Revitalizing Civic Education in Higher Education: Student Perspectives, Identity, and Reconstruction Strategies

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze student perceptions regarding civic education learning in tertiary institutions, student perceptions regarding their national identity as Indonesians, and considerations needed for the reconstruction of civic education in Higher Education. This study used a mixed method with a sequential exploratory approach. Data was collected through surveys and interviews. A total of 160 respondents were involved in the survey. Interviews were conducted with 3 senior lecturers who teach Civic Education courses at State Universities in Bandung. The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques and verification through Structural Equation Modeling methods and Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The study results showed that the teaching of Civic Education must be able to build student interest through the application of teaching methods that are appropriate, creative, contextual, and in accordance with student needs. Civic Education learning must also be able to strengthen students’ awareness of the importance of national identity to prevent them from attitudes and behaviors inconsistent with the nation’s noble values. Civic education reconstruction efforts must be based on real problems faced by lecturers and students in Civic Education learning, especially by considering the clarity of goals, the focus of change, the challenges of citizenship in the global era, and the concrete situations that are developing in society. This study is needed to provide an appropriate basis for the formulation and implementation of the reconstruction of civic education to strengthen the Indonesian nation’s national identity.

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Introduction
In the age of technological advancement and the digital world, a challenge emerges in diminishing national identity due to cultural globalization, easy information access, and digital connectivity. This global village concept blurs nationalism and promotes a sense of global community (Chung & Woo, 2015; Kennedy, 2001; Lechner, 2007). The erosion of national identity, especially in the youth, is exacerbated by technology and global values, along with weakening nationalism and conflicting behaviors (Komara, 2017; Sutrisno et al., 2021; Tawil & Harley, 2004; Warman, 2018). In this context, Civic Education, as a multidisciplinary field, equips citizens with an awareness of their roles and responsibilities within a nation (Dewantara et al., 2019; Jayadiputra et al., 2020; Nurdin, 2015; Santoso, 2019). Strengthening citizenship education should span all educational levels, addressing civic skills, values, behavior, and dispositions (Depdiknas, 2005; Parker, 2010; Winataputra, U. S. Budimansyah, 2012). Banks (2009) suggests redefining Civic Education to match changing demands, emphasizing transformative knowledge (Banks, 2016, 2017).

Isin and Turner (2012) advocate reconstructing Civic Education to impart an understanding of citizenship, legal awareness, and good citizen attributes. Civic Education
must evolve beyond information delivery into transformative education, nurturing responsible citizens (Banks, 2017). To achieve this transformative aspect, educational institutions should implement appropriate curricula and effective teaching methods, as stressed by Otsu (2002). Success hinges on the dedication of educational institutions and educators. Civic Education contributes to societal welfare and equality, requiring dynamic citizenship (Hidayah et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020). Isin and Turner (2012) highlight the interdisciplinary nature of citizenship studies, addressing themes from welfare to international relations. Transformative Civic Education demands the reconstruction of its concept, as Schulz et al. (2010) proposed, focusing on skills, active participation, and productivity.

Xiao and Tong (2010) emphasize that Higher Education should nurture independence and controlled behavior. Civic Education must be well-designed, using suitable methods to help students comprehend and analyze its essence in current contexts. Precise, creative, and student-centered teaching is vital (Indriani, 2017; Japar, 2018; Sulkipani et al., 2021; Sutrisno et al., 2021). It underscores the need for contextualized goals in Civic Education reconstruction, aligning with societal issues.

The skills, participation, and productivity of citizens developed in transformative citizenship education can lead to forming a national identity more in line with the global context. Experts realize that a more transformative reconstruction of civic education can only be carried out by providing the right context for every civic education material and practice, especially for students in tertiary institutions. More than that, this right context can also encourage the strengthening of the national identity of the younger generation. Research in India and Pakistan by Kadiwal and Jain (2021) shows that the reconstruction of civic education must be directed at strengthening national identity. The main reason is that nation-building in the context of globalization will always go hand in hand with discourses on global citizenship and identity-based movements, all of which reaffirm the importance of nationalism.

Various public concerns about the fading of national identity in this globalization era demand quick and appropriate solutions. Reconstruction of civic education, in this case, is one of the essential alternatives that is promoted besides increasing overall pedagogic abilities (Hidayah et al., 2020; Jayadiputra et al., 2020; Kadiwal & Jain, 2021; Komalasari & Saripudin, 2017). The reconstruction of civic education to strengthen national identity is also based on the consideration that a strong national identity will foster strong nationalism and encourage the political participation of young citizens. However, this issue of national identity must be developed towards the rise of nationalism. It is necessary to provide provisions for the younger generation in dealing with the negative excesses of globalization, such as cultural conflicts, conflicting values, unlimited information disclosure, free association, and others that can endanger social and state life (Dahliyana et al., 2021a; Rusnaini, 2015; Throntveit, 2021; Ubaeddillah, 2018).

The national identity is not only defined internally as the characteristics possessed by citizens but also externally through the distinction of a nation community with others. The issue of national identity has proven to be troubling. The values and philosophy of life of the nation originating from Pancasila as the basis of the Indonesian nation's national identity have experienced degradation, especially in the younger generation, as indicated by the following. First, promiscuity that blurs ethical values and boundaries according to the norms of Indonesian society; Second, the use of narcotics and illegal drugs, which is increasingly prevalent among young people. Third, the emergence of social conflict and violence based on narrow identities; Fourth, the degradation of the spirit of nationalism among the youth; and Fifth, increasing individuality and reducing the spirit of participation of the younger
generation in social and state service (Dahliyana et al., 2021b; Hidayah et al., 2020; Komalasari & Sapriya, 2016; Saud, 2020; Sumardjoko et al., 2018; Ubaedillah, 2018). Reconstruction of civic education that is more transformative is a solution to address these various problems. Reconstruction of civic education is the right method to strengthen the national identity. Moreover, the reconstruction of a more transformative civic education is expected to increase the skills, participation, and productivity of students needed for nation-building in the midst of global competition (Banks, 2016; Throntveit, 2021; Trisiana et al., 2015). However, this effort is clearly a complex effort to undertake. Because the interest of students to participate in citizenship education is also low (Holle, 2022; Kuang & Kennedy, 2021; Lonto & Umbase, 2022). Therefore, efforts to reconstruct civic education to strengthen this national identity must start from an understanding of students' perceptions regarding the practice of civics education they receive in lectures, students' perceptions of national identity as Indonesian citizens, and possible developments that can be carried out for the reconstruction of Civic Education. more transformative. This study aims to analyze: First, student perceptions regarding citizenship education in Higher Education; Second, students' perceptions regarding national identity as the nation of Indonesia; and Third, the needs that must be met to reconstruct civics education at the university level. This study is needed to provide an appropriate basis for the formulation and implementation of the reconstruction of civic education to strengthen the Indonesian nation's national identity.

Research Method

This study used a mixed method with a sequential exploratory model by combining quantitative methods in the first stage and qualitative in the second stage. The research procedures in this study were based on standard procedures for mixed method research that include: (1) reading and describing phenomena related to the erosion of national identity, the weakening of nationalism, and the declining interest in civics education among young people; (2) determining the design and methodology used in the study; (3) literature study, distribution of questionnaires, and interviews; (4) data processing and study findings; (5) analysis and interpretation of study findings; and (6) reporting of study results (Priadana & Muis, 2013).

This study's data sources consist of survey results (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative). The survey was distributed to 160 cross-semester students at the Indonesian University of Education in Bandung. The study sample was determined by random sampling technique. This study used the number of indicators multiplied by ten to determine the sample size and obtained a minimum of 140 respondents (Hair et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the interviews were conducted with 3 senior lecturers in Civic Education at 3 State Universities in Bandung. The following criteria determined the interviewees: (1) taught civics education courses for more than 5 years; (2) used more than two teaching methods in learning citizenship education; (3) understood student interests and learning outcomes in general related to citizenship education. The research was conducted for three months, from November 2022 to the end of January 2023.

The variables analyzed in this study were civic education and national identity. Civic education was measured and analyzed concerning the civic education model with 3 (three) main dimensions which include (1) civic skills and knowledge; (2) civic values; and (3) civic behavior and dispositions (CIRCLE, 2003; Depdiknas, 2005; Parker, 2010; Winataputra, U. S. Budimansyah, 2012). Meanwhile, national identity is measured and analyzed with
This study used descriptive analysis and verification with structural equation modeling (SEM) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The descriptive analysis focused on explaining the characteristics of the research respondents. Meanwhile, descriptive analysis using the CFA and SEM methods is used to get (1) a clear picture of the dimensional construct of civic education and national identity and (2) the correlation and influence between civic education and national identity. This study conducted a pilot test to analyze the validity and reliability of the questionnaire instrument. The statistical results for the validity test with the product moment showed that the value of count > rtable, so all items in this study are valid. Likewise, the results of the reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha showed that all items were reliable, > 0.60 (Byrne, 2001; Priadana, 2017).

**Results and Discussion**

**Profile of Respondents**

Most respondents were male students (61.25%) aged 17-20 years (63.75%). The religion adhered to by the majority of respondents is Islam (88.75%). The majority of students who were respondents to this study came from outside the city of Bandung (57.5%). The research informants who were interviewed based on predetermined criteria were 3 (three) senior lecturers who taught Civic Education courses at 3 State Universities in Bandung. Interview informants were considered to meet the qualifications needed to explain important considerations related to learning conditions and the reconstruction of Civic Education learning in Higher Education.

**Results**

A verification analysis was carried out to determine the dimensional construct of civic education and national identity. In this case, the author tested the data using the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method and tested the feasibility of the research model. The following are the results of tests that have been carried out:

a) Variable Construct Analysis

Verification analysis using AMOS program is shown in Figure 1.
Table 1 shows that the CR (Critical Ratio) values and P-value (Probability) for each of the dimensions for Civic Education (CE) and National Identity (NI) have met the set critical values (CR > 2.56 and P-value < 0.05). The test results also show that the estimated value for Civic Education (CE) and National Identity (NI) dimensions is quite strong. All existing dimensions contribute significantly to the variables studied. These results indicate that the instruments or measuring instruments used to measure Civic Education (CE) and National Identity (NI) are valid and reliable. The estimated value of the standardized regression weight or the magnitude of the influence of each dimension can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. Standardized Regression Weight**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>par_1</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>48,628</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>par_2</td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>36,317</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>par_3</td>
<td>1,033</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>54,341</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The estimated value for each indicator in table 2 shows that all dimensions have a significant effect (> 0.5). The estimated value shows the total effect of each dimension on the forming variables. The dimension with the greatest influence on the Civic Education (CE) variable is the Civic Behavior and Dispositions (CBD), amounting to 0.994. This score indicates that research respondents consider state behavior and character as the biggest factor for Civic Education. A person's behavior is the most important measure for achieving civic education learning objectives. The dimension with the largest correlation coefficient and influence for the National Identity (NI) variable is National Boundaries (NB), with a score of 0.994. This result indicates that research respondents consider that special characteristics that symbolize nationality are the most essential elements of national identity. The results of this statistical test also show that civic education (CE) significantly influences the formation of national identity (NI), with a total influence of 47.6%. Thus, learning Civic Education is needed by students or is an effective way to form a strong national identity for students.

b) Model Testing

The statistical test using the SEM method show a summary of the results of the research model feasibility test in Table 3.

**Table 3. Summary of Research Model Feasibility Test Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Cut-off Value</th>
<th>Test Results</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
<td>≥ 0.05</td>
<td>0.124</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted GFI (AGFI)</td>
<td>≥ 0.90</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)</td>
<td>≥ 0.90</td>
<td>0.982</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Fit Index (CFI)</td>
<td>≥ 0.90</td>
<td>0.998</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)</td>
<td>≥ 0.95</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normed Fit Index (NFI)</td>
<td>≥ 0.90</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root Mean Square Error of</td>
<td>≤ 0.80</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows that some of the feasibility criteria for the research model have been met, especially for the GFI, CFI, NFI, TLI, RFI, and RMSEA values. The results of the feasibility testing of the research model indicate that this research has fulfilled the research feasibility requirements, which means that the research model is fit with empirical data.

After analyzing the dimensional constructs of each variable, both civic education (CE) and national identity (NI), based on the results of the survey conducted, the author also conducted interviews with 3 (three) senior lecturers who teach the field of Civic Education as research informants. The results of interviews with 3 Civic Education lecturers in the city of Bandung regarding student perceptions of civic education and national identity and the need for civic education learning reconstruction in tertiary institutions have several important points to note, including:

First, student perceptions related to civic education learning. Informant 1, who was interviewed, stated that related to student perceptions about civic education learning, most students could understand the material being taught and the objectives of learning civic education. However, students cannot apply these materials in their attitudes and behavior in daily life. Informant 1 stated: “the main problem with civic education learning is that students can understand the material being studied easily, but the values contained in civic education learning are not internalized and absorbed well in students. Their attitudes and behavior do not yet reflect responsible citizens as expected from civic education learning itself.” (AF)

Informant 2 also stated that the students he taught had not shown a high interest in civic education. However, given that the materials taught in civic education learning are ethically and normatively easy to understand, students can also remember and master the civic education materials easily. In this context, informant 2 stated: “I think what is important for the effectiveness of civic education learning is the use of appropriate teaching methods. Students must be conditioned in certain contextual situations where they can learn and practice directly what they learn about civic education. Students must be given space to apply the values they learn in a real way for the effectiveness of civic education learning.” (RM)

Research informants generally stated that most students he taught still showed great interest in learning civic education. Students also realize that civic education learning is essential to understanding what the state wants from its citizens. However, other factors ironically influence students' attitudes and behavior, making it difficult for them to become good citizens at any time. It is difficult to practice the values contained in Pancasila, and it is difficult to fulfill all aspects of civic education learning.

Second, students' perceptions regarding national identity. Informant 1, who was interviewed, stated that students generally did not overthink the issue of national identity. However, students are the younger generation who currently identify themselves more with specific communities where they play and do activities, social media, and the idols they find from popular culture in society. Informant 1 stated: “Students identify themselves more with communities, idols, and pop culture that develop in society. College students are the younger generation who are looking for identity. Ironically, national identity is rarely part of their quest. Even though this national identity is important for the provision of being a good citizen.” (AF)

Informant 2 also explained that students' perceptions regarding the significance of national identity for their existence were not entirely positive following the desired values of nationalism from civic education learning. Students can understand the boundaries,
characteristics, and symbols of nationality. However, they do not yet have a strong attachment to the nation or state. Existing nationalism is more narrowly and temporally applied, as manifested in support for the nation in certain sports competitions.

Informant 3 stated that the awareness of national identity among students studying at this tertiary institution was much better than that of students at the high school level. Students' understanding of national identity is not limited to national symbols, the diversity of the nation's cultural traditions, or special characteristics that represent the Indonesian nation, but also how to act and behave according to the norms and ideal values of the Indonesian nation. However, these students have not consistently applied their understanding of national identity daily.

Third, the reconstruction of civic education. Regarding the need for civic education reconstruction, informant 1 stated that civic education reconstruction was needed to improve the quality of civic education learning at the tertiary level. This reconstruction is especially needed to strengthen students’ understanding and mastery of civic skills, civic values, and civic behavior. Informant 1 also emphasized that the reconstruction of civic education must start by changing the civic education curriculum, especially the curriculum that pays more attention to global challenges.

Informant 2 emphasized that the reconstruction of civic education is an effort that must be supported to improve civic education learning. However, this reconstruction must consider the clarity of the goals to be achieved and in what areas improvements will be made in civic education. The need for civic education reconstruction must also depart from the awareness that the younger generation (students at various levels) is the generation that is required to be the successors of the nation's ideals. The situations they face will be different and more complex each time. Informant 2 stated: “This civic education learning must be connected with learning other scientific fields studied by students. The values contained in civic education must be strengthened with real skills that will make our generation of students not only inherit the noble Indonesian culture, but also be productive and ready to compete in global competition.” (RM)

While informant 3 stated that the reconstruction of civic education needs to focus on what kind of character will be built from the generation of students as a result of civic education learning. Civic education learning like learning in other scientific fields must have real benefits for students and can be a provision for students when completing studies at tertiary institutions. In this context, the considerations that need to be involved for the reconstruction of civic education must focus on strengthening the aspects of civic education itself, starting from the knowledge, skills, values, behavior, and character of citizens who want to be shaped according to the challenges of the times. Informant 3 stated: “We have to start from a clear concept that we want to apply in civic education. What I mean is that the young generation must benefit from civic education learning so they can grow interest and interest in civic education, then understand the important values of civic education” (MAK).

Discussions

As explained by previous interview informants, civic education learning at the tertiary level has not been able to achieve the expected goals of civic education itself. Several main aspects of civic education, such as civic skills and knowledge, civic values, civic behavior and dispositions, have not been well manifested in the attitudes and behavior of the younger generation, especially students. However, students have a pretty good understanding of what they are learning in Civic Education.
Based on the results of the previous analysis, which was also strengthened by the results of direct interviews with three senior lecturers who teach civic education, it can be explained that the various dimensional constructs for civic education or national identity have a loading factor the good one. The effectiveness of civic education learning must strengthen its various dimensions to have a greater impact on strengthening student national identity. In this context, civic education learning must also look at the dimensions of national identity, both national boundaries and attachments to the nation, so that civic education teaching not only gives students a clear understanding of citizenship but also encourages the growth of a sense of belonging to the nation, the growth nationalism, and encourage students to be proud of their national identity.

Student perceptions of civic education learning that are yet to be entirely positive and currently their interest is also declining must be addressed appropriately by the civic education instructors. Based on the results of previous interviews, what civic education teachers need to do to increase student interest, insight, and mastery in the field of civic education includes improving learning methods that are more contextual and pay attention to student needs, conditioning students in real situations and democratic class for internalizing civic education values, and providing clear benefits to students from civic education learning.

Another vital effort made to improve civic education learning is that this learning must be able to change students' perceptions of national identity. Because civic education learning can be the remaining medium for the younger generation to strengthen nationalism, teach the nation's noble values, deepen national insight, and introduce the basics needed to become good citizens. This national identity must emphasize its significance in the global era so that students do not easily fall into attitudes and behaviors that do not reflect the identity of the Indonesian nation itself. However, strengthening national identity through civic education learning must be done appropriately and creatively.

Reconstruction of civic education is essential for achieving more effective civic education goals and increasing student awareness regarding national identity, which is currently being eroded. However, based on previous interviews, the reconstruction of civic education at the tertiary level, in particular, must have clarity about the goals to be achieved, contextualization of civic education learning, socio-cultural developments brought about by globalization, changes in values in society, and student challenges. Civic education learning must be able to solve the problems of today's young generation, especially by building a stronghold of values so that the younger generation, like students, do not fall into attitudes and behaviors inconsistent with the nation's norms and noble values.

This study is consistent with previous research regarding the importance of civic education to be taught more seriously to the younger generation as the nation's future. Civic education learning must be carried out with appropriate, creative teaching methods and following the needs of students in tertiary institutions or students at lower levels of education (Komalasari & Saripudin, 2017; Komara, 2017; Nurdin, 2015; Setiani & MacKinnon, 2015; Sulkipani et al., 2021; Sutrisno et al., 2021). The results of this study emphasize several vital points that can be the basis for the reconstruction of civic education that is more transformative and has an impact on strengthening national identity among students, such as clarity of purpose, focus on change, teaching creativity, and compatibility with today's global situation. The results of this study thus also validate previous ideas regarding the importance of reconstructing civic education that is more transformative, rooted, and focuses on strengthening the dimensions of civic education.
Conclusion

Based on the results of research, it can be concluded that: First, civic education learning must be able to build student interest through the application of appropriate, creative, contextual teaching methods, and according to student needs; Second, civic education learning must be able to strengthen students' awareness of the importance of national identity to prevent them from attitudes and behavior that are inconsistent with the nation's noble values; Third, civic education reconstruction efforts must depart from real problems faced by lecturers and students in civic education learning, especially by paying attention to clarity of purpose, focus of change, challenges of citizenship in the global era, and concrete situations that are developing in society.

Recommendation

Based on the results obtained in this study, the following key recommendations for policymakers and Civic Education instructors: First, Policymakers should promote innovative, context-based teaching methods. These methods will foster student engagement and cater to individual learning needs. Instructors need training to implement captivating approaches that connect lessons to real-world situations, accommodating diverse student learning styles. Second, Civic Educators must bolster students' awareness of national identity's significance. Policymakers should integrate materials that deeply explore the nation's core values, deterring behaviors misaligned with these ideals. It ensures students are grounded in their cultural ethos while becoming responsible global citizens.

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