



The Development Process of Democratic Values of High School Students in Banda Aceh City

Proses Pembinaan Nilai-Nilai Demokrasi Siswa SMA Kota Banda Aceh

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Abstract

Understanding and applying democratic values is one part of overcoming intolerant and discriminatory attitudes among students. The proposed solutions include strengthening extracurricular programs, active learning in the classroom, student participation in decision-making, integration of moral values in the curriculum, and regular program evaluation. This research examines the process of fostering democratic values for students at school. This study is a case study with a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. Data were collected through interviews with 16 Civics teachers and 16 students and then analyzed using data reduction, data display, and verification. The results showed that fostering democratic values was not only carried out through extracurricular activities or learning in the classroom. But it is also organized with a co-curricular activity approach integrated into the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). This includes simulating elections, changing the Osis chairperson, and distributing roles in class, such as class leader. In addition, the process of fostering democratic values also involves extracurricular activities such as Paskibra, PASCAL, Scouts, sports (such as futsal), debates, theatre, the annual 'Realistig' event, dance studio, Rohis, law ambassador forum, spiritual activities (tahfidz), PIK-R, and PMR.

INTRODUCTION

Fostering democratic values in students is an essential aspect of modern education. Democracy is not only a political system but also a fundamental value that underlies social life. Research (Smith & Jones, 2023) shows that fostering democratic school values can significantly contribute to shaping participatory attitudes, tolerance, and respect for plurality in society.

Fostering democratic values in schools is very important because schools are strategic places to instill these values early on. Democratic education in schools helps shape students' characters to become critical, actively participating, and responsible citizens in the life of society and the state. In addition, democracy education also improves students' ability to appreciate differences, resolve conflicts peacefully, and work together in diverse groups. This aligns with Silva & Guerra's research (2023), which shows that schools that implement democratic education have higher student participation in school and community activities and show more tolerant and inclusive attitudes.

The implementation of democratic education in schools also supports the national education goal, which is to develop students' potential to become human beings who are faithful, pious, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens. In this context, students who receive democratic education have better critical thinking skills and are better prepared to face complex global challenges. Therefore, it is important for schools to actively integrate democratic values into the curriculum and extracurricular activities so that students can internalize these values and apply them in their daily lives (Ahmadi, 2018).

Fostering democratic values helps students develop critical and analytical thinking skills, understand others' perspectives, and cooperate in achieving common goals. This confirms that democratic education is about educating individuals to become citizens aware of their rights and shaping individuals who collectively contribute to building a just and inclusive society.

Fostering democratic values for students is important because it can increase their involvement in collective decision-making processes. This is in line with the findings from a study by Brown et al. (2022), which showed that students familiar with democratic principles tend to be more active in social activities and more able to appreciate different views. Democratic education also helps build critical and analytical thinking skills, essential in facing the complex challenges of today's globalized society.

A study by Jones et al. (2024) highlighted the effectiveness of democracy coaching programs in increasing students' political awareness and participation. The results of this study provide strong evidence that the integration of democratic values in the school curriculum not only results in a deeper understanding of democratic principles but also produces a generation that is better equipped to contribute positively to the development of a democratic society.

Kurniawan (2023) explains that fostering democratic values in Indonesian schools generally involves teaching basic democratic concepts such as human rights, political participation, and social justice. Through active learning strategies such as class discussions, simulations of political situations, and collaborative projects, students not only understand how democracy functions in daily life but are also trained to think critically and appreciate diversity. Activities such as electing class leaders with democratic procedures, the UN model, and debate clubs help students experience hands-on practice of democratic values. Despite challenges such as limited resources and political polarisation, democratic education remains an important foundation in shaping students as agents of positive change in an inclusive and participating society.

In particular, the preliminary study results show that the process of fostering democratic values in Banda Aceh City High School is not limited to curricular programs in learning, which include justice, empathy, tolerance/intolerance, cooperation, and the like. However, schools as educational institutions play an important role in shaping students' democratic character. One effective platform for strengthening students' understanding and experience of democracy is through various extracurricular activities commonly organized in schools, such as Paskibra, PASCAL, Scouting, and sports such as futsal, which not only provide opportunities for students to develop their skills and talents, but also become a place to learn about cooperation, justice, and active participation in a community. Through practice and an understanding of responsibility, students learn to respect differences and accept the opinions of others, which are essential values in a democratic system.

Integrating democratic values is done through guided/independent learning activities, student council activities, news programs, mentoring, eating together, and hygiene initiatives. Developing democratic values for students includes fostering cooperation and solidarity, instilling obedience to rules and understanding, and fostering freedom of expression (Sarifah, 2017).

In the context of high schools in Banda Aceh city, further exploration of fostering democratic values is needed to gain a deeper understanding of the optimal practices schools can implement to build a younger generation that understands and applies democratic values effectively.

This research is fundamental as it helps identify how schools can effectively integrate democratic values into the curriculum and extracurricular activities. With a deeper understanding of best practices in fostering democratic values, this research can increase students' participation in civic life, strengthen their critical thinking skills, and promote tolerance and cooperation. Given the role of schools as strategic institutions in shaping students' character, this research will provide valuable insights for developing more effective learning methods, supporting national education goals, and preparing young people better equipped to contribute to an inclusive and equitable democratic society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is classified as a case study because it allows an in-depth analysis of implementing democratic values in schools. In addition, the researcher examined in detail how democratic values are integrated into the curriculum and daily activities in Banda Aceh city high schools and students' responses to the programs. Case studies also allow the identification of internal and external factors that influence the effectiveness of fostering democratic values for students (Cresweel, 2018).

The qualitative approach used in this research seeks to understand in depth the process of fostering democratic values implemented in high schools in Banda Aceh city. This approach allows researchers to explore and describe students' and teachers' experiences, views, and understandings related to implementing democratic values. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research allows

researchers to obtain data rich in detail and context. This approach describes and interprets how democratic values are understood, applied, and promoted at high schools in Banda Aceh (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The data collection technique used was interviews, a question-and-answer process conducted with 16 Civics teachers and 16 students. The data analysis technique used in this research includes three stages, as described by Miles and Huberman (2014): data reduction, data display, and verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, the process of fostering democratic values in schools covers several aspects, namely:

- a. Dispute resolution involves mediation by a third party to find an amicable solution.
- b. The implementation of change in the school environment is done by socialising and receiving feedback from students so that they feel involved and valued.
- c. Leadership changes are conducted regularly through fair and transparent elections, allowing all students to participate.
- d. Students value diversity
- e. Justice is upheld by ensuring equal access to all students.

Based on the results of the interviews, important points were obtained about the program of fostering democratic values in SMA Kota Banda Aceh:

1. Consistent Efforts: Programmes at Banda Aceh City High School show a continuous commitment to fostering democratic values among students.
2. Active Involvement: The activities undertaken involve students' active participation, supporting their direct involvement in the democratic process.
3. Decision Making: The programs teach students about decision-making, providing hands-on experience in making important decisions.
4. Discussion: Discussion is integral to these programs, helping students understand different views and build communication skills.

5. Enhanced Understanding of Democracy: These programs aim to enhance students' understanding of democratic principles.
6. Participation Skills: Besides understanding, these programs provide practical skills for students to participate effectively in society.

In general, the results of interviews from 16 senior high schools in Banda Aceh city show that students' responses to efforts to foster democratic values in schools are:

1. Programmes to foster democratic values, such as the election of student council leaders, election simulations, and class deliberations, are well received by most students.
2. Students felt that these programs helped them understand the democratic process, increase their self-confidence, and become more involved in school activities.
3. A small number of students still feel less interested and require additional motivation or a more engaging approach.
4. Civics teachers noted the need to continue developing and refining these programs to make them more inclusive and engaging for all students.

Overall, the results of the interviews indicate that there are several important points related to improving the understanding and practice of democratic values, namely:

1. Noted improvements include active involvement in class discussions, student council elections, and class deliberations.
2. There were variations in the level of engagement and understanding among students in each school
3. A small proportion of students still have more interest and engagement.

DISCUSSION

The results showed that fostering democratic values was not only carried out through extracurricular activities or learning in the classroom. However, it is also organized with a co-curricular activity approach. Fostering democratic values for students involves several stages that are important to ensure students understand and develop democratic attitudes that are integrated into the

Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Programme (P5). These include election simulations, the changing of the Osis chairperson, and the distribution of roles in class, such as class leader. In addition, teachers and students explained that the process of fostering democratic values also involves extracurricular activities such as Paskibra, PASCAL, Scouts, sports (such as futsal), debates, theatre, the annual 'Realistic' event, dance studio, Rohis, law ambassador forum, spiritual activities (tahfidz), PIK-R, and PMR.

Planning a democratic values development program involves several important stages to ensure students understand and develop democratic attitudes. For example, co-curricular activities such as the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Programme (P5) significantly benefit students in developing democratic values. Through this program, students strengthen their character and competence and are taught to participate actively in learning. Students can also learn to plan and execute projects independently, honing the skills and knowledge needed in real-life situations. In addition, P5 helps students to face and solve problems and develop critical and creative thinking skills that are important in facing future challenges (detailed Team, 2023).

Susanti et al. 's research (2023) revealed that fostering democratic attitudes through curricular activities integrated into Civics learning at school can be carried out by organizing group discussions, learning the practice of electing class leaders, and applying fun learning models in the form of games.

Extracurricular activities at school are among the most important aspects of fostering democratic values for students. However, extracurricular activities must also be balanced with the right time or *timeline* to avoid interfering with academics. The following is a narrative about the importance of balancing extracurriculars with academic time to foster democratic values; Novitasari et al. (2023) explain that in this context, students not only develop their interests and talents but also learn about active participation in the decision-making process. Students are also directed to speak and listen to the opinions of others, respect differences, and understand that every individual has the right to have a voice. Moreover, in a social context, extracurricular activities help students expand their social circle, hone their communication skills, and learn to cooperate effectively.

These are important in a democracy because they reflect freedom of speech, justice, and respect for individual rights.

Research conducted by Wahyuni (2017) shows that through extracurricular activities, students can be formed into Pancasila personalities who can live and practice the noble values of Pancasila, such as religious, humanist, nationalist, democratic, and socialist. These core *values* become characters that can always be built by each extracurricular activity in its various activities.

Mulyasa (2014) explains that self-development activities, such as extracurricular activities, can be used as potential media for fostering democratic values and improving students' academic quality. In addition, Massoni (2021) also revealed that extracurricular activities can positively impact students, including attitudes, self-confidence, better academic achievement, productivity, and social aspects.

The development of democratic values in schools is carried out by various parties and stakeholders who play an active role in the educational process, such as teachers, students, principals, school staff, and parents. Democratic attitudes reflect respect for human rights, accommodate positive values, and have an optimistic worldview (Kula & Aytac, 2022).

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that fostering democratic attitudes in schools can be done through co-curricular activities such as group discussions, class leader election practices, and fun learning models. In addition, extracurricular activities also play an important role in developing democratic values, such as active participation, respect for different opinions, and students' social skills. This is important because it reflects values such as freedom of opinion, justice, and respect for individual rights, which are the basic principles of democracy.

Fostering democratic values within SMA Negeri Banda Aceh includes resolving disputes peacefully and institutionally, ensuring peaceful change within a changing school environment, organizing regular changes in leadership, limiting violence to a minimum, recognizing and valuing diversity, and ensuring justice. Conflict resolution in schools requires a wise and peaceful approach to ensure the realization of democratic values. In this regard, teachers should actively listen to

students and choose an appropriate conflict resolution style, such as mediation or open dialogue. Facilitating honest and respectful dialogue between students is key. Teachers must also teach practical self-expression skills and model positive conflict-resolution behaviors. This way, conflicts can be resolved peacefully and support students' character development (Wanasek, 2023).

Fostering democratic values can also be manifested in efforts to organize change peacefully, which can be done through socialization related to change and choosing strategies according to the context and intended targets. Each strategy, be it direct communication, mass media, or social media, has advantages and disadvantages in achieving socialization objectives. Direct communication allows for intense direct interaction with the audience, while mass media can reach more significant numbers quickly. On the other hand, social media offers dynamic two-way interaction and the ability to reach specific targets. Choosing the right strategy will increase the effectiveness of the change socialization message, ensuring that the message can be conveyed clearly and successfully influence the audience as expected (Lipschultz, 2015).

Organizing the election of leaders such as student council leaders and class leaders in schools also plays an important role in introducing political and democratic principles to students. The process is designed to be similar to an election in general, starting with the submission of nominations by students who dare to appear as candidates. After that, the candidate gets to campaign with a clear vision and mission without cheating, teaching students about integrity and healthy competition. Furthermore, students are involved in supporting the candidate by designing a work program that is expected to be implemented if the supported candidate is elected. The election is conducted in a direct, general, free, and secret manner, resembling a general election process such as the presidential or regional head elections. The announcement of the elected chairperson is also important to be done by the teacher or OSIS coach, instilling the value of having a big heart in students to accept the election results gracefully. Through the implementation of this procedure, it is expected that students not only understand the school's internal democratic process but also practice good political ethics (Dipraja, 2019).

Research conducted by Jauhari et al. (2022) highlighted the role of teachers in instilling democratic values through a reflection of tolerance. Teachers can do several effective ways, including self-development, where teachers can create a school environment that promotes tolerance and provides direct examples to students in everyday life. In addition, evaluation in fostering democratic values is needed to ensure that the learning process and the development of democratic values are practical and efficient; teachers can integrate tolerance values into the curriculum and learning activities so that students are accustomed to respect for differences. Through an inclusive school culture, teachers can also create an atmosphere that supports tolerance and teaches students not to prejudge others based on differences. Thus, teachers not only act as academic educators but also as models and prime movers in shaping students' positive character related to tolerance.

Sri Yunita et al. (2023) revealed that the concept of justice in education also guides efforts to create a fair, inclusive, and democratic educational environment. Equity in education includes the understanding that every individual, regardless of social, economic, cultural, or other personal characteristics, has the same right to a quality education. It involves equitable access to educational resources, including every student's right to equal learning opportunities. In addition, the concept also concerns fair treatment in all aspects of education, such as assessment, rewards, and coaching. Equity in education is also closely related to eliminating inequalities in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on research on fostering democratic values in high schools in the Banda Aceh Municipality area in the 2023/2024 academic year, it was found that fostering democratic values is not only carried out through extracurricular activities or learning in the classroom. However, it is also carried out with a co-curricular activity approach integrated into the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Programme (P5). This includes simulating elections, changing the Osis chairperson, and distributing roles in class, such as class leader. In addition, the process of fostering democratic values also involves extracurricular activities

such as Paskibra, PASCAL, Scouts, sports (such as futsal), debates, theatre, the annual 'Realistig' event, dance studio, Rohis, law ambassador forum, spiritual activities (tahfidz), PIK-R, and PMR.

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