

Repositioning Civic Education as an Integrative Platform for Sustainable Development, Human Rights, and Global Citizenship: Bridging Pancasila Values and Indonesian Local Wisdom

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Abstract

This conceptual paper argues that Civic Education should be repositioned as an integrative platform linking Sustainable Development Goals, Human Rights Education, Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development, Pancasila values, and Indonesian local wisdom. Drawing on a library research design, the article synthesizes UNESCO, United Nations, Indonesian policy documents, and selected scholarly literature to address a persistent gap in the field: the tendency to discuss GCED, ESD, HRE, and Pancasila-based citizenship education in parallel rather than as a coherent educational architecture. The paper shows that SDG Target 4.7 explicitly frames education as a means to promote sustainable development, human rights, peace, non-violence, global citizenship, and cultural diversity, while SDG 10, SDG 16, and SDG 17 require inclusive participation, accountable institutions, and cross-sector partnerships. Building on this framework, the article proposes an integrative model of Civic Education for Indonesia that combines four layers: normative commitments, curriculum design, transformative pedagogy, and community-based action. Pancasila values and local wisdom such as gotong royong are positioned not as symbolic complements, but as living civic ethics that translate global commitments into context-sensitive democratic practice. The paper concludes that master's-level Civic Education scholarship in Indonesia should move beyond descriptive character discourse and toward a rights-based, sustainability-oriented, and partnership-driven framework for curriculum, teacher education, and future research.

Keywords: Education for Sustainable Development; Pancasila; local wisdom; mutual cooperation.

Introduction

The twenty-first century confronts education systems with a cluster of interlocking demands: accelerating environmental degradation, persistent inequality, the erosion of democratic institutions, and the need to prepare learners who can act responsibly as members of both a national community and a global society. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development translates these demands into Target 4.7, which calls on all learners to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through, among other means, education for sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, a culture of peace and non-violence,

global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity (United Nations, 2015). Civic Education is the field most directly responsible for translating this mandate into curriculum and classroom practice.

In Indonesia, Civic Education carries an additional historical and constitutional obligation: it is the principal vehicle through which Pancasila, the five foundational principles of the Indonesian state, is transmitted to successive generations of citizens. Yet the scholarly and curricular treatment of Civic Education in Indonesia has tended to run on two separate tracks. On one track sit the internationally circulated frameworks of Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), and Human

Rights Education (HRE), each promoted largely through UNESCO and United Nations instruments. On the other track sits Pancasila-based citizenship education, discussed primarily in relation to national identity, character formation, and moral discourse. These two tracks are rarely brought into a single analytical frame, even though they address overlapping normative commitments to dignity, justice, and collective responsibility.

This gap is not merely conceptual: it is visible in conditions already documented in Indonesia. Empirical studies of Pancasila and Citizenship Education report that instruction measurably raises students' political literacy, yet its translation into civic behavior is mediated by structural conditions such as economic vulnerability and entrenched local political practices, including money politics and patronage networks documented in recent electoral cycles (Hidayati et al., 2022; Erlinda, 2023; Aryaguna et al., 2026). Classroom level evidence further indicates that where Pancasila instruction remains rote and text based it tends to fail at cultivating critical or tolerant dispositions, while reflective and experience-based approaches show measurably stronger effects on value internalization (Suyato, 2016, as synthesized in Aryaguna et al., 2026). At the same time, as civic life increasingly shifts toward digital spaces, survey and interview evidence from senior high schools shows that PPKn's integration of digital-citizenship competencies remains limited, constrained by rigid curriculum demands and insufficient teacher training (Agus et al., 2025). This conceptual paper addresses that gap. It asks how Civic Education in Indonesia can be repositioned as an integrative platform that connects Sustainable Development Goals, Human Rights Education, Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development, Pancasila values, and Indonesian local wisdom within a single coherent educational architecture. The paper proceeds by reviewing the relevant conceptual literature, describing the library research design used to synthesize normative documents and scholarship, presenting an integrative four-layer model of Civic Education, and discussing its implications for curriculum design, teacher education, and future research at the master's level.

Literature Review

Citizenship education has long been theorized as more than the transmission of civic knowledge. Kymlicka (1995) argues that citizenship in culturally diverse societies must accommodate group-differentiated rights rather than assume a single, undifferentiated national identity. Osler and Starkey (2005) extend this argument by framing citizenship education as a practice of inclusion that must be learned through participation, not merely taught as content. Banks (2008) goes further, distinguishing legal, minimal, active, and transformative forms of citizenship, and contending that only transformative citizenship education equips learners to question and act on structural injustice at both national and global scales. Together, these perspectives establish that citizenship education is inseparable from questions of rights, diversity, and civic action.

At the international level, UNESCO has developed two closely related but distinct frameworks that operationalize these commitments. Global Citizenship Education is defined as an approach that develops learners' knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes for a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, and sustainable world (UNESCO, 2014). Education for Sustainable Development, meanwhile, equips learners with the competencies needed to make informed decisions in favor of environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society for present and future generations, and specifies learning objectives that can be embedded across subject areas (UNESCO, 2017). UNESCO (2015) situates both frameworks within a broader humanistic vision of education as a global common good, one that resists purely instrumental or economistic framings of learning. Read together with SDG Target 4.7, these frameworks indicate that sustainability, human rights, and global citizenship are not separate curricular add-ons but constitutive elements of quality education itself.

Within Indonesia, Winataputra and Budimansyah (2007) established Civic Education as an academic field with its own normative foundations, teaching materials, and classroom culture, positioning Pancasila as both the philosophical basis and the substantive content of citizenship learning. Winataputra (2015) later called for a historical and

epistemological reconstruction of Civic Education, arguing that the field must continually renew its theoretical foundations to remain relevant to changing social conditions. What remains underdeveloped in this literature is a systematic account of how Pancasila-based Civic Education relates to the global frameworks of GCED, ESD, and HRE, and how local wisdom traditions such as gotong royong, musyawarah, and communal land stewardship can function as living civic ethics rather than as decorative cultural references. This paper's integrative model, developed in the Result and Discussion section, is offered as a response to that gap.

Method

Research Design

The specific analytical procedure applied within this design is document analysis (Bowen, 2009), a qualitative method in which documents are treated as data to be systematically read, coded, and interpreted for their manifest content. Document analysis was chosen over discourse analysis because the purpose of this paper is to identify and synthesize substantive normative and curricular content what the SDGs, UNESCO frameworks, Indonesian policy documents, and the citizenship education literature say should be taught and why rather than to interrogate how that content is linguistically constructed or embedded in relations of power, which is the characteristic concern of discourse analysis. Each document was first skim read to establish relevance, then read closely and coded thematically, with codes compared iteratively across documents until stable categories emerged. The literature analyzed spans three categories: UN/UNESCO normative instruments, Indonesian constitutional and curriculum policy documents, and peer reviewed scholarship from Scopus and SINTA indexed journals published within approximately the last decade (2014–2026).

Because library research does not generate primary field data, its credibility rests on the trustworthiness of the document analysis procedure rather than on statistical validity (Bowen, 2009). Two safeguards were applied. First, data source triangulation (Denzin, 1978) was used across the three document categories:

a theme was retained only where it could be traced across at least two categories the claim that gotong royong operationalizes inclusive participation, for example, was checked against Indonesian policy language, UNESCO's participation oriented GCED indicators, and the empirical citizenship-education literature discussed in the Result and Discussion section. Second, theory triangulation was used to guard against idiosyncratic reading of any single text: emergent codes were cross checked against established citizenship education theory (Kymlicka, 1995; Banks, 2008; Osler & Starkey, 2005) before being accepted as themes.

Data Sources and Analysis

Three categories of documents were purposively selected and analyzed. The first category consists of United Nations and UNESCO normative instruments, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Target 4.7, and UNESCO's guidance documents on Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development. The second category consists of Indonesian policy and constitutional documents relevant to Pancasila and national civic education. The third category consists of peer-reviewed scholarly literature on citizenship education theory, Pancasila-based Civic Education, and Indonesian local wisdom. Documents were analyzed using thematic synthesis: passages relevant to normative commitments, curricular content, pedagogy, and civic action were coded, compared across sources, and organized into recurring themes. These themes were then arranged into the four-layer integrative model presented in the following section, following an iterative process of comparing the global frameworks against the Pancasila-based literature until a coherent architecture emerged.

Result and Discussion

SDG Target 4.7 and the Case for an Integrative Platform

SDG Target 4.7 explicitly names sustainable development, human rights, peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and cultural diversity as outcomes that education must deliver by 2030 (United Nations, 2015).

Read on its own, Target 4.7 already dissolves the boundary between ESD, HRE, and GCED: a learner cannot be said to have acquired sustainable-development competence while remaining ignorant of human rights, nor can global citizenship be taught in isolation from an appreciation of cultural diversity. The synthesis in this paper extends that logic to three further goals that shape the institutional conditions under which Civic Education operates. SDG 10 calls for reduced inequality and the meaningful inclusion of marginalized groups in social, economic, and political life; SDG 16 calls for accountable institutions, the rule of law, and inclusive decision-making; and SDG 17 calls for cross-sector partnerships as the means of implementation. Taken together, these targets imply that Civic Education must simultaneously build individual competencies, strengthen institutional accountability, and cultivate the partnerships needed to sustain civic practice beyond the classroom.

A Four-Layer Integrative Model

Building on this synthesis, the paper proposes an integrative model of Civic Education for Indonesia composed of four interlocking layers. The first layer, normative commitments, anchors the model in Pancasila alongside the global commitments of the SDGs, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and UNESCO's GCED and ESD frameworks, treating them as mutually reinforcing rather than competing sources of value. The second layer, curriculum design, translates these commitments into learning outcomes that integrate sustainability, rights, and global citizenship content into existing Civic Education and Pancasila and Citizenship Education syllabi rather than treating them as separate subjects. The third layer, transformative pedagogy, moves instruction away from rote memorization of Pancasila principles toward deliberation, case-based reasoning, and project-based civic action, consistent with Banks's (2008) argument that only transformative approaches produce citizens capable of addressing structural injustice. The fourth layer, community-based action, connects classroom learning to local civic practice, positioning schools as partners with communities, local government, and civil-society organizations, in line with the

partnership logic of SDG 17.

Pancasila and Local Wisdom as Living Civic Ethics

A central claim of this paper is that Pancasila values and Indonesian local wisdom should not be treated as symbolic complements appended to an otherwise foreign framework, a claim that finds empirical support in Afan et al.'s (2024) finding that gotong-royong-based instruction already functions in Indonesian PPKn classrooms as a vehicle for global citizenship awareness shaping student character through mutual cooperation, social justice, and respect for diversity while simultaneously enhancing students' awareness of human rights, cultural diversity, and social responsibility rather than as a decorative addition sitting alongside it. Gotong royong, the practice of mutual, voluntary cooperation for a shared purpose, already embodies the inclusive participation that SDG 10 and SDG 16 require, while traditions of musyawarah, or deliberative consensus-building, model exactly the deliberative competence that transformative citizenship education seeks to cultivate. Reframed in this way, Pancasila and local wisdom function as living civic ethics: they are not illustrations of abstract global principles but concrete, culturally embedded practices through which those principles can be enacted in an Indonesian context and, as the evidence above suggests, are already being enacted, not merely proposed. This reframing directly answers the gap identified in the literature review, in which Pancasila-based citizenship education and global frameworks such as GCED and ESD have tended to be discussed as parallel, rather than mutually constitutive, discourses.

Implications for Curriculum, Teacher Education, and Research

The integrative model carries three practical implications. For curriculum, it suggests that sustainability and human-rights content should be woven into existing Pancasila and Citizenship Education materials rather than delivered as an additional, disconnected unit. For teacher education, it implies that prospective Civic Education teachers need explicit training in deliberative and project-

based pedagogy, not only in the substantive content of Pancasila, so that they can facilitate the transformative practices the model calls for. For research, it suggests that master's-level Civic Education scholarship in Indonesia has room to move beyond descriptive studies of character and moral values toward empirical work that tests how the normative, curricular, pedagogical, and community-action layers of the model interact in actual classrooms and communities.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that Civic Education in Indonesia should be repositioned as an integrative platform linking the Sustainable Development Goals, Human Rights Education, Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development, Pancasila values, and Indonesian local wisdom. Rather than treating these bodies of knowledge as parallel discourses, the proposed four-layer model, spanning normative commitments, curriculum design, transformative pedagogy, and community-based action, shows how they can be woven into a single coherent educational architecture, with Pancasila values and practices such as gotong royong serving as living civic ethics rather than symbolic complements. Moving Civic Education scholarship and practice in this direction requires deliberate curricular redesign, renewed teacher preparation, and a research agenda that examines the model's implementation in Indonesian classrooms and communities, so that the field can move beyond descriptive character discourse toward a rights-based, sustainability-oriented, and partnership-driven framework for the future.

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