

THE EFFECT OF CONTEXTUAL LEARNING IN CIVIC EDUCATION ON STUDENTS' CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: The long, multidimensional crises in Indonesia have been rooted in degraded national morality. To improve this national moral quality, the country has needed a revitalisation of civic education's role in "value-based education" and "nation and character building". Therefore, civic education has developed to include contextual learning, which is assumed to improve students' character. The problem studied here was the following: What is the effect of contextual learning in civic education on students' character development? This study used quantitative and qualitative approaches with "a dominant-less dominant design". The quantitative approach used surveys, and the qualitative approach used interviews to gather data. The population of interest was junior high school students in West Java taught by civic education teachers who had followed Competence-based Integrated Training. The research sample was determined based on cluster sampling, proportional, and systematic random sampling techniques, with a final sample of 1004 junior high school students. This study's findings showed that contextual learning in civic education had a strong positive relationship with the character development of the junior high school students. This research finding explained that first, contextual learning in civic education taught student's life skills, including the principles of interdependence, differentiation, and self-regulation; second, contextual learning in civic education encouraged the establishment of democratic learning; third, contextual learning in civic education includes elements of character development; and fourth, character education in civic education helped students discover and develop local moral values.

Keywords: character, value, civic education, contextual learning

Abstrak: Krisis-krisis bersifat multidimensional dan panjang di Indonesia berakar umbi daripada penyusutan kualiti moral kebangsaan. Untuk memperbaiki kualiti moral kebangsaan tersebut, peranan pendidikan moral dalam konteks pendidikan berasaskan nilai dan pembangunan negara dan pembangunan karektor perlu diberi nafas baru. Justeru, dengan andaian untuk meningkatkan karektor pelajar, pendidikan moral telah dikembangkan dengan cara memasukkan elemen pembelajaran kontekstual. Masalah yang ingin dilihat adalah kesan pembelajaran kontekstual dalam pendidikan sivik kepada pembangunan sahsiah pelajar. Kajian ini menggunakan kedua-dua pendekatan kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Pendekatan kuantitatif menggunakan soal selidik bagi mendapatkan data manakala temu bual pula digunakan dalam pendekatan kualitatif. Populasi berkepentingan bagi kajian ini merupakan pelajar sekolah menengah rendah di Jawa Barat yang menerima pengajaran pendidikan sivik daripada guru pendidikan sivik yang telahpun mengikuti Latihan Bersepadu berasaskan Kecekapan. Teknik persampelan adalah secara persampelan kluster, persampelan berkadar dan persampelan rawak

bersistematik yang akhirnya menghasilkan 1,004 orang sampel. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pembelajaran kontekstual dalam pendidikan sivik mempunyai hubungan positif yang kukuh dengan perkembangan karektor pelajar di sekolah menengah rendah. Dapatan kajian ini juga menjelaskan pertama, pembelajaran kontekstual dalam pendidikan sivik mengajar prinsip kehidupan sebagai seorang warganegara, termasuklah prinsip saling bergantung, prinsip perbezaan dan prinsip pengawalseliaan diri; kedua, pembelajaran kontekstual dalam pendidikan sivik menggalakkan pembelajaran demokratik; ketiga, pembelajaran kontekstual dalam pendidikan sivik mempunyai intipati pembangunan karektor; dan keempat, pendidikan pembangunan karektor dalam pendidikan sivik membantu pelajar mencari dan membina nilai-nilai moral tempatan.

Kata kunci: watak, nilai, pendidikan sivik, pembelajaran mengikut konteks

INTRODUCTION

Background

Indonesia is facing ongoing, multidimensional crises. One of these crises is the degradation of the younger generation's morals. This degradation is marked by the following: (1) the increase of violence in teenagers; (2) the use of improper words and language; (3) the strong influence of peer-groups on violent actions; (4) the increase of self-abusive behaviour, such as the consumption of narcotics and drugs, alcohol and sexual promiscuity; (5) a lack of understanding of good and bad morals; (6) the decline of work ethos; (7) less respect for elders and teachers; (8) lack of individual responsibility and citizenship; (9) dishonesty; and (10) suspicion and hate among people (Lickona, 1992; Megawangi, 2004: 9–11).

Education is one of the principal pillars to develop and improve the moral quality of the young generation, especially civic education because Indonesia has a national mission to educate about Indonesian civic life through the philosophy of "value-based education". Civic education, as a compulsory subject in all years of school, is derived from a vision of civic education as a means of nation and character building and citizen development.

Recently, civic education has been assumed to be non-meaningful in the development of students' character. One reason this has happened is because learning and assessment processes in civic education place more emphasis on outcomes limited to content mastery. In other words, the focus of civic education only emphasises its cognitive dimension, whereas the development of other dimensions (such as affective and psycho-motor) and the acquisition of nurturant effects as "hidden curriculum" have not been given as much attention as they should. A second reason that civic education has been assumed to have little

impact on students' character development is that class arrangements have not been able to create conducive and productive situations to provide learning experiences to the students through practical and interactive involvement, either in the classroom learning process or outside the classroom (such as in extracurricular activities). These classroom structures cause a lack of meaningful learning experiences to develop students' behaviour and life skills. Third, the allocation of time dictated by the education curriculum structure is rigidly prescribed as a scheduled face-to-face hour-long lesson, making civic education learning activities highly routine and structured. This makes teachers unable to improvise creatively to do other activities besides strictly scheduled face-to-face routine learning. Fourth, the implementation of extracurricular activities as socio-pedagogical means to gain "hands-on experience" has not significantly contributed to balancing theory mastery and the development of practical skills in democratic and law-conscious living.

To improve the impact of civic education, contextual learning should be developed and include the following: (1) learning in interrelated contexts; (2) learning through direct experience; (3) learning through application; (4) learning through cooperation; (5) self-regulated learning; and (6) authentic assessment (Sounders, 1999: 4–6; Johnson, 2002: 24; Dikdasmen, 2003: 10–19). This contextual learning is done through the following learning strategies: (1) problem-based learning; (2) project-based learning; (3) inquiry-based learning; (4) work-based learning; (5) service learning; (6) collaborative or cooperative learning; and (7) authentic assessment (Lynch, 2001: 3–9).

The contextual learning approach is assumed to be able to develop students' character. Therefore, Competence-based Integrated Learning or *Pelatihan Terintegrasi Berbasis Kompetensi (PTBK)* for junior high school teachers has been conducted by Indonesia Ministry of Education, Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education in 2004–2005, and PTBK contains the material necessary to use the contextual learning approach with Junior High School students. The implementation of this program has inspired this study focusing on the effect of contextual learning in civic education on the development of West Java junior high school students' character, as taught by civic education teachers who have followed PTBK.

The Formulation of the Problem

The problems studied included the following questions: (1) what are the conditions of contextual learning in the civic education of junior high school students in West Java; and (2) what is the effect of contextual learning in civic education on these students' character development?

Aim

This study aimed to describe the following: (1) the condition of contextual learning in the civic education of junior high school students in West Java; and (2) the effect of contextual learning in civic education on these students' character development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Contextual Learning

Contextual learning is a concept that helps teachers to relate the material taught to the students' personal situations and to encourage students to make connections between the acquired knowledge and its application in their life as members of a family, community and country (Blanchard, 2001: 2; Berns & Erickson, 2001: 4). Thus, contextual learning enables the students to relate the curriculum's content to the context of their daily life to find out its meaning (Johnson, 2002: 24).

The following characteristics describe contextual learning according to Blanchard (2001: 5): (1) relies on spatial memory; (2) typically integrates multiple subjects; (3) value of information is based on individual need; (4) relates information with prior knowledge; and (5) authentic assessment through practical application or solving of realistic problems. Berns and Erickson (2001: 5–8) describe contextual learning as: (1) interdisciplinary learning; (2) problem-based learning; and (3) external contexts for learning. Finally, Johnson (2002: 24) identifies eight components of contextual learning, which are: (1) making meaningful connections; (2) doing significant work; (3) self-regulated learning; (4) collaborating; (5) critical and creative thinking; (6) nurturing the individual; (7) reaching high standards; and (8) using authentic assessment. Meanwhile, Saunders (1999) focuses on REACT (**R**elating: Learning through the context of personal life experience, **E**xperiencing: Learning through searching and discovering; **A**pplying: Learning when knowledge is introduced in the context of its usage; **C**ooperating: Learning through interpersonal communication and sharing with each other; **T**ransferring: Learning to use knowledge in a new context or situation).

According to Berns and Erickson (2001: 4–9) contextual learning can be implemented through five approaches: (1) problem-based learning; (2) cooperative learning; (3) project-based learning; (4) service learning; and (5) work-based learning. In civic education, the examples of learning based on contextual teaching and learning are the portfolio "We the People...Project

Citizen" developed by the Centre for Civic Education, and the program "Law in a Free Society Series, Foundations of Democracy" also by the Centre for Civic Education. The alternative model is the program "Exercise in Participation". These learning packages are designed to improve participatory skills.

Character Development

The word character was derived from the Greek word *charassein*, which means to carve so that it creates a pattern (Bohlin, Farmer & Ryan, 2001). People do not automatically have lofty character when they are born, but rather character is developed through a long process involving nurturing and education (the "carving" process). In Arabic terms, this idea of character is similar to morality or *akhlak* (the root word of *khuluk*), an attitude or habit of doing good things. Al Ghazali describes *akhlak* or morality as one's attitude coming from a good heart. Therefore, character education is an active effort to create good habits, and children's character is carved through this effort beginning in childhood. Megawangi (2004: 95) put forward the idea that character education is an effort to educate children in order to make them able to make wise decisions in their daily life so that they may make a positive contribution to their surroundings. The character values that should be impressed upon children are universal values that all religions, traditions, and cultures highly revere. These universal values should be able to bond all community members, even though they may have different cultures, ethnicities and religious backgrounds.

The indicators of good character consist of three components, according to Lickona (1992): moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action. Moral knowing is an important quality to be taught, which consists of six aspects: (1) moral awareness; (2) knowing moral values; (3) perspective taking; (4) moral reasoning; (5) decision making; and (6) self-knowledge. Moral feeling is another aspect that should be impressed upon students, and this feeling is the impetus for a person to act according to moral principles. There are six things that someone of good character should be able to feel: (1) conscience; (2) self-esteem; (3) empathy; (4) loving the good; (5) self-control; and (6) humility. Moral action involves putting moral feeling and knowledge into real action. This moral action is an outcome of two other components of character. To understand the factors that encourage someone to do good (act morally), three other aspects of character need to be considered: (1) competence; (2) will; and (3) habit.

The Indonesia Heritage Foundation (Megawangi, 2004: 94) has arranged those three character components into a set of values that should be taught to children, including: (1) love of God and all His creation; (2) independence and responsibility; (3) honesty and wisdom; (4) respect and good behaviour; (5)

generosity and willingness to help and be cooperative; (6) self-confidence, creativity and hard work; (7) leadership and justice; (8) kindness and modesty; and (9) tolerance, peace and unity.

Character education that only teaches moral knowing does not guarantee that someone will have character, which requires that one conforms to moral ideas in thoughts, words and action. Wynne (1991) states that there is a 95% probability that we know which attitude is good and which is bad. The problem is that we do not have a strong will or commitment to act upon this knowledge. Therefore, civic education should develop three moral aspects, including moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, in an integrated way through contextual learning so that it is meaningful for the students' character development.

Previous Relevant Study Findings

There are some previous study findings related to contextual learning and citizenship character development. One study involved classroom action research by Komalasari (2005) about the improvement of citizenship competence through contextual-based civic education in 44 Junior High School Bandung and showed that contextual-based civic education was able to improve the students' character (civic disposition). The change in civic disposition in cycle 1 was 31.62%, 47.4% in cycle 2, and 76% in cycle 3. Therefore, there was an increase in students' moral character after the improvement of civic education using contextual learning. The findings of Indonesia Heritage Foundation (2002), Carlton (2000), Howes and Smith (1995), Jacobsen and Hofmann (1997), and Planta (1997) showed that character education given to pre-school students could create positive attitudes, good interaction with teachers, the ability to manage emotion, self-confidence, successful social interaction with peers, and also academic competence. Vont, Metcalf, and Patrick (2000), in their comparative study in Indiana, Latvia, and Lithuania, concluded that there was a significant instructional effect of "We the People...Project Citizen" on the students' civic knowledge, civic dispositions, and civic skills in the three sample areas.

METHODOLOGY

This study used two approaches, quantitative and qualitative, using "the dominant-less dominant design" by Creswell (1994: 177). The first stage of this study used a quantitative approach involving surveys. The next stage of the study used an additional paradigm (less-dominant) with a qualitative approach undertaken for a deeper understanding of the data. Interviews were used to collect data during this stage.

The study was conducted in West Java junior high schools in 2007. The population of the study was the ninth-grade students of junior high schools in West Java taught by the teachers who had followed the Competence-based Integrated Training or *Pelatihan Terintegrasi Berbasis Kompetensi (PTBK)* in 2004. This consisted of 93 junior high schools spread across 26 regencies/cities in West Java. The sample was selected using cluster, proportional and systematic random sampling techniques, with a final sample of 1004 junior high school students in West Java.

The study instrument used was SSHA (Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes), a questionnaire from Brown dan Holtzman that had been adjusted for the cultural environment of Indonesia to measure the variable of contextual learning. To measure the variable of students' character, rating scales and Likert scales were used. In addition, interviews with 16 civic education teachers were conducted to reinforce and enrich the research findings from the questionnaire data.

The analysis technique used in this study included descriptive analysis to describe variable X (contextual learning in civic education) and variable Y (students' character); the analysis was conducted by determining groups based on a comparison of a respondent's score and ideal score. Correlation hypothesis testing was conducted using the Pearson Correlations analysis technique. Hypothesis testing of the effect was conducted by regression analysis and that of contribution by determination coefficient analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings presented below are based on the results of statistical analyses including descriptive statistics, correlations, regression analysis, and coefficient contribution.

Study Results

The results of the descriptive analysis

The results of the descriptive analysis and tendency testing of the data on students' perceptions about the condition of contextual learning showed an interesting phenomenon, seen in Table 1.

The Table 1 showed that most of the condition of contextual learning in civic education in West Java junior high schools was categorised as average by 87.22% of the sample, while 11.67% categorised it as high and only 1.11%

categorised it as low. Therefore, it could be concluded that most of junior high schools in West Java were perceived to be quite good at applying the contextual approach in civic education learning.

Table 1. The perception of study subjects on the condition of contextual learning in civic education in West Java junior high schools

No.	Contextual learning in civic education	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	11	1.11
2.	Average	867	87.22
3.	High	116	11.67
Total		994	100.00

Source. Komalasari (2009)

Based on the results of interviews with civic education teachers, they had conceptualised contextual learning as learning that related the lesson material to real life experiences and application in the students' daily lives. This contextual learning was characterised by the development of the students' competence and school surroundings, to apply multiple methods and media and to prioritise learning in groups. As an approach, contextual learning could be implemented by a variety of models, such as: (1) interviewing community figures and inviting them to the classroom; (2) observation and visits to government and non-government institutions; (3) cooperative learning (jigsaw, snowball throwing, number head together, peer-tutoring); (4) case analysis; and (5) simulation, role play, immediate practice (civic action), and creating a portfolio. All contextual learning models had a constructivist component: asking for questions, inquiry, creating a learning community, modelling, reflection, authentic assessment, active, creative, effective and delightful learning, and also discovering value-moral norms through examples from various students' living environments such as family, school and society.

The results of an analysis of the data about the condition of students' character can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Condition of junior high school students' character in West Java by student (N = 994)

No.	Students' character	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1.	Less	54	5.43
2.	Average	356	35.82
3.	Good	584	58.75
Total		994	100.00

Source: Komalasari (2009)

The Table 2 showed that only a few students had lower character (5.43%), some had average character (35.82%) and the majority had good character (58.75%). Thus, it could be concluded that the students of junior high schools in West Java taught by civic education teachers who applied contextual learning had good character, and only a few had lesser character.

Based on the results of interviews with civic education teachers, it appears that civic dispositions generally improved after contextual learning was applied in civic education. These dispositions included empathy, courtesy, responsibility, leadership, decision-making, more mature thinking, independence, greeting and hand-kissing, collective *dzuhur* praying, cleaning, considering norms and ethics, tolerance and discipline. However, these dispositions should be supported by the creativity of civic education teachers in discovering affective aspects of the cognitive material dominating the current curriculum of civic education. Besides that, these dispositions could be supported by creating synergy between civic education learning and civic-focused extracurricular activities and self-development programs developed by schools.

Hypothesis testing

To answer the research question, hypothesis testing was done in two directions, correlation hypothesis testing and effect hypothesis testing. Correlation hypothesis testing was done using the Pearson Correlations analysis technique. The effect hypothesis testing involved linear regression. Based on the data analysis using the computer program SPSS 12.5, the results described below were found.

First, there was a significant positive correlation between variable X (contextual learning in civic education) and variable Y (students' character) of 0.48. This showed that variable X had a strong positive correlation with Y. Based on hypothesis testing considering the significance value compared with a reliability level set at $\alpha = 0.05$, the ρ value of variable X and Y was found to be $0.00 < 0.05$. Thus, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted, meaning that there was significant positive correlation between variable X (contextual learning in civic education) and variable Y (students' character).

Second, the R correlation coefficient for variables X and Y was 0.48 with ρ value $0.00 < 0.05$, based on the result of regression analysis. Thus, H_0 was rejected and H_a accepted, meaning that there was a significant effect of the independent variable X (contextual learning in civic education) on variable Y (students' character). The next analysis used ANOVA and produced a ρ value of $0.00 < 0.05$, meaning that testing rejected H_0 and accepted H_a . A linear correlation

between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y) was found, so it was concluded that a regression model was a proper analytical tool for the data.

Third, the significance of contribution from variable X (contextual learning in civic education) on the variation of variable Y (students' character) was analysed by considering the *R Squared* value of 0.23. This shows that the independent variable X (contextual civic education learning) explained 23% of the variation of the dependent variable Y (students' character), and the rest of the variation was determined by other factors that could not be explained in this regression model.

Discussion of Study Findings

Contextual learning in civic education had a strong, positive correlation with the character of junior high school students in West Java of 0.48. This shows that contextual learning in civic education determined as much as 23% of students' character development; the remaining 77% was determined by other factors that were not studied. The strong correlation between contextual learning in civic education and students' character could be explained by several factors discussed below.

First, contextual learning in civic education taught citizenship life skills. The students were respected as individuals as well as members of society. As a consequence, the students developed interdependence, differentiation, and self-regulation. These three principles could be contextual learning principles (Johnson, 2002). Therefore, contextual learning in civic education developed the principles of: (1) interdependence – this principle led to the creation of relationships, rather than isolation (cooperative value); (2) differentiation – this principle stated that every person was unique and varied in characteristics such as sociocultural background and learning style. Such variety should be respected (tolerance value); (3) self-regulation – this principle stated that everything was regulated by the individuals themselves, maintained by themselves, and respected by themselves. The self-regulation skill required every student to use all of his or her ability (self-confidence value).

Second, contextual learning in civic education encouraged the creation of democratic learning. This meant that civic education was a means for students to develop into intelligent, participative, responsible and democratic citizens. Democratic principles were included in the content and also incorporated in the learning process of civic education. Contextual learning in civic education, much like democratic learning, adopted some approaches summarised by Bern and Erickson (2001) by the following: (1) problem-based learning, an approach that

involved the students solving problems by integrating concepts and skills of various disciplines. This approach included collecting and integrating information, and presenting discoveries; (2) cooperative learning, an approach that organised learning by using small study groups in which the students cooperated together to reach the learning objectives; (3) project-based learning, an approach that focused on principle concepts of a discipline, involved the students solving problems and other meaningful tasks, encouraged the students to work independently to establish learning, and ultimately created real work; and (4) service learning, an approach that provided a practical application of new skills and knowledge development for the needs of society through projects and activities.

Third, contextual learning in civic education had an element of character development. The problem of the recent moral crises in Indonesia could be a lesson for the global education community. The process of education as a way to develop values and attitude should be optimised through civic education as value-based, contextual education. This idea is related to the basic concept of value-based education according to Hermann (1972), who stated that "...values is neither taught nor caught, it is learned," meaning that values are absorbed, or caught, internalised and standardised as an inherent part of one's personality through the learning process. The learning process not only occurs in private spaces, but it also occurs in society because we live a cultural social life. Therefore, the educational process is basically seen as an enculturation process to create civilised people (Winataputra & Budimansyah, 2007: 168).

Character education was developed through standardisation, customisation, and enculturation processes and through direct practice integrated in a complex cultural system, including civic education class, school in general, family, peer groups, organisation and mass media. Lickona (1992) introduces the terms of "values education, moral education for virtues" as education processes aiming to develop values and attitudes. In Indonesia, discourse about value education was implicitly included in the idea that civic education substantively and pedagogically had a mission to develop students' ability to be people who had a sense of community and love for their country (State laws of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 Year 2003 Article 37).

Contextual civic education, which contains character education as its core, could be developed through various approaches as formulated by Superka, Ahrens, Hedstrom, Ford, & Johnson (1976: 145):

1. Inculcation approach, an approach emphasising value inculcation. According to Superka et al. (1976), the aims of value education based on

this approach are to get students to accept specific social values and to change students' values that are not in agreement with expected social values. The methods used in the learning process, according to this approach, are modelling, positive and negative enforcement, simulation, role-playing and others.

2. Cognitive moral development approach, also called the cognitive development approach because of its emphasis on the cognitive aspect of moral development. This approach encourages students to think actively about moral problems and to make moral decisions. According to this approach, moral development is seen as a series of levels of thinking in making moral consideration, from lower levels to higher ones (Elias, 1989). The aims of this approach are to help students in making more complex moral considerations based on higher values, and to encourage students to discuss the reasons why they chose their value and position in a moral problem (Superka et al., 1976; Banks, 1985). The process of value teaching, according to this approach, is based on moral dilemmas using the method of group discussion.
3. Values analysis approach, an approach emphasising the improvement of students' ability to think logically by analysing the problems related to values. Compared with the cognitive development approach, an important difference is that the value analysis approach places more emphasis on problem discussions related to values, while the cognitive development approach places more emphasis on individual moral dilemmas. According to this approach, the aims of moral education are to help students to use logical thinking skills and scientific methods in analysing problems related to specific moral values and to help the students to use analytical and rational thinking processes in relating and formulating concepts about their values. The teaching methods that are frequently used are individual- or group-based learning about problems containing moral values, inquiry, literature study, and class discussion based on rational thinking (Superka et al., 1976).
4. Values clarification approach, an approach emphasising efforts to help students in analysing their own feelings and behaviours and to improve their awareness about their own values. The aims of values education, according to this approach, are to help the student to be aware of and identify their own values and other's values; to help the students be able to communicate openly and honestly with others regarding their own values; and to help the students to use rational thinking and emotional awareness simultaneously to understand their own feelings, values and behaviour patterns (Superka et al., 1976). In its teaching process, this approach uses methods such as dialogue, writing, discussion in small and large groups, and others (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1978).

5. Action learning approach, an approach emphasising the effort to provide opportunities for students to do moral deeds, either individually or collectively in groups. The ultimate aim of moral education based on this approach is to provide opportunities for the students to do moral deeds, either individually or collectively, according to their own values and to encourage the students to see themselves as individual and social beings who do not have absolute freedom, but rather, are members of society who have to take part in democratic processes. The methods used are specific projects conducted at school or in society to practice organisational skills and interaction with others (Superka et al., 1976).

Fourth, character education developed local wisdom values. Character education should develop local wisdom values that support universal values. Cooperation and independence are cultural values that should be built continuously through character education. Basically, character education is inheritance of values, wishes and national goals stated in the national constitution and messages from national founding fathers. In this global era, cooperative and independent values should be attributes of a global citizen. Therefore, character building demands never-ending change (never ending process), an effort that should be done continuously, for example through civic education. Thus, civic education should have a mission of character education, not only through material (content) but also in the learning process itself (learning strategy). The material of civic education should give insight and stimulate the students to know and be aware of national cultural values as social capital for their personal development. Civic education should implement cultural values in learning practice, such as through cooperative learning, self-regulated learning, and value learning.

Citizenship values and character developed through contextual learning were national local wisdom values that were passed on from one generation to the next. For instance, the concept of cooperation in contextual learning was developed through mutual cooperation and deliberation. The value of cooperation among West Java people was in line with the philosophy of "*silih asih, silih asah, silih asuh*," which literally meant loving each other, giving knowledge to each other and nurturing each other. Therefore, cooperation was social capital that students already possessed that should be emphasised and optimised in learning. Thus, cooperative value was developed not only through the material (or content) of civic education but also cultivated in the process of civic education by learning through cooperative learning.

The value of self-regulation, including independence, was a message of the nation's founding fathers that should be realised. Soekarno (1930: 92) clarified: "if Indonesia people want to reach political power, which is to be independent, if

our people want to be the master in their own house, they should educate themselves, conduct representative for themselves, try by their own habit and power". Therefore, in civic education, the material about self-achievement should be developed to assure national improvement, and self-regulated learning should be implemented to this end.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the research question, the conclusions of this study are:

1. Most junior high schools in West Java are quite good at implementing a contextual approach to civic education. Junior high school students in West Java taught by civic education teachers who implemented contextual learning have good character, and only a few have lesser character.
2. Contextual learning in civic education had a significant positive effect on junior high school students' character development.

Based on the hypothesis testing results, further conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. Contextual learning in civic education teaches citizenship life skills such as interdependence, differentiation and self-regulation.
2. Contextual learning in civic education supports the creation of democratic learning.
3. Contextual learning in civic education involves character education (character building).
4. Character education develops local wisdom values.

Recommendation

Based on the study's conclusion, the recommendations are as follows:

1. Teachers should develop contextual learning through various strategies. Besides using problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, and structured project-based learning, they should increase the development of value learning through various approaches such as the inculcation approach, cognitive moral development approach, value analysis approach, value clarification approach and action learning approach.
2. Schools should encourage the creation of a conducive climate for establishing the school as a democratic laboratory and means of value

and character education. To do this, schools should develop lesson study models to improve the teachers' competence and to improve the quality of civic education. In addition, schools should develop an action learning approach through a value refraction program and also develop citizenship-based social service learning through active social service. Such activities can be integrated in Intra School Student Organization or OSIS (Organisasi Siswa Intra Sekolah) activities and various extracurricular activities at school.

3. The government (National Education Department) should have a strong commitment to improve the quality of civic education as value-based education and to comprehensively and synergistically integrate nation and character building in the entire education system to improve the quality of national character. The government needs to increase the availability of appropriate civic education curriculum instruments for students' value and character development and stress the improvement of civic education teachers' innovation when it comes to students' value and character education. The National Education Department should cooperate with teacher education institutions and schools to develop a system for training teachers on contextual teaching and learning and value learning, followed up by classroom practice that is monitored and evaluated. The National Education Department should also conduct research on the implementation and effect of contextual teaching and learning for the improvement of learning quality.
4. *Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan* (Educational Institution of Educational Personnel)
The organisers of civic education in universities should develop research and innovative value learning models in order to improve the quality of civic education. This includes involving schools and teachers in lecturing activity through field work practice, classroom action research, guest lecturing on the teaching and learning process, and developing lesson plans, among other activities.

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