

Research Article

Analysis of Citizenship Character Education in Building a Generation Concerned with Environmental and Social Issues

Nur Azizah* and Ama Farida Sari

Bachelor's Program in Pancasila and Citizenship Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Slamet Riyadi University, Surakarta, Indonesia

ORCID

Nur Azizah: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-5865-3829>

Abstract.

This research examines citizenship character education as a strategy to build a generation that is concerned about environmental and social issues. By delving into citizenship values such as responsibility, empathy, and justice, character education is expected to create individuals who are not only aware of their environment but also actively contribute to society. Citizenship Education (PKn) plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' characters who care about environmental and social matters. This study aims to analyze the extent to which PKn contributes to building a youth generation that has awareness and concrete actions to preserve the environment and care for others. Through literature review and case studies, this research will identify factors influencing the success of PKn in achieving these goals, as well as provide recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of PKn learning in the context of character development. The results indicate that the integration of character education into the curriculum produces a generation that is more sensitive and proactive in preserving environmental sustainability and improving social welfare.

Keywords: citizenship education, character education, environmental awareness, social issues, youth

1. Introduction

Education is the primary foundation in the formation of character and behavior in the younger generation. In the context of globalization and rapid technological advancement, the challenges faced by society have become increasingly complex, encompassing social, environmental, and moral issues. According to a study by Setyowati [1], social changes and the shifting values among the younger generation require a more comprehensive approach to character education. One approach that has become increasingly important is civic character education, which not only aims to enhance academic knowledge but also to shape individuals who are responsible for themselves, society, and the environment [2].

Corresponding Author: Nur
Azizah; email:
zizahhh00@gmail.com

Published: 8 August 2025

Publishing services provided by
Knowledge E

© Azizah, Sari. This article is
distributed under the terms of
the [Creative Commons](#)
[Attribution License](#), which
permits unrestricted use and
redistribution provided that the
original author and source are
credited.

Selection and Peer-review under
the responsibility of the 6th
ICTESS: Education and Social
Science Conference Committee.



In Indonesia, civic character education has been regulated in the 2013 Curriculum, which emphasizes the development of attitudes, behaviors, and noble values in students (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013). Through this curriculum, it is hoped that a generation will emerge that is not only intellectually intelligent but also highly concerned about social and environmental issues. For instance research by Sari and Widodo [3], shows that the development of character education can significantly influence students' attitudes towards social and environmental issues, such as concern for climate change and environmental preservation. Character education, integrated with civic values, also plays a crucial role in shaping awareness about environmental issues. In facing urgent environmental issues like climate change, pollution, and ecosystem damage, it is essential for students to gain a deep understanding of the impact of their actions on the environment. Research by Arifin and Ardiansyah [4], states that integrating environmental education into civic character education can help shape a generation that is more responsible for preserving nature and capable of providing solutions to existing environmental issues.

Furthermore, the rapid social developments in the era of information and social media require special attention. The younger generation is often exposed to social issues that can influence their perspectives and attitudes. Therefore, civic character education needs to provide broader insights on the importance of solidarity, empathy, and real actions in addressing social problems. A study conducted by Nugroho [5], found that project-based learning programs that involve social issues can increase students' social awareness and encourage them to actively participate in society.

This study will analyze how civic character education can build a generation that is concerned about both social and environmental issues. Based on a review of previous research, such as that discussed by Lestari and Purnama [6], it is essential to identify best practices in implementing character education in schools. This research aims to uncover the challenges faced by educators, students, and parents in integrating civic character education, as well as to offer research-based solutions to enhance the effectiveness of character education in Indonesia. By using a research-based approach, it is expected that the results of this study will provide valuable recommendations for the development of curricula and educational strategies in Indonesia. This study also aims to contribute significantly to the creation of a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also deeply concerned about society and the environment. This is crucial for building a sustainable national character, enabling the nation to compete globally, and committing to humanitarian values [7].

Overall, by preparing a concerned generation, we can build a harmonious and responsible society. Strong civic character education can instill a spirit of positive contribution to the world, face global challenges, and inspire meaningful change in the surrounding environment, as has been demonstrated in various previous studies.

2. Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with three main methods, namely:

2.1. Document analysis

This involves examining various relevant documents, including the national curriculum, education policies, and school evaluation reports related to citizenship character education. These documents provide an overview of the implementation and policies of character education within Indonesia's education system.

2.2. Literature review

This method is used to examine previous research and existing theories related to citizenship character education. Through the literature review, the researcher gains insights into previous study findings, patterns of implementation, and challenges faced in the application of character education in schools.

2.3. Thematic analysis

This method is used to identify and categorize key themes that emerge from the analyzed documents and literature. This approach allows the researcher to identify the relationships between policies, school practices, and their impact on students' character, as well as to draw conclusions relevant to the development of citizenship character education.

3. Discussion Results

3.1. The Importance of Citizenship Character Education

Citizenship character education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess high social and environmental awareness. According to Nuryani [8], character education is expected to create a generation that not only has knowledge but also behaves well, ethically, and responsibly. This education aims to build strong character so that individuals can make positive contributions to society and the environment. In today's context of globalization, citizenship character education has become increasingly important. The challenges faced by the younger generation, such as social conflict, division, and environmental issues, demand that individuals have a deep understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Character education emphasizes not only the mastery of knowledge but also the development of attitudes and values such as tolerance, solidarity, and concern for others. Furthermore, citizenship character education can help prevent deviant behaviors such as bullying and discrimination. By instilling positive values from an early age, individuals are expected to develop empathy and respect for differences, thus creating a harmonious and respectful environment. Additionally, this education plays a significant role in raising awareness of social responsibility, such as concern for the environment and active participation in community activities. Therefore, educational institutions, both formal and non-formal, must integrate citizenship character education into their curricula. This is not solely the responsibility of teachers but also involves parents and the community to create an ecosystem that supports the formation of good character.

3.2. Integration of Environmental Education

Integrating environmental education into citizenship character education is vital for fostering a sense of environmental responsibility among the younger generation. In this context, environmental education does not only teach knowledge about ecosystems but also instills values of responsible citizenship. This aligns with Supriyadi's [9], view that environmental education equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to address complex environmental issues, such as climate change and pollution. Through this integrative approach, students learn to recognize the impact of their daily actions on the environment. For example, through practical activities like tree planting, waste

management, and recycling campaigns, students not only learn the importance of environmental preservation but also understand their roles as active citizens.

Moreover, this integration can be applied in school curricula by adding environmental topics to citizenship lessons. This allows students to learn about their rights and responsibilities in protecting the environment, understand the influence of public policies on the environment, and recognize individual roles in environmental movements. With this approach, students are encouraged to think critically about environmental issues and how policies can affect sustainability. Environmental education can also be integrated with various other disciplines, such as social studies, science, and art, allowing students to see the connections between different aspects of life and the importance of environmental stewardship. For instance, in science classes, students can study the water cycle and the impact of pollution on water resources, while in art classes, they can create works that highlight environmental themes.

Direct experiences are invaluable in environmental education. Students involved in field activities, such as visits to conservation sites, environmental cleanup projects, or sustainable agriculture, gain a deeper understanding of existing issues. These activities not only provide practical knowledge but also build empathy and social awareness. When students see the positive impact of their actions, they are more likely to feel motivated to continue contributing to environmental preservation. Additionally, through collaboration with local communities, students can learn about sustainable traditions and practices that have been implemented by society, thus strengthening their sense of identity and connection to the environment.

Effective environmental education must also involve parents and the community. Programs that encourage families to participate in environmental activities can reinforce the values taught in schools. For example, seminars or workshops on how to reduce household waste or adopt eco-friendly lifestyles can be organized to enhance collective awareness. By involving various parties, environmental education can become more holistic and have a broader impact. Therefore, integrating environmental education into citizenship character education is not only essential for shaping a generation that cares for the environment but also provides them with the skills and knowledge to tackle the challenges they face. Through a comprehensive and collaborative approach, it is hoped that students will grow into ethical, responsible citizens who are active in efforts to sustain the environment.

3.3. Social Awareness

Citizenship character education plays a crucial role in building social awareness among youth, especially in today's digital era. Young people are often exposed to various social issues that influence their perspectives and actions. According to Sari [10], character education should equip students with values such as empathy, solidarity, and the ability to take positive action in addressing social challenges. These values are essential for the younger generation to actively participate in creating positive social change. By developing social awareness, students not only learn to understand existing problems but also feel a connection to others.

Education that emphasizes group discussions, collaborative projects, and community-based activities can encourage students to see a broader social reality and understand the impact of their actions on others. Activities such as fundraising for natural disaster victims, participating in community volunteer programs, or environmental projects can be effective means of instilling values of solidarity and empathy. Furthermore, it is important for character education to include good media literacy. Young people need to be taught to critically assess the information they receive and use social media as a tool to spread positive messages and support social issues. Thus, they can become effective agents of change, leveraging digital platforms to raise awareness about the issues they care about. Understanding how to identify fake news and misleading information is a crucial skill in an age where inaccurate information is widespread.

Direct experiences are also invaluable in character education focused on social awareness. Visiting social institutions, participating in discussions with social activists, or engaging in community programs provides deeper insights into the challenges faced by society. Direct involvement in social activities not only enhances students' understanding but also builds essential communication, collaboration, and leadership skills for positive contributions to society. Through these experiences, students can learn how to creatively and effectively address social problems.

Additionally, project-based learning can be an effective method for developing social awareness. Through projects related to local issues, students can collaborate in designing and implementing initiatives that benefit their communities. For example, projects aimed at reducing plastic waste in schools or initiatives to improve educational access for underprivileged children can foster a sense of social responsibility and provide them with opportunities to see the direct impact of their actions. Quality citizenship character education should also involve parents and the community. Programs that invite families

to participate in social activities can reinforce the values taught in schools. For instance, seminars or workshops on enhancing social awareness within families and communities can expand the reach of character education. By involving various parties, character education can become more holistic and impactful.

In conclusion, integrating citizenship character education that emphasizes social awareness is vital for shaping a generation that not only cares for themselves but also takes responsibility for their community and surroundings. It is hoped that through this comprehensive and collaborative education, the younger generation will grow into ethical, proactive individuals ready to contribute to better and sustainable social change.

3.4. Best Practices in Implementation

The implementation of citizenship character education in Indonesia has become increasingly important in light of the global challenges faced by the youth. In addition to academic achievements, students need to be equipped with attitudes and values that will help them contribute positively to society and the environment. One innovative step taken by many schools is the implementation of the “Caring School for the Environment” program, which not only focuses on raising environmental awareness but also on building sustainable positive character. This program involves students in various conservation activities such as tree planting, beach clean-ups, and waste reduction campaigns. These activities provide students with hands-on experience about the importance of environmental stewardship while teaching them responsibility and leadership. According to Wulandari [11], active participation in these activities not only fosters environmental awareness but also strengthens social bonds among students and their communities.

Furthermore, partnerships with local communities through “Community Service” programs also play a crucial role in character education. In this program, students engage directly in infrastructure development projects, such as repairing public facilities and educational programs for children in underprivileged areas. Prasetyo [12], notes that these experiences are invaluable in teaching empathy and providing students with a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by communities. This helps them realize that their contributions, no matter how small, can have a significant impact.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) models are increasingly adopted by schools to integrate character education into the curriculum. By completing projects focused on solving social problems, students not only learn theoretical concepts but also gain practical

experience that encourages critical and creative thinking. Hadi [13], explains that this method allows students to take an active role in their learning while providing opportunities for discussion and collaboration. In the current digital context, technology is also utilized to support character education. Students can use social media platforms to disseminate information about environmental and social issues. Ningsih [14], reveals that this integration of technology not only engages students but also enhances their participation in social activities. In this way, students learn about digital responsibility and communication ethics, which are increasingly relevant in today's information age.

Overall, this holistic and collaborative approach to character education demonstrates effectiveness in shaping students who excel academically while possessing good character and a concern for the environment and society. By combining practical experiences, community partnerships, and technology, schools in Indonesia can create a learning environment that supports the sustainable character development of students, making them positive agents of change in the future.

3.5. Challenges and Solutions

The implementation of citizenship character education in Indonesia faces several significant challenges. One of the main issues is the lack of training and professional development for teachers. Many educators may not have adequate understanding of the appropriate approaches and methods for teaching character education. As a result, classroom implementation is not optimal, making it difficult to effectively integrate character values into the existing curriculum. Additionally, the lack of support from parents poses a significant barrier. Many parents are not fully aware of the importance of character education in shaping their children's personalities, leading to their limited involvement in supporting character development activities in schools. Without this support, the values taught at school often go unreinforced at home, creating inconsistencies that can disrupt the character-building process.

Enhancing training for teachers is essential to overcome these challenges. Training programs should be carefully designed to provide educators with the knowledge and skills needed to integrate character education into the learning process.

Parental involvement in school activities is also crucial. Schools can organize workshops or seminars that invite parents to discuss the importance of character education and how they can contribute to supporting their children's character development at home. Programs such as "Family Day" or "Parent Involvement Activities" can serve as

good platforms to encourage parental participation in character education initiatives. Furthermore, establishing effective communication channels between schools and parents is vital. Schools can leverage technology, such as communication apps or social media groups, to provide updates on character education activities and how parents can engage. This not only strengthens the relationship between schools and families but also creates a consistent environment for implementing character values.

Support from the government and educational institutions is also critical in addressing these challenges. Policies that promote ongoing training for teachers and provide adequate resources for character education programs will be very beneficial. Additionally, involving local communities in supporting character education through partnerships and social programs can positively contribute to students' character formation.

4. Conclusion

Citizenship character education plays a strategic role in shaping individuals who are not only academically proficient but also possess social awareness, environmental consciousness, and a sense of responsibility towards society. In the context of globalization and increasingly complex social challenges, this education aims to instill fundamental values such as empathy, solidarity, and care. Therefore, the younger generation can contribute positively to addressing issues faced by society, such as social conflict, climate change, and injustice. Integrating environmental education into citizenship character education is vital, as it fosters an attitude of environmental stewardship while reinforcing the responsibilities of citizens. Practical activities like tree planting, waste management, and recycling campaigns provide students with profound direct experiences, enhancing their awareness of the impact of their daily actions on the environment. Through these activities, students not only learn theory but also acquire practical skills and a better understanding of complex environmental issues.

However, the implementation of citizenship character education faces various significant challenges. One main issue is the lack of training and professional development for teachers. Many educators may lack a sufficient understanding of the appropriate approaches and methods for teaching character education, making it difficult to effectively integrate character values into existing curricula. Additionally, the lack of support from parents is a significant barrier, as parents often underestimate the importance of character education in personality development. To address these challenges, enhancing teacher training becomes crucial. Training programs should be carefully crafted

to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate character education into the learning process. Training modules focusing on character education should include innovative teaching techniques, practical approaches, and effective evaluation methods. With proper training, teachers will be more confident and capable of effectively teaching character values in the classroom.

Engaging parents in school activities is also a critical step. Schools can hold workshops or seminars that encourage parents to discuss the importance of character education and how they can contribute to their children's character development at home. Programs such as "Family Day" or "Parent Involvement Activities" can be excellent platforms to foster parental participation in character education initiatives. Additionally, creating effective communication channels between schools and parents is vital, utilizing technology like communication apps or social media groups to provide updates on character education activities.

Support from the government and educational institutions is equally important in addressing these challenges. Policies promoting continuous teacher training and providing sufficient resources for character education programs will greatly assist these efforts. Involving local communities in supporting character education through partnerships and social programs can contribute positively to character development in students. With a holistic and collaborative approach, citizenship character education is expected to cultivate a generation that is not only self-aware but also responsible towards their communities and environments. Through comprehensive and integrated education, the youth can grow into ethical, proactive individuals ready to contribute to better and sustainable social change. In this way, character education can help create a more harmonious and sustainable society, where every individual plays a role in realizing a shared vision for a better future.

References

- [1] Setyowati D. Social Value Changes in Character Education in Indonesia. *J Spec Educ.* 2020;13(3):112–23.
- [2] Prasetyo A. Development of Citizenship Character Education in Elementary Schools. *Journal of Indonesian Education.* 2019;22(1):45–59.
- [3] Sari W, Widodo S. The Effect of Character Education on Students' Social Awareness. *J Educ Res.* 2018;15(2):101–15.

- [4] Arifin M, Ardiansyah R. Integration of Environmental Education in Citizenship Character Education in Schools. *Journal of Education and Environment*. 2019;14(2):112–25.
- [5] Nugroho D. The Role of Character Education in Facing Social Challenges in the Digital Era. *J Spec Educ*. 2021;9(1):55–67.
- [6] Lestari I, Purnama M. Best Practices in the Implementation of Character Education in Schools. *Journal of Character Education*. 2020;6(3):78–90.
- [7] Setiawan H. Citizenship Character Education as the Foundation for Building a Caring Youth Generation. *Journal of Citizenship Education*. 2020;11(4):32–44.
- [8] Nuryani E. *Character Education: Theory and Practice*. Jakarta: Erlangga Publisher; 2018.
- [9] Supriyadi A. *Environmental Education in Character Education*. Yogyakarta: Andi Publisher; 2020.
- [10] Sari R. Character Education and Social Awareness in Students: Strategies to Build Caring Generation. *Journal of Education and Social Change*. 2019;6(1):15–28.
- [11] Wulandari R. School Program for Environmental Awareness: Building Student Character. *Journal of Character Education*. 2021;12(3):45–58.
- [12] Prasetyo B. Student Involvement in Social Service Programs. *Journal of Citizenship and Social Studies*. 2022;11(3):12–22.
- [13] Hadi A. Project-Based Learning in Character Education. *Journal of Education and Character*. 2023;12(2):45–56.
- [14] Ningsih R. The Role of Technology in Character Education in the Digital Era. *Journal of Educational Technology*. 2023;9(1):30–40.