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IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM TO FORM STUDENT CHARACTER IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the implementation of the Citizenship Education Program (PKn) at the elementary school level as an effort to shape students' character. Utilizing a literature review method, this research analyzes various sources, including scholarly articles, books, and relevant journals related to citizenship education and character development. The findings indicate that citizenship education plays a crucial role in instilling moral and ethical values in students, including the values of Pancasila, which is the foundational philosophy of Indonesia. The Civics program focuses not only on academic aspects but also on character formation through interactive and participatory learning activities. In this context, students are encouraged to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens, as well as the importance of tolerance, justice, and social responsibility. However, the study also identifies several challenges in implementing Civics in elementary schools, such as insufficient teacher training, limited educational resources, and a lack of awareness among parents and the community regarding the importance of character education. The research concludes that to enhance the effectiveness of the Civics program in shaping students' character, collaboration among schools, parents, and the community is essential. Additionally, developing a more innovative and relevant curriculum that meets students' needs is crucial. Thus, citizenship education can significantly contribute to forming a generation of young individuals with strong character who are prepared to face future challenges.

Keywords : Civic Education, Student Character, Pancasila, Elementary School

Introduction

In the era of globalization like today, it takes a strong attitude and mental strength to face the challenges of life. The changing times that continue to advance have caused society to ignore national character education, even though this is a very important foundation and must be taught from an early age. The problems of national character today are much more numerous and complex compared to the past. Discussion of character is very important and fundamental. The origin of the word "character" from Greek means " to mark " or mark, showing how the values of goodness are applied in a person's actions or behavior. The good or bad quality of a person's character is reflected in their daily attitudes and behavior. Character plays an important role in determining the future of a person, even a nation. Character is a force that controls the direction of a nation's life, ensuring that it does not drift (Darlis et al., 2023). If the citizens of a country have good character, then the future of the country is likely to be bright. Conversely, if citizens show bad character, the life of the country is likely to be disrupted. This also has an impact on the character of students as the next generation of the nation. Students, who are in a period of growth and development, really need to instill character values from an early age so that they are not influenced by negative things around them. They tend to imitate the behavior of their surroundings; if the environment reflects positive things, students will imitate the goodness, and vice versa. Therefore, character education is very important in forming good character in students. Education is a conscious and planned effort to develop students' potential,

while character is unique values in morality and personality that are formed through internalization of various values and policies. Thus, character education is a conscious and planned effort in the learning environment to develop students' potential and attitudes so that they have good character values. Character education is a form of human activity that includes educational efforts aimed at the next generation.

The goal of character education is to continuously shape individual self-improvement and train their abilities towards a better life (Lubis, 2024). (Ritonga, et al., 2022) also stated that one of the goals of education is to help children develop their maximum potential, which will benefit both them and society. Children see school as a place to get provisions that will open the world to them, while parents see school as a place where children will develop their abilities. The government also hopes that schools will prepare children to become intelligent citizens, both in terms of intelligence and their characteristics as Indonesian citizens. This emphasizes that education in elementary schools is very important for all parties, especially in the application of character that will be the basis for education at the next level (Lubis & Ritonga, 2023). Character education in elementary schools is very important because at the age of around 6-12 years, the development of students' mindsets in imitating or copying something develops rapidly. Therefore, character education in elementary schools is very necessary so that students have good character values. Character education can be realized through various subjects, including Citizenship Education (PPKn). The PPKn subject is the right means to implement character education values to students, because its main goal is to create students who have democratic characters and are in accordance with the values of Pancasila (Dewi, 2020). (Herdiansyah el al., 2021) also stated that PPKn is a way for educational institutions to teach someone about recognizing attitudes and behaviors. Thus, PPKn becomes a means for students to understand and learn appropriate attitudes and behaviors, creating democratic and characterful students. Civic education is one of the educational concepts that helps shape students as citizens with character. (Pertiwi et al., 2021) explains that PPKn has a dimension that is closely related to the formation of character and public morality of citizens. Therefore, civic education has a strong relationship with the implementation of character education. By implementing character education through PPKn learning, it is hoped that students can be created who have good, intelligent, and moral character.

Research Methodology

The research method for the journal on the Implementation of Civic Education Programs in Forming Students' Character in Elementary Schools can be done through an in-depth literature review approach. In this study, researchers will collect and analyze various relevant literature sources, including articles, journals, and books that discuss civic education and character development. The analysis process will include identifying key themes, challenges, and best practices from previous studies, such as the importance of integrating character values into the civic education curriculum (Susilawati & Widagdo, 2024) and project-based learning innovations to increase student engagement (Trisiana et al., 2023). This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of civic education programs in forming students' character as well as recommendations for better implementation in the future. The results of this literature review are expected to provide insight into the role of civic education in creating citizens with integrity and responsibility.

Result & Discussion

The implementation of the Civic Education (PKn) Program at the elementary school level has a very important role in shaping students' character and preparing them to become good and responsible citizens. Through the literature review method, this study aims to explore the various challenges faced in the implementation of PKn and strategies that can be applied to improve the effectiveness of this education. The results of the study show that PKn not only functions as a means to convey knowledge about the rights and obligations of citizens, but also as a medium to instill character values such as honesty, discipline, social responsibility, and empathy (Gustifal et al., 2024). Challenges in the Implementation of PKn One of the main challenges in the implementation of PKn is limited access to technology. Many schools, especially in remote and underdeveloped areas, do not have adequate infrastructure to support digital learning. This makes it difficult for students and teachers to access quality online learning resources. Research by Darojah (2023) shows that the lack of hardware such as computers and a stable internet connection are major obstacles to an effective learning process. This limitation means that learning materials cannot be delivered optimally, thus reducing students' interest in civics lessons. In addition, low digital skills among teachers and students are also a significant obstacle in the implementation of PKn. Many teachers are not yet skilled in using information and communication technology to support the learning process. This has the potential to cause monotonous and less interesting teaching methods for students (Hilyatun et al., 2024). The

inability of teachers to utilize modern technology makes students lose the opportunity to learn in a more interactive and enjoyable way.

Strategies for Improving PKn Implementation To overcome these challenges, several strategies can be applied. First, digital skills training for teachers is essential so that they can utilize technology effectively in teaching PKn. This training should include the use of digital learning applications, interactive teaching techniques, and creative ways to integrate technology into the curriculum (Gustifal et al., 2024). By improving teachers' digital skills, it is hoped that they can provide a more interesting and relevant learning experience for students. Second, the development of technological infrastructure in schools must be a priority for the government and related parties. This includes the provision of hardware such as computers, tablets, and a stable internet connection so that all students have equal access to digital learning resources (Darojah, 2023). Adequate infrastructure will enable teachers to implement technology-based learning methods more effectively. Third, it is important to provide interesting and interactive learning resources. These resources can be in the form of project-based learning modules that allow students to be actively involved in the learning process. For example, through community-based projects, students can learn about citizenship by directly engaging in social activities in their environment. This approach not only improves the understanding of the concept of citizenship but also develops students' social skills and character (Hilyatun et al., 2024). Integration of Character Education Research also shows that the integration of character education into the Civics curriculum is very important. Through a project-based approach and collaboration with community organizations, students can learn character values practically. For example, students can be invited to do social activities such as community service or environmental campaigns that instill a sense of empathy and responsibility for others (Gustifal et al., 2024). In this way, civic education is not only a theory but also a real practice that has an impact on students' daily lives.

Conclusion

The Implementation of Civic Education Program to Form Students' Character in Elementary Schools confirms that civic education has a crucial role in the formation of character and national awareness among students. This study shows that through a curriculum integrated with civic values, such as responsibility, justice, and tolerance, students can understand their rights and obligations as citizens. Interactive and participatory learning methods, including group discussions and collaborative projects, allow students to be actively involved in the learning process, thereby deepening their understanding of the concept of civics. In addition, the importance of collaboration with local communities and external parties, such as community leaders, is highly emphasized. Out-of-class activities involving the community can provide practical experience for students in implementing civic values. This study also notes that periodic evaluation of civic education programs is needed to ensure their effectiveness in achieving educational goals. With a holistic and integrated approach, it is hoped that students will not only become individuals who understand their rights and obligations, but also become active and responsible citizens. Overall, this study recommends that elementary schools implement civic education consistently and continuously to build strong character and high national awareness in the younger generation. Thus, civic education can contribute positively to creating a just and harmonious society.

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