Internalization of Citizenship Values through Inquiry Learning Model: Qualitative Study on High School Students

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Abstract
This study aims to explore the effectiveness of the inquiry learning model in internalizing citizenship values in senior high school (SMA) students. The approach used is qualitative, with a literature study method that utilizes reputable scientific sources, including national and international journals. The results of the study indicate that the application of the inquiry learning model can increase students' active involvement in the learning process, strengthen critical thinking skills, and encourage a more contextual understanding of citizenship values such as responsibility, tolerance, participation, and social justice. Inquiry learning creates space for students to build understanding through exploratory, collaborative, and reflective processes, thus having an impact on the formation of strong citizenship character and attitudes. In addition, this study identified that the process of internalizing values is not only determined by learning strategies but is also influenced by external factors such as the social environment, culture, education, and media. Thus, inquiry learning is considered relevant to be integrated more widely into education policies in order to strengthen citizenship awareness and form a young generation that is active and responsible in community and national life.

1. Introduction

Civic and moral values serve as essential foundations in the development of individuals characterized by responsibility, integrity, and a capacity to contribute positively to community life. The internalization of these values is crucial not only for personal growth but also as a strategic instrument in fostering an inclusive and civilized social order (Usmi et al., 2024). Understanding and valuing civic principles such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, justice, and respect for diversity are prerequisites for establishing a democratic society oriented toward the common good. In this context, education plays a pivotal role as a medium for instilling these values through relevant and transformative pedagogical approaches. One effective method for imparting civic values is the inquiry learning model, which emphasizes exploration, critical reflection, and participatory problem-solving (Suardi, 2023). This approach encourages students to become active participants in the learning process; they engage not only in passive information reception but also in actively seeking and constructing knowledge through exploration, observation, and structured investigative activities (Sulistyarini et al., 2020).

This inquiry-based learning model not only enhances students' conceptual understanding but also cultivates critical thinking skills essential for addressing the challenges in national and state contexts. By engaging students in group discussions and collaborative projects, they learn to appreciate diverse perspectives, thereby fostering tolerance and cooperation (Rusmin et al., 2020). Additionally, this approach creates opportunities for students to practice making ethical and responsible decisions, which are crucial in the realm of citizenship. Through reflection on their learning experiences, students can effectively connect theory to practice while developing a profound social awareness, ultimately producing individuals who are proactive and attentive to their surroundings. Therefore, inquiry-based learning serves as a vital bridge in preparing a generation that is not only academically proficient but also deeply committed to the principles of democracy and social justice (Beltrano, 2023).

The implementation of the inquiry learning model can be further enhanced through the integration of information and communication technology (ICT), which is increasingly pertinent in today's digital era. Utilizing various digital platforms allows students to access a broader and more diverse range of

information while participating in global discussions that enrich their perspectives (Archer-Kuhn et al., 2020). For instance, collaborative projects involving students from different countries can provide insights into global issues such as climate change and human rights, fostering a spirit of joint problem-solving. Consequently, students gain understanding not only from their local environment but also within a broader global context, cultivating a more inclusive and responsive sense of citizenship. Consistent application of this approach in the curriculum will produce individuals who are well-equipped to confront contemporary challenges and contribute positively to a multicultural and dynamic society (Lesnefsky et al., 2025). The inquiry learning model plays a crucial role in developing students' critical thinking skills, analytical abilities, and creativity. Moreover, this model promotes social competence through collaborative activities such as discussions, group work, and joint problem-solving. In this process, students learn to formulate questions, express opinions, and build understanding through meaningful interactions with peers and educators (Rusmin et al., 2020). Therefore, learning becomes oriented not only towards mastering academic content but also towards strengthening essential soft skills relevant to 21st-century life, including communication, adaptability, and leadership.

Inquiry-based learning fosters student independence and intrinsic motivation. This investigative and open learning process cultivates curiosity, perseverance, and a sense of responsibility for one's own education (Ed.D & Lewis-Bernstein, 2017). Such attributes are essential in shaping lifelong learners who are not only academically proficient but also capable of adapting to contemporary challenges. However, the implementation of the inquiry learning model presents certain challenges. Not all students are prepared for independent learning, necessitating ongoing guidance and facilitation from educators (Sulistyarini et al., 2020). Furthermore, not all subject matter can be effectively conveyed through the inquiry approach; it is essential to adapt and integrate this model with other instructional strategies that align with the material's characteristics and the learning context. Consequently, the success of this model relies heavily on the teacher's pedagogical competence, student readiness, and the presence of a supportive learning environment (Supriadi et al., 2024).

Considering these advantages and challenges, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of the inquiry learning model in developing students' ability to learn independently and sustainably. This study specifically focuses on how this model can be a strategic vehicle in internalizing citizenship values in Senior High School (SMA) students (Beltrano, 2023). It is hoped that the results of this study can provide theoretical and practical contributions in developing learning strategies that support the formation of strong citizenship characters while improving the quality of learning at the secondary education level. Thus, the inquiry learning model has the potential to be one of the pedagogical strategies that not only encourages academic achievement but also strengthens the role of education in forming active, reflective, and responsible citizens. This study is expected to enrich the scientific treasury in the field of citizenship education and provide applicable recommendations for teachers and education policy makers in designing more contextual, participatory, and transformative learning.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative study method, which aims to explore in depth the effectiveness of the inquiry learning model in internalizing citizenship values in high school students. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for understanding phenomena holistically and contextually, especially in the context of complex and dynamic value learning and education. The design of this study focuses on exploring students' learning experiences through the application of the inquiry learning model, as well as teachers' perceptions in implementing this approach in Citizenship Education (PKn) learning. The purpose of this study is to provide an argumentative and empirical understanding of the potential of inquiry learning as a strategic means in forming active, reflective, and responsible citizenship characters. Within this framework, this study also seeks to highlight how the inquiry model can improve students' learning independence and intrinsic motivation in the context of inclusive multicultural education.

Data collection was carried out through literature studies (library research) by reviewing various scientific sources, including relevant national and international journal articles, academic books, previous research reports, and policy and regulatory documents related to citizenship education. Scientific journals are used as primary sources because they have high academic validity and legitimacy. Meanwhile, secondary sources include laws and national education documents that are used to

strengthen the normative context and legal basis of civic education in Indonesia. Data analysis was conducted using interactive analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman (1992), which include three main stages: (1) data reduction, namely the process of selecting and simplifying relevant information from the literature reviewed; (2) data presentation (data display), namely the arrangement of information into descriptive narrative forms and thematic categorization; and (3) drawing conclusions and verification, namely the process of interpreting data that has been analyzed to form a comprehensive and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. With this approach and method, it is hoped that the research can provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of effective inquiry-based civics learning strategies in supporting the formation of democratic, intelligent citizens with strong national character.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of the study showed that the level of internalization of citizenship values in students increased significantly after the application of the inquiry learning model in the learning process. Students who were actively involved in inquiry activities showed better abilities in accessing and managing information, developing critical and analytical thinking skills, and increasing collaborative capacity in completing learning tasks. This increase reflects the effectiveness of the inquiry learning model as a pedagogical approach that is able to stimulate students' cognitive, affective, and social involvement in greater depth. This finding is in line with previous studies which emphasize that inquiry-based learning can improve conceptual understanding and encourage students' ability to link academic knowledge with real-life contexts (Ed.D & Lewis-Bernstein, 2017). In the context of Citizenship Education learning, this connection is very important because it allows students to reflect on democratic values, social responsibility, and active participation as citizens in concrete situations.

Furthermore, students who follow the inquiry learning model show an increase in their ability to integrate learning materials with current issues in society. This ability is an important indicator in internalizing citizenship values because students not only understand the concept theoretically, but are also able to evaluate and apply it in everyday life. This indicates that inquiry learning not only functions as a teaching method, but also as a transformative strategy in forming critical awareness and a strong citizenship ethos (Sudarmin et al., 2018). In addition to supporting mastery of subject matter, the inquiry model also contributes to the development of students' character and personality. The learning process that emphasizes open questions, exploration, and problem solving encourages students to build learning independence, intrinsic motivation, and a sustainable curiosity. These characteristics are important aspects in the formation of individuals who are adaptive, innovative, and resilient in facing the challenges of the digital era which is full of complexity and rapid change.

In this context, the role of teachers becomes very strategic. Teachers not only function as conveyors of information, but also as facilitators and mediators of learning who must be able to design challenging, relevant, and contextual inquiry activities. Therefore, increasing the professional capacity of teachers is an important prerequisite in integrating the inquiry learning model effectively into the curriculum(Pramana et al., 2023). The implications of these findings emphasize the importance of strengthening the application of the inquiry learning model in the national education system, especially in Civic Education subjects. Amidst the rapid flow of globalization and technological advances, inquiry learning can be a key strategy to prepare a young generation who are not only academically competent, but also have national awareness, critical thinking skills, and commitment to democratic values and diversity (Stitzlein, 2022). Thus, inquiry learning not only contributes to improving the quality of learning, but also strengthens the foundation of visionary and competitive citizenship character.

These findings strengthen the argument that the inquiry learning model is not only relevant from a pedagogical perspective, but also strategic in the context of building national character and strengthening citizenship identity in the global era. In an increasingly complex and pluralistic world, the ability to think reflectively, appreciate diversity, and work in teams across backgrounds are essential skills for 21st-century citizens. Inquiry learning contributes directly to fostering these values through a learning approach that emphasizes active involvement, open dialogue, and exploration of diverse values and perspectives (Canuto, 2022).

Furthermore, the inquiry process encourages students to experience authentic learning, where they do not simply memorize concepts, but are involved in searching for meaning and solving problems that

are directly related to their social lives. In the context of Citizenship Education, this creates space for students to build critical awareness of contemporary citizenship issues, such as human rights, democracy, cultural diversity, and social justice. Thus, the inquiry model not only facilitates the achievement of cognitive goals, but also encourages strengthening the affective and psychomotor dimensions in citizenship learning.

Strengthening the values of tolerance, solidarity, and social responsibility through inquiry activities provides an important foundation in producing citizens who are not only academically intelligent, but also emotionally and socially mature. This shows that the effectiveness of the inquiry learning model includes aspects of holistic character formation, which reflects the integration of knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies as a whole (Ulfah et al., 2020). As a practical implication, this finding indicates the need to reposition the pedagogical approach in Citizenship Education learning, from teacher-centered to student-centered, where students are given an active role as subjects who build their own knowledge. Therefore, ongoing training is needed for educators to design and implement inquiry learning that is adaptive to the context and needs of students. The curriculum must also provide flexible space for the development of contextual and meaningful inquiry-based projects. Thus, inquiry learning has the potential to be a catalyst in realizing the goals of national education, namely to educate the nation's life and to form Indonesian people who are faithful, pious, have noble character, and are able to actively participate in democratic life that upholds national and humanitarian values.

Furthermore, the internalization of citizenship values cannot be separated from the dynamics of social interactions experienced by individuals in various contexts of life. In the context of formal education, the role of teachers as facilitators and agents of change is very strategic in instilling citizenship values systematically and sustainably. Teachers are not only tasked with transmitting knowledge, but also becoming models of citizenship values and attitudes that can be emulated by students. The curriculum designed with a contextual and value-based approach also plays an important role in ensuring that citizenship education does not stop at the cognitive aspect alone, but also touches on the affective and psychomotor domains of students. Meanwhile, the social and cultural environment provides an equally important influence in the process of value formation. Social norms, customs, and values that live in local communities are often the initial foundation for individuals in understanding the concept of citizenship. When these local values are contextualized with national and global values through a critical and reflective learning process, a holistic, inclusive, and adaptive understanding of citizenship is formed to the changing times.

The role of the family as a primary institution in the socialization of values also needs to be strengthened. In the family environment, individuals are first introduced to the concepts of responsibility, discipline, justice, and empathy (Rusmin et al., 2020). If these basic values are instilled early on, the process of internalizing citizenship values in educational institutions will be easier and more meaningful. On the other hand, mass media and digital media also shape citizenship views and attitudes, both positively and negatively. Therefore, media literacy is important so that students are able to sort information and form opinions based on strong national values. Referring to the ecological approach in education, the success of internalizing citizenship values is highly dependent on the synergy between schools, families, communities, and the state. Partial interventions will not produce optimal impacts if they are not accompanied by cross-sector collaboration and an integrated approach. Therefore, an education policy is needed that supports the development of character and citizenship values holistically, including teacher training, strengthening the value curriculum, and developing extracurricular programs based on social and citizenship projects. With this comprehensive strategy, the process of internalizing citizenship values will not only produce individuals who are aware of the law and norms, but also create citizens who are critical, participatory, and committed to maintaining the integrity and progress of the nation amidst the increasingly complex currents of globalization and digital challenges

The first image presents a conceptual representation in the form of a building structure with four main pillars. Each pillar represents a dimension of citizenship character that is essential in a democratic society, namely: tolerance, social concern, responsibility, and democratic participation. Theoretically, this visual reflects an approach to citizenship education that emphasizes the formation of civic competence. The four pillars reflect the integration of social values, moral attitudes, and political participation of citizens. A building with a balanced structure reflects that these four aspects have equal weight and support each other in building the character of ideal citizens who are not only law-abiding, but also critical and politically active. Thus, learning Civic Education should not only be oriented towards mastering normative material, but also designed to foster attitudes of empathy, tolerance, social awareness, and the courage to participate in the democratic process in a real way.

The second image shows five essential elements in building a learning context that is conducive to inquiry and reflection approaches. These elements include: the role of the teacher, curriculum, school culture, social environment, and institutional norms. All of them are integrated in an ecosystem called the learning context. Conceptually, this visual refers to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the constructivist approach in education, which emphasizes that the learning process is the result of dynamic interactions between students and the social, cultural, and pedagogical environment. Inquiry and reflection are key in developing meaningful learning, because they encourage students to think critically, explore knowledge independently, and relate it to social reality. This model also implies the importance of holistic learning design where teachers act as facilitators, the curriculum is flexible and contextual, the school culture supports democratic values, and the social environment acts as an authentic learning resource.

4. Conclusion

This study reveals that the inquiry learning model has significant potential in supporting the process of internalizing citizenship values in high school students. Through a student-centered approach and

oriented towards active exploration of real problems, inquiry learning enables students to develop a deep understanding of citizenship concepts in a contextual and applicable manner. The process of internalizing values such as responsibility, tolerance, justice, and active participation in community life occurs more effectively when students are given space to think critically, discuss, and make moral decisions in learning. The inquiry model not only strengthens students' cognitive aspects, but also forms the character and citizenship attitudes needed in social life in an increasingly complex and pluralistic era.

The research findings also show that the success of internalizing values is greatly influenced by social, cultural, educational, family, and media environmental factors. Therefore, the implementation of the inquiry learning model must be accompanied by the support of a conducive educational ecosystem, including the involvement of teachers as facilitators who understand the social dynamics of students, as well as the integration of this approach into broader educational policies. Considering the complexity of the challenges of citizenship education in the digital and global era, the inquiry learning model is worthy of being the main pedagogical strategy in forming critical, reflective, and responsible citizens. The implementation of this model consistently and systematically has the potential to encourage the realization of education that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also fosters strong awareness and commitment to citizenship in every young generation of Indonesia.

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