

Strengthening Students' Participatory Skills in Pancasila Education in the Digital Era (Case Study at SMPN 12 Surabaya)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the process of strengthening students' participatory skills in Pancasila Education in the context of the digital era. Participatory skills refer to students' ability to actively express opinions, engage in discussions, and participate in decision-making processes that reflect the character of democratic citizenship. Amid the challenges of digital transformation in education, Pancasila Education is expected to transmit values while fostering citizenship competencies relevant to the 21st-century context. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method at SMP Negeri 12 Surabaya. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and documentation of learning designs. The research findings reveal that participatory skills can be enhanced through discussion-based learning methods, problem-based learning models, project-based learning models, and the use of the Lapor.go.id digital platform that encourages active student involvement. This study also highlights the important roles of teacher support, a democratic classroom environment, and technology integration in creating participatory learning spaces.

Keywords: Participatory Skills; Pancasila Education; Digital Era

Introduction

A democratic state system is often characterized by the openness of active participation for citizens to participate in determining governance. The World Public Sector Report (2023) emphasizes that a civic space that allows for active participation and freedom of expression is part of the democratic social contract. Indonesia, the world's third-largest democracy, ranked 59th out of 167 countries on the Democracy Index in 2024, with a score of 6.44. A 2022 survey by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) examined young people's interest in freedom of expression in Indonesia. The CSIS report indicated that young people's tendency to express their political aspirations is more dominant through social media than through conventional forms of political participation. A total of 17.7% of respondents reported having expressed opinions on

political issues through social media. In contrast, only 6% of respondents had expressed their opinions directly to public officials or members of parliament, and 2.4% had donated to political party activities. The majority of other respondents, 73.9%, admitted that they had never been involved in activities related to political participation, either offline or online (Hasya, 2022).

The above data reflects the tendency of young citizens to participate more actively in digital spaces than through conventional political mechanisms. These democratic challenges demand systematic efforts that can be implemented through education. Dwitasari (2024) emphasized that civic education has great potential to instill political education in schools. Civic education, included within the scope of Pancasila Education, functions as a means to increase intelligence, participation, and foster a sense of civic responsibility. This can be achieved through a scientific approach,

the use of appropriate instruments, and the implementation of comprehensive and integrated education (Winataputra and Budimansyah, 2012).

The above objectives and functions are closely related to strengthening participatory skills. Participatory skills can be developed in Pancasila Education with a scope of skills in interacting, monitoring, and actively influencing citizenship actions (Winarno, 2024). Participatory skills are the development of participatory skills with a primary focus on fostering civic responsibility. Every citizen needs to possess the skills to interact effectively, monitor government policy direction, influence public decision-making, manage conflict, and form coalitions (Winarno, 2024).

Referring to the Regulation of the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2025 concerning Amendments to the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 12 of 2024 concerning the Curriculum in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education Level, and Secondary Education Level, it states that Pancasila Education taught for two hours every week at the junior high school level should be strengthened in order to develop students' citizenship skills. In terms of its characteristics, the Pancasila Education subject is used as a development vehicle in order to realize democratic and responsible citizens. Students are encouraged to practice their rights and obligations as citizens while being encouraged to be able to voice them critically.

The ideal scope for balancing the rights and obligations of young citizens needs to be strengthened in the Pancasila Education learning process. Observations of student characteristics at SMP Negeri 12 Surabaya indicate that there are obstacles in developing participatory skills. This condition is evident in two activities that take place during the learning process. First, during the question and answer session, only a portion of students dared to raise their hands to express their opinions or ask questions about citizenship issues. Second, during group discussions, there was an imbalance of authority, with students classified as active having a greater portion of

the opportunity to express their opinions and influence group decisions. As a result, passive students merely followed the flow of the discussion and did not have the opportunity to influence group outcomes.

These findings were further reinforced by observations aimed at analyzing student needs, indicating that students already possess basic knowledge of their rights and obligations as citizens. Observations revealed that some students are interested in exercising their right to freedom of opinion and expression. However, they are still unfamiliar with the procedures for expressing their opinions in public, both in person and virtually. This trend demonstrates the need to address students' learning needs in Pancasila Education, particularly in strengthening their participatory skills in learning in the digital era.

Literature Review

Participatory skills

Participatory skills are a subset of citizenship skills that emphasize students' ability to actively participate in school and community settings. Civic framework for National Assessment of Educational Progress (1998) participatory skills include the ability to express opinions, collaborate in groups, influence policy, and participate in democratic decision-making processes. These civic skills are important indicators in assessing the ability to fulfill the role of a responsible citizen. Participatory skills are essential to develop through learning activities that encourage students to discuss, debate civilly, and express ideas openly. In the context of Indonesian education, civic skills are categorized as participatory skills. This is found within the scope of skills competencies or emphasized in psychomotor aspects (Winarno, 2024).

Participatory skills encompass various forms of social and political skills. To clarify their scope, Branson (1998) divides participatory skills into three, including: First, interacting, which is a skill related to citizens' ability to communicate and collaborate with other citizens. This skill involves asking questions, answering questions, negotiating, forming coalitions, and managing conflict through mediation, compromise, and

agreement. Second, monitoring, which is a citizen's ability to engage in political and government processes. Citizens need to be involved in the process of monitoring public issues, participating in public meetings, and being able to observe political issues up to the courts. Third, influencing, which is a citizen's ability to influence public issues, relates to creating petitions, speaking publicly, testifying before public bodies, engaging in advocacy groups, building alliances, and voting.

Constructivism Learning Theory

Constructivism theory views learning as an active process in which students construct knowledge through interactions with their environment, experiences, and other people. Constructivism theory primarily emphasizes the role of social interaction and collaboration as the foundation of cognitive development (social constructivism). The constructivist framework reflects that learning can occur when students experience and construct meaning through authentic engagement. This principle of social constructivism aligns with the process of strengthening participatory skills, which emphasizes students' active involvement in interacting and shaping their own knowledge.

In the review of educational philosophy, constructivism is considered as all our concepts are constructed (Kukla, 2013). Meanwhile, according to Fischer, KW, & Bidell, T. (2014), Constructivism characterizes the acquisition of knowledge as a product of an individual's creative self-organizing activities in a particular environment. Constructivism has characteristics that illustrate that the acquisition of knowledge from the learning process is considered a product of individual activities influenced by the environment. Brown HD (2019) divides constructivism into two main branches, namely cognitive and social. Cognitive constructivism refers to Piaget's view that learning is a developmental process that involves change, self-emergence and construction of previously built. Therefore, cognitive constructivism makes students to build their own reality, discover or change complex information to gain new knowledge. On the other hand, social constructivism is

based on Vygotsky's view that students' thinking and meaning-making are socially constructed and emerge from social interactions within their environment. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cooperative learning in constructing cognitive, emotional, and real-world images.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The location of this study was SMP Negeri 12 Surabaya. The data source was taken using the snowball sampling technique. The criteria in this study were grade IX students who had balanced characteristics and learning readiness. The focus of this study was the aspect of participatory skills that developed in students in Pancasila Education learning and was reviewed based on constructivist learning theory. Referring to the qualitative approach, the data collection techniques that have been carried out include: First, observation by conducting observations to find out the picture of the situation and condition of Pancasila Education learning. Second, interviews using interview guidelines and elaborating questions spontaneously according to the context of the discussion regarding student characteristics and learning strategies. Third, documentation in the form of books, research journals, and papers on constructivist learning theory, participatory skills, and group learning result sheets. Based on the collected data, it was then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis technique with the following stages: First, in the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, simplified, and focused the data to form certain themes or patterns. Second, in the data presentation stage, the researcher selected and presented it in narrative text form and analyzed it using Putnam's social capital theory. Third, the conclusion-drawing stage was carried out by summarizing data that was deemed valid and credible.

Result and Discussion

Student Interaction Skills in Group Discussions

Civic skills, as a component of Pancasila education, are directed toward developing a set of abilities that provide students with the intellectual, social, and personal skills needed to function as citizens. Civic skills are developed from school age to prepare students for future involvement in the democratic process (Maulana, 2022). Based on observations conducted during three Pancasila Education learning sessions in grade IX of SMPN 12 Surabaya, the Pancasila Education teacher employed a group discussion method as a learning strategy. Students were divided into five groups of six. During the discussion, interaction skills were defined as communication skills, as measured by asking questions, listening, and expressing opinions. Observations showed that 18 out of 30 students actively participated in the discussion, asking questions, responding, and expressing opinions. However, 12 out of 30 students tended to be passive, spending more time listening and contributing less to the group's output. This finding is supported by a statement by Ms. AA, a Pancasila Education teacher, who stated:

"I deliberately use group discussions so the children can learn to express their opinions. If they just read or watch the material, many of them are passive. When they work in groups, they're more responsive, although some still can't follow along very well." (Interview, August 6, 2025)

Teachers recognize differences in student characteristics, with some not yet fully aware of the need to participate in group interactions. Observations indicate that active students are confident in expressing their opinions and asking questions relevant to the topic. On the other hand, passive students still require teacher support to develop their communication and interaction skills. Teachers address this challenge by assigning roles within the group. This assignment aims to encourage more equitable participation, with students acting as moderators, note-takers, and presenters. Regarding the indicator of listening to the opinions of other group members, students strive to listen and refrain

from interrupting. This also occurs when differing opinions arise, with students able to ask questions to clarify the direction of the discussion and reach a compromise to resolve the issue.

Student Participation in Monitoring Citizenship Issues

Monitoring is a citizen's skill to play an active role in the political process and oversee the running of government. In Pancasila Education learning, monitoring is conceptualized as students' ability to observe, analyze, and evaluate public issues. These skills are trained with a focus on the school, community, and national environments. Observations show that Ms. AA encourages student involvement in the process of monitoring public issues and government policies by implementing a problem-based learning model. Students in grade IX-B are presented with examples of current civic issues that can be identified and analyzed in groups. As expressed by Ms. AA:

"The book provides several example problems, but the children don't fully understand them. So I use these problems to help them better understand real-life examples. They can look for additional information from news stories and related articles, discuss them together, and then present their solutions." (Interview, August 13, 2025).

In practice, teachers provide topics that are appropriate to students' development and relevant to everyday life. Examples of problems concerning the fulfillment of the right to education are chosen so that students can explore the core issues, policies issued, and their implementation. Observations show that students are provided with facilities to utilize smartphones as digital learning resources. Students explore information about problems and seek solutions together through online news portals, official government websites, and video coverage. Interviews with group 1 discussed cases of school dropouts in remote areas and examined the Smart Indonesia Program (PIP). One student stated that although the government has launched various programs, the right to education has

not yet been fully felt by all children in Indonesia. This finding indicates that students already have the ability to access information according to the topic of the group's problem.

Referring to the group learning outcomes, it is clear that students' critical analysis skills are still limited. This is evident in the language used, which tends to copy information and lacks verification of credible sources. The findings above indicate that students' monitoring skills still require strengthening of civic literacy from teachers. In a review of the repertoire of civics, civic literacy occupies an element of citizens' political virtues. Civic literacy encompasses basic political knowledge that can be realized in civic activities (Kollo et al., 2024). In line with Suryaningsih, A. (2020) Civic literacy refers to the knowledge and ability of citizens to participate in civic life. This ability manifests itself in updated procedures for receiving and understanding public information, and understanding the provisions for exercising their rights and obligations as good citizens (Masyada & Washington, 2019).

Students' Ability to Influence Public Policy through Digital Media Amidst the rapid flow of information and technology, the practice of Pancasila Education learning faces the task of passing on the nation's noble values along with the provision of 21st century civilized competencies. Functionally, Pancasila Education is specifically devoted to building a body of knowledge that needs to utilize other existing fields of study. Political education is one instrument to provide a deep understanding of the political process, decision-making, the exercise of rights and obligations as citizens. The integration of political education into Pancasila Education enables students to internalize their roles as young citizens (Affani, et al., 2025).

Influencer skills refer to a citizen's ability to influence public issues, both formally and informally. For junior high school students, influence skills are aimed at developing critical awareness and the courage to express aspirations regarding issues surrounding them. Observations indicate that strengthening influence skills in Pancasila Education is realized through the implementation of a project-based learning model. This learning model aims to improve students' collaboration

and critical reasoning skills. As expressed by Mrs. AA in an interview:

"I use a Project-Based Learning model. Students are asked to choose a local issue, such as the availability of school facilities or a problem in the surrounding environment, and then create a solution in the form of a real-life digital petition. The petition is then uploaded to the lapor.go.id platform. This way, they understand the material through discussion and can also put it into practice by submitting their concerns according to the official government-recognized complaint procedure." (Interview, August 13, 2025).

In Pancasila Education learning in the digital era, teachers utilize the lapor.go.id platform as a simulation medium for reporting student complaints and aspirations. This indicates that the learning strategy implemented by Mrs. AA includes improving student participation skills. Students are given a simulation of being citizens who are able to influence life and public policy by submitting petitions. The characteristics of the PjBL learning model, which aligns with the development of 21st-century skills, turned out to be a crucial moment that can encourage students to be motivated and enthusiastic in researching public issues from various digital sources. As occurred in group 2. All members of group 2 agreed to submit a report regarding the delay in the distribution of student books, including photos as supporting evidence. This situation indicates that students are beginning to understand the mechanisms of digital-based public advocacy. A statement from student AR confirms this finding:

"We just learned that there's a website for reporting directly to the government. I think this is great, so if there's a problem, it can be reported quickly and resolved." (Interview, August 21, 2025).

The above statement indicates that students have acquired declarative knowledge about the rights and obligations of citizens. Practically, students can actively participate in expressing their opinions through official government channels. This learning demonstrates that the implementation of the

project-based learning model has successfully fostered public advocacy awareness. Ultimately, the petition-making results demonstrated that four out of five groups successfully conveyed their complaints, aspirations, or requests for information, accompanied by complete supporting evidence and in the appropriate format.

Participatory Skills in Pancasila Education Learning

The Pancasila Education subject holds a strategic position in shaping Indonesian citizens who inherit character in accordance with Pancasila values. In terms of its characteristics, Pancasila Education serves as an educational vehicle in developing students into good citizens through three components of citizenship. These three components align with three learning domains, including: First, civic knowledge, the basic knowledge that every citizen needs to possess. Second, civic skills, the skills that citizens should possess. Third, civic disposition, the attitude or character of citizens (Winarno, 2024).

Instilling civic knowledge in students forms the initial foundation for developing civic skills. Civic skills comprise two components that must be mastered by students: intellectual skills and participatory skills. Participatory skills are a subset of civic skills that emphasize students' ability to actively engage in school and community settings. Based on the content standards of the Merdeka curriculum, Pancasila Education plays a crucial role in integrating students' abilities to interact, be responsive to public policy, be wise in decision-making, and manage conflict. These abilities are embodied in learning outcomes through the verbs build, implement, apply, and practice (Winarno, 2024).

Based on the documentation results, it is known that the material that intersects with the psychomotor domain in grade IX. Consisting of three chapters of material, namely: (1) implementing rights and obligations as citizens; (2) practicing freedom of opinion as citizens in the era of open information; (3) actively participating in maintaining the territorial integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. These three materials are in a sequence of interconnected materials and their implementation uses group

discussion learning methods. In strengthening participatory skills, the embodiment of problem-based learning models and project-based learning models is in line with the principles of constructivist learning theory. Constructivism views that knowledge is actively constructed by students through social interactions and contextual experiences (Candra & Retnawati, 2020). Constructivism is a philosophy of knowledge that is closely related to the process of self-construction (formation). Existing knowledge is based on a cognitive construction that runs continuously through reorganization, thus giving rise to new understanding (Nurhidayati, et al. 2024).

For constructivist theorists, knowledge is a process of gaining knowledge through experience. Experience is a crucial factor in developing one's knowledge (Astuti et al. 2024). In the field of social sciences, Supardan (2022) states that experiences interacting with society and the environment significantly influence one's understanding of social sciences. In learning practices, teachers have provided participatory spaces for students to research and analyze public issues. This is reflected in the implementation of learning, where teachers construct understanding of the material through investigative activities and the creation of digital petitions. The implications of strengthening participatory skills are evident in students' active participation in asking questions, providing responses, and expressing opinions.

Conclusion

Strengthening students' participatory skills in Pancasila Education learning is achieved through collaborative and experience-based learning strategies. The application of group discussion methods, problem-based learning (PBL), and project-based learning (PjBL) has provided students with opportunities to construct knowledge through social interaction and active involvement in examining public issues. Through the strategies implemented by teachers, students are positioned as learning subjects capable of identifying problems, formulating solutions, and expressing aspirations through the digital media

Lapor.go.id. Pancasila Education in the digital era demonstrates a transformation in learning that is more adaptive, responsive, and opens up opportunities for participation. The use of technology in the classroom makes it easier for students to improve their interaction skills, monitor public issues, and influence policy through the creation of digital petitions. This finding is reinforced by the alignment with social constructivism learning theory. The importance of social interaction has shaped experiences and added new knowledge constructs. This alignment proves that developing participatory skills is a strategic tool in shaping critical and responsible citizens in the digital era.

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