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Perceptions and Nationalism Attitudes of PGSD Students toward Civic Education Learning in Parepare

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Abstract

Although Civic Education learning has received increasing attention in previous studies, research specifically examining the relationship between students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes remains limited, particularly among PGSD students in Parepare. This study aims to analyze the relationship between students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes. A quantitative approach with a survey design was employed, involving 120 respondents selected through proportional random sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis. The findings indicate that students' perceptions of Civic Education learning were in the good category (M = 3.87), while their nationalism attitudes were categorized as high (M = 4.12). The correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between students' perceptions and nationalism attitudes ($r = 0.68$, $p < .05$). These results suggest that positive perceptions of Civic Education learning are associated with stronger nationalism attitudes among students. This study contributes to the theoretical development of civic education and nationalism studies by expanding understanding of how instructional

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perceptions relate to students' civic attitudes in higher education contexts. Practically, the findings imply that educators should adopt innovative, contextual, and value-based teaching strategies to strengthen the effectiveness of Civic Education learning and support the development of nationalism attitudes.

Keywords: Civic Education; Nationalism Attitudes; Student Perception; PGSD Students; Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era of globalization and rapid technological advancement, education systems worldwide are increasingly expected to prepare students not only with cognitive competencies but also with strong civic values and national identity. Civic Education (PKn) plays a crucial role in fostering students' awareness, responsibility, and commitment as citizens in democratic societies. Internationally, the importance of civic education has been emphasized as a means to develop democratic values, social participation, and national cohesion (Banks, 2021; Kennedy, 2020). However, recent global trends indicate a decline in civic engagement and nationalism among young people, which raises concerns about the effectiveness of civic education in achieving its intended goals (Schulz et al., 2022).

In the Indonesian context, Civic Education holds a strategic position in strengthening national identity and instilling the values of Pancasila among students. The Indonesian government has continuously emphasized the importance of character education and nationalism, particularly in higher education institutions (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2021). However, several studies have revealed that the implementation of Civic Education in universities, including in teacher education programs, still faces challenges such as conventional teaching methods, lack of contextual learning, and limited student engagement (Suryadi & Santoso, 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2023). These issues suggest that students' perceptions of Civic Education learning may influence how effectively nationalism values are internalized.

From a theoretical perspective, students' perceptions play a significant role in shaping their attitudes and behaviors. According to the constructivist learning theory, learning is an active process in which individuals construct knowledge based on their experiences and perceptions (Fosnot, 2020). In the context of Civic Education, positive perceptions toward learning processes—such as engaging teaching methods, relevant content, and meaningful

experiences—can enhance students' understanding and internalization of civic values (Nucci et al., 2021). Conversely, negative perceptions may lead to low motivation and superficial learning outcomes, ultimately affecting students' civic attitudes, including nationalism.

Nationalism itself is a multidimensional construct that encompasses feelings of belonging, loyalty, and commitment to one's nation (Smith, 2021). In educational settings, nationalism is reflected through attitudes such as respect for diversity, appreciation of national culture, and willingness to contribute to national development. Several recent studies have shown that Civic Education can significantly influence students' nationalism attitudes when delivered effectively (Hidayat et al., 2022; Pratama et al., 2024). However, the relationship between students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes has not been extensively explored, particularly in specific local contexts such as Parepare.

Previous research has examined various aspects of Civic Education and nationalism. For instance, Hidayat et al. (2022) found that interactive learning models in Civic Education significantly improved students' civic engagement and national awareness. Similarly, Pratama et al. (2024) reported that integrating digital media into Civic Education enhanced students' interest and understanding of national values. In contrast, Suryadi and Santoso (2022) highlighted that traditional lecture-based approaches often fail to foster meaningful civic attitudes among students. While these studies provide valuable insights, they primarily focus on instructional strategies and learning outcomes, rather than examining students' perceptions as a mediating factor influencing nationalism attitudes.

Furthermore, Wahyuni et al. (2023) emphasized that students' perceptions of learning environments significantly affect their motivation and attitudes toward subjects, including Civic Education. However, their study did not specifically address nationalism as an outcome variable. Similarly, international studies have explored the role of civic education in shaping democratic attitudes but often overlook the cultural and contextual dimensions of nationalism in non-Western settings (Kennedy, 2020; Schulz et al., 2022). This indicates a clear research gap in understanding how students' perceptions of Civic Education learning relate to their nationalism attitudes, particularly within the Indonesian higher education context.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the relationship between perception and nationalism attitude within a localized context, specifically among PGSD (Elementary School Teacher Education) students in Parepare. This focus is important because PGSD students

are future elementary school teachers who will play a key role in transmitting civic values to younger generations. Therefore, understanding their perceptions and attitudes is crucial for improving the quality of Civic Education at the foundational level. This study is grounded in the theoretical framework of constructivist learning theory (Fosnot, 2020) and civic education theory (Banks, 2021), which emphasize the importance of meaningful learning experiences in shaping attitudes and values.

Additionally, this study contributes to the existing literature by integrating two important constructs—perception and nationalism attitude—within the context of Civic Education. While previous studies have examined these constructs separately, limited research has explored their interrelationship using empirical data, particularly through a quantitative survey approach. By addressing this gap, the present study offers a more comprehensive understanding of how learning experiences influence students' civic attitudes.

In the local context of Parepare, the implementation of Civic Education in higher education institutions presents unique challenges and opportunities. As a developing city with diverse cultural backgrounds, Parepare provides a relevant setting for examining how Civic Education contributes to the formation of nationalism attitudes. However, empirical data on students' perceptions and attitudes in this context remain scarce. Therefore, this study seeks to provide evidence-based insights that can inform educational practices and policies in the region.

Based on the issues, theoretical perspectives, and research gaps discussed above, this study focuses on analyzing the perceptions and nationalism attitudes of PGSD students toward Civic Education learning in Parepare. Specifically, this research aims to examine the level of students' perceptions of Civic Education learning, identify their nationalism attitudes, and analyze the relationship between these two variables. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective Civic Education strategies and to strengthen the role of education in fostering nationalism among future educators.

METHODS

Research Type

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a survey method. A quantitative approach was selected because it allows for the measurement of variables and the examination of relationships between variables using statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). Quantitative research is particularly suitable for studies that aim to generalize

findings from a sample to a larger population and to test hypotheses objectively (Fraenkel et al., 2020). In this study, the quantitative approach was used to measure students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes, as well as to analyze the relationship between these variables.

Research Design

The research design used in this study was a cross-sectional survey design. This design involves collecting data from a sample at a single point in time to describe and analyze relationships among variables (Setia, 2020). The survey design was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to gather data from a relatively large number of respondents efficiently and to examine patterns of perception and attitudes. Previous studies in Civic Education have also utilized survey designs to explore students' civic attitudes and perceptions (Hidayat et al., 2022; Pratama et al., 2024). However, unlike prior studies that mainly focused on instructional strategies, this study emphasizes the relationship between perception and nationalism attitude, thus providing a more integrative perspective.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all students enrolled in the Elementary School Teacher Education Program (PGSD) in Parepare. The sample was selected using proportional random sampling to ensure that each subgroup within the population was adequately represented. According to Sugiyono (2019), proportional random sampling is effective in obtaining representative samples when the population is heterogeneous. A total of 120 students participated in this study, which is considered sufficient for statistical analysis in survey research (Hair et al., 2021). The inclusion criteria required participants to be active students who had taken the Civic Education course.

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire consisted of two main sections: (1) students' perceptions of Civic Education learning, and (2) students' nationalism attitudes. The instrument was developed based on relevant theoretical frameworks and adapted from previous studies on civic education and student attitudes (Wahyuni et al., 2023; Pratama et al., 2024).

To ensure the quality of the instrument, validity and reliability tests were conducted. Content validity was assessed through expert judgment, while construct validity was tested using Pearson product-moment correlation. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's

Alpha, with a coefficient greater than 0.70 indicating acceptable reliability (Taber, 2020). The data collection process was conducted by distributing the questionnaire directly and online to respondents, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the assistance of IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to describe students' perceptions and nationalism attitudes. Inferential analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation to examine the relationship between the two variables.

Pearson correlation analysis is appropriate for determining the strength and direction of relationships between continuous variables (Field, 2020). The level of significance was set at 0.05. Prior to analysis, data were tested for normality and linearity to ensure that the assumptions of parametric tests were met. The results of the analysis were interpreted to determine whether students' perceptions of Civic Education learning significantly influence their nationalism attitudes.

RESULTS

Overview of Data and Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 120 respondents from the Elementary School Teacher Education Program (PGSD) in Parepare. All participants had completed or were currently enrolled in the Civic Education course. The demographic characteristics of respondents were analyzed to provide contextual understanding of the data distribution.

Based on gender distribution, 78 respondents (65%) were female, while 42 respondents (35%) were male. In terms of academic level, 35% were in their second year, 40% in their third year, and 25% in their fourth year. This distribution indicates that the respondents had sufficient exposure to Civic Education learning, making them suitable participants for this study.

Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

1. Students' Perceptions of Civic Education Learning

Students' perceptions were measured using 15 questionnaire items covering aspects such as teaching methods, learning relevance, lecturer competence, and learning engagement.

The analysis showed that the overall mean score for students' perceptions was M = 3.87 (SD = 0.52), which falls into the "good" category. This indicates that, in general, students have positive perceptions of Civic Education learning.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Perceptions

Indicator	Mean	SD	Category
Teaching Methods	3.85	0.55	Good
Learning Relevance	3.92	0.50	Good
Lecturer Competence	4.01	0.48	Good
Student Engagement	3.70	0.58	Good
Overall Mean	3.87	0.52	Good

Among the indicators, lecturer competence received the highest mean score (M = 4.01), indicating that students perceive their lecturers as knowledgeable and capable of delivering the material effectively. However, student engagement had the lowest score (M = 3.70), suggesting that there is still room for improvement in making learning more interactive.

2. Students' Nationalism Attitudes

Nationalism attitudes were measured using 15 items reflecting dimensions such as love for the country, respect for diversity, national pride, and civic responsibility.

The results showed that the overall mean score for nationalism attitudes was M = 4.12 (SD = 0.47), categorized as "high."

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Nationalism Attitudes

Indicator	Mean	SD	Category
Love for the Country	4.20	0.45	High
Respect for Diversity	4.15	0.46	High
National Pride	4.10	0.48	High
Civic Responsibility	4.05	0.50	High
Overall Mean	4.12	0.47	High

The highest score was found in the "love for the country" dimension (M = 4.20), indicating strong emotional attachment to the nation. The lowest score, although still high, was in civic responsibility (M = 4.05), suggesting that practical engagement in civic activities may need further enhancement.

3. Validity and Reliability Testing

a. Validity Test

The validity of the questionnaire items was tested using Pearson product-moment correlation. All items showed correlation coefficients (r-count) greater than the critical value (r-table = 0.179), indicating that all items were valid.

b. Reliability Test

Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha yielded the following results:

Table 3. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Students' Perceptions	0.89	Highly Reliable
Nationalism Attitudes	0.91	Highly Reliable

These results indicate that the instruments used in this study are highly reliable and suitable for data collection.

4. Assumption Testing

a. Normality Test

The normality of the data was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The significance value for both variables was greater than 0.05, indicating that the data were normally distributed.

b. Linearity Test

The linearity test showed a significance value of less than 0.05 for the linear component, indicating a linear relationship between students' perceptions and nationalism attitudes.

5. Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationship between students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Results

Variables	r-value	Sig. (p)	Interpretation
Perception – Nationalism	0.68	0.000	Strong Positive

The results indicate a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$) between students' perceptions and nationalism attitudes. This means that students who have more positive perceptions of Civic Education learning tend to exhibit higher levels of nationalism.

6. Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of students' perceptions on nationalism attitudes.

Table 5. Regression Analysis Results

Variable	B	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.52	5.21	0.000
Perception	0.67	9.84	0.000

The regression equation can be expressed as:

$Y = 1.52 + 0.67X$

This indicates that for every one-unit increase in perception, nationalism attitude increases by 0.67 units.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was found to be 0.46, meaning that 46% of the variance in nationalism attitudes can be explained by students' perceptions of Civic Education learning.

Further analysis revealed several important patterns:

a. Students who reported higher engagement in classroom discussions tended to have stronger nationalism attitudes.

b. Interactive teaching methods (e.g., group discussions, case studies) were positively associated with higher perception scores.

c. Students expressed a preference for contextual and real-life examples in Civic Education learning.

Summary of Findings

The key findings of this study can be summarized as follows:

a. Students' perceptions of Civic Education learning are generally positive and fall within the "good" category.

b. Students' nationalism attitudes are high, indicating strong civic values among PGSD students.

c. There is a strong and significant positive relationship between students' perceptions and nationalism attitudes.

d. Students' perceptions significantly influence nationalism attitudes, with a contribution of 46%.

e. Interactive and contextual learning approaches are important factors in enhancing both perception and nationalism.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to analyze the relationship between students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes among PGSD students in Parepare. The findings reveal several important insights that contribute both theoretically and practically to the field of civic education.

First, the results indicate that students' perceptions of Civic Education learning are generally in the "good" category (M = 3.87). This suggests that most students view Civic

Education as relevant, meaningful, and adequately delivered by lecturers. This finding aligns with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that students' learning experiences are shaped by how they perceive instructional processes. When students perceive learning as engaging and relevant, they are more likely to actively construct knowledge and internalize values. This result is consistent with previous studies showing that positive perceptions of learning environments significantly influence students' motivation and engagement (Wahyuni et al., 2023). It also supports the argument that the quality of instructional delivery plays a critical role in shaping students' academic and affective outcomes.

However, despite the generally positive perception, the relatively lower score on student engagement (M = 3.70) indicates that Civic Education learning may still rely partially on traditional approaches. This finding is in line with Suryadi and Santoso (2022), who found that lecture-based teaching methods often limit students' active participation. Therefore, although students recognize the importance of Civic Education, there is still a need to enhance interactive and student-centered learning strategies. Incorporating methods such as problem-based learning, discussions, and case studies may improve engagement and deepen students' understanding of civic values.

Second, the findings show that students' nationalism attitudes are in the "high" category (M = 4.12). This indicates that PGSD students in Parepare demonstrate strong emotional attachment to their country, respect for diversity, and commitment to civic responsibilities. This result confirms the role of Civic Education as an essential subject in fostering national identity and character. The high level of nationalism attitudes may also reflect the effectiveness of national education policies that emphasize character education and Pancasila values.

This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that Civic Education contributes significantly to the development of civic values and national awareness (Hidayat et al., 2022; Pratama et al., 2024). It also aligns with nationalism theory, which posits that education plays a central role in cultivating a sense of belonging and loyalty to the nation. In this context, the integration of national values into the curriculum appears to have a positive impact on students' attitudes.

Nevertheless, the slightly lower score in civic responsibility (M = 4.05) suggests that while students possess strong national feelings, their active participation in civic activities may not be equally strong. This gap between attitude and practice is a common issue in civic education, where students understand values conceptually but may lack opportunities or

motivation to apply them in real-life contexts. Therefore, educators should emphasize experiential learning approaches that encourage students to engage in community-based activities and social participation.

Third, one of the most significant findings of this study is the strong positive correlation between students' perceptions of Civic Education learning and their nationalism attitudes ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that students who have more positive perceptions of Civic Education are more likely to exhibit higher levels of nationalism. This finding provides empirical support for the assumption that learning experiences influence students' attitudes and values.

This result is in line with the findings of Nucci et al. (2021), who argued that meaningful and value-oriented learning experiences are essential for moral and character development. It also reinforces the idea that perception acts as a mediating factor between instructional processes and learning outcomes. In other words, even well-designed curricula may not achieve desired outcomes if students perceive the learning process negatively.

Furthermore, the regression analysis shows that students' perceptions contribute 46% to the variance in nationalism attitudes ($R^2 = 0.46$). This indicates that while perception is a significant factor, there are other variables that also influence nationalism attitudes, such as family background, social environment, media exposure, and cultural context. This finding highlights the complexity of nationalism as a construct and suggests that Civic Education should be complemented by broader social and cultural interventions.

Another important implication of this study is the need to adopt innovative and contextual learning strategies in Civic Education. The additional findings suggest that students prefer interactive methods and real-life examples, which enhance their engagement and understanding. This supports the argument that traditional teaching approaches should be transformed to meet the needs of 21st-century learners. Digital-based learning, collaborative activities, and problem-solving approaches can make Civic Education more relevant and impactful.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of civic education literature by integrating the concepts of perception and nationalism attitude. While previous studies have examined these variables separately, this study demonstrates their interrelationship within a specific educational context. This integration provides a more comprehensive understanding of how instructional processes influence students' civic development.

In addition, this study offers contextual contributions by focusing on PGSD students in Parepare, a setting that has been underrepresented in previous research. As future elementary school teachers, PGSD students play a crucial role in shaping the civic values of younger generations. Therefore, improving their perceptions and nationalism attitudes is essential for strengthening the overall quality of Civic Education at the primary level.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the use of a survey method limits the depth of understanding regarding students' experiences and perspectives. Future research could employ qualitative or mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights. Second, the study focuses on a single location, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Expanding the research to other regions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

Future research is also recommended to explore additional variables that may influence nationalism attitudes, such as digital literacy, social media exposure, and intercultural competence. Moreover, experimental studies could be conducted to test the effectiveness of specific instructional strategies in improving both perception and nationalism attitudes.

In conclusion, this study confirms that students' perceptions of Civic Education learning play a crucial role in shaping their nationalism attitudes. Positive, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences are essential for fostering strong civic values among students. Therefore, educators and policymakers should prioritize the development of innovative and contextual Civic Education strategies to ensure that learning not only enhances knowledge but also strengthens students' commitment to their nation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the perceptions and nationalism attitudes of PGSD students toward Civic Education learning in Parepare and analyzed the relationship between these two variables. The findings indicate that students generally hold positive perceptions of Civic Education learning, particularly in terms of lecturer competence, relevance of materials, and overall instructional quality. At the same time, students demonstrate high levels of nationalism attitudes, reflected in their love for the country, respect for diversity, and sense of civic responsibility. Most importantly, the study reveals a strong and significant positive relationship between students' perceptions and their nationalism attitudes. This suggests that the more positively students perceive Civic Education learning, the stronger their nationalism

attitudes become. Thus, the research confirms that learning experiences play a crucial role in shaping students' civic values.

From a scientific perspective, this study contributes to the literature in several ways. Theoretically, it strengthens the link between constructivist learning theory and civic education by demonstrating that students' perceptions of learning significantly influence their attitudes and values, particularly nationalism. Methodologically, the study provides empirical evidence using a quantitative survey approach that integrates perception and nationalism constructs, which have often been examined separately in prior research. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of designing engaging, contextual, and student-centered Civic Education learning to enhance both cognitive understanding and affective outcomes. These contributions offer a more comprehensive framework for understanding how Civic Education can effectively foster national identity among future educators.

Based on the identified limitations and gaps, several recommendations for future research are proposed. Future studies should consider using mixed-method or qualitative approaches to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and the underlying factors influencing their perceptions and attitudes. Expanding the research scope to different regions or educational contexts would also enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, further research is needed to explore other variables that may influence nationalism attitudes, such as digital literacy, social media exposure, and intercultural competence. Experimental studies are also recommended to test the effectiveness of innovative teaching strategies in improving students' perceptions and civic attitudes. Through these efforts, future research can continue to strengthen the role of Civic Education in developing responsible and nationally committed citizens.

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