



## Character Education Strategy to Enhance Students' Nationalism and Patriotism Through Civic Education Learning at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes

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### **Abstract**

This observation aims to design an effective character education approach to enhance nationalism and patriotism through Civic Education learning among students of State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan Brebes. The method used in this research is qualitative with a case study approach. Findings show that successful character education for strengthening nationalism and patriotism through Civic Education learning in students of State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes is achieved through character-based learning methods, specifically by integrating character values into lessons. Obstacles faced by Civic Education teachers in shaping nationalism/patriotism include the influence of technological development. This impacts students' way of thinking, the influence of mass media, and school facilities that do not fully support Civic Education learning.

**Keywords:** *Civic Education; State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan; Brebes*

### **Introduction**

Nationalism and patriotism are two main pillars in the formation of national character. Both reflect love and sacrifice for the homeland that must be instilled from an early age, especially in the younger generation. However, in the Society 5.0 era, the development of digital technology and social media also influences the attitudes and mindsets of the younger generation. Various negative contents that contradict Pancasila values are easily accessible, leading to social polarization and a decline in national spirit.

A Populix survey (2023) revealed that 65% of Indonesians feel a decline in nationalism among the younger generation, with 71% of respondents citing social media as the main contributing factor. This indicates the need for an effective character education strategy through education, especially in Civic Education subjects.

Civic Education has a strategic function in shaping the character of citizens based on Pancasila. Through learning oriented towards civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition, students are

expected to be able to internalize the values of nationalism and patriotism. The concept of character education developed, as stated by Driyarkara, Lickona, and Syarbini, emphasizes the importance of humanization in forming complete, faithful, and socially responsible individuals.

Civic Education as a medium for character education becomes important to foster love for the homeland, national pride, and readiness to contribute and sacrifice for the country. However, in practice, there are still obstacles in implementation, such as a lack of discipline, low respect for teachers, and weak participation in national activities at school.

Based on initial observations at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes, it was seen that although teachers have integrated national values into learning and school activities, some students have not fully shown attitudes of nationalism and patriotism in daily life. Therefore, this research focuses on examining the character education strategies applied in Civic Education learning to re-instill the spirit of nationalism and patriotism among students, as well as identifying the obstacles faced by teachers in this process.

## **Method**

Research location, this research was conducted at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes. The researcher chose State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes as the research location because the school is interesting to study in accordance with the research focus. The research was conducted by the researcher in the 2023/2024 academic year, starting in January 2024. This research uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is research that reveals a phenomenon through a comprehensive non-statistical language description. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative methods are research procedures that provide descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior (Moleong, 2014: 4). Qualitative research is a research method based on the post-positivist philosophy used to examine natural object conditions, with the researcher as the key instrument, data collection techniques carried out through triangulation, inductive/qualitative data analysis, and qualitative research results emphasizing meaning (Sugiyono, 2017: 9). In the research that the author intends to conduct, data is collected in appropriate conditions, using a systematic, directed, and careful working method, so as not to lose its scientific nature or the series of data operations or processes. This qualitative research uses a descriptive approach because the research aims to describe and interpret objects according to their nature.

This qualitative research uses a single embedded strategy. A single embedded strategy is a qualitative descriptive research strategy where the research focus has been determined based on the researcher's goals and interests before conducting research activities in the field (Sutopo, 2002: 42). The purpose of this research is to examine Character Education Strategies to Improve Students' Nationalism and Patriotism Attitudes Through Civic education Learning at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes.

Secondary data is data obtained from literature studies and documents. In this research, secondary data sources come from books/journal articles related to the research topic. Then, other secondary data sources used come from documents related to the research location. This research uses several techniques to obtain accurate and concise data, namely: interviews, observation, documentation.

Data validity checking techniques are very important to determine the quality of research results. To achieve the expected results, the researcher uses data verification techniques, which are the researcher's efforts to obtain the truth of information. For this reason, it is necessary to check its credibility through the following techniques:

1. Perception expansion
2. Perception persistence

3. Triangulation
4. Peer review
5. Reference suitability
6. Negative case study
7. Member evaluation.

One technique used by researchers to verify and validate data is triangulation. Triangulation is defined as a data verification technique that uses something else. The result is a triangle of sources, techniques, and time.

Based on the description above, the researcher uses technical triangulation and time triangulation in this research. Technical triangulation is a way to verify information from the same source by using different techniques. For example, data obtained through interviews is then followed by revised observation or documentation. Time triangulation is done by re-verifying with interviews, observations, or other techniques at different times or situations to obtain more valid and credible information. This research is collected, then classified, and conclusions are drawn through inductive reasoning, which is drawing conclusions from specific statements or facts that lead to general conclusions.

Data presentation is the development of a structured description of data to draw conclusions. Data presentation is done after the data is summarized. The form of data presentation is a narrative description related to the research data results. Furthermore, an interactive analysis is carried out between data groups. In this research, presentation of data in a brief description that illustrates each research formulation of character education strategies to enhance students' nationalism and patriotism through Civic education learning at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes.

Authentication is the conclusion made by the researcher after receiving the reduced data, which is then processed to find the meaning of each phenomenon obtained during the research. Therefore, valid and consistent data are needed to obtain credible conclusions.

## ***Results and Discussion***

### **Results:**

#### **a. Teacher as a role model (Exemplar)**

Learning from exemplars can be done by teachers by providing examples of the struggles of national heroes, how their life history of struggle for the nation and country unfolded.

Based on an interview with Mrs. Hendrawati, S.Pd, a Civic education subject teacher, she said:

"My favorite hero is Mr. Ir. Sukarno because he had the determination to lead Indonesia and become the first president of Indonesia by prioritizing public interest above personal or group interests." (Interview result, February 25, 2024). The students' reactions were also happy when they heard heroic stories as expressed by Mutia Maulida Putri, Class XII IPA 4. "Yes, if the Civic education material is enjoyable, for example, explaining the history of Mr. Ir. Sukarno, a hero who fought to establish the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia." (Interview result, February 25, 2024). This exemplary behavior can be applied not only to the struggles of historical figures but also in daily school life. This means that the teacher becomes a figure to be emulated and imitated by students. Therefore, the teacher's attitude in conveying the image of nationalism and patriotism can also be an example for students.

#### b. Teacher as a motivator

Teachers as motivators related to the formation of nationalism/patriotism encourage students to bravely express their opinions and be responsible for their answers. Civic education teachers never tire of giving advice to their students, even when they are studying. Based on an interview with the Civic education subject teacher, Hendrawati S.Pd, "In class as well as outside the classroom, I always use the lecture method in teaching to explain about national heroes, give examples of hero names, and help students to love their nation and homeland." (Interview, February 25, 2024). According to the data obtained by the researcher through interviews, the role of the Civic education teacher in motivating students to enhance the nationalism/patriotism of State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan students. This is supported by the results of an interview with Elda Ancera Salma, Class XII IPS 1, as follows: Yes, if the Civic education teacher, after telling stories about the struggles of heroes, we are often asked to truly understand the struggles of the heroes who established the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia who sacrificed everything (Interview Result, February 25, 2024). This also increases motivation when learning in class. Students' courage in discussions should motivate them to continue learning actively.

#### c. Teacher as a guide

Teachers are expected to be able to help students solve problems. This role also includes pedagogical aspects, as teachers not only disseminate knowledge but also educate, instilling life values. In this case, the role of the Civic education teacher as a guide in fostering nationalism/patriotism of State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan students. In addition to giving moral messages, Civic education teachers always provide knowledge to their students and hopefully their actions will be successful. They will be tougher in the future, and they will always practice the values of nationalism and patriotism in daily life. Based on the results of an interview with the a Civic education subject teacher, Mrs. Hendrawati S.Pd, she said:

"A disciplined and punctual teacher can set a good example for their students. There is no reason to skip or be late because they would be ashamed of other teachers who are always on time (Interview result, February 25, 2024).

#### d. Teacher as an inspirer

A teacher is a source of inspiration for the students they teach. The inspiration provided by a teacher can at least help students reach their maximum potential. Changing attitudes towards enjoyable learning rather than just teaching theory can lead to students writing better. Based on an interview with Mrs. Hendrawati, S.Pd, a Civic education subject teacher, she said: "Changing the mindset that Civic education learning is not just theory, but also fun. Civic education can also build students' character in research by raising topics that can be used for research." In addition, the Brebes region also has many historical sites that can be the focus of this research (Interview result, February 25, 2024).

The role of the teacher as an inspirer was also conveyed by Mr. Saeful Romadona, who acts as an inspiring teacher by guiding students in writing academic papers on the virtues of local wisdom in Brebes city.

The relevance of Civic education to learning is to enhance the nationalism and patriotism of students at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes, thereby forming national sharpness, attachment to the homeland, concern for the environment, etc.

Like other schools, flag-raising ceremonies are held every Monday and on other major holidays. The purpose, among others, is to honor the services of heroes and strengthen Indonesian nationalism and patriotism. This means that if the student concerned participates in the flag-raising ceremony, it means they have a sense of nationalism and patriotism. Based on the results of an interview with one of the class leaders, Muhammad Iqbal Junairdi of Class XII IPA 4:

## The importance of nationalism and patriotism in state life.

Nationalism/patriotism is an attitude that everyone must possess in the form of awareness and action to always be ready to sacrifice for the interests of the nation/state and their homeland. From the data obtained by researchers in the field, the attitude of nationalism/patriotism in terms of sacrifice has been well practiced by students of State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes. The nationalism/patriotism shown by a student named Anggi Maharani, a student of Class XII IPA 3 (OSIS Chairperson), according to her interview results:

"For example, if the classroom is dirty and no one is on duty, even though it's not my duty, I am ready to clean up on behalf of the students for the cleanliness of the classroom. The willingness to sacrifice in the school environment (interview result, February 25, 2024). This is a real manifestation of students' nationalism at school, showing readiness to clean the classroom. Although this is not about my own duty schedule, it is about the cleanliness of the classroom so that it always looks clean and tidy. This is an attitude of sacrifice by students in the school environment. A different attitude of nationalism and patriotism was also shown by a student named Sri Hartati, who showed sacrifice by doing assignments/homework until late at night. The willingness to sacrifice must be shown without any effort or time. This also instills a sense of responsibility in students. The following are the results of an interview with Sri Hartati, a student of class XII MIPA 2:

"As a student: "I am willing to sacrifice in completing all assignments given by the teacher until late at night at home for the common good," (Interview Result, February 25, 2024).

Currently, there is no longer a need to take up arms to fight for the country or nation, as heroes always willingly sacrificed their energy, wealth, and even their lives to achieve independence. However, students are essentially the successors of the heroes' struggle and the next generation of the nation's struggle.

Based on the above statement, teachers can develop a nationalist attitude with the following stages:

Teachers must explain to their students that the values of nationalism and patriotism are essential for them to gain a deeper understanding and appreciate the contributions of past heroes.

Teachers must convey attitudes and behaviors, for example, by encouraging students to learn more and understand what nationalism and patriotism are. Historical sites are places where important events occurred. What are the obstacles that arise in the process of enhancing nationalistic and patriotic attitudes carried out by teachers towards students at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes? Besides wanting to know what the teacher's role is in fostering nationalistic and patriotic attitudes in students, the researcher also wants to know the various obstacles faced by Civic education teachers in strengthening students' attitudes towards nationalism and patriotism.

In this study, the researcher found that teachers face obstacles. Based on data obtained from observations and interviews:

### 1. Student Interaction

In general, the learning process for internalizing the values of nationalism and patriotism at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes runs smoothly according to the planned program. However, in addition to the developed activities, there are still obstacles and factors that affect the process of forming nationalistic and patriotic attitudes in Civic education learning. Mrs. Hendrawati (S.Pd) said:

"The obstacles I face include; environment, internet, and the impact of globalization. The influence of an environment that does not reflect the values of nationalism and patriotism is one factor that makes it difficult to develop nationalistic and patriotic attitudes. The widespread use of the Internet in the era of globalization also affects children's knowledge, sometimes making them follow Western ways that weaken their nationalistic and patriotic values. The influence of the Internet is very significant because all

knowledge is now available through the Internet, and children prefer to play and explore the internet rather than study. (Interview result, February 26, 2024)." The fourth obstacle in the formation of nationalism and patriotism is mass media coverage of the volatile political trends in Indonesia due to corruption among government officials.

## 2. Lack of School Facilities

School facilities and infrastructure are lacking, for example, storytelling media related to nationalistic and patriotic values, such as storybooks about national heroes, national hero dolls, and national hero photos. These school tools include miniature traditional houses and regional traditional clothing. Mrs. Hendrawati (S.Pd) said:

"The school does not care about historical material, does not have other places to utilize it, and the Civic education books available in the library are still limited." (Interview Result, February 26, 2024). This is one of the obstacles in the classroom learning process. This is because the teacher who is delivering the material is busy dictating the lesson, and there is no Pancasila/Social Sciences laboratory at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes.

## Discussion:

Civic education learning at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes has become the main means in the effort to internalize the values of nationalism and patriotism. The teacher's role as the main actor in character education is reflected in various learning strategies used, in accordance with Lickona's (2012) concept of character education, namely through example, habituation, motivation, and guidance.

### 1. Teacher as Role Model and Inspirer

Civic education teachers do not only act as material deliverers but also as role models. Through stories of national figures, teachers can inspire students to understand the meaning of sacrifice and love for the nation. This is in line with Driyarkara's concept of humanization, which emphasizes the importance of role models in shaping students' personalities. The teacher's role model is seen in their discipline, consistency in conveying national values, and its ability to foster students' learning enthusiasm.

### 2. Teacher as Motivator and Mentor

Teachers encourage students to actively discuss, express opinions, and understand the context of the nation's struggle more personally. This strategy aligns with Nu'man Soemantri's (2001) idea that civic education must be able to develop students' critical and participatory attitudes in democratic life. Teachers also guide students in resolving conflicts, fostering social responsibility, and practicing nationalist values in daily school activities.

### 3. Implementation of Nationalism and Patriotism Values in School Activities

Civics learning practices do not only occur in the classroom but also through activities such as flag ceremonies, group discussions, and OSIS (Student Council) and leadership activities. Interviews with students show that attitudes of self-sacrifice, discipline, responsibility, and love for the homeland are beginning to be instilled, for example, through simple actions such as keeping the classroom clean even when it's not their turn for duty, or completing tasks even when tired. This is a concrete manifestation of value-based character education, as emphasized by Syarbini (2012) and Dharma (2012).

### 4. Obstacles in the Formation of Nationalist and Patriotic Attitudes

Although the teacher's strategy has been quite systematic, there are obstacles that hinder the optimization of character education. These include:

- **Influence of environment and digital media:** Students are exposed to individualistic values and global lifestyles that often conflict with the spirit of nationalism. This reinforces the results of a national survey (DataIndonesia.id, 2023) showing that social media plays a role in weakening the sense of nationalism among the younger generation.
- **Lack of supporting facilities:** Limitations of facilities such as learning media, hero storybooks, and Civics laboratories hinder teachers' creativity in delivering material contextually. The absence of engaging visual resources makes Civics learning seem monotonous to some students.
- **Differences in student backgrounds:** Socioeconomic factors, levels of discipline, and diverse student learning styles also pose unique challenges for teachers in adopting effective and comprehensive approaches.

## 5. Relevance of Findings to Theory

Field findings reinforce that character education strategies based on Civics learning are capable of forming students' civic disposition, as stated by Azis (2006). Teachers who play dual roles—as role models, motivators, mentors, and inspirers—have a strong influence in instilling nationalist and patriotic values. However, the success of this strategy is highly determined by school environment support, learning media, and the synergy between local values and global contexts.

## Conclusion

Based on the research results and analysis of character education strategies in Civics learning at State Senior High School 1 Ketanggungan, Brebes, the following can be concluded:

- 1. The role of the teacher is crucial in instilling nationalist and patriotic values.** Civics teachers play a strategic role as role models, motivators, mentors, and inspirers in shaping students' love for their homeland and national spirit. Exemplary behavior, motivation in learning, and inspiration through the introduction of the nation's struggle values have encouraged students to develop national awareness in school life.
- 2. Civics learning serves as an effective medium for national character education.** Through materials such as the history of the nation's struggle, Pancasila values, and the implementation of routine activities like flag ceremonies and student organizations, Civics learning directly contributes to forming students' civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. This leads to the growth of responsibility, discipline, social care, and willingness to contribute for the common good.
- 3. Obstacles encountered in the implementation of character education include external and internal factors.** The negative influence of social media, lack of supporting learning facilities, and diverse student backgrounds are major challenges for teachers in instilling values of nationalism and patriotism. These factors require an adaptive and collaborative approach, both from the school and from families and the community.
- 4. Contextual and reflective character education strategies have proven effective.** Approaches that prioritize role modeling, habituation of values, and active student involvement in the learning process have been shown to genuinely foster attitudes of nationalism and patriotism in students' daily lives. This strategy is relevant to the theory of humanization in education and contemporary civic education concepts.

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