

The Role of Citizenship Education in Forming a Person With Character for Elementary School Children

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Abstract

Civic education (PKn) has a very important role in shaping the character of children in elementary schools. This education serves as a foundation for instilling moral, social, and critical values to the younger generation, which are needed to become responsible citizens. Through civic education, students not only learn about rights and obligations, but also develop attitudes of tolerance, discipline, and love for the country. This study uses a literature review approach to investigate the role of civic education in shaping character in elementary school children. Data were collected from various literature sources such as scientific journals, books, and popular articles that are relevant to the research topic. This study explains the role of the subject of PKn in elementary schools in character formation efforts. The results of this study indicate that Civic Education has an important role in shaping students' character for the nation and state to become better individuals. Civic Education in its teaching has a major impact on the development of the character of elementary school students. Although there are challenges in its implementation, such as a dense curriculum and limited resources, commitment from all parties is needed to strengthen civic education. With the right teaching methods and support from the environment, citizenship education can help students become active, responsible, and well-characterized individuals.

Keyword: Civic Education, Character, Elementary School.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort that is carried out consciously and has also been planned as a learning process to ensure that every human being becomes a person with good character, knowledge, noble morals, logical thinking, creativity, and can be responsible. Education can also be said to be one of the paths taken by some humans in determining the future (Suwahu, 2019). With education, the nation's children can determine how their lives will go in the future. Life will continue without knowing time, children will grow and begin to experience development, and become adults who can later become great and dignified successors according to the education they took during school. Civic education plays a very important role in shaping a person's character and personal identity, especially at the elementary school level. Amidst the complexity of social, economic, and political dynamics that continue to develop, civic education is the main foundation in instilling critical, moral, and social values to the younger generation. Especially at the elementary school level, where the character building process first begins, civic education plays a role as a foundation that builds awareness of the rights and obligations of responsible citizens. In this context, civic education does not only focus on understanding the government structure and laws of a country, but also emphasizes the development of attitudes, values, and skills needed to become active and responsible members of society. This is in line with the general goal of basic education, which aims not only to convey academic knowledge, but also to form strong character and good morals in students. One of the main aspects of civic education is the learning of critical values, such as democracy, human rights, justice, and pluralism.

Through a deep understanding of these values, students can build awareness of the importance of respecting differences, participating in democratic processes, and fighting for justice for all individuals in society. Civic education also helps students to develop critical thinking skills in evaluating information, understanding multiple perspectives, and making responsible decisions. In addition, character education can be said to be quite an important part because it is one of the things related to personality and morals that must be instilled since childhood, so that children can grow and develop with good character. Education is a form

of effort that is carried out so that someone is able to mature and humanize fellow human beings or even to every other living creature, character education also plays an important role for humans, because character can help the growth of children, especially at the Elementary School level, so that they have a caring nature towards fellow human beings, have a stance, and are also able to be responsible. Character is essentially something that can be seen as a collection of habits that can be felt, because character is not just behavior and understanding but also something that has become a habit in a person, and is certainly applied in everyday life (Sari, 2017). Civics education is one of the subjects that has a fairly important role in the world of education, especially in elementary schools, in learning civics education there are several values of morals that can shape the character and personality of elementary school students. The character and morals of students can be formed better in civics education lessons. Because in civics education, students learn about how to apply morals, knowledge about the homeland, love and defend the homeland, foster a sense of responsibility, unity, love and respect for each other, obey God as is clearly in the foundation of the Indonesian state, namely Pancasila, and in civics education students can also learn about how to respect others, also respect fellow friends even though there are differences in religion, race, class, and language.

Character itself is a value of human behavior based on religion, norms, culture, law, customs, and aesthetics in community life that has generally been studied in Civic Education subjects. This character education includes a system of instilling student behavioral values in the form of knowledge, awareness to do good things towards God, fellow friends, fellow human beings, the environment, to oneself so as to become a human being with good character that is also useful for his life and the lives of others and his environment. That is why character education is very important, in PKn learning in elementary school, character education must be instilled as much as possible for the golden generation with good character in the future. In civic education, students are taught to be good individuals, to be able to socialize well in community life, to be critical citizens, and good citizens. However, while the importance of civic education is widely recognized, the challenges in its implementation cannot be ignored. One of the main challenges is the curriculum which is sometimes too dense, leaving little time for civic learning amidst competition with other subjects that are considered more "academic". In addition, limited resources and training for teachers also become obstacles in delivering civic education materials effectively. To overcome this challenge, a strong commitment is needed from all related parties, including government, educational institutions, communities, and teachers. The government needs to provide adequate policy support and resources to strengthen civic education in the national curriculum and teacher training. Educational institutions need to integrate civic education into all aspects of school activities, so that it becomes an integral part of the student learning experience. Meanwhile, communities can provide support through participation in school activities and supporting civic education initiatives at the local level. The statement above provides a little description of what character education is and the importance of the role of civic education in shaping individuals to be more characterful to elementary school students.

The focus of this issue is how the role of Civic Education is for the nation's generation, especially for elementary school levels. We often see that many still do not understand character education so that it is not uncommon for students or the next generation of the nation to have poor character, due to the lack of character education learning since elementary school in several subjects, one of which is Civic Education, both at school and in the personal environment. In theory, this research aims to develop and determine to what extent the role of Civic Education subjects in the stage of forming a character-based personality in Elementary School children. In addition, this study also aims to provide information to the general public, especially for Elementary School teachers, so that they know that Civic Education is important and influential in forming character in students. In various previous studies, namely in the research that has been conducted (Kamza *et al.*, 2021), strategies for shaping students' character in elementary schools have been discussed by prioritizing the right learning strategies to shape character, and the role of Civic Education teachers in shaping students' character which has been discussed by (Bego *et al.*, 2016) with Civic Education teachers as the focus for shaping students' character. As for the research conducted (Akbal, 2016) on Civic Education in National Character Building, it discusses in general about civic education as an educational program to build good citizens. This research is expected to provide several benefits, namely, (1) With this research, it is expected to be used as a basis for educators to further develop character education through PKn lessons in Elementary Schools. (2) It is expected that this research can provide information to teachers or parents about how important citizenship education is to the formation of children's personalities to be more characterful, especially in efforts to produce the character of the next generation of the nation and state that is

better. (3) Can provide knowledge about Citizenship Education as part of character formation that can be emulated and applied in everyday life.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a literature study method or literature review. The literature review method is a comprehensive overview of research that has been conducted on a particular topic, aimed at providing readers with an understanding of what is and is not known about the topic, as well as identifying rational grounds for existing research or future research ideas (Snyder, 2019). Literature studies can be obtained from various sources, including journals, books, documents, and online libraries. The objects of research in this literature review method include articles, books, journals, and other academic sources that focus on the role of civic education in shaping character in elementary school children. Data analysis was carried out by examining the relevance of civic education materials in supporting the formation of elementary school students' character as responsible citizens. Thus, this study aims to identify the concept of the role of civic education, its influence on the formation of children's character, as well as the positive impacts and challenges of its implementation in elementary schools. Data checking in this study was carried out by referring to relevant references.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the literature review of documents with documents that have been published in journals, the conclusions drawn can be seen in table 1 as follows:

Table 1. Document Review

Writer	Title	Method	Results
Galuh <i>et al.</i> , 2021	Integration of Character Education in Civic Education Learning to Develop Elementary School Students' Character	Qualitative Methods	The results of this study indicate that the integration of character education into civic education learning in elementary schools can help develop students' attitudes and characters. This study identifies several character values that are in accordance with civic education subjects, which are expected to shape students into active, responsible, and intelligent individuals in participating in society, nation, and state.
Rayhan <i>et al.</i> , (2022)	The Role of Civic Education in Building Students' Moral Character in the Modern Era.	Qualitative Methods	The results of the study indicate that rapid technological developments have caused significant behavioral changes among students, both in schools and in society. Many students engage in actions that are not in accordance with prevailing norms and morals, indicating behavioral deviations. This deviation occurs when individuals are unable to adapt to the rules, values, and social norms that exist in their environment. In other words, behavior is considered deviant if it does not comply with the expectations of society or the school environment. This study also emphasizes that civic education (PKn) has an important role in building students' moral character. Through effective education, students are

			expected to be able to internalize the moral values taught, so that they are able to behave in accordance with applicable norms.
Wijang <i>et al.</i> , (2021)	The Importance of Civic Education Learning in Creating National Character Education in Elementary School Students	Descriptive Qualitative	This study shows that character education is something that is required, because it is considered capable of making students intelligent, have good character and manners so that students are meaningful as members of society both for themselves and society in general and widely. National character education that is moral and has noble character is poured into the subject of civic education which is implemented at every level of school. However, in reality, character education in Indonesia is considered to have failed in creating people with character and morals as in its mission. To overcome this, innovation is needed in the teaching and learning process, especially in Civic Education learning. Based on the results and discussion, it can be understood that teacher innovation and creativity in teaching this civic education subject play a very important role and are needed in building national character in students in elementary schools.
Nurina <i>et al.</i> , (2021)	The Importance of Civics Learning in Forming Character Education Values in Elementary School Children	Descriptive Qualitative	This study shows that character education is one of the important things in realizing a good generation of the nation in Indonesia. Civics learning is present as a bridge in the formation of character education in the next generation of the nation. Civics learning has a direct influence on Character Education because Civics contains 3 main components, including knowledge, skills and attitudes. In addition, there are effective strategies for instilling character education values in Civics learning, which include (1) integrating values and ethics in subjects. (2) internalizing positive values possessed by every school citizen. (3) through training, providing examples and training. (4) creating a school atmosphere that is characterful and cultured. (5) combining learning with the formation of student character. (6) management of schools and

			extracurricular activities. With this strategy, the formation of character education values in elementary school children can be carried out properly and perfectly.
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Civic Education (PKn) is a discipline that aims to shape individuals into good and responsible citizens. PKn teaches the basic values of nationality, the rights and obligations of citizens, and the principles of democracy and social justice. Through PKn, students are expected to understand national identity, develop an attitude of tolerance, actively participate in community life, and have an awareness of social and political issues. Thus, PKn plays an important role in the formation of character and positive behavior of individuals in a social and national context. With character education applied continuously, students will have emotional intelligence (Setiawan, 2015). Character education for students since elementary school level is very important because character education is a system that teaches children habits to be accustomed to thinking and behaving. Character education itself has several objectives, namely:

1. Developing students' potential to become citizens with character values.
2. Developing good and commendable behavior and habits in students in accordance with the culture of the nation and state.
3. Instilling the spirit of being a leader from childhood & training students to become individuals who are always responsible as the next generation of the nation.
4. Developing students' abilities to become more independent individuals, have national insight, and also obey applicable norms.
5. Instilling a character that is obedient, polite, honest, and has a high sense of love for the homeland.

The function of character education is (1) As a place to develop students' potential so that they have good behavior, (2) As a place to improve education to produce a generation with character and responsibility, (3) As a place to develop one's own culture in accordance with character values. Character education greatly supports the social, moral, emotional and ethical development of students. Character education is a guide for students, especially in elementary schools, to become human beings with character in heart, will, feeling, and body (Nanda et al., 2021). Character is a reflection of the personality of each human being in terms of attitude, mentality, character also has cultural and contextual characteristics. Character education implemented in schools is defined as a learning process to strengthen the development of student behavior. Civic Education here is focused on forming individuals with competent, moral characters, having a high sense of nationalism and humanity, and having courage in their lives, also doing good and right things even when faced with difficult challenges (Hartati, 2018). Character education through Citizenship Education is found in the National Education Regulation No. 22 of 2006, namely citizenship education is one of the subjects that focuses on efforts to form the character of citizens so that they can carry out their rights and obligations to become good, intelligent, creative, responsible, trustworthy citizens (Indrawati, 2015) and have a character in accordance with the foundation of the State, namely Pancasila and the opening of the 1945 Constitution (Kurniawan, 2013).

Civic education has a role to provide provisions for students with noble character and basic skills regarding national life as well as preliminary education so that they become citizens and individuals with good character and have tolerance among others. Because in its teachings, citizenship education teaches tolerance towards others, in this case students will learn how important it is to have a tolerant character such as respecting friends who have different religions. Thus, it is concluded that there are several roles of Civic Education in efforts to form a character-based personality in elementary school children. As stated in the contents of Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which has regulated Civic Education as a formal education starting from Elementary School, namely (Kasminah, 2019):

1. Civic education easily shapes students' character so that they think critically in responding to civic issues.
2. Able to actively participate & act firmly and intelligently in community activities and avoid acts of corruption in the future.
3. Can develop positively in the surrounding environment and foster a democratic spirit to make oneself in accordance with the character of Indonesian society itself.
4. Able to interact well with other humans.

5. Able to think logically, critically, and responsibly.
6. Cultivate character and uphold humanity in accordance with Civic Education learning materials.
7. Able to interact well with other nations by utilizing communication technology, becoming a smart citizen and always prioritizing honesty.
8. Become a useful human being in social life.

Civic education is the same as democracy education because it aims to form and prepare citizens to have critical and democratic thinking (Suhardiyansyah *et al.*, 2016). Instilling this character in elementary school students is a must because the awareness of democracy in the future is a form of life in society and guarantees the rights of citizens. If students are accustomed to civic education to be critical and democratic, then individuals with critical and democratic characters will also be formed in life. Because character will be formed in each individual if they are used to doing it. The way of thinking, behaving is a characteristic of each individual but can change based on several factors such as the school and family environment. If students are given critical education, their character will be formed accordingly. That is why the instillation of character values in civic education needs to be instilled in elementary school students in order to build a strong Indonesian national character and Based on the philosophy of the nation and state. The implementation of civic education is always seen in its learning from the beginning to the end of its learning (Didik *et al.*, nd). Based on this statement, it can be said that civic education has a large and deliberate role and influence to help us understand every human character and care about ethical/moral values.

In its learning, we are taught to think about the character of each person by seeing whether students care deeply about their surroundings or become apathetic. In its learning, Civics is said to be successful if students are able to complete all assignments and all assessments from the teacher, this is a result of good character that has been successfully developed by the teacher (Ibrohim *et al.*, 2020). In its implementation, Civic Education also has a role in efforts to form individuals with good character, in elementary school students that teachers can apply in the school environment, namely in exemplary activities and habits in the school environment such as (Dewi *et al.*, 2021):

1. Students are accustomed to wearing complete uniforms, being neat, being careful about what they say, and being obedient to their teachers.
2. Students are accustomed to being disciplined by arriving at the right time, completing and submitting assignments on time, not cheating during exams, carrying out duties according to the schedule, and being responsible for what they have done.
3. Students are also always taught to be diligent in worshipping according to their beliefs, to care for their friends, to love their surroundings, such as not littering.

In addition, in its learning, civic education has the essence of an effort to develop individuals with character, which is a conscious effort to develop self-identity in students' obligations in efforts to defend the country because in its learning, civic education educates students to:

1. Having a love for the homeland
2. Having awareness of the nation and state
3. Firmly believe in Pancasila as the basis of the state
4. Ability to defend the country
5. Be a good student and have a character that is willing to sacrifice.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that civic education plays an important role in shaping the character of elementary school students. With the right teaching methods, support from the school and family environment, and the use of technology, civic education can help students develop ethical values and responsible behavior. However, challenges in implementation must be addressed through supportive policies and practices, to ensure that civic education can reach its full potential in shaping young people with character and commitment to active and responsible citizenship.

4. CONCLUSION

Civic education (PKn) has a very important role in shaping the character of children at the elementary school level. Through this education, students are not only taught about the rights and obligations of citizens, but also the moral and ethical values that are essential for building a good personality. In this context, civic education serves as a foundation for instilling an attitude of tolerance, a sense of love for the homeland, and a strong sense of national awareness. This is very important considering the challenges of globalization and cultural differences faced by today's young generation. Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded

that effective civic education can shape students' critical thinking in responding to civic issues. With the right approach, students can learn to appreciate differences, empathize with others, and contribute positively to society. In addition, civic education also plays a role in fostering responsible character, which is reflected in students' daily behavior, such as concern for the environment and mutual respect between friends. However, challenges in implementing civic education still exist. Many students do not fully understand the importance of character education, which can result in the emergence of bad behavior. Therefore, collaborative efforts are needed between the government, educational institutions, and the community to improve the understanding and implementation of civic education. Adequate policy support, training for teachers, and integration of civic education into all aspects of school activities are essential to create a conducive learning environment.

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