



## CHARACTER BUILDING MANAGEMENT THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION ON AWARENESS OF COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS AT UIN SU MEDAN

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### Abstract

The Civic Education course plays an important role in shaping the character of university students. However, many students still lack awareness of the values of nationalism and patriotism. This is reflected in their lack of respect for national symbols, such as reluctance to participate in flag ceremonies or a lack of understanding of the importance of maintaining national unity. To address this issue, collaboration among various parties is required. This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, conducting interviews with lecturers, students, and staff at UIN SU Medan who participate in the learning process in the classroom. This approach aims to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon within a real-world context. Applicable learning methods, relevant training programs, and discussions tailored to students' needs are required to increase awareness of the importance of obeying regulations. Civic Education also faces several challenges, such as poor communication between units, monotonous learning methods, and low student motivation. As a solution, innovative strategies such as the use of creative learning methods are needed. At UIN SU Medan, Civic Education is able to encourage students to be more disciplined and obedient to rules. Methods such as project-based learning, group discussions, and seminars have proven to help students understand the importance of order. One of the lecturers' strategies is to set specific rules in the course and explain them in detail at the beginning so that students get used to obeying them.

**Keywords:** Civic Education, Character Development, UIN SU

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## INTRODUCTION

## مقدمة

Civic education is a subject that plays a role in character building among university students. Civic education is also a subject that aims to equip students with knowledge, understanding, and skills in developing attitudes and behaviors as good and responsible citizens (Fauziah & Dewi, 2021). Civic education is considered an important aspect in instilling values to address juvenile delinquency and fostering awareness among young people to adhere to rules and regulations in their surroundings (Marlia et al., 2023). The State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UIN SU) in Medan, as a higher education institution, also has rules and regulations that must be followed by all students and academic staff.

Character is the main foundation in shaping quality individuals, especially in social, national, and state life. Character development has become a key priority in the field of education to produce graduates who are not only cognitively intelligent but also possess moral integrity and a

sense of social responsibility (Mudzkir, 2023). One tangible manifestation of character development is the awareness to adhere to regulations, both those applicable in local and international contexts.

As a component of higher education, civic education (PKn) serves to instill moral, ethical, and national principles. Students will gain a better understanding of the role of regulations as a tool for regulating community life and as a reflection of legal awareness, which is a characteristic of modern society (Sofha et al., 2023). In a university environment, compliance with regulations reflects the character of students, which impacts their work in society. One Islamic-based university, the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UIN SU) in Medan, aims to produce graduates who are not only academically excellent but also uphold Islamic values. It is crucial to cultivate character through various academic and non-academic programs to achieve this mission. However, reality shows that students still face many issues regarding their awareness of regulations, such as a lack of discipline, violations of campus regulations, and a lack of awareness of their own responsibilities.

A systematic method called character development management in civic education offers a way to incorporate character values into the learning process. With this method, it is hoped that students will not only understand the meaning of rules, but also begin to apply them in their daily lives (Rizky, Hariandi & Noviyanti, 2024). Therefore, this research is important to determine how citizenship education can help students at UIN SU Medan become more legally aware.

Discussing the behavior of teenagers who are the same age as college students is a common issue on campus, often leading to disruptions in the rules and regulations of the campus itself (Hernawati, 2021). Discipline refers to the rules or norms that individuals or groups must follow within a particular environment or organization to maintain order and ensure the smooth operation of activities (Nuban, Triposa & Arifianto, 2021). Discipline also serves as a guideline for regulating behavior and interactions between individuals.

Ideally, students, as agents of change, can have a positive impact on their surrounding environment. Students should be part of the younger generation studying at universities who not only pursue academic achievements but also serve as role models in applying educational values as citizens (Nurrahmaniah, 2019). Students at UIN SU Medan have a strategic opportunity to apply these values in their daily lives, both on campus and in the broader community.

One of the objectives of civic education is to develop citizens who possess a sense of nationalism, tolerance, legal awareness, and social responsibility (Aisy & Santoso, 2022). Students must diligently follow university regulations and academic rules on campus, as this demonstrates respect for the existing system, which in turn fosters a safe and orderly academic culture. Additionally, students are expected to apply principles of tolerance and cooperation in their social interactions. As a multicultural campus, UIN SU Medan is an ideal environment for fostering mutual respect for diversity. National values such as mutual assistance, consultation, and respect for others' opinions are crucial to apply in various activities, such as organizations, discussions, or student work programs.

Legal awareness is important for students. Understanding and complying with rules is a personal responsibility and a dignified trait. Students at UIN SU Medan must set an example for others by avoiding harmful acts such as plagiarism, copyright infringement, or verbal or physical violence. Students should be able to apply principles of citizenship outside the campus, such as participating in social activities and contributing to society. For example, participating in community empowerment programs, donating to humanitarian causes, or establishing social

organizations focused on justice and collective well-being (Megawati et al., 2024). Students strengthen their role as agents of change by actively participating in society.

UIN SU Medan has a moral obligation to encourage its students to uphold these principles. Through the application of civic values in education and campus activities, students can become honest, empathetic individuals who are ready to contribute to building the nation. Practicing these values on campus not only creates a friendly campus environment but also fosters a generation with strong nationalism and social responsibility. Although citizenship education is now part of university curricula, field evidence indicates that many UIN SU Medan students have not truly internalized these values (Firdaus, 2020). This is evident in various daily actions and events occurring within the campus environment.

Discipline, which includes complying with academic regulations and campus rules, is a core value in civic education. However, students at UIN SU Medan often arrive late to class, miss assignments, or even skip class without a clear reason. Their poor academic performance is a direct result of this lack of discipline. This also disrupts the overall dynamics of the classroom. Tolerance, which is the foundation of Indonesia's diversity, is often not deeply ingrained. UIN SU Medan faces challenges in creating social harmony as a campus with students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. There are still students who do not respect differences, such as discrimination in discussion groups, negative stereotypes about peers from other regions, or an inability to collaborate in cross-cultural teams. This phenomenon indicates that some students have not fully embraced the principles of tolerance and inclusion. Civic education on legal awareness is also often neglected. For example, some students appear to violate campus regulations, including using campus facilities without permission, smoking in restricted areas, or engaging in plagiarism.

This type of violation shows that they do not understand the importance of laws and rules as rules of life. In addition, values such as mutual cooperation and social responsibility tend to be less applied in social life on campus. For example, students often do not participate in campus activities such as social services, seminars, or competitions. Even when these activities are intended to help them or the surrounding community, many students prefer to avoid them. This apathetic attitude contradicts the principles of Citizenship Education, which encourages people to actively participate and make tangible contributions to society.

Another prominent issue is the lack of awareness of the values of nationalism and patriotism. This can be seen from students' lack of awareness of respecting national symbols, such as not participating in flag ceremonies or understanding the importance of maintaining national unity. This attitude reflects a sense of nationality that should be a characteristic of students as future leaders of the nation. There are various reasons why students at UIN SU Medan do not apply the principles of civic education. One of them is the lack of consistent campus training. Civic education is often understood as merely a theoretical course without practical application. Additionally, students' behavior is influenced by factors outside the campus, such as social media, contemporary lifestyles, and social circles that do not adhere to these principles.

Research conducted by Adisel, Thadi & Sukarno (2024) explains that students do not exhibit disciplined and responsible behavior, with 35% falling into the low category in this study. Furthermore, research conducted by SY (2024) suggests that around 40% of students practice civic education values on campus. Furthermore, research conducted by Marta et al (2024) suggests that due to a lack of appreciation for cultural and religious differences, multicultural students often experience conflicts. Only around 50% of students actively apply tolerance values

in social interactions, such as respecting differing opinions or collaborating with different groups.

Research conducted by Herlina & Nurlestari (2019) explains that students are less involved in social activities based on civic values. Only 25% of students are involved in social programs or community service activities on campus. The main factors are a lack of internal incentives and a lack of support from the campus to incorporate these programs into academic activities.

Therefore, to overcome this problem, concerted efforts from various parties are needed. To improve character building management, the campus must take a holistic approach and incorporate the values of Civic Education into various aspects of student life. In this way, students are expected to not only understand these values, but also be able to apply them consistently in their lives both on and off the UIN SU Medan campus.

## METHOD

## منهج

The research method used is a qualitative method or case study, which involves interviewing one of the lecturers, staff, or members of the academic community at UIN SU Medan who are enrolled in the class, as well as one of the students who has completed the citizenship education course. The qualitative research method and case study approach are among the approaches used to understand and analyze phenomena occurring in the real world. According to Creswell (2013), the qualitative approach is used to understand the meaning contained within a phenomenon, whether from the perspective of an individual, a group, or a culture. Meanwhile, the case study method is a deep and holistic research approach conducted on one case or several specific cases to explore data in depth and detail about the case (Yin, 2014).

## RESULT

## نتائج

To gain a comprehensive understanding, the research results are presented in three main focuses: (1) the effectiveness of civic education in increasing students' awareness of obeying rules, (2) the obstacles faced in implementing character building through civic education, and (3) the methods or learning strategies used by lecturers and the campus in conveying character values to students. Each focus area is analyzed based on in-depth interviews that reflect the empirical experiences of faculty members, administrative staff, and students. These findings provide a realistic picture of the dynamics of character education within the UIN SU Medan campus environment.

### **The effectiveness of character building through civic education in increasing students' awareness to obey rules at UINSU Medan?**

Civic education is essentially a course that seeks to encourage the formation of attitudes and morals at every level of education. In line with civic education, the course content focuses on building the morals and character of students and ensuring that they have attitudes and behaviors that are in line with the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. The civic education course also focuses on cultivating citizens who understand and are able to exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations to become intelligent, skilled, and character-driven citizens in accordance with the principles of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Permendiknas:2006:22). In an interview conducted, the researcher found that, according to Mrs. EN, a lecturer at UIN SU

“In fact, civic education has great potential to raise students' awareness of the importance of obeying rules. However, there are still obstacles to its implementation. The current curriculum does not provide

enough space for hands-on practice, focusing more on theory. As a teacher, I see students often struggling to connect the ideas they learn with real-world situations outside the campus. This indicates that more interactive, experience-based learning, such as case simulations or social activities, is needed."

The researchers also interviewed Mrs. S, a staff member at UIN SU, who stated that

"As an employee who interacts directly with students, I see that students' awareness of following rules is still inconsistent. For example, many people are late in submitting administrative documents or break the rules, such as dressing inappropriately. While citizenship education can help in this regard, it must be supported by concrete campus actions, such as specialized training or more targeted character development programs. Students must be educated to understand that rules are not merely obligations; they are part of self-development."

Furthermore, the results of the interview with student F are as follows:

"I find the Civic Education course interesting; however, there are times when it feels irrelevant to campus life as a whole. Instead of giving examples of how campus rules are applied, lecturers talk more about state theory. Activities such as group discussions about campus issues might be more beneficial. For example, rules related to dress code or attendance could be explained in a more approachable way. I believe that if students are encouraged to speak more, their awareness will increase."

### **What obstacles do you see in character building for students through Civic Education at UIN SU Medan?**

Awareness of obeying rules is a form of attitude that demonstrates a sense of concern, in the sense that, whether consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally, as a country governed by law, all levels of society should emulate the rules that have been established in every institution and region. Awareness must be accompanied by guidance or supervision at every stage and level. At the implementation stage for beginners, socialization and familiarization are applied so that there is a process of instilling the necessity of being aware of the applicable rules. This was conveyed by the student, who expressed his opinion. According to Ms. EN, she explained that:

"One of the main obstacles is the lack of practical learning methods. Civic education is often taught theoretically without involving students in activities that directly hone their character, such as discussing real cases or simulating social life. The large number of students in one class also hinders interaction. Under these conditions, character building becomes less profound."

Furthermore, information obtained from Mrs. S, a staff member, explained that:

"In terms of character building for students, I see a lack of communication between academic and non-academic parties as an obstacle. Students in the administration often do not understand the meaning of administrative rules as part of character building. However, principles of citizenship include rules such as dressing neatly and arriving on time. In order

for the message to be more effective, collaboration between teachers, staff, and students must be improved.”

Explanation from student F that:

“I think the problem is that the teaching methods are sometimes too formal and uninteresting. Many students view civics education as a subject that only needs to be memorized, but they don't realize its benefits in the real world. In addition, students don't see some of the rules taught in real life, so they feel that it's just theory. I believe that more enjoyable mentoring programs or outdoor activities need to be created.”

### **What methods are used in civic education at UIN SU Medan to increase students' awareness of obeying rules?**

Various methods used in teaching civic education courses at UIN SU, the researcher conducted an interview with one of the lecturers, Ms. EN, as follows:

“We use various civic education approaches at UIN SU Medan to raise student awareness. One of the most effective methods is project-based learning, where students are directly involved in civic activities such as legal awareness campaigns. In addition, we hold simulations and group discussions, which allow students to participate in real-life situations. They not only gain a better understanding of the rules, but also learn how their actions impact society.”

Then, according to Ms. S, a staff member, she explained that she observed the methods used to teach values at UIN SU as follows:

“At UIN SU Medan, I see civic education through outreach and seminars involving people from various backgrounds, such as legal practitioners and community leaders. These activities give students a broader understanding of the importance of obeying the rules. We also use social media to disseminate information and encourage students to talk about civic issues. In this way, we hope that students will be more critical and actively understand the existing regulations.”

Furthermore, student F explained that the lecturer applied the method of teaching civic education values as follows:

“To understand the applicable regulations, we often use discussions and case studies. Critical thinking and giving opinions on how these regulations are applied in everyday life are encouraged by our lecturers. We are also involved in extracurricular activities related to citizenship, such as social services and leadership training. Methods like this increase awareness of the importance of complying with regulations and contributing positively to society.”

## **DISCUSSION | مناقشة**

Civic Education (PKn) plays a strategic role in shaping students' character, particularly in raising awareness of the importance of adhering to campus regulations. As a required course in higher education, PKn not only conveys cognitive aspects of nationalism and law but is also



expected to foster values of discipline, social responsibility, and legal awareness in academic life (Puspitasari, 2021; Rahmawati & Subagya, 2020). Research findings indicate that this potential has not been fully realized due to the limited use of contextual teaching approaches that address students' realities (Fadillah & Nuryanto, 2022; Lestari & Syam, 2023).

The lecturers who served as sources in this study revealed that Civic Education material is still largely presented theoretically, without being directly linked to the dynamics of campus life. This aligns with the findings of Nurhafsa and Dewi (2021), who stated that the PKN learning approach tends to focus on memorization and conceptual understanding, rather than on students' active involvement in the character-building process. Students feel they lack space to critically discuss the campus regulations they face daily.

From a structural perspective, character development also faces coordination challenges between units within the campus environment. Administrative staff noted that there remains a separation of roles between academic and non-academic units in enforcing discipline, yet the success of character development requires synergy among all academic community members. This is reinforced by the opinion of Marlia et al. (2023) that the success of character education depends heavily on collaboration between teachers, administrators, and the students' social environment.

Additionally, students' internal motivation and the relevance of teaching methods are important factors. Students tend to view Civic Education as a formal subject that is disconnected from reality and does not have a tangible impact on their behavior. In line with this, research by Rizky, Hariandi, and Noviyanti (2024) indicates that the internalization of character values through Civic Education will be more effective if delivered through experiential learning methods, such as case studies, group discussions, and social projects.

This study also shows that methods such as real-life case simulations, legal awareness campaigns, and involvement in social activities like community service and leadership training are considered effective in encouraging students to understand the importance of adhering to rules. This is supported by the findings of Megawati et al. (2024), who state that students' direct involvement in value-based activities will make it easier for them to absorb civic values more fully and deeply.

Thus, it can be concluded that Civic Education at UIN SU Medan has the potential as an instrument for character development, but it needs strengthening in methodological and institutional aspects. Strategies that can be implemented include developing project-based curricula, integrating discipline into teaching practices, training faculty in character-based approaches, and enhancing the role of non-academic staff in supporting student discipline (Pratama, 2021; Putri & Sari, 2022). Ideal character education is one that not only fosters knowledge but also attitudes and behavior, enabling students to become citizens who are not only intelligent but also civilized and responsible (Hidayatullah, 2019; Yulianti & Firmansyah, 2023).

## CONCLUSSION | خاتمة

Civic Education (PKN) plays an important role in instilling awareness among students regarding campus rules and regulations. Although external encouragement such as One way that lecturers instill awareness among students regarding rules is by first establishing rules in PKN courses and then explaining these rules in detail and expecting students to comply with them.

Efforts made by lecturers and campus leaders to instill awareness among students regarding campus rules and regulations include providing clear information and explanations,

setting a good example, imposing strict and consistent sanctions, teaching students to be responsible, and providing support and appreciation. In this regard, the role of citizenship education as one of the courses that instills values of patriotism and nationalism must be implemented effectively and continuously strengthened to ensure students become a generation with awareness and responsibility as good citizens, including in adhering to campus rules and regulations.

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