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INTEGRATION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN PKN LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ACCORDING TO NEL NODDINGS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the integration of character education in Citizenship Education (PKn) learning in elementary schools based on the perspective ofethics of careproposed by Nel Noddings. The method used was descriptive qualitative research with data collection techniques through interviews with four elementary school teachers in Lampung Province. Data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis techniques through the stages of collection, grouping, analysis, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that teachers understand the importance of character education as an integral part of civics learning. The implementation of character education is carried out through the habituation of moral values, discussion activities, cooperation between students, and teacher role models in everyday life. The approachethics of carehas proven relevant because it emphasizes a warm, empathetic, and caring relationship between teachers and students. However, its implementation still faces obstacles such as limited learning time, differences in students' family backgrounds, and minimal teacher training related to character education. This study concludes that the success of character education in Civics learning requires synergy between schools, families, and the community, as well as strengthening teacher competencies in implementing a caring-based approach.

INTRODUCTION

Character building from elementary school age is very important for building the personality of students, especially to anticipate various moral problems that occur in society. Various cases of behavioral disorientation in the younger generation show that education must be an important tool for building strong character rather than being limited to mastering academic material. (Ayu Fitriana, Moh. Mul Akbar Eta Parera, dan Jailani Tong, (2025)

In situations like this, the subject of Civic Education (PKn) has strategic benefits as a tool for instilling moral, social, and cultural values that support nationality. In addition to providing a theoretical understanding of the rights and obligations of citizens, PKn also functions as a social laboratory. It teaches students to think logically, think critically, and wisely in making decisions based on moral standards. (Maulidia Dwi Wahyu Hayati dan Iqnatia Alfiansyah,(2025)

Furthermore, the Civics learning approach does not solely focus on knowledge or cognitive aspects. Instead, it aims to help students develop their personalities in relation to their daily activities. In the Civics program, character education is strongly integrated with the process of adopting moral values and developing positive attitudes. Furthermore, these lessons are taught to students by encouraging personality

development in accordance with societal standards. This phenomenon demonstrates the importance of Civics in building children's fundamental character from elementary school onward.

However, there are still several challenges that need to be addressed when implementing civics education in elementary schools. Compared to direct character development, the learning process tends to focus on cognitive aspects. These factors contribute to the lack of fully internalization of noble character traits such as caring, empathy, and responsibility in students. Therefore, it is crucial to employ appropriate strategies to maximize the integration of character education for students.

The ethics of care approach proposed by Nel Noddings is one method that can be used to integrate character education into civics learning. This method emphasizes the importance of the interactive relationship between educators and students in the learning process. This method also emphasizes the importance of ethics and caring in education. Furthermore, mutual respect and concern between teachers and students are the main foundation for building positive and synergistic relationships during the learning process. It is hoped that this healthy emotional environment will encourage students to develop sensitivity, social awareness, empathy, and self-awareness in the dynamics of community life.

The main objective of this study is to demonstrate how character building is integrated into civics education (PKn) in elementary schools. Furthermore, the current issues surrounding the field of character education will be thoroughly examined, and these findings will be confirmed through interviews with PKn teachers working in the field. Furthermore, the researcher concentrates on theoretical investigations of Nel Noddings' ideas on the ethics of care, also known as the ethics of care, and how this concept can be applied in PKn instruction. Therefore, it is hoped that this series of studies will produce practical solutions to improve the effectiveness of character building in elementary school children.

METHOD

A.Types of research

This research applies a qualitative approach that is oriented towards a comprehensive understanding of phenomena based on objective realities in the field. This research design prioritizes the collection of descriptive data in the form of verbal narratives, views, and direct experience records from informants.(Abdul Fattah Nasution,(2023) In this context, a qualitative methodology is operated to gather in-depth information related to the implementation of character education in Civic Education (PKn) learning reviewed from the perspective of the theory of ethics of care (ethics of care) Nel Noddings' thoughts.

Through a qualitative approach, researchers can explore more deeply the experiences, understanding, and application of caring values by teachers in civics learning in elementary schools.

B. Data Collection Techniques

The method used to collect data in this study was interviews. Researchers interacted directly in the field with several elementary school teachers as primary sources. During the interview, the discussion process was guided by a pre-prepared interview questionnaire, ensuring that the data collected was comprehensive and aligned with the study's objectives. The interview questions focused on:

1. Teachers' understanding of character education in civics learning
2. Teachers' knowledge of Noddings' concept
3. Application of caring values in civics learning

C.Research Subjects

The subjects in this study were four elementary school teachers from several schools in Lampung Province, namely: Mrs. Anggun Oktavia Rahmadhani (SDN 01 Tri Makmur Jaya, Tulang Bawang), Mr. Tahril Bulkia, S.Pd (SD N 1 Tebapering Raya, West Lampung), Mrs. Wanda rukhiyatul Jannah (SDN 1 Gunung Meraksa, Tanggamus), Mrs. Diana Wulandari (SD Negeri 25 Tegineneng). The four resource pers ons were chosen because they were considered to have experience in teaching Civics subjects and implementing character education in learning.

D.Time and place of research

Interviews were conducted at the end of March 2026. Interviews took place in person at each interviewee's home, as agreed upon between the researcher and the interviewee. The interview times were as follows:

1. Mrs. Anggun Oktavia Rahmadhani – March 26, 2026
2. Mr. Tahril Bulkia, S.Pd – March 27, 2026
3. Mrs. Wanda Rukhiyahtul Jannah – March 26, 2026
4. Mrs. Diana Wulandari – March 2026

The selection of the source's house as the interview location aims to create a more relaxed and comfortable interview atmosphere so that the source can provide information more openly and in depth.

E. Data Analysis Techniques

The data obtained from the interviews were then analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The analysis was conducted in four stages: collecting interview data, grouping data based on themes, analyzing interview results, and drawing conclusions from the research results. Through these analysis techniques, an overview of

the implementation of caring-based character education in civics learning in elementary schools was obtained

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' understanding of character education in civics

Referring to the interview data, it was revealed that the teaching staff had mastered the adequate concept regarding the urgency of character education in the Civics curriculum. Character formation is interpreted as a series of systematic guidance to grow and carve out an individual's personality through moral values that are internalized within the subject.(Hayati dan Alfiansyah, 2025)

This realm of character strengthening is not limited to the aspect of cognitive material transfer alone, but rather carries a vital function in constructing attitudes, value systems, behavioral codes, and the true character of students to be applied in the dynamics of community life.

Based on the explanation from Resource Person 4, Civics learning is highly applicable to students' real lives, so that noble values such as honesty, a sense of responsibility, and tolerance among others must be sown from the early stages of growth. In line with this premise, Resource Person 2 argues that character formation is a concrete step to mature the character of students to become better individuals through exemplary daily activities. The synthesis of the arguments of these resource persons shows that character education has a high urgency in directing students' morality and behavior in the real world. Based on this, the function of Civics in the classroom is not merely to complete the content of the teaching text curriculum, but also to become the main forum in cultivating noble personalities in students at the elementary level.

The Concept of the Ethics of Care Approach According to Nel Noddings

The concept of the ethics of care approach from Nel Noddings' thinking emphasizes that a strong bond between teachers and students is a crucial pillar in the world of education. In this paradigm, educators' contributions are not limited to the mere transfer of academic knowledge, but also position themselves as individuals who provide compassion, empathy, and moral support to their students. This emotional connection based on care is considered effective in building a calming learning ecosystem and guiding students in internalizing moral values and character

In addition, the perspectiveethics of careThis emphasizes that the essence of education is not only to hone students' intellectual intelligence, but also to cultivate morality and personality through in-depth interactions in the classroom,(Tri Evinasari dan Mukh Nursikin, (2025)

In line with findings in the field through interviews, the implementation of this caring concept appears to be integrated into Civics subjects. Based on the narrative of Resource Person 3, harmonious communication between teachers and students can

create a more effective learning ecosystem. This provides strong evidence that the caring paradigm has high urgency as a catalyst in developing noble character in students.

Implementation of Character Education in Civics

The application of character building in civics learning is carried out by inserting moral values into each academic activity session in the classroom. In this case, teachers abandon their sole role of simply completing the delivery of teaching text content; they also bear the responsibility to internalize noble character through reciprocal interactions, exemplary daily behavior, and ongoing learning scenarios. Character education can be implemented at the beginning of the lesson, such as starting with prayer, greeting, and creating a conducive atmosphere. These activities aim to foster an attitude of discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect among students. Habitual practices carried out routinely can help students gradually build positive character in their daily lives.(Selly Dinda Sartika(2022)

Furthermore, teachers also incorporate the pillars of character education into the teaching and learning process through discussion strategies, interactive dialogue, and teamwork. These activities guide students to learn to collaborate with each other, respect others' perspectives, and foster a sense of caring for the surrounding environment. The implementation of character education, which is executed directly during the teaching and learning process, is considered effective in helping students understand and practice these ethics in their daily activities. Therefore, the subject of Civics holds a crucial position as a social laboratory that shapes students' character based on their empirical experiences at school.

In addition to learning activities, character education can also be implemented through teacher role models. Teachers who are disciplined, responsible, and respectful of their students can serve as positive examples in character development. These exemplary teachers can help students understand character values concretely through the attitudes they demonstrate during the learning process. Furthermore, teachers can employ approaches that help students develop a sense of responsibility, caring, and cooperation within the school environment. Therefore, character education in Civics education relies not only on the delivery of theory in the classroom but also manifests itself in behavior and morals exemplified directly by teachers in daily interactions with students.

Obstacles and Solutions in Implementing Character Education

In implementing character education in civics lessons in elementary schools, teachers still face several obstacles. One of the main obstacles is limited time and the structure of teaching hours. These time constraints make it difficult for teachers to optimize learning activities. Furthermore, the dense curriculum also forces teachers to focus more on delivering material than on strengthening students' character. This situation has prevented the implementation of character education from being optimally

implemented in learning activities.9Munawir Anas,Muh. Inayah A.M., dan Uhwah Hasanah(2025)

Furthermore, differences in students' family backgrounds also pose unique challenges. Students from families that are less supportive of the values of responsibility and social concern tend to require a more personalized approach. This demonstrates that character education cannot be implemented in isolation within schools, but requires ongoing collaboration between schools, families, and the community. (Hayati dan Alfiansyah, (,2025)

Another obstacle is the lack of teacher training in instilling character education values into civics lessons. Some teachers still use conventional learning methods, so character values are not fully integrated into the learning process. This situation needs to be addressed immediately so that the potential of civics learning for character building can be fully optimized.(Munawir Anas, dkk. (2025)

To address these various obstacles, several efforts may be implemented by teachers and schools. First, teachers need to undergo ongoing training to be able to design more active, reflective, and contextual civics learning. Second, educational institutions need to foster synergy and intensive dialogue between teachers and parents so that the internalization of character taught in the classroom is reinforced simultaneously when the children are at home. Third, implement a caring approach (ethics of care) Nel Noddings' thinking presents a solution; namely by carving out interpersonal relationships between teachers and students that prioritize the dimensions of feeling, empathy, and warmth throughout the educational process. In addition, teachers who are sensitive to the emotional condition of each individual student also play an important role in building a learning atmosphere that supports the process of instilling character values in a deep and continuous manner.(Tri Evinasari dan Mukh Nursikin(2025)

CONCLUSION

Referring to the scientific findings and theoretical reviews outlined above, it is concluded that integrating character education into Civics learning at the elementary level plays a vital role in shaping students' character. The teachers who served as key informants in this research demonstrated a relatively comprehensive perspective and understanding of the importance of internalizing character within Civics material. These educators agreed that the essence of Civics goes beyond the content of teaching texts that explain the rights and obligations of citizens; this subject is actually a fundamental instrument in fostering moral values, social awareness, a sense of responsibility, and good character in children from an early age.

The theory of ethics of care (ethics of care) initiated by Nel Noddings has been confirmed as highly contextual for implementation in Civics teaching at the elementary school level. This paradigm emphasizes that the effectiveness of character building does not solely rely on methodological instruments or instructional strategies, but rather on

the essence and interconnectedness of interpersonal relationships forged between educators and students. When teachers are able to manifest authentic attention, empathy, and concern for students, a protective and conducive classroom atmosphere will be created for the stimulation of noble personality values.

The implementation of character building in Civics is realized through the formation of positive habits at the beginning of the lesson, team discussion forums, collaboration between students, and real-life examples from teachers. The role models demonstrated by educators hold the most crucial influence because students tend to replicate the morality and actions of teachers in daily interactions within the school environment. Therefore, teachers' contributions are not merely about transferring knowledge in the classroom, but also reflecting character and personality traits worthy of emulation by students.

However, several obstacles remain in its implementation. These include limited learning time, differences in students' family backgrounds, and a lack of teacher training in designing character-based learning. These obstacles can be overcome through close collaboration between schools, families, and the community, as well as through continuous teacher competency development.

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