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Citizenship Education Materials And Curriculum In Elementary Schools: Analysis of Student Participation in Civics Learning

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Abstract

Student participation is a key factor in determining the success of Civics Education (PKn) learning in elementary schools. This study aims to analyze student participation in Civics learning, examine the suitability of learning materials with the Independent Curriculum, and identify challenges that influence active student engagement. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with three elementary school teachers from different schools. Data were collected through direct interviews and analyzed descriptively to explore patterns of participation, curriculum implementation, and learning obstacles. The findings indicate that active student participation contributes significantly to the understanding and internalization of civic values. Teachers have implemented various strategies, including discussions, role-playing, games, project-based learning, and the Think Pair Share method to encourage engagement. Furthermore, learning materials aligned with curriculum objectives and students' real-life experiences were found to increase motivation and participation. However, several obstacles remain, including low student self-confidence, diverse learner characteristics, limited learning resources, teacher-centered instructional practices, and unsupportive classroom environments. The study concludes that increasing student participation requires contextual learning materials, innovative teaching strategies, and a supportive learning environment. Collaboration among teachers, schools, parents, and students is essential to create meaningful Civics learning and strengthen students' civic knowledge, skills, and character development.

INTRODUCTION

Education on citizenship issues includes several pillars such as personal development, enabling constructive social behavior, and developing a sense of citizenship (Via Haiyun Karimah, 2024), Civics education in schools can help children understand and appreciate their rights and social responsibilities in society. This helps them become more responsible and socially aware. Civics education can help build children's character so they can become good members of a Pancasila-based society. The Independent Curriculum also helps promote Pancasila character values by giving teachers more freedom to design and implement constructive and relevant learning processes.(. Mulyasa,2023)

Active learning is the most important factor in demonstrating the success of the teaching and learning process in the primary education system. To be an active learner, students need more than just attending class. Active learning means they must answer

questions, help make decisions within their groups, and participate in class discussions and other activities.

Student participation in the learning process has a direct impact on their understanding of citizenship and democratic attitudes. Pre-research on Civics subjects using cooperative and project-based learning models shows a positive impact of these methods on student participation.(. Santosa, and Putra, 2024)

In addition, existing civics materials that are in accordance with the school curriculum are an important part of it.4Introduction to Merdeka Curriculum, materials he teaching is arranged based on the expected learning outcomes of each module, which aims to improve the competence and character of students.

Thus, it is expected that teachers will not only use textbooks but also adapt the material based on students' interests and needs, the environmental context, and predetermined learning outcomes. Therefore, effective and relevant civics learning strategies for students, along with teachers' mastery of various other teaching strategies, are integrated into a comprehensive set of elements that determine the quality of learning.(Siti Mutia Rusmana, 2024)

However, there are still many challenges that prevent higher-level learning, such as a lack of confidence and the persistence of passive attitudes from previous levels, along with a lack of interest due to the repetitive way the material is presented. One of them is: You are a teacher, or working with a civics curriculum in an elementary school, and someone encounters discipline problems that make certain children very frustrated because civics lessons cannot hold their attention. These are some of the reasons why a small study like this is more than just done. This study was expressly designed to offer an alternative model to the pedagogical strategies that civics teachers use in their curricular instruction.

This study focuses on measuring student engagement in Civics in elementary schools. It also examines the relevance of learning materials and resources, as well as the challenges and difficulties in fostering active and participatory Civics learning in the classroom.

METHOD

Location and Time of Research

The location of this research was carried out in three elementary schools, namely:

1. Harapan Jaya 1 Public Elementary School
2. Air Abang 2 Public Elementary School
3. UPTD of Sukanegara 3 Public Elementary School

Research address:

1. Jl. Senopati I, Harapan Jaya, Sukarame District, Bandar Lampung City, Lampung
2. Air Abang, Ulubelu District, Tanggamus Regency, Lampung

3. Sukanegara Street, Tanjung Bintang District, South Lampung Regency, Lampung.

Approach

The type of research used in this study is descriptive qualitative. This approach was chosen because the purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of teachers as informants regarding aspects of student involvement in Civics Education (PKn) learning. The primary data in this study were collected through interviews, then analyzed descriptively to determine the forms of student participation, the suitability of the curriculum with the material that discusses their relationship with the students being studied, and the obstacles or challenges that arise in learning. Thus, researchers can obtain an overview of the conditions of students when participating in Civics learning in elementary schools.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection used an interview method. The author interviewed the sources face-to-face. The interviews were semi-structured, with the author having a list of questions derived in part from preparations made before the meetings with the authors. The questions focused on the participants' understanding of active engagement, the connections they noticed between and among the subject matter and the curriculum content, and how they addressed these challenges (if any). (existing) during learning. This method produces rich information about learning conditions and engagement in civics learning at the elementary school level.

Research Subjects

The respondents in this study were elementary school teachers. These respondents were selected randomly.purposive based on the consideration that respondents have relevant experience in the field of civics learning, particularly in civics. This study also identified respondents such as Rosmiyati, S.Pd, a teacher at SD Negeri 1 Harapan Jaya, Jl. Senopati I, Harapan Jaya, Sukarame District, Bandar Lampung City, Lampung. Furthermore, there is Mahmudah, S.Pd, a teacher at SD Negeri 2 Air Abang, Air Abang, Ulubelu District, Tanggamus Regency, Lampung. Another respondent is Chivia Trisandi, S.Pd., Gr, a teacher at the UPTD of SD Negeri 3 Sukanegara, Sukanagara, Cianjur Regency, West Java. With the selection of respondents as mentioned above, it is hoped that the data obtained can describe a broader and more comprehensive representation of the level of student involvement in the Civic Education learning process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Student Participation in Civics Learning

One important aspect influencing the successful process and outcomes of Civics (PKn) learning in elementary schools is student participation. Participation doesn't just mean students attending class, but also how students actively participate in various activities, such as asking questions, answering questions, discussing and collaborating in

group settings, or demonstrating a positive attitude during learning activities. The more participatory the experience, the greater the chance that students will achieve your learning objectives.(Apriliani, Putri, and Unzzila,2024)

The three informants shared similar views on the issue of student engagement in learning based on their interviews. The nuance lies in what each informant emphasized. The first informant focused more on student participation in collaborative activities and completing group assignments. The second informant emphasized student participation, specifically their role in acting and engaging in collaborative thinking and decision-making. Meanwhile, according to the third informant, participation is how students mentally engage themselves and their attitudes in the learning process. These differences emphasize the multiple dimensions of student participation; teacher perceptions measured solely by students' willingness to speak in front of the class cannot fully capture participation.

Participation in civics learning is crucial for many reasons. While knowledge is a crucial component, civics learning also builds character and creates responsible citizens. Student participation also helps teach basic civics concepts and promotes values such as democracy, tolerance, and social responsibility. Active participation in class is also an important learning tool that helps build character.(Apriliani, Putri, and Unzzila,2024)

However, based on the interview results, student engagement was not optimal. The three informants also stated that some students were still passive, lacked confidence, were shy to speak up, and were afraid of making mistakes when expressing their opinions in class. It is noteworthy that all informants seemed to share a very similar belief that the biggest barrier to student participation stems from their own psychology, not academic ability. The implication is that many students have learned what the teacher teaches, but they lack the courage to articulate their thoughts.

Researchers say this demonstrates that successful citizenship education depends on more than just students' understanding of the subject. It also includes teachers' ability to support students' self-confidence. This means that teachers must design learning environments that are safe, comfortable, and respectful, so that students are more engaged in the learning process.(Arni Dwi Yana and Kirana Nurhaliza, 2024)

Interviews revealed that teachers have implemented numerous strategies to increase student participation. These include discussions, games, role-playing, project-based learning, problem-based learning, case studies, and Q&A. Using these diverse methods demonstrates that teachers are moving away from teacher-centered instruction and providing more opportunities for students to learn independently.(Nurrohim Nurrohim, Suyoto Suyoto, 2022)

One strategy to get students to participate more isThink Pair Share (TPS). With TPS, students first think about something individually, then they talk to their peers and tell the whole class, if they want. From the interviews, it sounded like TPS really should help students, considering the main challenge is that students are very shy and cannot speak

in front of the whole class. Because they can think and talk about their answers, they should feel more prepared to give their answers.(Yana and Nurhaliza, 2024)

Research suggests that one way to foster student interest in civics learning is through the use of diverse teaching methods. Interactive and collaborative methods at every level of education provide space for student interaction and collaboration, enabling students to learn more actively, not simply as recipients of information. This means that the type of learning method used is a factor in increasing student participation. Another idea discussed, which is used to draw conclusions about civics learning, is student participation based on several interviews and theories. Active participation not only helps achieve learning objectives but also helps develop students' character and social skills. Therefore, increasing student engagement should be a top priority for teachers in planning active, interactive, and meaningful learning.

Suitability of Material with Curriculum

The alignment of teaching materials with the curriculum is a crucial and supportive aspect for the success of Civics (PKn) learning, particularly at the elementary school level. The Independent Curriculum not only prepares learning materials based on predetermined and formulated learning outcomes, but also considers students' needs, the characteristics of the school's environment, and the context of their daily lives. Therefore, teaching materials are expected to provide contextual and authentic experiences for students.(Putri and Aliyyah, 2024)

Based on the interview results, all respondents answered that the learning materials used in the teaching and learning process must refer to the learning objectives and learning outcomes stated in the curriculum. However, Educators never rely solely on textbooks as the sole learning medium. Teachers are allowed to remain flexible and use a variety of other learning resources as long as they meet the objectives outlined in this section. Research shows that the primary determinant here is the curriculum, while learning materials can be tailored to the needs of students.(Sumarsih , 2022)

All three speakers reached similar conclusions, stating that when learning materials are related to students' daily lives, it helps them better understand concepts and encourages greater engagement in the learning process. Students are able to connect concepts learned in class to the realities of their lives. If learning materials are abstract and far from students' daily lives, this can lead to a decrease in student interest in learning and participation in the learning process.

From the information provided, researchers can conclude that linking material to the curriculum serves a purpose beyond simply fulfilling an administrative educational function. It can lead to greater student engagement. When students understand that the concepts being taught have a purpose and are relevant to their daily lives, they are more likely to ask questions and engage with the concepts being taught.(Karimah, Santosa, and Putra, 2024)

The Independent Curriculum provides teachers with the opportunity to provide contextualized learning for students. For example, teachers can connect civics (PKn) in the classroom to environmental phenomena experienced by students, such as cooperation, responsibility, respect, and how to deal with differences. This not only makes civics (PKn) more relevant to students, but also engages them and makes the learning process meaningful.(Sumarsih,2022)

Despite some progress in curriculum implementation, many challenges remain. According to interviews, teachers need to modify curriculum materials based on students' varying skills, interests, and learning levels. Furthermore, a lack of learning resources and media can hinder teachers from modifying materials. Therefore, continuous improvement of teachers' skills is necessary to create relevant and motivating curriculum materials.(Intan Pertiwi, Leni Marlina, and Ketang Wiyono 2023) From the interviews and the theory applied, it was noted that the alignment of the material

The curriculum is related to the level of participation and learning success. Modifying materials based on learner needs will create active and meaningful learning. Therefore, teachers are crucial in ensuring that curriculum materials are not only aligned but also applicable and relevant to students.(Karimah, Santosa, and Putra, 2024)

Obstacles to Increasing Student Participation

Interview findings indicate that the challenges faced correlate with the extent (or level) to which students are able to participate in Civics (PKn) learning. These challenges can be categorized into three broad aspects: student characteristics, teaching strategies, and environmental factors. It is important to note that these three factors are interconnected and impact student engagement throughout the learning process.

One of the most common obstacles is internal factors within the students themselves. Furthermore, the three interviewees revealed that some students lack self-confidence, feel too shy to speak up, are afraid of making mistakes, and are reluctant to comment in front of their classmates. These characteristics of students with low participation are not always directly related to their academic standards but are more importantly based on the psychological well-being of all parties involved.(Yana and Nurhaliza, 2024)

In addition to internal factors, differences in student characteristics also pose challenges in learning. Each student has different abilities, interests, learning styles, and levels of courage. This situation requires teachers to use diverse approaches to ensure all students have equal opportunities to participate in learning. According to researchers, the diversity of student characteristics is an unavoidable challenge, requiring teachers to have the ability to adapt learning strategies to their students' needs.(Apriliani, Putri, and Unzzila, 2024)

The teaching methods used by teachers also influence the level of student participation. Learning that is still dominated by lectures tends to make students less

actively involved because they only act as recipients of information. As a result, students become increasingly disinterested and indifferent to learning. Conversely, teaching methods that involve students provide more opportunities for critical thinking and to express and defend their opinionsc

Environmental learning factors also significantly influence student participation. A tense learning environment fosters a fear of expressing opinions due to students' fear of being wrong and of peer criticism. Conversely, if a classroom feels safe, transparent, and respectful of all opinions, students will feel more confident in participating. Therefore, teachers play a significant role in fostering an environment that fosters social and interaction skills.(Abdul Rahman Saleh and Nuryadi, 2025)

The findings show that the problem of low student participation should be viewed not solely as a student issue, but as a matter for educational institutions. Based on the division of male and female students, the three informants. This study also found that low participation resulted from the interaction between student needs, teacher teaching methods, and the learning environment. These results indicate that student engagement is multifaceted and influenced by various interrelated variables

According to researchers, efforts to increase student participation should not be limited to changing student behavior but should be enhanced through the system. More active and participatory learning strategies by teachers, as well as schools as environments that support the development of students' social and communication skills, are more sustainable and effective than, for example, forcing student participation.

Throughout the research, it is clear that barriers to student engagement arise not only from within the students themselves but also from external factors, such as pedagogy and the learning environment. Consequently, collaboration between teachers, caregivers, students, and schools will be a crucial component in participatory and meaningful Civics (PKn) learning, optimally supporting the achievement of educational goals.

CONCLUSION

Student participation influences the success of PKn learning. Class activities reflect students' willingness to respond, but their participation must also extend to classroom norms, namely the ability to follow and respond, as well as an enthusiastic attitude to participate in collaborative parts of the lesson, or simply engage in active learning. Active students are better equipped to understand and internalize the values of PKn in their daily lives. Thus, student engagement can be one of the important parameters based on which the analysis of PKn learning in elementary schools is suspected to be successful.

The Independent Curriculum influences how students participate because it depends on the students and the school environment as teachers adapt their lesson plans. Students better understand material that is relevant to their real lives. This interaction encourages student participation in lessons. Teachers are responsible for managing

classroom behavior to ensure lesson planning and learning are flexible and adapt to students' personalities.

Many factors influence student participation in Civics. These factors include varying student personalities and abilities, rigid teaching styles, and classroom environments lacking the necessary factors to stimulate active student participation. These barriers require creative teachers who can shift their teaching style from traditional to more active. Most importantly, providing students with the opportunity to participate by asking questions and expressing their opinions without restrictions is crucial. The character-building aspect of Civics is not sufficiently strong, and participation still has room for improvement.

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