

The Construction of Civic Awareness in Citizenship Education: A Qualitative Study at a Junior High School in Lampung

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ABSTRACT

The development of information technology and globalization has created various challenges in fostering students' citizenship character, including low digital literacy, the spread of misinformation, and declining participation in democratic life. These conditions highlight the importance of strengthening civic awareness through Civic Education. This study aims to analyze the concept of civic awareness, explain the process of its construction, and identify the factors influencing its development in Civic Education learning at junior high schools in Lampung. The research employed a qualitative approach using a library research method. Data were collected from scientific journals, books, and relevant previous studies, then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that civic awareness is constructed through the integration of civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. The construction process occurs through value internalization, critical reflection, and the actualization of civic behavior. Both internal and external factors influence this process. Therefore, Civic Education learning should be designed using participatory and contextual approaches integrated with digital literacy to foster democratic, critical, tolerant, and responsible young citizens.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of information technology and the tide of globalisation have significantly altered the patterns of social interaction among the younger generation. Easy access to information gives students opportunities to acquire a wide range of knowledge; however, it also presents challenges, including the spread of misinformation, declining digital literacy, social polarisation, and low civic participation in democratic life. These conditions indicate that strengthening civic awareness is a critical need in 21st-century education (Purwandari et al., 2026) (Usmi & Puspitaningrum, 2022).

In the context of formal education, Civic Education (PKn) plays a strategic role in shaping intelligent, participatory, and responsible citizens. PKn not only serves to provide knowledge about the constitutional system and national life, but also to develop the civic skills and character required in a democratic society (Damayana et al., 2024). Therefore, the success of Civic Education learning cannot be measured solely by mastery of the subject matter, but also by the development of students' civic awareness.

Civic awareness is an individual's ability to understand their rights and duties as a citizen, care about the public interest, and participate actively in social and democratic life. The literature on citizenship indicates that civic awareness is built through the integration of three key competencies: *civic knowledge*, *civic skills*, and *civic disposition*. These three dimensions are interrelated in shaping citizens who are capable of critical thinking, acting democratically, and demonstrating social responsibility (Hadi et al., 2026).

Various studies have discussed the strengthening of *civic knowledge*, *civic skills*, and *civic disposition* in Civic Education (PKn) learning. Research on the enhancement of *civic skills* indicates that a learning model positioning junior high school (SMP) students in Lampung as active participants is capable of improving students' critical thinking skills and social participation (Aprilia, 2024). Other research indicates that strengthening *civic disposition* through the teaching of democracy, school culture, and student organisation activities contributes to the formation of responsible civic character (Ningsih et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, the findings of the study indicate that the majority of research still examines *civic knowledge*, *civic skills* and *civic disposition* separately. Studies that specifically explain how these three components interact in shaping civic awareness through Civic Education (PKn) learning remain relatively limited. Yet, an understanding of the process of constructing civic awareness is crucial for explaining how learners develop their awareness as citizens through the learning experiences they gain (Putri & Siagian, 2024).

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyse the concept of civic consciousness in Civic Education (PKn) learning, explain the process of constructing civic consciousness in Civic Education (PKn) learning; and identify the factors influencing the construction of civic consciousness in Civic Education (PKn) learning and the implications of the findings for Civic Education (PKn) learning at lower secondary school (SMP) level in Lampung.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method (Sugiyono, 2023). The library research method was chosen because the study focuses on the analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of various literature discussing civic awareness in Civic Education at the junior high school level in Lampung. Research data sources were obtained from scientific journal articles, books, academic documents, and previous research findings relevant to the topic of study.

Data collection was carried out through a documentary study by searching various literature sources from scientific databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, and accredited national journals. Subsequently, the data were analysed using Sugiyono's qualitative data analysis model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The reduced data was then classified into three main themes: the concept of civic consciousness, the process of constructing civic consciousness,

and the factors influencing the construction of civic consciousness. Through this thematic synthesis process, patterns and relationships between findings were identified, forming the basis for the development of the research's conceptual model (Sugiyono, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the latest literature, there is a consistent pattern that the formation of civic awareness in junior high school students is rooted in three main components, namely *civic knowledge*, *civic skills*, and *civic disposition* (Rahmelia et al., 2026). Various recent studies indicate that the strengthening of civic skills and civic character cannot be separated from a participatory, reflective, and contextual Civic Education learning process (Hadi et al., 2026).

The Concept of Civic Awareness in Civic Education

The synthesis results indicate that *civic awareness* is a state in which learners understand their identity as citizens, are aware of their rights and duties, and possess the willingness to engage in social and democratic life (Rahmelia et al., 2026). In the context of Citizenship Education, civic awareness is not merely understood as mastery of subject matter, but also as the ability to apply civic values in daily life. These findings indicate that civic awareness is multidimensional in nature as it encompasses aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour (Heryani & Fadel, 2022).

Various studies indicate that civic awareness is shaped through three main components. The first component is *civic knowledge*, namely knowledge regarding Pancasila, the constitution, democracy, human rights, the law, and the system of government. The second component is *civic skills*, namely the ability to think critically, argue, communicate, solve problems, and participate in social life (Rahmelia et al., 2026). The third component is *civic disposition*, namely civic character traits such as tolerance, responsibility, discipline, social concern, and respect for diversity. These three components complement one another and form a holistic civic competence (Hadi et al., 2026).

The synthesis also reveals that the development of Civic Education studies in Indonesia is beginning to shift from a knowledge-transfer orientation towards character building and citizen participation (Rahmelia et al., 2026). Whereas previously Civic Education learning placed greater emphasis on the rote memorisation of concepts, recent research highlights the importance of developing *civic skills* and *civic disposition* as the foundation for students' civic awareness (Hulu et al., 2024).

Discussion

These findings indicate that civic awareness cannot be reduced to merely cognitive aspects. Students who are able to explain the concept of democracy do not necessarily exhibit democratic behaviour in their daily lives. Therefore, Civic Education must be directed towards the integration of knowledge, skills, and civic character (Rahmelia et al., 2026).

These findings are consistent with recent research trends that identify *civic disposition* as the primary objective of citizenship education. From this perspective, the success of learning is measured not only by pupils' academic grades, but also by their ability to demonstrate behaviour that reflects the values of democracy, tolerance and social responsibility (Putri & Siagian, 2024).

Furthermore, civic awareness at lower secondary school level has different characteristics compared to other levels of education. Junior high school students are in a phase of social identity development, making them more receptive to civic values when these are conveyed through concrete experiences and participatory activities (Hulu et al., 2024). Consequently, learning that relies solely on lectures tends to be less effective than learning that involves discussions, simulations, case studies, and social projects.

The Process of Constructing Civic Awareness in Civic Education

The synthesis results indicate that the construction of civic awareness occurs through three main stages: the internalisation of values, critical reflection, and behavioural actualisation. In the stage of value internalisation, learners are introduced to various civic values such as democracy, tolerance, responsibility, mutual cooperation, nationalism, and respect for the law (Dwi Agustina Rahayu et al.,

2024). These values are acquired through classroom learning, the example set by teachers, school culture, and various ongoing habit-forming activities. Research indicates that teachers play a central role in this process as they function as both facilitators and models of civic behaviour (Lahagu et al., 2024).

The second stage involves critical reflection on social realities. At this stage, students are encouraged to connect concepts of citizenship with various phenomena occurring in their environment (Rahmelia et al., 2026). Through discussions, case studies, and problem-based learning, students learn to understand social issues such as intolerance, bullying, law-breaking, the spread of hoaxes, and low levels of public participation in democratic life (Hulu et al., 2024).

The third stage is the actualisation of civic behaviour. Civic awareness develops when learners are given the opportunity to apply the values they have learnt through student organisations, class discussions, social activities, Scouting activities, and various other participatory activities. These experiences provide space for students to learn to cooperate, respect differences, express opinions, and take responsibility for joint decisions (Putri & Siagian, 2024).

Discussion

The synthesis results indicate that the construction of civic awareness is a continuous process and does not occur instantaneously. The civic knowledge acquired by learners must undergo a process of internalisation so that it becomes part of their personal value system. Furthermore, these values need to be tested through critical reflection on various social issues so that learners understand the relevance of civic values in real life.

These findings demonstrate that effective Civic Education (PKn) must provide learning experiences that enable students to construct meaning independently. In this context, teachers no longer act as the sole source of knowledge, but rather as facilitators who help students develop critical and reflective thinking skills (Lahagu et al., 2024).

School culture also makes a significant contribution to the construction of civic consciousness. Schools that apply democratic principles, provide space for dialogue, and encourage student participation tend to be more successful in developing *civic dispositions* than schools that adopt an authoritarian approach (Putri & Siagian, 2024).

Factors Influencing the Construction of Civic Consciousness

The synthesis results indicate that there are two main groups of factors influencing the construction of civic awareness: internal factors and external factors. Internal factors include students' learning motivation, self-awareness, critical thinking skills, social experiences, and digital literacy. Learners with high learning motivation tend to be more active in participating in Civic Education lessons and are more interested in social issues developing within society. Furthermore, critical thinking skills are a vital asset in dealing with the various information circulating via digital media (Hadi et al., 2026).

External factors include the school environment, family, peers, digital media, and society. A democratic school environment has been shown to strengthen students' participatory skills and civic character (Heryani & Fadel, 2022). Family support also plays a vital role in shaping attitudes of responsibility, social concern, and respect for national values.

Furthermore, the development of information technology presents new challenges in fostering civic awareness. Junior high school students are a group that is very familiar with digital media and thus have extensive access to a wide range of information. This situation can be an opportunity to improve civic literacy, but it also has the potential to lead to misinformation if not accompanied by adequate critical thinking skills (Wijayanti et al., 2024).

Discussion

These findings indicate that the construction of civic consciousness is the result of an interaction between the individual and their environment. Consequently, the success of Civic Education (PKn)

learning is determined not only by the quality of the learning process in the classroom, but also by the support of the wider social environment (Rahmelia et al., 2026).

In the digital age, information literacy skills are an essential part of civic awareness. Students need to be equipped with the ability to evaluate information sources, distinguish between facts and opinions, and understand the social consequences of using digital media. Therefore, strengthening digital citizenship must be an integral part of Civic Education (PKn) teaching at lower secondary school level (Hadi et al., 2026).

Implications of the Findings for Civic Education at Junior High Schools in Lampung

The findings of this synthesis have strong relevance for Civic Education (PKn) teaching at junior high schools in Lampung. The multicultural nature of Lampung society means that civic education plays a strategic role in fostering tolerance, respect for diversity, and social responsibility among student (Susanto, 2016).

Research findings indicate that Civic Education teaching in junior high schools in Lampung needs to be developed through a more participatory and contextual approach (Susanto, 2016). The use of case studies related to the social life of the Lampung community, social project-based learning, class deliberations, and the strengthening of student organisations can serve as effective means to develop students' civic awareness (Hulu et al., 2024).

Furthermore, research findings from Lampung indicate that the implementation of learning models that provide students with opportunities to actively express their opinions and engage in discussion can significantly enhance students' *civic skills* (Aransyah et al., 2026). These findings suggest that student-centred Civic Education (PKn) is more effective in developing civic skills than teacher-centred learning (Sulaksono et al., 2018).

In the context of information technology development, junior high schools in Lampung also face the same challenges as other regions, namely the increasing use of social media by adolescents. Therefore, Civic Education teaching needs to integrate digital literacy, media ethics, and critical thinking skills as part of strengthening civic awareness (Sari et al., 2026). Consequently, students will not only be able to become good citizens in the real social sphere, but also responsible digital citizens.

Overall, this synthesis yields a conceptual model suggesting that the construction of civic awareness among junior high school students occurs through a continuous relationship between Civic Education (PKn) learning, the internalisation of values, critical reflection, social participation, and the strengthening of *civic knowledge*, *civic skills*, and *civic disposition*. This model demonstrates that the development of civic consciousness requires the simultaneous involvement of schools, families, and the community so that the educational process of civic education can produce young citizens who are democratic, tolerant, critical, and responsible (Zulaikah et al., 2023).

Based on the results of a literature synthesis regarding the concept of civic consciousness, the process of constructing civic consciousness, influencing factors, and its implications for civic education learning at lower secondary school level, this study produced a conceptual model of civic consciousness construction that illustrates the relationships between components in their entirety, as presented in Figure 1.

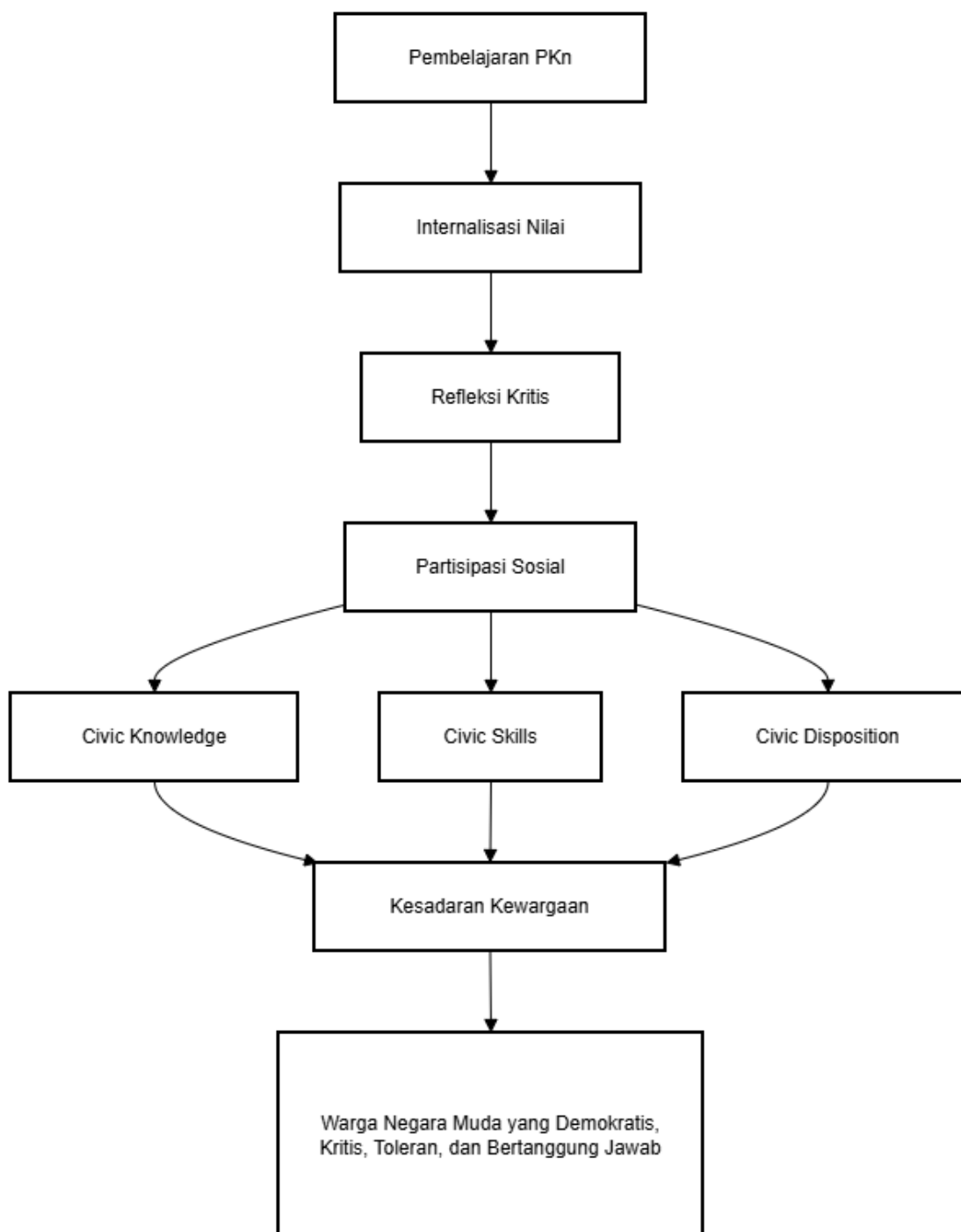


Figure 1. Model of the Construction of Civic Awareness in Civic Education at Junior High School Level

Figure 1 illustrates the model of civic consciousness construction in Civic Education. Based on the results of the literature review, Civic Education serves as the primary means of instilling civic values in students through the process of value internalisation, critical reflection, and social participation. The internalisation of values is carried out through the instilling of the values of democracy, tolerance, responsibility, and mutual cooperation, whilst critical reflection encourages students to understand and analyse various social issues occurring in their surrounding environment. Furthermore, social participation provides students with the opportunity to put civic values into practice through various activities involving cooperation, social concern, and engagement in school and community life.

This process contributes to the strengthening of *civic knowledge*, *civic skills*, and *civic disposition* as the main components of civic awareness. These three components complement one another in

shaping *civic awareness*, which is reflected in students' ability to understand their rights and responsibilities, think critically about social issues, and demonstrate democratic, tolerant, and responsible attitudes. Thus, Civic Education (PKn) serves not only as a means of knowledge transfer but also as a vehicle for shaping young citizens who are democratic, critical, tolerant, and responsible.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the literature review, civic awareness in Civic Education (PKn) at lower secondary school level is a construct formed through the integration of three main components, namely civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. Civic awareness develops continuously through the stages of internalising values, critically reflecting on social realities, and actualising civic behaviour in daily life. The research findings also indicate that the development of civic awareness is influenced by internal factors, such as learning motivation, critical thinking skills, and digital literacy, as well as external factors including the school environment, family, peers, digital media, and society. Consequently, PKn learning success depends not only on mastery of the subject matter but also on students' ability to apply civic values in practice.

The implications of this research suggest that Civic Education at lower secondary level, particularly in Lampung, needs to be developed through participatory, contextual, and learner-experience-oriented approaches. Discussions, case studies, social projects, class deliberations, and strengthened digital literacy can effectively build civic awareness. Therefore, schools, families, and the community need to collaborate continuously to create an environment that supports the development of young citizens who are democratic, critical, tolerant, responsible, and capable of actively participating in both social life and the digital sphere. Further research is recommended to test this conceptual model of civic awareness construction through field research, thereby obtaining stronger empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness in Civic Education (PKn) teaching.

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