

# **Contextual Learning in Civic Education: *Alternative Approach to Enhancing Civic Competence***

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## **ABSTRACT**

Civic Education courses are courses that present material in the form of descriptions of facts or certain social problems. The dynamic nature of social science provides the opportunity to generate diverse views. Therefore, the ability to understand concepts is a must for students in understanding Civic Education in order to avoid misinterpretation. Based on these problems, the purpose of writing this article is to determine contextual learning in an effort to increase student understanding of the Citizenship Education Course. In theory that contextual learning is learning that can help students understand subject matter by connecting academic subjects with the context in their daily life, so that the material will be easier to understand. As a form of innovation in learning, contextual learning can increase the citizenship competence of students

**Keywords:** *Contextual teaching and learning, Civic education, Civic competence.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

As part of the higher education curriculum, civic education has a big mission in order to achieve the goals of national education. Judging from the substance of the study, composed of civic education has some central study in order to achieve the mission that citizenship education as character education, education, social policy, and legal education. Observing this substance, of course, the civic education mission will focus on the formation of citizens who have character, balance between rights and obligations, and have an attitude of obedience to the law.

The great accomplishment of the mission will be correlated acquisitive with a learning process that occurs earlier. This means that good graduate learning outcomes will be obtained if the process is also good. A good learning process is a combination of learning elements that function optimally. Among the elements of learning model.

The learning model is a coherent description of learning activities from beginning to end. Many factors must be considered in order to establish a model in learning. In the concept of knowledge, the goal of civic education is that students can optimize their civic competence. Citizenship competence is the knowledge, understanding, and mastery of the concept of citizenship. These objectives are of course a factor that

must be considered in determining the learning model to be used.

contextual learning is a learning model that can be used in order to mastering the understanding of learners contextually, meaning that not only textual but also context knowledge. Contextual learning also that can help learners to understand the concept and are analogous factual knowledge in the life of the concrete. As one of the models teaching and learning that emphasis on mastery learning/ concept mastery and its relevance to real-life learners, contextual learning certainly be one alternative that is considered to be effective, since this approach considers that the process of learning is really air directly only if the learners can found a meaningful relationship between abstract thinking and practical application [1].

## **2. METHOD**

This article uses literature review as a research method. This article offers an overview of contextual learning in an effort to increase student understanding of the Citizenship Education Course. It particularly discusses the literature on contextual learning, civic education, and how Contextual Learning to Improve Citizenship Competence. This article tries to discuss these topics in depth by reviewing some literature.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 3.1 Contextual Learning

Contextual (the root word for context) means to contextualize or make something according to its context. If it is associated with learning, contextualize is learning that connects between the subject matter in the context of the lives of the participants. Thus, learners can make connections between the knowledge is understood in its implementation in everyday life or in the context of the life of concrete by involving seven major components of learning namely: Deconstructionism, asking, investigating, learning community, modeling, reflection, and assessment authentic [2].

In principle, contextual learning provides opportunities for students to as broadly as possible build their own knowledge through a number of concepts being learned. Building constructionist or knowledge is very important so that students do not only understand textually, it is more important than that to understand the context. Therefore, participants can make a connection between the concept and the experience that has been built before. With this concept of learning will be more meaningful, because students not only understand the material conceptually but are also able to master the concept according to the context.

It can be interpreted as learning in accordance with certain conditions [3], the contextual learning approach or Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a concept that helps teachers link the material they teach with real-world situations, and encourages students to make connections between knowledge. They have with their application in their lives as members of their family and society. Furthermore, states that a contextual approach is learning that aims to help students see meaning in academic material in the context of their daily life, namely in the context of their personal, social, and cultural circumstances [4].

Then it is argued that the contextual learning approach is a learning approach that emphasizes the process of full student involvement, to be able to understand the material being studied, and to relate it to real life situations, thus encouraging students to be able to apply it in their lives [5].

Based on these opinions, it can be seen that contextual learning can make learning material more meaningful for students because the material being studied has a direct relationship with the real situation that students feel so that they feel they have experience in life with the material being studied. This is believed to be able to increase students' understanding, because the context being studied is in accordance with their personal and social circumstances.

#### 3.2. Civic education

Education is said to be an effective acculturation instrument for cultural values for students. Because, through education, the inheritance of the noble values of the nation's culture will take place in a dynamic condition and have an impact on an ongoing basis as a result (outcomes) of the educational process. As explained education is a process of sowing the seeds of culture and tinsel of human tires who live and are lived by the values or visions that develop and are developed in a society. Through a series of targeted and systematic activities, education can be a process that allows the development of cultural values between generations.

One of the courses developed in higher education units in Indonesia is Citizenship Education. Citizenship Education Course is one of the compulsory subjects which develop in the higher education according mandated by the Law No. 12 of 2012 [6]. Citizenship Education is included in the Personality Development Course (MPK) group with a weight of 2 credits. Civics (civic education) is education that has a broader scope than democracy education and human rights education because it includes studies and discussions on many things, such as: governance, the constitution, democratic state institutions, rule of law, rights and obligations of citizens, the democratic process, active participation and involvement of citizens in civil society, knowledge of institutions and systems that exist in government, politics, public administration and the legal system, knowledge about human rights, active citizenship, and so on [7].

Meanwhile, in essence, Civics is the result of a synthesis between civic education, democracy education, and citizenship which is based on the Pancasila philosophy and contains Indonesian national identity and content material on state defense [8]. Based on the nature of Pancasila and Civics, Erwin [9] highlights that civic education in Indonesia is a national education and civic dealing with the existence of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (Homeland), democracy, Human Rights (HAM) and aspirations to realize Indonesian civil society by using the Pancasila philosophy as the blade of analysis.

In Law No.12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education it is emphasized that which emphasizes more on the psycho-andragogical and socio-cultural approach in the context of the instrumental and practical values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as contemporary values of cosmopolitanism. The main purpose is Citizenship Education to foster insight and state awareness, attitudes and behaviors that love the country and on culture and nation. Thus Citizenship Education is basically to develop awareness of the nationality of Indonesian citizens. This awareness includes the rights and

obligations of citizens in an effort to demonstrate their participation in the development of national life.

In juridical context, Civics are developed on the basis of the law contained in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in the second and fourth paragraphs which contain the aspirations, goals and ideals of the Indonesian people. This is then elaborated in the body of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in Article 27 paragraph (1) regarding equality in the field of law. Article 27 paragraph (3) concerning the rights and obligations of state defense for every citizen, and Article 30 paragraph (1) concerning state defense and security. This article explains the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a state which is the study of civics. Then in article 30 paragraphs (1) which states that education is the right of all Indonesian citizens.

The implementation of Civics regulated in Law Number 20 Year 2003 on National Education System (Education) and based on the Ministry of Education No. 232 / U / 2000 on Guidelines for Higher Education Curriculum Development and Assessment of Learning Outcomes and No. 045 / U / 2002 on Higher Education Core curriculum has been determined that Religious Education, English Education and Civics is a subject Personal Development, which must be given in the curriculum of each program. The regulation of Civics in the National Education System makes Civics have a fairly strong position. Civics, which aim to shape students into human beings who have a sense of nationality and love the country, have a very strategic position in the formation and development of national character (nation and character building).

### ***3.3. Contextual Learning to Improve Citizenship Competence***

Contextual learning in Civics is certainly a strategic effort to optimize students' understanding of the substance of the material. Civics as a subject that presents a series of facts in narrative form are certainly a challenge in understanding them. If learners only understand textually then there is the ability of reasoning and critical thinking will not be honed, so when faced with a situation which is above the level of the text he understood learners would have difficulty making relationships even clicking construct understanding. This certainly affects the competence of citizenship as young citizens who have great responsibility for the survival of the nation and the State.

Citizenship competence is the knowledge, skills, and skills of students as provisions to become citizens who are able to participate in the life of the nation and state<sup>1</sup>. Citizenship knowledge or what is known as civic knowledge is the substance of the study that citizens

must know. According to the National Standards and Civics Framework for the 1988 National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP)[10], this component of civic knowledge is manifested in the form of five important questions, namely: (1) What is the civic, political, and government life; (2) What are the foundations of a political system; (3) How the government formed by the constitution embodies the aims, values and principles of democracy; (4) the relationship between a country and other countries and its position on international affairs; (5) What is the role of citizens in democracy?

Thus, it can be understood that in substance the knowledge of citizenship includes concepts and theories developed from the socio-political science, law, and citizenship. If ingested in the curriculum factual Citizenship Education in college then the material substance of Education nationality can be broken down into sub the following materials: Itself Civics and Character Education, National Identity, Integration and Disintegration National Constitution of Indonesia, Rights and Duties of the Citizen, Democracy Indonesia, Law Enforcement in Indonesia, Insight on the Archipelago, and National Resilience.

Next is the skill of citizenship (civic skills) which is a constituent part of the structure of civic competence. According to Komalasari [1], citizenship skills are skills that are developed from knowledge to citizenship so that they can be used in dealing with the problems of national and state life. It is further explained that Civic skills include intellectual skills and participation skills<sup>1</sup>. Life Skills related intellectual with the ability to reason in getting the meaning of content material, and participation skills refer to the ability to implement the scientific concept that is in the substance of the material in the form of practice or participation in real in everyday life.

Next is civic character or attitude (civic disposition). Competence of character refers to how citizens of the State act and behave in social life. According to Branson [10] civic disposition wheezing otherwise require care as citizens of the State, courtesy, to obey rules (rule of law), critical thinking, and a willingness to listen, negotiate and compromise. In the context of democratic life, Quigley et al [11] reveal that Civic disposition is the attitude and thinking habits of citizens that support the development of healthy social functions and guarantee the general interest of the democratic system. It can be concluded that this character skills basically is the ability of citizens of the State behave in accordance with the norms prevailing in a society, nation, and state.

From the results, it can be concluded that students have a great opportunity to improve the civic competence through contextual learning, because the learners are trained to make the connection or relevance

of learning material with the real context in the life of society, nation and state.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

According results and discussion can be concluded that the learning of contextually an approach alternative to the right in order to increase civic competence of learners, referring to the views of experts and factual substance materials developed in the early retirement of civic education.

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