

LITERATURE STUDY: STUDENT CHARACTER IN CIVIC EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STUDI LITERATUR: KARAKTER PESERTA DIDIK PADA PENDIDIKAN KEWARGANEGARAAN DI SEKOLAH DASAR

Nurul Ramadhani¹, Maemonah², Ibnu Azka³, Fathur Baldan Haramain⁴

^{1,2,3} State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga,

⁴Al-Azhar University of Cairo

^{1,2,3}Jl. Laksda Adisucipto, Sleman, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia

⁴Al Mokhaym Al Daem, Gameat Al Azhar, Cairo Governorate, Egypt

Email: 23204081002@student.uin-suka.ac.id¹, maimunah@uin-suka.ac.id²,
ibnuazka00@gmail.com³, fathurbaldan98@gmail.com⁴

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Abstract

The progress of a nation is largely determined by strong character, to create a nation that is dignified and respected by other nations. This research aims to describe students' character in citizenship education in SD from a progressivism perspective. The method used was library research, which collected data by understanding and studying theories from various literature related to the research. Data were collected from various sources, such as journal articles and books. The data analysis technique used in this research is the content analysis. The research results explain that the philosophy of progressivism believes that the environment can influence character development. At the same time, citizenship education is a science that pays attention to national character and the character of students in elementary schools. From these two perspectives, the philosophy of progressivism and citizenship education both aim to form students' character in accordance with the progress of the Indonesian nation.

Keywords: *Character, Progressivism, Citizenship Education*

Abstrak

Kemajuan suatu bangsa sangat ditentukan oleh karakter yang kuat, untuk menciptakan bangsa yang bermartabat dan dihormati oleh bangsa lain. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan karakter peserta didik dalam pendidikan kewarganegaraan di SD dari perspektif progresivisme. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kepustakaan, yaitu pengumpulan data dengan memahami dan mempelajari teori-teori dari berbagai literatur yang berkaitan dengan penelitian. Data dikumpulkan dari berbagai sumber, seperti artikel jurnal dan buku. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah analisis isi. Hasil penelitian menjelaskan bahwa filsafat progresivisme percaya bahwa lingkungan hidup dapat mempengaruhi perkembangan karakter sedangkan pendidikan kewarganegaraan merupakan salah satu ilmu yang sangat memperhatikan karakter bangsa dan karakter peserta didik di sekolah dasar. Dari dua pendapat tersebut bahwa filsafat progresivisme dan pendidikan kewarganegaraan sama-sama memiliki tujuan untuk membentuk karakter peserta didik yang sesuai dengan progres bangsa Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: *Karakter, Progresivisme, Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan (PKn)*

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1. Introduction

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping the behavior and identity of a nation, particularly within the framework of national values and moral enhancement

(Jannah, 2022; Komariah, Kurniatun, & Almubaroq, 2020; Lestari & Surur, 2021). The development of a country is largely determined by character, and only strong character can create a nation that is dignified and respected by other nations (Mughtar & Suryani, 2019). Character formation has a higher meaning than moral formation because character formation is not only related to right or wrong but also how to instill good habits in life so that students have high awareness and understanding, as well as concern and commitment to implementing goodness in everyday life (Roswandi, 2022). Character education plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of students' lives and underscores the importance of collaboration between schools, parents, and teachers in shaping and strengthening students' character (Anita & Novianty, 2020). In a quote from Frank G. Goble in 1916, John Dewey in Aisyah & Afandi (2021) said that it is commonplace in educational theory that character formation is the general aim of pursuing and educating character in schools.

Globally, education in various aspects has experienced changes along with the times. Citizenship education (called PKn in Indonesia) is no exception, where learning is initially teacher-centered and becomes student-centered. However, citizenship education also experiences dynamics of ups and downs because, basically, citizenship education is only theoretical and rarely applied in everyday life. Citizenship education in elementary school is very important in character formation. To improve students' good character, there must be a connection with progressivism. The connection between progressivism and character-focused primary school education has been suggested. Putri, Martaningsih, Prabowo, & Rukiyati (2023) said that the philosophy of progressivism can provide a new perspective in elementary schools, which leads to the development of interests and talents and the formation of students with character.

Furthermore, Winataputra in Anbiya, Nurdin, & Rizal (2020) explained that citizenship education and the philosophy of progressivism influence a philosophical basis. Progressivism comes from the word progressive, which means moving forward or which can be interpreted as a movement for change towards improvement. Progressivism is a movement that wants progress, and this progress can bring change. Progressivism is also a movement that wants rapid progress (Fadlillah, 2017). In 1974, progressivism became a trend in education, which John Dewey pioneered. Since its inception, the school has tried to achieve a positive influence on science and technology. Progressivism emphasizes the concept of "progress," which says that humans have the ability to develop and perfect the environment by applying their intelligence through scientific methods to solve problems that arise in both human personal life and social life (Mustaghfiroh, 2020).

Education can develop students' character. According to Barnadid in Ibrahim (2018), the philosophy of progressivism considers education to be an effort to help the growth and development of students. In developing students' education, they must form character to solve problems by assessing real experiences. In addition, Faiz and Purwati (2021) stated that developing character in the 21st century is necessary to improve the nation's quality. Building character is closely related to the quality of a nation because character is a very important part of creating a nation's civilization. A nation's character development has been taught in citizenship education, which aims to be education related to good citizens' character, morals, and values.

The development of citizenship education learning used by teachers in the learning process can lead students to character formation. However, looking at students' behaviour and character, they are still far from the objectives of civics learning, which is

caused by several problems, namely: (1) learning problems faced by teachers in implementing civics learning to shape character, (2) support for facilities and infrastructure in implementing civics learning to shape the character of students, (3) the teacher has not delivered the material contextually, (4) has not used learning media when studying civics, (5) when students do not pay enough attention to the teacher during civics learning, and (6) the student's character is not in line with the expected civics goals (Andita, Djuwita, & Hasnawati, 2018).

Research conducted by Gurning, Chairunisa, & Tobing (2023) explained that the country's current condition, especially in Indonesia, has been hit by a climate of living characteristics that do not support the growth of Pancasila. This can be seen from the large number of people who consume drugs and brawls between villages and schools, so it is easy to complain about each other. The current character crisis has spread to the campus environment, so many students' attitudes and behaviours contradict moral values. Therefore, there is a need for a special approach to the weaknesses of character education in Indonesia so that character formation can bring change to all the problems that are currently occurring.

Indonesia is slowly experiencing character problems as a nation, and this is related to the younger generation, who often fall into negative actions that can damage their character. While civics education is closely tied to the formation of people's character, civic learning aims to educate citizens to become good, intelligent citizens and be able to compete with the influence of current developments so that they can solve the problems of national and state life. Citizenship education seeks to develop the character of citizens following the principles of Pancasila because the main aim of citizenship education itself is to make students grow up with good morals and noble character so that they become citizens who are active in expressing their desires and have character under Pancasila principles (Dewi, Hidayat, Septian, Apriliani, & Purnamasari, 2021).

Progressivism is connected to citizenship education. In citizenship learning, apart from providing material, sometimes an educator must instill the values of norms, discipline, attitudes, creativity, and independence in students. Educators deliver material, and education can change or shape students' character. As we know, some character-building students in elementary schools still do not meet curriculum standards. Meanwhile, implementing the merdeka curriculum aims to shape student character. This opinion is supported by the research of Iskandar, Rosmana, Luthfiyyah, Amelia, Maulidawanti, & Fauziyah (2023), which explained that the merdeka curriculum has a structure to improve the character of the nation's children through one of the programs in the curriculum, namely the Pancasila student profile.

Researchers have conducted several studies related to citizenship education. The first research is from Saroro & Setyawan (2022), aimed to (1) identify ethical principles appropriate for citizenship education subjects in primary schools and (2) integrate them into citizenship education lessons in primary schools. This research is similar to the current research because it discusses the students' character and citizenship education. Meanwhile, the difference is the philosophy of progressivism because the results of previous research do not discuss the philosophy of progressivism. The second research conducted by Apriyadi, Hendra, Yanti, & Sukardi (2024) discussed progressivism in character education. This research is similar to the current research because both discuss progressivism and character, while the differences in this study have not been linked to citizenship educators. The current research uses a literature study on students' character

in citizenship education related to the philosophy of progressivism. Can this progressivism be integrated with character in citizenship education? As reviewed by researchers, this study has never been carried out by previous researchers. Therefore, this study is suitable for continued use and will become a new discovery for researchers.

This research aims to explore and understand students' character in learning citizenship education in elementary schools, using a philosophical perspective of progressivism. The novelty of this research lies in the philosophical approach used in understanding students' character and the emphasis on citizenship education at the elementary school level. This research presents a new contribution by exploring the concept of student character through the lens of progressivism, which emphasizes the development of an inclusive, critical, and responsible personality. Through this approach, this research seeks to highlight how the citizenship education learning process can shape students' character in facing the complexity of modern society. This research also broadens insight into the implementation of the philosophy of progressivism in the context of citizenship education at the elementary school level by providing a deeper understanding of how the principles of progressivism can be applied effectively in forming strong and ethical student characters.

2. Research Method

The method used in this research was library research. This research involved gathering data and information from the literature in the form of manuscripts, relevant previous study findings, journals, or relevant books as the primary source of study. Data collection, processing, and conclusion were all carried out systematically for this study. This study employed a qualitative approach. This approach aimed to increase understanding based on the referenced sources.

Data collection was carried out by understanding philosophy and studying progressivism theories, which can be linked to the character of citizenship education in elementary schools, from various literature reviews related to this research. Data were collected from various sources, such as journal articles and books entitled "PKn Learning in Elementary Schools" by Winataputra (2008). The data analysis technique used in this research was content analysis. Data obtained from various sources and data supporting research describe the research object.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Character in Citizenship Education in Elementary Schools

Character cannot be separated from citizenship education, a branch of science discussing citizenship education. Civics helps students understand their rights, obligations, and responsibilities as citizens, as well as government systems and institutional functions in running government. Civics is taught as the formation of national identity, studying history, culture, religion, and language in Indonesia so that it can instill an attitude of tolerance in students towards the differences that exist in Indonesia. Civics develops students' social and participation skills and respect for the opinions of others in demonstrations because citizenship is very important in character formation. Students are taught ethics, an honest attitude, the basis for carrying out human life, and a fair attitude in responding to the circumstances around them. According to Madon, Maemonah, Malahati, Atin, Irfan, & Nurjanna (2023), one's

actions offer an opportunity to foster a sense of self-awareness and responsibility in civic character.

Creating national character through education is one of the goals of education in Indonesia. Building character from an early age is important to strengthen the implementation of local standards. Behavioural settings have standard values built by a real and perfect society (Muslim, 2020). According to Kusumawati (2016), education is a process that can lead to a better and more dignified direction. Character problems are interesting problems to study and research and find solutions to. In a country, character can become capital in achieving a country's goals. The problem of attitude or character is one of the problems that always concerns every developed and developing country, especially underdeveloped countries. The arrival of ethical destruction or the abolition of a country will slow down the development of a country, considering that the character of a country is the beginning of progress and even the foundation of a country's development (Fauzi, 2019). Citizenship education is a course that focuses on the formation of citizens who understand and can carry out their rights and obligations to become intelligent and skilled Indonesian citizens as mandated by Pancasila and the 1945 constitution (Winataputra, 2008).

Ismadi in Mudana (2019), Indonesia needs five characters to show its identity and compete with other countries. First is the moral (religious) character of the country. This country will have moral and religious values as thoughts and actions. Second is the characteristics of developed countries. Open in a broad sense, to become a nation with character, culture, and society. Third is the united national character, which, among other things, upholds tolerance, which means that Indonesia cannot be united without tolerance, harmony, and brotherhood. Fourth is the quality of a confident nation, broadly defined as a nation that is knowledgeable, competent, and competitive intellectually, emotionally, and technologically. Competition is not only material and mechanical but also mind, heart, and soul. Fifth is the characteristics of the participating countries. Intervention is very important to eliminate apathy, just wanting to feel fine and not worrying about the future of the Indonesian nation. This is done with an attitude of full participation and attention, a high sense of responsibility and character, and an increasingly greater contribution to the character of a nation.

Character education is a method that has been carried out consciously to instill and develop good values. Sofyan in Febriani (2021), it aims to create a generation that is intelligent and has the character to benefit the environment. Character education itself has 18 character education values, including creative values, hard work values, discipline values, democratic values, independence values, and nationalism values. Meanwhile, according to Dewi, Suresman, & Suabuana (2021), the continuation of 18 character values in education, namely religion, honesty, tolerance, curiosity, national spirit, love of the country, respect for achievement, friendly/communication, love of peace, love of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility.

Citizenship education in elementary schools is very important in shaping students' personalities, citizenship, and social skills to contribute positively to society and the nation. Character in civics is not only a goal in learning but is the basis for forming personality and positive behaviour in everyday life. Through citizenship education, students in elementary schools are expected to become someone with moral integrity, good social skills, and a commitment to good civic values.

3.2 Progressivism Philosophical Theoretical Approach in Implementing Character Strengthening in Civics

Historically, the flow of progressivism was discovered by the philosopher John Dewey, who created schools that used a progressivism system presented as a protest against authoritarian education and the standardization of predetermined educational methods (Faiz & Kurniawaty, 2020). The philosophy of progressivism is most suitable for facing the demands of the current era (Atika & A'yun, 2024). Progressivism provides new concepts and colours to instill character in students from an early age. Progressivism provides the widest possible space for students to grow and develop their potential interests and talents (Siswadi & Putri, 2023). Cultivating character in elementary schools is very important so that the flow of progressivism is easier to touch on students' character.

The basic meaning of progressivism is progress (Saadah, Swaradesy, & Prasetyo, 2022). Progressivism prioritizes looking to the future rather than the past. If this can be related to a spectrum of well-being, progressivism sees the greatness or fear of the past as a similar metaphor or translation into the present or future. This can align with what is implemented in civics learning; teachers see students as free, active, creative, and dynamic creatures, so they are good at carrying out struggles. Meanwhile, what is not good is used to prevent it from happening again.

Citizenship education is learning that pays attention to the progress of a nation's character. The meaning of progress is a student's progress in learning as a goal of preparing for the future because each person's face is not the same as their teacher's, so students have to learn according to their needs and times. This can be in line with the philosophical view of progressivism. According to Muttaqin in Khomairroh, Nurwahidin, & Sudjarwo (2022), the philosophy of progressivism assumes that the living environment can influence character development. In addition, Ruslan in Faelasup (2024) explained that the philosophical thinking of progressivist schools is following the school's goal of implementing character education for students to improve their quality of life and guarantee a better future life. Meanwhile, Irianto (2020) stated that civics is teaching about values, ethics, and standards. It is believed to be a very effective civic education for developing professional intelligence and personality. Therefore, citizenship education is very close to social and national life.

The philosophy of progressivism is the basis for implementing character education (Khomairroh, Nurwahidin, & Sudjarwo, 2022). This philosophy emphasizes the development of students to think well, be disciplined, be social, and be democratic. In this way, students can gain skills and abilities to solve problems in various contextual situations. From the explanation above that citizenship education is related to character education, the philosophy of progressivism and citizenship education aims to provide progress in students' character. Progressivism in the context of character in citizenship education is an approach that emphasizes developing students' critical thinking skills, creativity, and active participation in understanding the values of democracy, tolerance, justice, and social responsibility. By applying a progressivism approach in civics learning, students are expected to develop a deeper understanding of the important character values for becoming responsible and ethical citizens.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the philosophy of progressivism and citizenship education have similar goals in shaping students' character. The philosophy of progressivism influenced by John Dewey emphasizes the development of students who think practically and can solve problems following increasingly complex environmental developments. On the other hand, citizenship education pays attention to the formation of the national character of students. Through the integration of the philosophy of progressivism and civics, it has been proven that students' character formation can be achieved in accordance with the progress of a nation with character. Civics is a mandatory subject at all levels of education and a basis for forming personality and positive behavior in everyday life. Through civics learning, students are expected to have moral integrity, good social skills, and a commitment to positive civic values. Thus, the integration between the philosophy of progressivism and civics is expected to create a learning environment that supports the formation of students' character following the demands of the times and national values. This is an important step in preparing the younger generation to become individuals who think critically, are responsible, and contribute positively to society and the country.

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