

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE: EFFORTS TO INTERNALIZE CHARACTER EDUCATION VALUES BASED ON PPKn IN HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract:

This study examines pedagogical practices in Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn) learning as an effort to internalize character education values in high schools. The purpose of this study is to analyze the forms of pedagogical practices, internalized character values, the process of value internalization, and supporting and inhibiting factors in PPKn learning. The method used is a literature review (library research) through a critical review of books, recent scientific journal articles, and relevant education policy documents. The results indicate that dialogic, reflective, and contextual pedagogical practices enable a more meaningful internalization of character values such as responsibility, tolerance, democratic attitudes, and national awareness. The discussion emphasizes that the role of teachers, humanistic pedagogical relationships, and contextual learning design are key factors for success, despite the challenges of cognitive orientation and social dynamics. This study concludes that strengthening pedagogical practices in PPKn learning is an important foundation for transformative and sustainable character education.

Keyword: Pedagogy, Character Values, PPKn

1. Introduction

Character education is a crucial component in developing students' potential as citizens with integrity, integrity, and social awareness (Makki, 2024). According to Putri, Suastika, and Sanjaya (2026), character education is increasingly important to help students face moral, social, and political challenges in an increasingly complex world driven by advances in technology, digital media, and human interaction. However, although the goals of character education have been normatively established in the national curriculum, the practice of character internalization in schools has not demonstrated the consistency necessary to create an essential and reflective national character (Makki, 2024; Putri et al., 2026). Several studies have shown that the internalization of character traits often occurs fragmentarily and instrumentally, especially when learning is viewed as the transfer of cognitive knowledge (Makki, 2024).

In a study of Civic Education (PPKn), for example, it was found that although PPKn contributes to the internalization of values such as tolerance, responsibility, and love of country, the methods used are more descriptive and conceptual than reflective, which makes it difficult for students to experience these values in social interactions (Makki, 2024). As a result, character education in PPKn is prone to becoming a normative value activity rather than a pedagogical value transformation process. This can be better understood by viewing it from a pedagogical perspective, which emphasizes that the internalization of knowledge involves not only cognitive understanding but also reflection, social practice, and authentic interpersonal relationships (Putri et al., 2026). According to Putri et al. (2026), internalization is a value-conscious pedagogical practice (value-conscious pedagogical praxis), where learning takes place as a dialogic and reflective space rather than as top-down instruction.

This approach highlights the role of teachers as facilitators of moral transformation, capable of fostering moral development both inside and outside the classroom, and encouraging students to assess and apply morality in real-world contexts. Support for the pedagogical imperative is also found in research showing that effective internalization of character traits occurs through multidimensional integration, such as interactions between school, family, and community (Putri et al., 2026; Makki, 2024). Empirical research shows that when PPKn is conceptualized through collaborative learning and linked to students' social experiences, character traits including tolerance, social responsibility, and civic ethics can be internalized more effectively (Makki, 2024). This suggests that internalization of character traits

is an integrated and contextual pedagogical process, not simply a curriculum objective. Other studies also highlight the importance of innovative and reflective learning strategies in character internalization, such as the use of digital media, collaborative projects, and contextual learning relevant to students' daily lives (Putri et al., 2026).

This is important because it demonstrates how Civics (PPKn) education can incorporate character traits into practical exercises involving moral reflection and dialogue, thereby minimizing the normative memorization often observed in the classroom (Putri et al., 2026). According to Mahaswari, Yudana, and Kertih (2025), the integration of parents into the learning environment, particularly during the courageous learning period, also helps strengthen the internalization process of character traits through home-school synergy. Although numerous studies have addressed character internalization in general, there is still much theoretical and empirical research exploring the pedagogical internalization of character based on Civics (PPKn) in schools. These studies primarily focus on the perspective of teachers' reflective processes, the relationship between teachers and students, and pedagogical strategies that connect character traits to students' everyday experiences. Internalization of knowledge in other contexts, such as school foundations or teacher role models, also shows that contextualization of knowledge in school practices has a significant impact on student character development (Handayani & Basariah, 2025; Setyaningsih, 2023).

However, there has been little discussion about PPKn education as a value-conscious pedagogical practice. Therefore, this study is crucial for understanding how PPKn pedagogical practices are implemented as a means of internalizing the principles of character education in a reflective, contextual, and transformative manner in high schools. The research approach in this study will focus more on the pedagogical aspects of the learning process, moral interactions, and students' reflections on the character traits they learn. It is hoped that the results of this study will make a significant contribution to the development of pedagogical theory in character education as well as practical recommendations for PPKn teachers that are more practical and useful in the context of secondary education.

2. Metode Penelitian

This research employed a library research method, an approach that emphasizes critical review of various sources, including books, journal articles, policy reports, and official documents relevant to the research topic. This method was chosen because it allows for a more comprehensive integration of theoretical perspectives and empirical findings and builds a solid conceptual framework (Snyder, 2019; Grant & Booth, 2021). Library research focuses not only on literature collection but also involves a systematic process of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing previous research findings. This process encompasses a series of steps, from keyword selection and database searches to content analysis (Xiao & Watson, 2019; Paul & Criado, 2020).

To maintain data relevance, the literature used was limited to publications from 2021–2025, obtained through reputable international databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Taylor & Francis, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar. Literature selection was carried out by applying inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria included publications that: (1) discussed pedagogical practices, (2) examined the values of character education in PPKn learning, and (3) were relevant to the impact of PPKn learning in this era of globalization. Literature that had not undergone a peer-review process, was popular, or was conceptually irrelevant was excluded from the analysis (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016; Ferrari, 2015).

The analysis phase was conducted using a content analysis approach to examine the main findings from each literature review. The analysis was conducted by identifying key themes, grouping similarities and differences, and drawing a conceptual synthesis. This approach aligns with the views of Whitemore and Knafl (2005) and Torraco (2021) that comprehensive library research not only provides an overview of the development of knowledge but also enriches conceptual understanding and generates practical recommendations. Therefore, the use of library research methods in this study enabled the authors to not only summarize the literature but also develop a critical analytical framework for how pedagogical practices can be optimized to strengthen character education values in Civics (PPKn) learning in high schools.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. From of Pedagogical Practice in Civic Learning

Civics education in high schools demonstrates itself not merely as a normative subject imparting civic knowledge, but as a space for pedagogical practice imbued with dimensions of educational value and meaning. In this context, pedagogical practice is understood as educational action that is value-conscious, directed, and oriented toward the holistic development of students. Pedagogical practice in

Civics education is realized through the way learning is designed and implemented. Learning does not stop at conveying constitutional material, norms, or political systems, but moves toward internalizing the values contained therein. Teachers serve not only as conveyors of information but also as facilitators who open up space for dialogue, the exchange of ideas, and critical reflection on social and national realities.

This form of pedagogical practice is evident in learning that encourages active student involvement. Students are encouraged to think, evaluate, and take a stand on various civic issues. Through this process, PPKn learning becomes a vibrant educational arena, where values are not taught dogmatically, but presented as something to be consciously understood, questioned, and interpreted. Furthermore, pedagogical practice is also manifested in the pedagogical relationships established during learning. Dialogic, open relationships that respect students' opinions reflect the democratic values that are the soul of PPKn itself. Thus, PPKn learning not only discusses values but also practices those values in the daily educational process.

3.2. Internalized Character Values

In the pedagogical practice of PPKn learning, character education values emerge as the core of the entire learning process. These values do not exist in isolation, but are interconnected and form an ethical framework in civic education. The values of responsibility, discipline, tolerance, democratic attitudes, and nationalism are the most prominent values in PPKn learning at the high school level. The value of responsibility is realized through an emphasis on students' awareness of their roles and obligations as citizens. PPKn learning guides students to understand that being a citizen is not merely a formal status, but also entails moral and social responsibilities in community, national, and state life. The value of discipline is present in PPKn learning as an awareness of the rules, norms, and laws that govern communal life. Discipline is not defined narrowly as blind obedience, but as an awareness of living in an orderly manner for the sake of creating justice and social order. This understanding enriches the internalization of the value of discipline in students.

The values of tolerance and democratic attitudes are highly relevant in the context of a pluralistic society. Civics (PPKn) learning positions differences in perspectives, backgrounds, and identities as social realities that must be addressed maturely. Through the learning process, students are guided to understand that differences are not threats, but rather riches that demand mutual respect and openness. Meanwhile, the value of nationalism is internalized through an understanding of national identity and a commitment to unity. Nationalism is positioned not as a mere emotional attitude, but as a reflective awareness that seeks to uphold national values in a civilized, democratic life.

3.3. The Process of Internalizing Values in Pedagogical Practice

The internalization of values in Civics (PPKn) learning occurs as a gradual and ongoing pedagogical process. This process cannot be understood as an instant result, but rather as an educational journey involving the cognitive, affective, and practical dimensions of students. The initial stage of internalization begins with the introduction and understanding of values. At this stage, students are introduced to civic concepts that embody the values of character education. Values remain within the realm of knowledge, but they serve as an important foundation for subsequent stages. The next stage is the internalization of values, where students begin to relate these values to the realities of social life. At this stage, PPKn learning plays a crucial role in helping students understand the relevance of civic values to everyday life experiences.

Values begin to be interpreted personally and socially, no longer merely as abstract concepts. The next stage is the habituation of values, when character values are reflected in relatively consistent attitudes and behaviors. This habituation is strongly influenced by the learning climate and the consistency of pedagogical practices. When values are continuously presented in learning interactions, they gradually become part of students' ways of thinking and acting. The process of reflection becomes a crucial element in the overall internalization of values. Reflection allows students to reassess their attitudes and actions, and understand the moral consequences of their choices. However, this reflection process does not always receive adequate space in PPKn learning, so that internalization of values often stops at the level of understanding and habituation without deepening critical awareness.

3.4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Pedagogical Practice

The success of pedagogical practices in Civics (PPKn) learning is inseparable from various influencing factors. One key supporting factor is the role of educators as values-conscious pedagogical subjects. Educators' ability to design meaningful, dialogic, and reflective learning is a key determinant in the process of internalizing character education values. The curriculum is also an important supporting factor because it provides a normative framework for Civics (PPKn) learning. A curriculum that positions PPKn as a strategic subject creates space for the integration of character education values into learning objectives and processes. However, there are also factors that hinder the optimal implementation of pedagogical practices. The strong orientation of learning toward cognitive achievement and the demands

of academic evaluation often limit the space for deepening values. Learning has the potential to be reduced to the activity of delivering material, while the reflective and transformative dimensions receive less attention. Furthermore, time constraints, administrative burdens, and the density of learning materials also pose challenges in developing pedagogical practices oriented toward internalizing values. This situation indicates a tension between the demands of the education system and the ideals of pedagogical practices in Civics (PPKn) learning.

3.5. Discussion

3.5.1 Pedagogy as a Space for Internalizing Character Values

Pedagogy within the framework of contemporary education is no longer understood merely as a teaching technique or methodological tool, but rather as a practical space imbued with dimensions of values, power relations, and orientations for human development. Pedagogy positions education as a process consciously directed toward shaping students, not only academically competent individuals but also individuals with moral orientation and social responsibility. In this context, the internalization of character values cannot be separated from the way pedagogy is implemented. Values are never neutral; they are always present through pedagogical relationships between teachers, students, and knowledge. Pedagogy becomes a space where values are negotiated, practiced, and given meaning. This aligns with Apple's (2022) view, which asserts that education always contains ethical and ideological dimensions, so pedagogy cannot be separated from the issue of values.

Pedagogy as a space for internalizing values requires an awareness that character education is not an indoctrination process. Character values cannot be instilled through a one-way transmission approach but must be presented in reflective and dialogical learning experiences. Such a pedagogical approach enables students not only to learn values but also to understand the moral reasons behind them (Carr, 2022). Furthermore, pedagogy facilitates the process of internalizing values by creating a humane learning climate. Pedagogical relationships that respect students' voices, open up space for differences, and encourage critical reflection are essential prerequisites for the authentic internalization of character values. Within this framework, pedagogy functions as a space for value transformation, not simply a space for the reproduction of norms (Biesta & Hannam, 2023).

3.5.2 Internalization of Character Values in Civic Learning

Civics (PPKn) learning has a unique character because it combines the dimensions of civic knowledge with the formation of citizens' attitudes and moral orientations. PPKn not only addresses what is constitutionally correct but also what is just, responsible, and civilized in communal life. Internalization of character values in PPKn learning occurs when civics material is presented as a life issue, not simply academic content. Values such as responsibility, justice, tolerance, and democratic participation gain meaning when linked to the social realities faced by students. In this context, PPKn serves as a vehicle for developing reflective civic awareness (Westheimer, 2021). However, various studies show that PPKn learning often falls into a normative and legalistic approach. When PPKn is reduced to memorizing concepts, regulations, and definitions, the process of internalizing character values becomes shallow.

Values stop at the cognitive level and fail to transform into attitudes and actions (Sant, Davies, & Santisteban, 2022). Therefore, internalizing character values in PPKn requires a pedagogical approach that positions students as moral subjects. Meaningful civic education is education that encourages students to assess, question, and take ethical positions on civic issues. This view aligns with the concept of civic moral education, which emphasizes active student involvement in value learning (Arthur et al., 2022). Therefore, internalizing character values in PPKn is not a linear process, but rather a dialogic and reflective one. Values are not presented as final answers, but rather as issues that must be understood and interpreted responsibly.

3.5.3 The Role of Teacher in Pedagogical Practice

In pedagogical practice, teachers occupy a strategic position as subjects who bring values to life in the educational process. Teachers not only transfer knowledge but also represent values through attitudes, pedagogical decisions, and the relationships they build with students. In other words, teachers are both pedagogical and moral figures. The teacher's role in internalizing character values cannot be reduced to a technical role. Teachers function as designers of learning experiences that enable students to interact with values reflectively. Teachers with pedagogical awareness will create spaces for dialogue, open up differences of opinion, and encourage students to think critically about civic values (Korthagen, 2023).

Teacher role models are also crucial in pedagogical practice. Character values are not only taught through material but also manifested through consistent teacher attitudes and actions. When there is a mismatch between what is taught and what is practiced, the internalization of values has the potential to experience moral dissonance (Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2021). However, the ideal role of teachers is often confronted with various structural pressures, such as administrative burdens, demands for results-based evaluation, and limited space for pedagogical reflection. These conditions have the potential to shift the role of teachers from pedagogical subjects to curriculum operators. This challenge demands strengthening teacher professionalism based not only on technical competence but also on ethical and reflective awareness (Flores, 2022).

3.5.4 Pedagogical Practice: And its Challenges in Character Education

Pedagogical practices in character education face increasingly complex challenges in line with social dynamics and developments. One major challenge is the dominance of an educational paradigm oriented toward performativity and the measurement of learning outcomes. This paradigm tends to position character education as a secondary aspect that is difficult to measure quantitatively (Ball, 2021). Furthermore, character education often faces tensions between the values taught in schools and those developing in the broader social space, including digital media and popular culture. This tension demands adaptive and critical pedagogical practices to ensure character education does not lose its relevance (Livingstone & Third, 2023). Another challenge arises from the tendency of character education to be normative and ahistorical. When values are taught without social and historical context, they have the potential to lose their transformative power.

Therefore, pedagogical practice needs to integrate a critical approach that enables students to understand values within the context of social relations and power (Giroux, 2022). Therefore, pedagogical practice in character education requires continuous renewal. Character education must be understood as a continuous process of developing ethical awareness, not as a one-time program. Reflective and critical pedagogical practice is key to ensuring character education is able to meet the challenges of the times.

4. Conclusion

This study confirms that PPKn learning in Senior High Schools has strategic potential as a pedagogical practice space in internalizing character education values if pedagogy is understood and implemented as a value-conscious educational action and oriented towards the formation of student subjects. Dialogic, reflective, and contextual pedagogical practices enable character values such as responsibility, tolerance, democratic attitudes, discipline, and nationalism not to stop at the level of normative knowledge, but to be internalized and interpreted as orientations for students' attitudes and actions. The process of internalizing values takes place gradually and continuously through learning experiences that link the substance of citizenship with social reality, so that students are positioned as active and reflective moral subjects. In this context, teachers play a key role as pedagogical subjects who not only transmit material but also bring values to life through role models, pedagogical relationships, and meaningful learning decisions. However, pedagogical practices in character education still face various challenges, particularly the dominance of cognitive orientation, demands for academic evaluation, and the complexity of digital social and cultural dynamics, which have the potential to reduce the value dimension in learning. Therefore, strengthening pedagogical practices in PPKn learning is a fundamental need to ensure that character education is not normative and procedural, but rather transformative and relevant in shaping civilized citizens.

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