

Implementation of Character Education Through Civic Education Learning for Fourth Grade Students at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol

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Abstract

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This study aims to describe the implementation of character education through Civic Education (PKn) learning in Grade IV students at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol for the 2024/2025 academic year. The research questions include: (1) How is character education implemented through the Civic Education subject at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol? and (2) What are the obstacles in the implementation of character education through the Civic Education subject at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol? The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects consist of the school principal, Grade IV teacher, and students. The results of the study show that character education is integrated into Civic Education learning through various methods such as habituation, teacher role modeling, the insertion of character values into learning materials, and social activities such as communal work and mutual cooperation. The character values instilled include discipline, responsibility, cooperation, tolerance, and patriotism. Teachers play a major role as exemplary figures and the main facilitators in shaping students' character. However, the implementation of character education faces several obstacles, including differences in students' backgrounds that affect their acceptance of values, limited parental involvement in reinforcing character at home, and the negative influence of social media, which can undermine the moral values instilled at school. In addition, there are still teachers who do not fully understand the optimal approach and strategies for character-based learning. Therefore, synergy is needed between the school, teachers, parents, and the surrounding environment to support and strengthen the comprehensive and sustainable implementation of character education, particularly through the Civic Education subject.

Keywords: Character Education, Civic Education, Learning Obstacles

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INTRODUCTION

Education is basically aimed at shaping the character of students. This objective is stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System in Article 3, which states that national education serves to develop and shape the character and civilization of the nation in order to educate the nation. Education aims to develop the potential of students to become people who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. The government, through the Ministry of National Education,

has launched the implementation of character education at all levels of education from elementary school to university. According to Nuh in Narwani (2011:1), character formation should begin at an early age. If character is formed at an early age, it will not be easy to change a person's character. This is expected to build the nation's personality.

The elementary school age (around 6-12 years) is an important stage in the implementation of character education, even becoming the foundation for the successful development of students' character. Sigit (2007:121) states that elementary school children experience rapid development in physical, motor, personality, emotional, intellectual, language, moral, and ethical aspects. Therefore, character education at this age can be implemented optimally to achieve maximum results.

Various negative actions, such as cheating, skipping school, or other behaviors that indicate weak character education, demonstrate the importance of character education for students. Civic education is one of the subjects that serves to shape students as citizens with good character. Samsuri (2011:20) emphasizes that civic education has dimensions that cannot be separated from character building. The purpose of civic education in elementary school is not only to prepare students for the next level, but also to instill morals that are expected to shape good citizens. Rumiati (2008: 1) states that civic education as education in values, morals, and norms should be instilled in students from an early age. This is because if students already have good moral values, then the goal of shaping good citizens will be easy to achieve. As mentioned earlier, in practice, PKn faces obstacles that hinder the achievement of learning objectives. The weaknesses of PKn are highlighted by Winataputra (2009: 37), who states that the learning and assessment processes emphasize instructional impacts that are limited to mastery of material/cognitive dimensions. Thus, what students gain is not cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, but still within the cognitive realm.

The implementation of character education still faces many obstacles. Based on an interview with Mr. Jamuhur, the principal of SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol in Kopong Sebangun Village, Sambik Bangkol Village, Gangga Sub-district, North Lombok District, it was found that most teachers at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol have already implemented character education. However, some teachers are still unaware of the techniques for implementing character education. Based on the researcher's observations on Monday, December 16, 2024, it was noted that teachers at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, although they have not conducted special socialization or implemented character education, have already incorporated it into the Civic Education (PKN) subject. However, there are still challenges because there are many character values that need to be instilled in the students.

Based on the above explanation, the author is interested in analyzing and examining the development of student character that must be carried out in the Civic Education (PKN) subject, which aims to foster reliable character in elementary school students. Therefore, in this thesis, the researcher raises the title regarding "The Implementation of Character Education through PKN Learning for Fourth Grade Students at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol.

RESEARCH METHODS

The researchers used qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach and a case study design. The study was conducted during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, with the research subjects being fourth-grade teachers and students. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted through data condensation, data presentation, and the drawing and verification of conclusions. Data validity testing was performed through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Implementation of Character Education Through Civic Education Subjects at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol.

Based on the results of the study, which showed that teachers at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol implemented character education through the subject of Civic Education (PKn) in various ways. One of the approaches taken is to integrate character values such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and love for the country into the learning material. Additionally, active learning methods such as group discussions, role-playing, and case studies are used to ensure students not only understand theoretically but also demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors aligned with the values of Pancasila. Outside the classroom, I also encourage students to actively participate in flag ceremonies, class duty, and other social activities as a form of implementing discipline, cooperation, and social responsibility.

From the description of the research findings on the implementation of character education through the Civic Education subject at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol applies several strategies tailored to the conditions and characteristics of the students. These strategies aim to ensure that character values are not only taught theoretically but are truly internalized and applied in students' daily lives.

1. Integration of Character Values in the Material

Based on the results of research in grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, the integration of character values in Civic Education (PKn) learning is carried out in a structured and contextual manner, with material adapted to the psychological development level of the students. Educators deliberately select relevant themes such as community life, social norms, harmonious living, and respect for diversity as vehicles for character development. Core values such as tolerance, cooperation, discipline, responsibility, and honesty are internalized through a contextual approach, linking abstract concepts (e.g., the importance of unity or adherence to rules) with concrete examples from the school and home environments, such as classroom duty activities or interactions with peers from diverse backgrounds. The use of varied learning media (short stories, educational videos, group discussions) also strengthens students' conceptual understanding of these values.

This implementation not only focuses on cognitive aspects (understanding values) but also strengthens the affective dimension (appreciation) through positive reinforcement strategies. Rewarding student behavior that reflects positive character traits (honesty, helpfulness, responsibility) serves as reinforcement to form sustainable habits (habituation). This holistic approach—

which combines context-based curriculum planning, participatory methods, and a behavior appreciation system—has transformed civic education learning from mere transmission of citizenship knowledge into a comprehensive process of shaping students' personalities. Thus, the integration of character values is no longer an add-on but an intrinsic element that is seamlessly integrated into students' learning experiences and personal development within the school environment.

In this case, according to Lickona's theory, the integration of character values in civic education learning in grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol reflects the three main components of character building, namely moral knowing (moral knowledge), moral feeling (moral feelings), and moral action (moral actions). Teachers not only impart knowledge about the importance of living harmoniously, tolerance, and discipline but also cultivate empathy and concern among students through stories, group discussions, and concrete examples from daily life. Character strengthening is carried out through recognition of students' positive behavior, thereby forming sustainable good habits. With this approach, students not only understand character values cognitively but are also emotionally motivated to act in accordance with those values in real life.

Based on the above description, the researcher concludes that the integration of character values in Civic Education learning must be done in a planned and contextual manner to be able to shape the students' personalities holistically. The approach that encompasses knowledge, feelings, and moral actions, as proposed by Lickona, serves as an important foundation for fostering sustainable positive character in students.

2. Active Learning Methods

Based on the description of the research results at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, civic education in fourth grade is conducted using an active learning approach that aims to encourage direct student participation, build deep understanding, and instill character values through real and enjoyable learning experiences. One of the active methods often used is group discussion. In this activity, students are divided into small groups and given a simple problem or case related to community life, such as the importance of obeying school rules or working together in community service. Through this discussion, students learn to express their opinions politely, listen to others, and make decisions together. This directly develops the values of tolerance, democracy, and cooperation.

In this case, according to Berkowitz's theory (2002:80), effective character learning does not only focus on imparting moral knowledge, but must also involve students' active participation in a contextual and meaningful learning process. The active learning approach in Civic Education (PKn) lessons, such as group discussions implemented in Grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, reflects the importance of social engagement and interaction as a means of internalizing values. When students are directly involved in solving social problems, expressing opinions, and making decisions together, they not only understand values such as cooperation, tolerance, and responsibility cognitively but also experience them in a tangible way. The positive impact of this approach aligns with Berkowitz's perspective, which emphasizes the development of authentic and enduring character through meaningful and repeated social experiences.

3. Teacher Role Models

From the description of the research results, teacher role models are one of the most important aspects in the character education process, especially in Civic Education (PKn) subjects. At SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, fourth-grade teachers serve as primary role models who provide real-life examples of character-building behavior to students in their daily school environment. In practice, teachers not only teach theoretical material but also demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors that students can emulate. For example, teachers always arrive on time to class, demonstrating the value of discipline. When assigning tasks, teachers are fair and do not discriminate among students, reflecting the values of justice and responsibility. Teachers also make it a habit to speak honestly and admit mistakes when errors occur, which indirectly teaches students the values of honesty and humility.

In this regard, according to Purnamasari (2017:3), teacher role modeling is an effective method in character education because students tend to imitate behaviors they see directly and repeatedly. Teachers' exemplary behavior serves as a real-life example that is consistently internalized by students through the process of habit formation. For example, when teachers demonstrate discipline, honesty, and fairness in their daily interactions, students will associate these values with positive and worthy behavior. The positive impacts of this exemplary approach include the growth of moral awareness, the formation of good habits, and an increase in students' sense of responsibility and empathy in their daily lives.

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that teacher exemplarity is a very effective approach in character education, especially in Civics Education (PKn) lessons in the fourth grade at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol. Teachers not only convey theoretical material but also serve as real-life models in demonstrating character values such as discipline, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and cooperation. This consistent modeling creates a positive learning environment and supports the internalization of values by students through the process of habit formation. In line with Purnamasari's (2017:3) view, teachers' behavior, which is directly observed and experienced by students, serves as a strong stimulus in shaping moral awareness and sustainable good habits. Thus, PKn learning is not only a means of knowledge transfer but also functions as a medium for comprehensive and sustainable character development.

4. Project or Social Service Activities

From the description of the research results As part of a strategy to strengthen character education through the subject of Civic Education (PKn), SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol Grade IV conducts various project activities or social services aimed at providing students with hands-on experience in applying character values in real life. One of the regular activities is community service in the school environment. Students are encouraged to clean the school grounds, tidy up the garden, or help maintain public facilities in the school. This activity teaches the values of mutual cooperation, teamwork, and care for the environment. Students learn that maintaining the cleanliness and tidiness of the school is a shared responsibility.

Additionally, fourth-grade students have also been involved in environmental care projects, such as making plant pots from recycled materials or planting trees on the school grounds. These projects not only foster creativity but also instill values of responsibility, environmental love, and social initiative from an early age. At certain times, such as when disasters occur in the surrounding area, students are invited to participate in fundraising or social assistance activities, such as bringing basic necessities or usable clothing that are collected and distributed to residents in need. Through these activities, students are taught to have empathy, social awareness, and a spirit of solidarity towards others.

In this case, according to Lickona's theory, the project activities and social services carried out in Civics Education learning in grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol reflect the application of the three main components of character education, namely moral knowing (moral knowledge), moral feeling (moral feelings), and moral action (moral actions). Through activities such as community service, environmental care projects, and social assistance, students not only understand the importance of values such as cooperation, responsibility, and empathy (moral knowing) but are also encouraged to directly experience the importance of caring for the environment and others (moral feeling). Furthermore, students are trained to perform concrete actions that reflect these values in their daily lives (moral action). This approach demonstrates that effective character education must comprehensively involve cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects so that moral values can be instilled and reflected in students' lives in a sustainable manner.

B. Obstacles in implementing character education through Civic Education lessons at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol.

In implementing character education through Civic Education (PKn) lessons at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, teachers and school officials face various obstacles. Although efforts to instill character values have been made using various approaches, implementation does not always run smoothly due to limitations in terms of time, resources, and environment. Inconsistencies in the values applied at home and at school can hinder the successful instillation of character in children. The following are some of the main obstacles faced:

1. Differences in Student Backgrounds

In the fourth grade of SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, there is a striking diversity in students' backgrounds, both in terms of social, economic, cultural, and family environments. These differences present both challenges and opportunities in the learning process, particularly in the implementation of character education through the Civic Education (PKn) subject. Some students come from families that already have a high awareness of the importance of education and character development. They are accustomed to positive values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility at home. Students with this background are usually quicker to understand and apply the character values taught at school.

However, on the other hand, there are also students who come from families with low levels of parental education or limited economic conditions. Some of them lack attention or guidance in terms of daily behavior and attitude. This causes them to be less familiar with values such as discipline, politeness, or

cooperation. In fact, it is not uncommon to find students who bring negative influences from their surroundings into the classroom.

In this context, according to Lickona's theory, the differences in the backgrounds of students in grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol emphasize the importance of a comprehensive character education approach, which involves the aspects of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Teachers who understand the diverse backgrounds of their students and implement inclusive learning have played an important role in creating an environment that allows each student to gain an understanding of moral values (moral knowing), feel their meaning emotionally (moral feeling), and ultimately be able to practice them in real actions (moral action).

By creating a fair, supportive, and empathetic learning environment, teachers encourage the development of balanced character, overcome social-emotional gaps between students, and help them grow as individuals of character, without being hindered by their family or socioeconomic background. This approach reflects Lickona's main principle that character education must be comprehensive, continuous, and attentive to the needs and potential of each student.

2. Lack of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement greatly influences the success of character education implementation, including in Civic Education (PKn) lessons in the fourth grade at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol. However, in practice, parental involvement is still relatively low and is one of the obstacles to character building in students. Many parents leave their children's education entirely to the school. They assume that character building is the sole responsibility of teachers. In fact, values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and politeness are more likely to be formed in the family environment, which is the first and primary place where children learn.

Teachers in grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol have made efforts to establish cooperation with parents through informal communication, providing student progress reports, and inviting parents to participate in simple projects with their children at home. However, the response received has not been entirely optimal. This situation highlights the importance of improving synergy between schools and families. Active parental involvement is essential to ensure that the character values taught at school are not merely understood theoretically but also become part of students' daily habits. Without support from home, character education will be imbalanced, and the results will be less than optimal.

In this context, according to Fadillah (2013:218), the family is the first and foremost educational environment for children, where basic life values are introduced and instilled from an early age. The success of character education cannot be left entirely to schools, but must involve synergistic cooperation between teachers and parents.

The situation in class IV of SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, which shows low parental involvement, reflects serious obstacles in the implementation of character education. The absence of parents in the educational process, minimal communication with teachers, and a lack of understanding of the importance of character building weaken the efforts made by the school. According to Fadillah's theory, when the family environment is not in line with the values taught at

school, there will be an imbalance that can hinder the internalization of character values in children.

Therefore, increasing parental participation is very important for character education to be balanced. Schools need to continue to build effective communication and empower parents' roles in supporting their children's education, both through collaborative programs and simple activities at home. With more active involvement, values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and politeness can become consistent habits at home and at school.

3. The influence of social media

Technological developments and the use of social media have now begun to reach elementary school students, including fourth graders at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol. Although most students do not yet have official personal accounts, the influence of social media is still felt through their surroundings, siblings, parents, and even peers who are already actively accessing it. The influence of social media is two-sided. On one hand, social media can be used as a learning tool, to broaden knowledge, or to expand social circles in a positive way. Some students become more tech-savvy and responsive to information. However, on the other hand, if not guided and supervised, social media can have a negative impact on the development of a child's character.

Some of the negative impacts that are beginning to emerge include a decline in interest in learning, as students are more interested in watching entertainment videos than reading books or completing assignments. In addition, inappropriate language and behavior are beginning to emerge as students mimic viral content that is not age-appropriate. There is also a tendency for students to imitate a consumerist lifestyle and impolite speech patterns, due to excessive exposure to non-educational content. Furthermore, social media can trigger social jealousy and unhealthy competition, as students begin to compare themselves to what they see on social media, even though they do not fully understand the context. This can affect their self-confidence and social attitudes at school.

In the context of technological development and the influence of social media on fourth-grade students at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, as described above, this can be analyzed in accordance with the theory proposed by Zubaedi (2011) on character education. According to Zubaedi, character education must respond to the challenges of the times, including the impact of advances in information technology, by shaping the character of students so that they have selective abilities, digital ethics, and moral responsibility in interacting in cyberspace.

The efforts of the fourth-grade teacher at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol to incorporate digital ethics material into civics lessons are a form of contextual character education implementation as suggested by Zubaedi, namely instilling values such as politeness, honesty, and responsibility through an approach that is relevant to the real lives of students.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the discussion above regarding the implementation of character education through civic education lessons for fourth-grade students at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, the researcher concludes that:

1. Implementation of Character Education Through Civic Education Subjects at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol

In grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol, character education is integrated into civic education lessons in a planned and contextual manner. Values such as tolerance, discipline, responsibility, and cooperation are taught through materials relevant to students' daily lives, reinforced with learning media such as stories and videos. Active learning methods such as group discussions and case studies are used to instill character values directly. Teachers also serve as role models in their behavior, demonstrating positive behaviors that students can emulate. Additionally, project activities and social service initiatives such as community service and environmental conservation efforts provide students with real-world experiences to apply character values in their daily lives. With this approach, civic education not only conveys academic content but also comprehensively shapes students' character.

2. Obstacles in Implementing Character Education Through Civic Education Subjects at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol

The implementation of character education in grade IV at SDN 7 Sambik Bangkol faces three main challenges. First, differences in student backgrounds cause disparities in the acceptance of character values, as not all students receive positive reinforcement at home. Second, the lack of parental involvement hinders the reinforcement of character values, as most parents delegate full responsibility to the school. Third, the uncontrolled influence of social media is beginning to negatively impact students' behavior. Teachers have attempted to address these challenges through personalized approaches, digital ethics education, and communication with parents. However, the success of character education still requires strong collaboration between schools, families, and the community.

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