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Citizenship Needs in the Daily Activities of Elementary Madrasah Students

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Abstract

This study aims to identify and analyze the citizenship needs reflected in the daily activities of madrasah ibtidaiyah students, as well as the role of these activities in the formation of students' citizenship character. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method involving observation, interviews, and documentation as data collection techniques. The research informants consisted of teachers, students, and principals in madrasah ibtidaiyah in Kendari City. The results show that daily activities such as the implementation of class pickets, flag ceremonies, religious activities, and social interactions between students serve as a means to instill citizenship values, including responsibility, cooperation, justice, and social care. Through engagement in these activities, students not only acquire knowledge of their rights and obligations as citizens, but also develop social skills and attitudes that support their role in society. This research suggests that schools should further integrate citizenship activities in students' daily activities to enhance civic learning that is more applicable and contextual, by strengthening the role of teachers in facilitating the internalization of these values.

Keywords: *Character Education, Citizenship, Daily Activities, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Social Value.*

PRELIMINARY

Civics education plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's character and identity as a good citizen, regardless of age or educational level (Izma & Kesuma, 2019). At the elementary school level, particularly in Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah), civics learning encompasses not only understanding the rights and obligations of citizens but also instilling social and national values through various daily activities. Islamic elementary schools, with their distinctive integration of religious education and national values, serve as a highly strategic platform for fostering civic awareness in students from an early age (Assingkily, 2021). Students' daily activities, such as flag ceremonies, class duty, group prayers, and community service activities, provide rich and relevant learning experiences that shape desirable civic behavior.

However, although these activities are often carried out with the aim of developing social attitudes and discipline, a deeper understanding of the citizenship needs that can be met through these daily activities is still very limited (Anatasya, E., & Dewi, D. A. (2021). Most research on citizenship education focuses on cognitive aspects and formal curriculum, without touching on how students' basic needs related to citizenship, such as a sense of responsibility, discipline, and social participation, can develop in the context of their daily lives. Therefore, this study aims to identify the citizenship needs of elementary madrasah students through observations of their daily activities, which can be the basis for developing more effective citizenship education strategies that are in accordance with the social realities in the madrasah.

Although numerous studies have addressed the importance of citizenship education at the elementary school level, there remains a significant gap in understanding how students' citizenship needs, particularly in Islamic elementary schools, are reflected in their daily activities. Daily activities, such as flag

ceremonies, community service, and classroom social interactions, are often viewed as routine without further consideration of how these activities meet students' needs in understanding their roles as citizens (Assingkily et al., 2023). Yet, through these activities, students not only practice social values but also develop a basic understanding of their obligations and rights as part of the broader society (Sadia et al., 2022).

This issue becomes increasingly relevant in the context of Islamic elementary school (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*), which has a religious and morality-based educational approach. Although civic values are frequently taught in subjects such as Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn), the actual implementation of this learning in students' daily lives remains underexplored (Permatasari, 2021; Riska, 2020). Therefore, this study focuses on exploring how the daily activities of Islamic elementary school students can reflect and meet their needs in developing civic awareness and attitudes, and how these needs can be optimized within the context of *madrasah* learning.

The primary objective of this study is to identify the civic needs that emerge through the daily activities of elementary school students and to explore how these activities contribute to the formation of their civic character. By observing student interactions in daily activities such as flag ceremonies, class duty, and community service, this study aims to explore in-depth the forms of civic needs that exist, including a sense of responsibility, social awareness, and community involvement. The results of this study are expected to provide a clearer picture of how students in elementary school students internalize civic values through concrete practices in their school life (Tamaeka et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this study aims to provide strategic recommendations for educators and policymakers in designing learning approaches that better align with students' civic needs. By focusing on daily activities as a learning medium, this study aims to suggest more effective ways to integrate civic education relevant to the social and cultural context in Islamic elementary schools, as described by Assingkily et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of teachers' roles in shaping students' character through daily interactions in the Islamic elementary school environment. It is hoped that these findings can make a significant contribution to the development of civic education curricula at the elementary level, particularly in Islamic elementary school settings.

Although there has been a number of studies addressing citizenship education at the elementary school level, most of these studies focus on theory and formal curricula that teach citizenship cognitively and normatively. Research examining students' practical citizenship needs directly in their daily activities, particularly in the context of Islamic elementary schools (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*), remains very limited. Some previous studies have focused more on aspects of the PPKn curriculum and citizenship instruction within the general education context, while very few have explored students' citizenship needs through the social and cultural activities they engage in daily at *madrasah* (Azizah, 2021).

Furthermore, although education in Islamic elementary schools (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*) has unique characteristics with an approach that combines religious and civic values, no research has yet explored in depth how students' daily activities in Islamic elementary schools can contribute to fulfilling their civic needs. One relevant study by (Mufidah et al., 2023), which analyzed daily habits in character formation of students in Islamic elementary schools, showed that routine activities such as reciting prayers, congregational prayer, and class duty play an important role in shaping students' character. However, this study has not specifically linked daily activities to fulfilling civic needs. This study seeks to fill this gap by focusing on the relationship between students' daily activities and civic character development, which has not been widely studied in the existing literature. Thus, this study has the potential to provide new and relevant contributions to the study of civic education in Islamic elementary schools.

This research offers a significant contribution to the field of citizenship education, particularly in the context of Islamic elementary schools (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*), by highlighting an aspect that has not been widely discussed in previous studies: the fulfillment of citizenship needs through students' daily activities. Unlike traditional approaches that focus more on cognitive or normative learning through the curriculum, this research highlights the concrete practices students engage in in their daily lives at *madrasah*, such as social activities, mutual cooperation, and peer interactions (Damayanti & Rahmawati, 2021). This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how citizenship values can develop naturally within their social context, which is often more relevant and effective than relying solely on theory-based teaching.

Another novel aspect of this research is its application to Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah), which are characterized by an education that integrates religious and national values. This provides a crucial new perspective, given that Islamic elementary schools play a central role in shaping students' character through moral and civic education. This research not only provides insight into the relationship between daily activities and civic education but also offers recommendations that educators can directly implement to create a more dynamic learning environment that is relevant to students' civic needs in Islamic elementary schools (Munfa'ati, 2018).

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of in-depth understanding of the citizenship needs of elementary madrasah students as reflected in their daily activities within the school environment. This design was chosen because it allows for a holistic depiction of complex social phenomena, particularly those related to citizenship values that are not only taught through the formal curriculum but also shaped through everyday practices.

The research was conducted in several elementary Islamic schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah) in Kendari City, Southeast Sulawesi. This city was chosen because of its high social diversity and the schools' active integration of religious and civic values into school life. As Islamic elementary educational institutions, Madrasah ibtidaiyah have significant potential for internalizing civic values through daily social interactions between students and educators.

Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Assingkily, 2021). Observations were conducted during routine student activities, such as flag ceremonies, class duty, community service, and interactions between students outside of class hours. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were conducted with purposively selected informants: fourth and fifth grade students, civics and religion teachers, and the madrasah principal. The interviews aimed to explore their perspectives on citizenship values and needs that emerge from daily practices. Documentation of school activities, learning materials, and character-building programs was also used to complement and strengthen the data obtained through observations and interviews.

All data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, beginning with the transcription of interview and observation data, followed by a coding process to identify key themes. After the themes were classified, their meaning was interpreted by comparing data sources to determine consistency and uniqueness. This analysis was conducted iteratively to produce valid and contextual findings.

To ensure data validity, source triangulation and member checking techniques were used. Triangulation was conducted by comparing data from students, teachers, and the madrasah principal. Member checking was conducted by asking informants to provide feedback on preliminary findings to ensure that the researchers' interpretations align with their experiences and perspectives. Furthermore, the entire field recording process was conducted systematically and structured to ensure the data obtained remains accurate and scientifically accountable.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

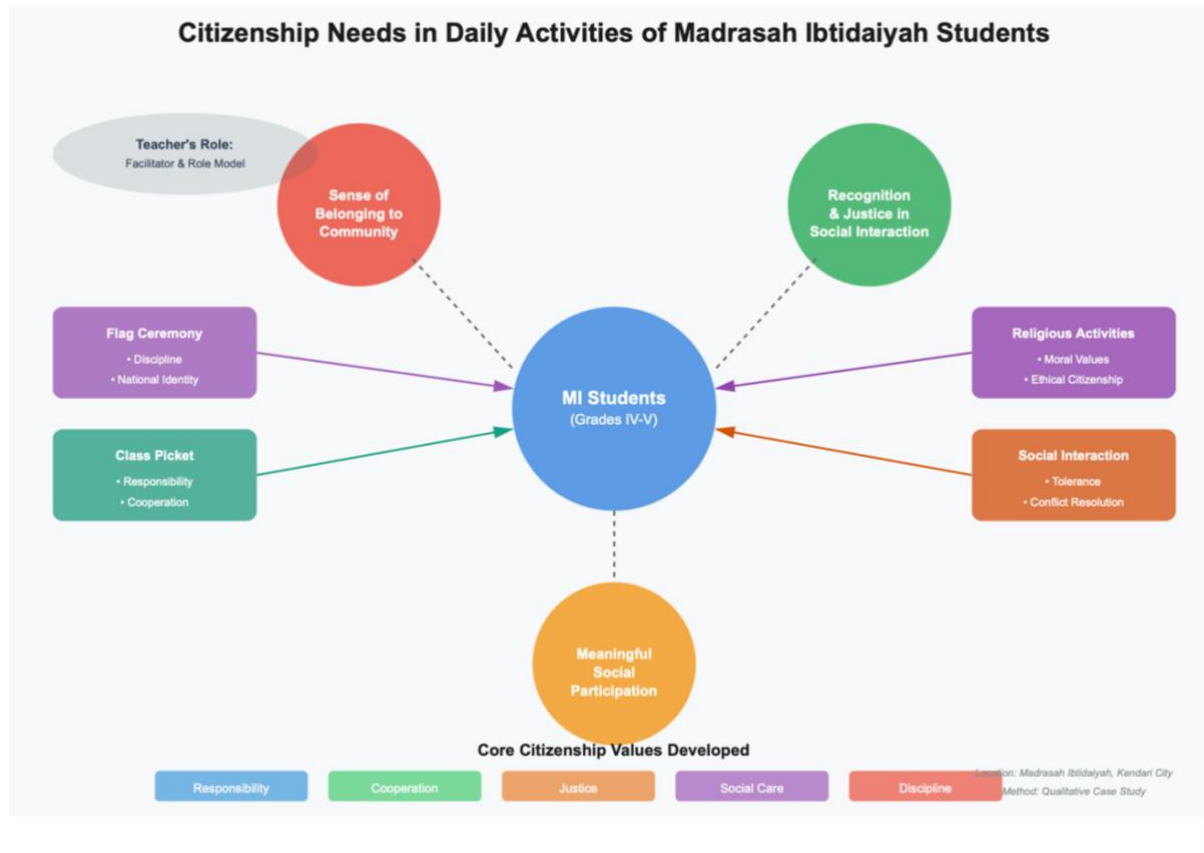


Figure 1. Civics Learning Needs of Elementary Madrasah Students

The findings of this study indicate that the daily activities of elementary madrasah students are an important arena for internalizing the values and needs of citizenship. Activities such as flag ceremonies, cooperation in maintaining classroom cleanliness, carrying out duties, participating in religious activities, and social interactions between students not only reflect ordinary social practices but also concretely reflect the process of forming citizenship awareness from an early age (Mufidah et al., 2023). In this context, citizenship needs encompass not only aspects of knowledge about the rights and obligations of citizens, but more broadly encompass the need for social participation, a sense of responsibility, discipline, and concern for the social environment.

Data analysis shows that students in Islamic elementary schools gain citizenship experience not only through formal learning but also through everyday experiences in the school environment. This aligns with Vygotsky's concept of social learning, which states that knowledge and skills develop through social interaction (Daniels, 2017). When students work together to clean the classroom or maintain order during congregational prayer, they learn the meaning of responsibility, mutual cooperation, and adherence to norms—values that are integral to citizenship education.

Conceptually, citizenship needs in the context of elementary madrasah students can be classified into three main domains: (1) the need for a sense of belonging to the school community, (2) the need for recognition and fairness in social interactions, and (3) the need for participation in socially meaningful activities. These three domains are evident in students' routines. For example, when students are given the responsibility of being a ceremony officer or a work group leader, they feel recognized and valued for their role. This experience strengthens their intrinsic motivation as part of the school community and indirectly fosters an active citizenship identity (Hoskins et al., 2021).

These findings also confirm the relevance of civic learning theory, which states that effective citizenship learning requires direct engagement in social life. The daily activities of elementary madrasah students are not merely administrative routines, but rather living spaces that allow them to develop civic

understanding and skills through real-life experiences (Hoskins et al., 2021). These activities bridge the gap between the values taught in the classroom and the real-life experiences students encounter in their daily lives.

One important finding of this study is that teachers play a central role in fostering students' civic needs through consistent practice and a dialogical approach. Teachers not only act as conveyors of information but also as role models who demonstrate how civic values are implemented ethically and practically. For example, when teachers provide space for students to express their opinions in class discussions or resolve conflicts through deliberation, students learn about democracy, tolerance, and non-violent problem-solving (Sastradipura et al., 2021). This suggests that the need for expression, respect for differences, and procedural justice have become part of a healthy civic classroom dynamic.

Interestingly, this study also revealed that the religious dimension of madrasah life does not negate the need for citizenship but rather enriches its meaning and practice. Activities such as congregational prayer, reciting prayers together, and participating in Islamic holiday commemorations provide students with a space to interpret citizenship from a religious perspective that is ethical and full of human values (Aziz & Hasanah, 2022). This aligns with an integrative approach to citizenship education, which does not separate moral, spiritual, and socio-political aspects in shaping well-rounded citizens.

These findings reinforce the idea that relevant and meaningful citizenship education for elementary school students must be rooted in their daily life experiences, rather than solely relying on a cognitive curriculum (Akuba, 2023). This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for educators to design more contextual and participatory pedagogical strategies that address students' needs for a sense of justice, engagement, and meaningfulness in their social lives.

On the other hand, this study also shows that fulfilling citizenship needs still faces challenges in terms of the unequal participation of students in social activities. For example, in some cases, activities are still too dominated by teacher initiatives, while students tend to passively follow directions. This indicates that student participation has not been fully utilized as a means of empowerment (Hoskins et al., 2021). In this regard, the results of this study emphasize the importance of an inclusive and learner-centered learning approach to strengthen their active role in school life.

Most students also indicated that they felt their social needs were met when they contributed to, were recognized, and were valued by the school community. This recognition did not always take the form of formal awards, but could include praise, trust, and support from teachers and peers. This demonstrates that the affective dimension of civics learning plays a crucial role, and that fulfilling civic needs is not solely related to legal instruments or policies, but also to healthy and supportive social relationships (Suarman, 2021).

This interpretation has important implications for the broader context of citizenship education. If schools, particularly Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah), are to develop resilient and reflective young citizens, then citizenship education must be embedded through concrete, meaningful, and contextualized social practices in students' daily lives. This means that citizenship needs cannot be separated from students' existential needs as social beings who desire to be valued, included, and empowered within their communities.

Furthermore, the results of this study broaden our understanding of how civics education can be designed to address the unique needs of elementary school-aged students. These findings also challenge the prevailing view that overemphasizes the cognitive aspects of civics education, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach that incorporates affective, social, and moral dimensions into the learning process (Iswandi, 2019). Thus, civics education not only shapes knowledge about the state, law, and citizens' rights, but also shapes character, identity, and social habits rooted in students' lived experiences.

Overall, the interpretation of the results of this study confirms that the daily activities of elementary madrasah students have great potential as a medium to fulfill substantive citizenship needs. Through active involvement, supportive social relations, and the practice of values such as responsibility, justice, and tolerance, students learn to become citizens who not only know their rights and obligations but are also able to contribute actively and ethically in social life (Iswandi, 2019). This research not only enriches theoretical studies on citizenship education but also provides practical guidance for schools and educators in developing a generation of intelligent, resilient, and integrity-based citizens from an early age.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that students' daily activities in Islamic elementary schools significantly reflect various forms of citizenship needs, not only limited to cognitive knowledge of the rights and obligations of citizens, but also encompass social, affective, and moral dimensions. Activities such as class duty, participation in flag ceremonies, religious activities, and social interactions among peers provide effective contextual learning spaces for internalizing the values of responsibility, justice, cooperation, and social awareness. In this process, students develop a sense of belonging to the school community, gain social recognition, and gain meaningful experiences in social participation, which are the seeds for the formation of a civic identity.

These findings indicate that fulfilling the citizenship needs of elementary madrasah students occurs not only through formal learning, but also through daily experiences shaped by school culture and constructive social relationships. Teachers play a crucial role as facilitators, role models, and mentors in creating an educational environment that supports the formation of these civic values. Success in fostering early civic awareness is closely related to how schools are able to create a participatory, inclusive, and educationally valuable climate in students' daily activities.

Theoretically, this research reinforces the experiential civic learning approach, which emphasizes the importance of context and active student involvement in the social life of the school. Practically, the results of this study have direct implications for the development of civic education models at the elementary level, particularly in Islamic elementary schools (madrasah ibtidaiyah). Students' daily activities need to be designed and evaluated continuously to meet their basic needs as active, critical, and responsible future citizens. Furthermore, the religious values that underlie the madrasah's identity must be interpreted as strengthening the formation of social ethics and public virtues that underlie the practice of citizenship.

Based on these results and implications, it is recommended that schools and educators systematically and reflectively integrate civic values into students' daily routines. Teachers need to be provided with pedagogical training that emphasizes a contextual and participatory approach to fostering civic awareness. This study also recommends the development of assessment instruments capable of comprehensively measuring the achievement of students' civic needs, including socio-emotional and value aspects. Further research is recommended to explore the influence of family and community factors on the holistic fulfillment of students' civic needs.

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