



National Character, Local Wisdom, and Citizenship Education: Building National Identity Through Education

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Corresponding Author: Dadang Mulyana E-mail: dadangmulyana@unpas.ac.id</p>	<p>National identity is the core of the existence of a nation which is reflected in the values, norms and attitudes held by its citizens. Local wisdom, as a cultural heritage owned by local communities, is an important foundation in the formation of national character. Citizenship education acts as an instrument for internalizing national values and developing awareness of responsibility as citizens. This research examines the role of national character, local wisdom, and citizenship education in building national identity through the education system. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results show that a civic education learning approach based on local wisdom has a positive impact in increasing students' involvement in learning, broadening their understanding of citizenship concepts, and strengthening students' cultural identity. Through meaningful social interactions and collaboration within their local cultural context, students not only gain new knowledge, but also develop a deeper understanding of civic values and local wisdom. Thus, this approach has the potential to enrich students' learning experiences as well as facilitate a sustainable process of meaning formation in the context of their learning community.</p> <p>Keywords: National Character, Local Wisdom, Citizenship Education, National Identity</p>

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INTRODUCTION

In facing the multidimensional challenges facing Indonesia today, serious efforts are needed to re-strengthen national, cultural and moral values among the younger generation (Eddison et al, 2021). The importance of strengthening a sense of unity and togetherness through mutual cooperation activities, deliberation for consensus, and increasing mutual respect in society is a top priority (Kurniawaty & Widayatmo, 2021). A holistic and integrated approach is needed, involving formal and non-formal education, mass media, and social and religious institutions to strengthen national and cultural values which are the basis for social harmony and stability (Althafullayya, 2024).

Apart from that, there needs to be concrete steps to maintain local wisdom and traditions which are part of the nation's identity, while integrating them with current developments. Education regarding the importance of a culture of courtesy, mutual help, harmony, tolerance and social solidarity must be increased, both in the school environment and in society at large (Rohmah et al, 2022). By building awareness of the importance of

these values, it is hoped that the Indonesian people will be able to face the various challenges of modernization and globalization without losing their identity and local wisdom which are an integral part of the nation's cultural diversity (Suradi, 2018).

The erosion of national character values has a significant impact on the weakening of national identity, where cultural identity and local wisdom are no longer considered unique characteristics that need to be maintained (Santoso et al., 2023). This phenomenon is further exacerbated by the existence of international schools that use English as the language of instruction, causing a reduction in love for the mother tongue. Language, as the main tool in the learning process, is important in developing students' character (Febrianty et al, 2023). However, the material content in textbooks tends to be more oriented towards pure science which only emphasizes cognitive aspects without paying attention to the rich local wisdom values in various regions, which should be integrated into the learning curriculum (Prasisko, 2019).

The importance of strengthening the teaching of local languages and culture in the education system has become very urgent. Integrating local wisdom values in the curriculum can be the first step to strengthening cultural identity and national character (Lestyarini, 2012). In addition, efforts are needed to increase appreciation of the mother tongue as an inseparable part of one's cultural identity. Schools also need to balance the emphasis on pure science with a more balanced exposure to cultural values and character, so that the younger generation can grow as individuals who understand, appreciate and practice local wisdom in everyday life (Susilo & Sarkowi, 2018).

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Citizenship education has a crucial role in developing Pancasila civility, which is the ideological and moral foundation for the Indonesian nation. Through Citizenship Education learning, students are introduced to the values of Pancasila, and taught to apply them in everyday life (Khairunisa et al, 2024). This is in line with efforts to cultivate national character which includes values such as trustworthiness, honesty, intelligence and

responsibility. Apart from that, the integration of local wisdom values in the Citizenship Education curriculum is important to strengthen national identity (Juangga et al, 2024). By understanding and appreciating local wisdom, students will have a deeper awareness of cultural diversity in Indonesia. This will strengthen the feeling of love for the homeland and increase a strong sense of nationality (Fahmi et al, 2022).

In the context of this research, it can be investigated how citizenship education is implemented in integrating Pancasila values and local wisdom in the learning process. This research can provide in-depth insight into the role of citizenship education in building a strong national identity through the formation of national character rooted in rich local values. The aim of this research is to explore the role and implementation of Citizenship Education in integrating Pancasila values and local wisdom in learning, as well. The benefit of this research is that it provides a more comprehensive view for education stakeholders, government and society regarding the importance of integrating local values in the citizenship education curriculum to strengthen the identity of the Indonesian nation amidst globalization.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods, especially literature study, to obtain in-depth information. The process involves reading, researching, and analyzing various literary sources and related regulations. In accordance with Yulianah's (2022) approach, this research adopts a literature study method to comprehensively understand the research topic. Data and information were obtained through exploring articles and previous research from sources such as international journals and related books. By combining literature study and literature review approaches, this research aims to provide an in-depth review of the themes discussed. The use of this qualitative method is expected to produce a deeper understanding of the issues discussed and provide a strong theoretical basis to support research findings (Sugiyono, 2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of national character, local wisdom, and citizenship education in building national identity through the education system is very important. First. National character plays an important role as a moral and ethical foundation that shapes the personal and national identity of every Indonesian citizen. Through character education in schools, students are not only given academic knowledge, but are also taught to internalize noble values which are an integral part of national identity. For example, the value of honesty teaches them to speak honestly and act according to the value of truth in all aspects of life. Courage is taught so that they have the courage to face challenges and make the right decisions, even in difficult situations. In addition, the value of hard work helps students understand the importance of effort and dedication in achieving goals, and prepares them to face real-world challenges with perseverance and tenacity.

In the character education process, mutual respect is also promoted as a fundamental value in national and state life. Students are taught to respect differences, be they differences in religion, culture or opinion, as a form of respect for the plurality of Indonesian society. In this way, they can build harmonious relationships and respect the rights of every individual around them. Through holistic character education, it is hoped that students can

become individuals with strong integrity, ethics and morals, which in turn will help strengthen the identity of the Indonesian nation.

Character education also plays an important role in preparing students to become future leaders with responsibility and integrity. By understanding national values such as honesty, courage, hard work and mutual respect, they can become agents of positive change in building a just and just society. Apart from that, they will also have the ability to lead by example, strengthen democratic life, and advance the Indonesian nation in a better direction.

Not only does it build individual character, character education also has a broad impact in strengthening national identity. By teaching the national values that are characteristic of Indonesia, character education helps preserve the rich cultural and moral heritage of society. This strengthens awareness of national identity which is rooted in local values, and provides a strong basis for building a strong and empowered nation. Overall, character education has a very important role in forming a strong and sustainable Indonesian national identity. By internalizing noble national and moral values, students are expected to become agents of change who lead Indonesia towards a better and more prosperous future.

Second, local wisdom in Indonesia reflects rich cultural diversity, becoming an invaluable marker of this country's identity. From Sabang to Merauke, every region in Indonesia has a unique cultural heritage, such as traditions, arts, language, customs and values that have been passed down from generation to generation. By incorporating local wisdom into the educational curriculum, students are given the opportunity to explore and understand this diversity in depth. They learn about the rich culture of each region, understand the values reflected in traditions and customs, and appreciate the uniqueness of each culture.

Education that integrates local wisdom not only provides knowledge about the cultural aspects of each region, but also fosters a sense of pride in national identity that is rooted in this diversity. Students become more aware of how important it is to maintain and preserve the nation's cultural heritage, which is an inseparable part of their identity as Indonesian citizens. Thus, this education not only builds awareness of cultural diversity, but also strengthens the sense of togetherness and unity among the nation's children.

Through learning about local wisdom, students are also invited to develop an attitude of tolerance and respect for differences. They learn to accept and appreciate cultural diversity as a common wealth, not as a source of division. This approach builds a solid foundation for an inclusive and empowered society, where every individual feels valued and accepted regardless of cultural or ethnic background. Apart from that, incorporating local wisdom into the educational curriculum can also provide encouragement for the preservation of traditional culture which may be threatened with extinction. By increasing awareness of the importance of cultural heritage, it is hoped that students can become agents of change in promoting and preserving Indonesia's cultural riches for future generations.

Overall, integrating local wisdom in education is an important step in strengthening national identity rooted in cultural diversity. This not only helps students understand and appreciate Indonesia's cultural heritage, but also builds a strong foundation for a society that is inclusive, tolerant and proud of their national identity. Top of Form

Third, citizenship education is a subject that has a crucial role in equipping students with a deep understanding of the basic principles of democracy, the rights and obligations of citizens, as well as the values of Pancasila which are the ideological foundation of the Indonesian state. Through citizenship education, students are introduced to the concept of democracy, where every individual has the same rights and responsibilities in making decisions that affect society. They are also taught about their rights and obligations as citizens, including the rights to express opinions, religion and organization, as well as the responsibility to obey the law and adhere to social norms.

By understanding these concepts, students become more skilled in participating in the political and social life of society. They learn to exercise their rights responsibly, as well as respect the rights of others in a democratic environment. More than that, citizenship education also helps students understand the values of Pancasila as a moral and ethical foundation in social life. Through this learning, students are given a deep understanding of values such as the Almighty God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy led by wisdom in deliberation/representation, and social justice for all Indonesian people.

By understanding and applying civic values in everyday life, students can play an active role in building a society that is just, democratic and has an Indonesian national personality. They become more sensitive to the social and political issues around them, and are ready to contribute to creating positive change in society. Apart from that, citizenship education also helps strengthen a sense of unity and oneness among students, regardless of religious, ethnic or cultural differences.

In the educational context, it is important for educational institutions to pay special attention to the development of citizenship subjects. A holistic and integrated approach is needed to ensure that students not only understand theory, but are also able to apply it in real life. Thus, citizenship education can be an effective instrument in forming a young generation who has critical awareness, strong moral values, and active involvement in advancing the Indonesian nation and state. Top of Form

Overall, the integration of national character, local wisdom, and citizenship education in the education system can help form individuals who have a strong sense of national identity, and become agents of change who are responsible for maintaining and developing the diversity and integrity of the Indonesian nation.

A local wisdom-based learning approach highlights the importance of utilizing local knowledge that exists around students as a basis for deepening their understanding of the concepts studied in the school curriculum. By integrating local knowledge into subject matter, students are not only invited to master concepts theoretically, but also to relate them to the reality they experience every day. For example, in studying social sciences, teachers can relate the material to concrete examples from local community life, so that students can more easily understand these concepts by seeing them in a context that is more relevant and familiar to them.

Apart from increasing students' understanding of academic concepts, this approach also aims to strengthen students' sense of identity and pride in their local culture. By involving local cultural elements in learning, students are invited to explore and appreciate the cultural richness of their community. This not only strengthens their sense of belonging to local culture, but also helps encourage the sustainability and preservation of cultural heritage which is an inseparable part of their identity as Indonesian citizens. Thus, local wisdom-based learning not only contributes to improving students' academic

understanding, but also to the formation of a strong cultural awareness and appreciation for the rich local cultural heritage.

The local wisdom-based civic education learning process provides ample opportunities for students to be actively involved in exploring and analyzing lesson material by relating it to their local cultural context. In this learning environment, students are encouraged to express their questions and curiosities, and to participate in creative and collaborative discussions to find answers to these questions. Learning activities like this not only activate students intellectually, but also facilitate meaningful social interactions between them. Through this interaction, students not only share knowledge and experiences, but also negotiate with each other to achieve a common understanding of the material being studied.

More than just acquiring knowledge, learning based on local wisdom also emphasizes the creation of sustainable meaning. Students not only receive information from teachers, but they are also actively involved in building their own understanding through the process of interaction with peers and teachers in the context of their cultural community. In this way, the meaning of learning is not only given, but is understood and interpreted by students through a process of dialogue, reflection and collaboration. In this case, meaningfulness is not only the result of the knowledge provided, but also from the process of social interaction and collaboration that occurs in a local wisdom-based learning environment.

CONCLUSION

Citizenship education based on local wisdom is an approach that provides opportunities for students to be actively involved in learning, both in terms of exploration, analysis and social interaction. In this context, students are encouraged to raise questions, explore their various curiosities, and engage in creative analytical processes to find answers to these questions. Apart from that, learning is also designed to facilitate meaningful social interaction between students, both in discussion and collaboration, thus enabling them to share knowledge, negotiate and create shared meaning. Through this process, students not only gain new knowledge, but also broaden their understanding of the subject matter by relating it to their local cultural context. As a result, this learning approach not only produces deeper understanding, but also strengthens students' cultural identities and facilitates ongoing meaning formation through social interaction and collaboration within their learning communities.

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