



# Fostering Democratic Citizenship: Innovative Approaches to Improve Civic Values in Elementary School Independent Curricula

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## ABSTRAK

Indonesia sangat menjunjung tinggi nilai demokrasi. Demokrasi diinternalisasikan sejak pendidikan dasar sebagai esensi dari Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan (PPKn). Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis. Strategi pendekatan inovatif guru dalam menerapkan nilai-nilai demokrasi melalui mata pelajaran PPKn dalam kurikulum merdeka di tingkat sekolah dasar. Peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Analisis data meliputi empat alur yaitu pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumenter. Sumber data primer adalah guru, dan sumber data sekunder adalah siswa kelas empat SD. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat beberapa strategi pendekatan yang dilakukan dalam mengimplementasikan nilai demokrasi di sekolah dasar, antara lain: 1) pembiasaan berjabat tangan, 2) hafalan ayat-ayat Al-Quran dan asmaul husna, 3) membuang sampah pada tempatnya, 4) program sekolah untuk mengikutsertakan guru-guru dalam forum ilmiah, 5) jumat bersih dan sehat, 6) madrasah diniyah, 7) pembiasaan sholat berjamaah, dan 8) anjangsana. Selain itu, guru juga menyelipkan nilai demokrasi dalam pembelajaran PPKn, seperti: 1) pembelajaran berbasis kelompok, 2) kelompok multikultural, 3) melakukan aktivitas bersama, 4) membuat modul ajar yang demokratis. Disimpulkan bahwa guru memiliki berbagai strategi pendekatan yang inovatif untuk meningkatkan nilai kewarganegaraan yang demokratis bagi siswa. Temuan penelitian memberikan wawasan berharga tentang pendekatan guru yang inovatif dalam mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai demokratis ke dalam Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan di sekolah dasar, yang berkontribusi pada pengembangan bidang ilmiah dalam mempromosikan kewarganegaraan demokratis.

## ABSTRACT

Indonesia highly upholds democratic values. Democracy is internalized since elementary education as the essence of Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn). The purpose of this study was to analyze. Teachers' innovative approach strategies in implementing democratic values through PPKn subjects in the independent curriculum at the elementary school level. The researcher used a qualitative descriptive method. Data analysis includes four flows, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentaries. The primary data source was the teacher, and the secondary data source was the fourth grade students. The results of the study showed that there were several approach strategies carried out in implementing democratic values in elementary schools, including: 1) the habit of shaking hands, 2) memorizing verses of the Quran and Asmaul Husna, 3) throwing garbage in its place, 4) school programs to involve teachers in scientific forums, 5) clean and healthy Fridays, 6) madrasah diniyah, 7) the habit of praying in congregation, and 8) visiting. In addition, teachers also insert democratic values in PPKn learning, such as: 1) group-based learning, 2) multicultural groups, 3) doing joint activities, 4) making democratic teaching modules. It is concluded that teachers have various innovative approach strategies to improve democratic citizenship values for students. The research findings provide valuable insights into innovative teacher approaches in integrating democratic values into Civic Education in elementary schools, which contribute to the development of scientific fields in promoting democratic citizenship.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a mandatory requirement for every individual. One place for education is school. School cannot be separated from human life (Supriyadi, 2018; Wicaksono & Siska, 2020). In Indonesia, students are mandated to complete a 12-year compulsory education program. The term "compulsory education" denotes a policy mandating school-age citizens to attend education up to a specified level, with full governmental support to ensure their participation. This mirrors similar compulsory education initiatives in countries like the US, Scandinavia, Germany and Japan, students not only do not pay for school, but also do not pay for transportation costs and getting books and various other educational needs (Mahendrawan & Rahayu, 2020; Sofyan & Sanusi, 2023). In this context, compulsory education is meant to fulfill children's "right" to learn. Education is a deliberate attempt to realize the teaching process and learning atmosphere so that the students actively cultivate their selfpotential, according to Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System. Explicitly, this shows the connection between the education and learning processes (Ilham, 2019; Widiastuti et al., 2022). Teachers facilitate the learning process, students are the subjects who are learning, and infrastructure is the way to support learning are all components of the learning process. Teachers are an important part of the learning process (Anggraini et al., 2022; Maulida, 2022).

In essence, the role of educators changes according to the applicable curriculum. The curriculum has a big impact on the progress of education in a country (Dhomiri, 2023; Maulida, 2022). If previously learning was teacher-centered, now the teacher's role is to facilitate students in learning. This is in accordance with what the principal of SDN Pagertoyaa said, "In this independent curriculum, students are indeed involved a lot, so the teachers must be strong, innovative, creative and energetic. So learning is not only teacher-centered, students are active there too, learning is student-centered. In the past, teachers were transformers of knowledge in learning, now teachers are only among people." Apart from that, educator, teacher, facilitator, guide, director, servant, designer, manager, innovator, assessor, and other roles are some of the many responsibilities that teachers have in school education (Sibagariang et al., 2021; Sitompul, 2022; Syaparuddin et al., 2020). Teachers as educators have an important role in the education process at school. In carrying out the learning process, teachers must master the core components, the core components are intended to achieve basic competencies and learning objectives through strategies, methods, media that are adapted to the character of students and subjects (Arviansyah & Shagena, 2022; Zulaiha et al., 2022).

One of the important subjects in elementary school is civic education. The learning objectives of Civics focus on aspects of cultivating students' attitudes and personalities in order to become good citizens, and be able to show civic responsibility and civic skills such as participation in decision making (Ikhtiarti et al., 2019; Lisnawati et al., 2022). One of the subjects that fulfills the national goal of educating Indonesians is civics, which is done through the "value-based education" corridor. Citizens who are patriotic, tolerant, devoted to their country and state, religious, democratic, and authentic Pancasila are examples of excellent citizens, and civics education can help them become such (Febrianti & Dewi, 2021; Safitri et al., 2021). Apart from that, students also have a loyal attitude to the Indonesian nation and uphold Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution as the nation's basic principles. This is in line with Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 22 of 2006 concerning Standards for elementary to middle schools states that Civics subjects emphasize the character of citizens who can implement their rights and obligations as mandated in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (D. A. Dewi et al., 2021; Widiastuti et al., 2022).

According to previous study civics education as an educational program implemented with a focus on learning about political democracy, with various sources of insight with the aim of forming a critical and analytical mind and forming a democratic attitude (Nurazizah & Dewi, 2021). Humans who do not have a democratic attitude can give rise to a pattern of coercion, indifference and disrespect for the rights and obligations of other people (Amalia & Najicha, 2022; Na'imah & Bawani, 2021). Democracy has values, namely responsible freedom, recognition of individual rights, the goal of justice, equality before the law. Democratic values need to be instilled from elementary school. By implementing democratic education in learning, justice will be created for each individual to obtain rights in education. Schools must have a culture that can enable students to experience the life of citizens who have democratic values and attitudes (Anatasya & Dewi, 2021; Khuzaimah & Farid, 2022).

Democratic values can be reflected through the way we behave and act. This value is strengthened in PPKn by showing behavior that prioritizes common interests, differences of opinion can be resolved by consensus based on a family spirit. Democratic values must be upheld in democratic life, so these values must be instilled in students. Teachers as the front guard in schools need to strengthen education to create quality learning. The quality of the learning process means that students can participate actively in school (Pertiwi et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2021). The learning process is the interaction between the teacher and students and ends with the evaluation of learning outcomes. The implementation of democracy in learning

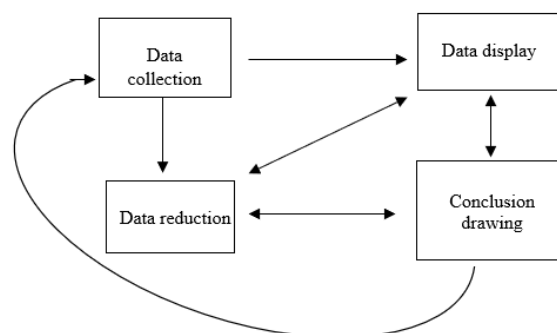
can shape students' character, values and morals. Apart from that, students can develop their rationality to achieve better morals (R. R. Dewi et al., 2021; Parawangsa et al., 2021). Thus, the application of democratic values needs to be implemented in everyday life, so that the next generation can build a democratic society.

Democratic education is not only carried out by developing countries, but also by developed countries. Democratic education is indeed important, but in practice democratic education is still ignored and considered trivial (Arifin, 2021; Kirani & Najicha, 2022). This is proven by research conducted at SD Apart from that, based on research on students at SDN Gemarang 6 Kedunggalar Ngawi, it is known that their democratic values and character strengthening are still low (Sinta et al., 2022). This reality is contrary to the main aim and mission of Civics learning. Many students do not understand democratic values so that these students do not have democratic understanding and attitudes in their daily lives (Arifin, 2021; Humaeroh & Dewi, 2021). According to the interview with the fourth grade teacher at SDN Pagertoya, there are still some students who do not reflect democratic attitudes, such as a lack of active participation during learning. Furthermore, the principal of SDN Pagertoya also said that there were still students who forgot their responsibilities regarding the tasks given by the teacher. The results of these observations show the importance of democratic values and culture from an early age since elementary school so that students become citizens who have democratic attitudes and characters. Teachers have a role in building students' character and ethics, especially in the independent curriculum which emphasizes the formation of students' character, moral and ethical values. Education units are given the Merdeka Curriculum as an additional option to help them recover learning in 2022–2024 (Iqbal et al., 2023; Savitri, 2020). The Ministry of Education and Culture's policy on promoting educational freedom aims to ensure quality education accessible to all Indonesians, characterized by widespread participation across all education levels, enhanced learning outcomes, and improved educational standards (Mazid et al., 2021; Sherly et al., 2021).

This research holds significant importance in the educational landscape as it delves deeply into the innovative strategies adopted by teachers to effectively integrate democratic values within Civics Education at the elementary school level, particularly within the context of the independent curriculum framework in Indonesia. The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive exploration of various approaches, such as familiarization programs and school-community collaborations, aimed at instilling democratic values among students. By emphasizing the importance of effective communication and close relationships between schools and communities, this study offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to nurture democratic citizenship from an early age. The findings of this research not only contribute to the advancement of civic education but also provide a unique perspective on fostering democratic principles in elementary school environments, thereby paving the way for enhanced character development and ethical values among students. This researchers aim to analyze strategies for integrating democratic values into Civics Education (PPKn) within the independent curriculum framework at elementary schools.

## 2. METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, which involves generating descriptive data through written or spoken words and observable behaviors (Adlini et al., 2022; Yusanto, 2019). Qualitative research typically takes place in natural settings, with primary data collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Rijali, 2019). The research utilizes both primary and secondary data sources, with fourth-grade teachers and the principal of SDN Pagertoya contributing as primary sources, and students from the same school serving as secondary sources. Data collection methods include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The collected data undergo qualitative data analysis following established models (Hasan et al., 2023; Sarosa, 2021), which will be further elucidated as show in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Qualitative Research Data Analysis

In acquiring data, researchers directly engage in fieldwork utilizing interview guide, observation, and documentation instruments. The interview guide is crafted to aid researchers in formulating questions for the interviewees. It encompasses a list of inquiries regarding innovative approach strategies employed by teachers to enhance democratic citizenship values within the independent curriculum at elementary schools. The observation guide is designed to assist researchers during on-site observations. It comprises elements pertaining to teachers' approach strategies in fostering democratic citizenship values within the independent curriculum at elementary schools. The documentation guide, document review, serves as supporting evidence for the researchers' activities such as innovative approach strategies through school environment familiarization programs, teachers' approach in shaping democratic character through civic education in the independent curriculum, school vision and mission, school objectives, and regulations for teachers and students within the school.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Result

Based on the results of data analysis, this research found two main findings that are relevant to the implementation of democratic values in the independent curriculum in elementary schools. First, the strategic approach used to strengthen democratic values. One prominent strategy is through familiarization, where schools introduce activities that teach students about the importance of democratic values in everyday life. For example, SDN Pagertoya implements programs designed to form students who are intelligent, have good character and have noble morals, in line with the school's vision. Habits such as congregational prayers are part of this effort, where students are taught to carry out worship collectively, creating an atmosphere of unity and togetherness among them. Apart from that, this research also highlights the importance of collaboration between schools and communities in building student character. Schools need to establish close relationships with the local environment, because good interaction between the school and the community can strengthen democratic values in everyday life. Effective internal and external communication is the key to maintaining harmonious relationships between schools, students and society. With positive support from the community, school programs can be implemented more effectively and sustainably.

Active community participation is also a real indication of the success of implementing democratic values in everyday life. Through their participation in various school activities and supporting educational programs aimed at strengthening democratic values, the community plays a role in shaping student characters that reflect the spirit of democracy and togetherness. Therefore, a harmonious relationship between schools and society is an important aspect in strengthening democratic values at the elementary school level. The actualization of democratic values in everyday life is the main focus in the school environment. However, the formation of democratic character in students is not an instant process, but requires a gradual approach. SDN Pagertoya has implemented several innovative strategies to internalize democratic values. One strategy that has been implemented is a habituation program. Every morning, students are scheduled to shake hands with the principal, teachers and fellow students. Apart from that, before class starts, they take part in activities to memorize verses of the Koran, short letters and Asmaul Husna in the school yard.

Other habits include throwing rubbish in a place that has been prepared in front of the school. SDN Pagertoya also involves teachers in scientific forums related to education, such as webinars, to facilitate their professional development. The "Clean Friday" program has become a routine at school, where students clean the school environment, do gymnastics, and collect charity as sincerely as possible. Apart from that, this school provides additional learning in the form of Madrasah Diniyah. The midday prayer in congregation accompanied by a teacher and the habit of praying midday prayer in congregation are also part of the routine activities. Anjongsana is carried out when a friend is sick, where students voluntarily collect donations to help a friend in need. Teachers at SDN Pagertoya incorporate moral values in their teaching, such as in class deliberations. This trains students to have opinions and speak out, such as when a friend is sick and students collectively discuss how to help their friend. In this way, students' democratic character is slowly being formed through various activities and learning carried out at this school.

Based on the results of the interview, it can be seen that in an effort to instill democratic values, there needs to be a strategic approach taken by the school. The forms of these strategies can be seen in [Table 1](#).



**Table 1.** Forms of Strategy for Implementing Democratic Values

No	Form a Strategy
1	Get into the habit of shaking hands every morning. Every morning at 06.30 WIB, the principal and teachers take turns greeting students at the school gate.
2	Habituationmemorize the verses of the Koran and Asmaul Husna before starting learning.
3	The habit of throwing rubbish in its place in the school environment. The school has provided rubbish bins in front of each class. This habit becomes the application of the practical values of the second principle of Pancasila.
4	The school also has a program to involve teachers in scientific forums. With FGD, MGMP and KKG activities, teachers can improve their professionalism. Teachers must keep up with the times, and study every change in the curriculum that applies in Indonesia so they can adapt well. As support, teachers must also have certificates as proof of their competence.
5	Get into the habit of doing community service work in the surrounding area every Friday and doing healthy exercise.
6	Different from public elementary schools in general, at SDN Pagertoya there is a madrasah diniyah after school
7	There is a habit of praying together at 09.30 WIB, namely the Dhuha prayer, and at 12.00 WIB for carrying out midday prayers in congregation.
8	Anjangsana. Anjangsana is a custom in Javanese society, to stay in touch. In this case, the teacher teaches that if a student is sick, they can visit him. Apart from praying for a speedy recovery, this can also foster a sense of solidarity and brotherhood.

Furthermore, the second finding is that apart from the strategic approaches applied in the school environment, teachers also apply democratic values through Citizenship Education (PPKn) learning. The fourth grade teacher at SDN Pagertoya stated that democratic values were taught through PPKn subjects, and their application was still carried out in daily activities at school.

**Group-based Learning**

Group-based learning is a learning approach specifically designed to encourage interaction between students and shape student communication and participation skills. According to Mrs. Listyo, dividing the class into small groups allows students to discuss actively. The teacher acts as a facilitator, asking questions addressed to each group, and allowing active participation from all students. Implementing this approach helps students who may have difficulties, because they can get help from their group friends. The aim of forming group-based learning when learning Civics is so that students can collaborate actively to get good learning results. In more detail, the objectives of group-based learning based on guidance material are 1) Improving academic learning outcomes. Some experts argue that this model is superior in helping students understand difficult concepts; 2) Providing opportunities for students with different backgrounds and conditions to work interdependently on joint tasks; and 3) Teaching students cooperation and collaboration skills to interact with other friends. Learning through group work can encourage the development of empathy, acceptance, tolerance and readiness to act. Collaboration can support the prevention of conflict and all forms of discrimination. This can be a teacher's technique in exemplifying a democratic school culture. Thus, in implementing democracy, students can accept all decisions based on the interactions that have been carried out in the group.

**Formation of Multicultural Groups**

Indonesia is a plural nation or consists of various ethnic groups, therefore there are various types of cultures The Indonesian nation is a plural nation, consisting of various ethnicities, religions, races and groups (SARA), so that Indonesia is rich in various types of culture. Therefore, Indonesia can be considered a multicultural country. To maintain this harmony and diversity, it is important for each individual to understand each other and respect the differences that exist between them. In Citizenship Education (PPKn) learning, teachers often form groups based on SARA differences to instill attitudes of tolerance and respect for diversity in students. This is also in line with the strategy implemented by Mrs. Listyowati, a teacher at Pagertoya Elementary School, who explained that in learning, heterogeneous groups are formed, regardless of intelligence level. In this way, students are taught to respect each other and work together, regardless of their background. For example, Mrs. Listyowati combines students from two different hamlets, Pagertoya and Mangli, to foster diversity and cooperation between students from different environments.

Based on the researcher's observations, students were divided into several groups from different regional environments, apart from that the teacher actively distributed seats every three days. The aim of changing seats is so that students do not discriminate between one friend and another. Students become

more cheerful and happy because they can change seats. This strategy can increase students' enthusiasm in participating in class learning. This looks like in [Figure 2](#).



**Figure 2. Formation of Multicultural Groups**

The principle of multiculturalism in Indonesia has been reflected in the Indonesian state motto, namely *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which means that even though there are differences in SARA, society remains one, namely the Indonesian nation. The formation of multicultural groups carried out by the teacher is relevant to the Indonesian motto. The aim of carrying out this activity is so that students can become tolerant individuals and respect every difference in society, including differences in opinions and points of view of each person, so that the democratic process in society can take place well.

### ***Doing Several Activities Together***

In learning, there are activities that are divided into three parts according to their respective time allocations, namely opening, core, and closing. In the opening activity, the teacher makes apperception, this is done with the aim that students have the same freedom in expressing their views and opinions related to the material that has been learned. In this case, every student has the same rights and opportunities to answer the teacher's questions during the apperception. In the core activities, the teacher provides learning with a student centered learning approach, so the method used by the teacher is group-based learning. In group division activities, the teacher will direct students to arrange tables and benches in a circle into several groups, the arrangement is done together by students, this is done by the teacher so that students can cooperate and help each other. The last is the closing activity, usually in the closing activity the teacher and students together carry out activities to clean the classroom and yard. Activities carried out together can foster a spirit of mutual cooperation, mutual respect and understanding of each other's obligations so that close cooperation is formed. This value is instilled by teachers since elementary school with the aim that students understand what their obligations are and what to do, so that students can be formed into a society that is aware of their obligations and responsibilities in the group.

### ***Creating Democratic Teaching Modules***

Another strategy that teachers can use is to develop learning modules that integrate democratic values through Citizenship Education (PPKn) subjects, in accordance with the independent curriculum guidelines. At SDN Pagertoya, the independent curriculum has been implemented in the learning process, especially in grade 4. If in the previous curriculum teachers used lesson plans, in the independent curriculum they created learning modules. Teachers at SDN Pagertoya explained that they are now developing their own teaching modules to facilitate the learning process. Learning modules are instructional materials or educational frameworks derived from a curriculum and utilized to attain predefined competency standards. According to the independent curriculum guidelines, before the learning process begins, teachers must create a learning plan that contains core components, flow of learning objectives, strategies, models, approaches, learning media and so on. Teachers can develop PPKn teaching modules to be more democratic. In preparing learning tools, the teacher plays an important role. Teachers

hone their thinking skills to be able to innovate in teaching modules. Therefore, creating teaching modules is a teacher's pedagogical competency that needs to be developed, this is so that the teacher's teaching techniques in the classroom are more effective, efficient, and the discussion does not get out of touch with achievement indicators.

## Discussion

The independent curriculum is one of the government's programs as a stepping stone to improve the quality of education in Indonesia from primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, to university levels in facing all challenges in the future. Freedom to learn can motivate students in learning and in perfecting attitudes and personal characteristics, making individuals care about the surrounding environment, creating self-confidence and training skills as well as ease in socializing and adapting to the wider community environment. Freedom to learn is very important for students and is useful in the current era of educational demands in the 21st century (Darlis, 2022; Indarta et al., 2022). The independent learning policy can be interpreted as a reflection of efforts to develop democratic learning. This is reflected through the actualization of democratic values in schools such as freedom, equality, fraternal justice, individual dignity, cooperation, sharing responsibility, and so on. Teachers need to support and facilitate the application of democratic values with appropriate strategic approaches (Cholilah et al., 2023; Maryam et al., 2022). As has been done by SDN Pagertoya, there is an innovative approach strategy to shape students' democratic values and character through positive habits. With this implementation, education will be more effective, meaningful, relevant and useful.

Education should focus on cultivating fundamental character traits crucial for sustaining democratic societies. Character education is needed by humans in building a harmonious life (Birhan et al., 2021; Mulyasa, 2022). In its implementation, the independent curriculum has a significant role in increasing the harmonization of school and community relations. School and society are two elements that cannot be separated, because they both have very close interests and relationships (Nurfajriah, 2021; Pebriyanti, 2023). This relationship needs to be carried out through effective internal and external communication. With positive support from the community, school programs can be implemented well. At SDN Pagertoya there is an innovative strategic approach to forming democratic values and character. These strategies include: (1) Program to get used to shaking hands every morning, (2) Memorize verses from the Koran and Asmaul Husna, (3) Get used to throwing rubbish in its place, (4) School program to involve teachers in forums. scientific, (5) clean and healthy Fridays, (6) Madrasah Diniyah program, (7) Getting used to congregational prayers, and (8) Anjangsana.

Apart from that, teachers also incorporate democratic values in Civics learning. There are many democratic values, namely tolerance, freedom of opinion, respect for differences, respect for diversity in society, upholding human dignity, respect for other people, fostering togetherness, and maintaining balance in social life. Civics subjects in learning should be seen and treated as democratic practices (Maryam et al., 2022; Sakman et al., 2024). Citizenship education in schools also has a strategic role in realizing the development of a democratic citizenship culture. Teacher strategies applied in the learning process include: 1) Group-based learning, 2) Formation of multicultural groups, 3) Carrying out joint activities, 4) Creating democratic teaching modules. By consistently implementing strategies, democratic citizens can be formed (Rukmini, 2021; Sudirman, 2022).

So, the application of democratic values in the independent curriculum in elementary schools is carried out both inside and outside the classroom. In the classroom, democratic values are instilled through PPKn learning, while outside the classroom through several innovative programs and activities that have been prepared by the school. In several conditions, character education is actualized by something positive that educators do and can have an impact on their students (Kistoro, 2021; Nurmalisa et al., 2020). Seeing the importance of character, moral and ethical education, SDN Pagertoya has implemented character values-based learning guided by the independent curriculum. All subjects in school contain character values, but citizenship education is one of the subjects whose main focus is on developing good citizens. Citizenship education has a mission to equip Indonesian students so that later Indonesian students who will enter society can participate in a dynamic and diverse global environment (Oktafianti, 2021; Rahayu, 2021).

Citizenship Education (PKn) learning emphasizes values, therefore in mapping basic competencies in Civics lessons it is closely related to the first core competency, which is related to spirituality and the second core competency, which is related to social matters. Democratic values include values that are relevant to the second core competency. Democratic values direct someone to be able to deliberate, determine opinions, express views, respect differences, and so on. Thus, democratic values are positive values that must be instilled in students from elementary school. Early habituation in elementary school can help develop students' character (Bafadal et al., 2020; Magdalena et al., 2020). Several habits such as shaking hands when meeting teachers, throwing rubbish in the right place, wearing neat clothes, coming to



school on time, getting used to congregational prayers, madrasah diniyah and anjangsana can foster students' democratic character. In addition, character education is integrated into various subjects, not solely reliant on habituation. This ensures that character education is tailored specifically to meet the needs of students (R. R. Dewi et al., 2021; Pertiwi et al., 2021). Elementary school age has a soul that is still malleable, teachers as educators have a big role in forming a strong foundation since elementary school.

The results of this research on the innovative strategies for integrating democratic values within Civics Education in elementary schools hold significant implications for the advancement of the scientific field of education. By shedding light on the effective approaches employed by teachers to instill democratic principles in students from an early age, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on civic education and character development. The identification of strategies such as familiarization programs, school-community collaborations, and the promotion of democratic values not only enriches the existing literature but also provides practical insights for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance civic education practices.

Moreover, the findings of this research offer a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in fostering democratic citizenship among elementary school students, thereby contributing to the theoretical frameworks and pedagogical approaches within the field of education. By emphasizing the importance of communication, collaboration, and community engagement in cultivating democratic values, this research underscores the interdisciplinary nature of civic education and its impact on broader societal development. The insights gleaned from this study have the potential to inform future research endeavors, policy initiatives, and curriculum design aimed at promoting democratic principles and active citizenship among young learners. Furthermore, by highlighting the significance of character development and ethical values in the educational context, this research underscores the transformative potential of integrating democratic values into Civics Education. The implications of this study extend beyond the classroom, influencing discussions on educational reform, social cohesion, and democratic participation. Ultimately, the contribution of this research to the scientific field lies in its ability to inspire further inquiry, stimulate critical dialogue, and shape innovative practices that nurture a generation of informed, engaged, and socially responsible citizens.

While this research offers valuable insights into the implementation of democratic values within Civics Education in elementary schools, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the generalizability and applicability of the findings. One limitation is the focus on a specific elementary school setting, which may restrict the transferability of the strategies and approaches identified to other educational contexts. Additionally, the qualitative nature of the research may limit the depth of quantitative data analysis and the ability to draw statistically significant conclusions. The reliance on a single research site and a specific grade level may also limit the breadth of perspectives and experiences captured, potentially overlooking variations in implementation across different school settings and student populations.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that there are several strategic approaches to implementing democratic values in the independent curriculum in elementary schools, namely (1) program to get used to shaking hands every morning, (2) memorizing verses from the Koran and Asmaul Husna, (3) ) the habit of throwing rubbish in its place, (4) the school program to include teachers in scientific forums, (5) clean and healthy Fridays, (6) the Madrasah Diniyah program, (7) the habit of praying in congregation, and (8) anjangsana. Apart from that, teachers can also insert democratic values through Civics learning, which can be implemented with students through various strategies, including 1) implementing group-based learning; 2) formation of multicultural groups; 3) do several activities together; and 4) creating democratic teaching modules. By implementing these strategies, Civics lessons can contribute to the formation of a democratic national character. This research is still qualitative research it is recommended that future researchers conduct further research by looking at the effectiveness of these strategies when implemented in other elementary schools.

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