The Urgency of Strengthening Civic Education in Shaping Social Ethics in The Digital Era

Ikmah Wati*[1], Irna Wati[2], Syahrul Muharom[3], Muhamad Ihsan Gunawan[4]

ikmahwati1510@gmail.com*

[1,2,3,4] Pancasila and Citizenship Education Study Program, Pamulang University, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Civics Education plays a crucial role in instilling social values in the younger generation. In today's digital age, the decline of social ethics among the younger generation is a serious problem. Social ethics, as the foundation of social life for harmony, must be mastered by every individual. This study aims to examine the strengthening of Civics Education in shaping social ethics for students in the digital age. This research uses qualitative methods that refer to literature studies. The data from this study refer to various relevant scientific journals. The results indicate that humanistic values need to be focused on Civics Education, that they require an understanding of the challenges in instilling social values, and that an appropriate strengthening strategy is required in Civics Education. The recommendations in this study are the need for evaluation and effective collaboration between various parties, including the government, society, the younger generation, institutions, stakeholders, and others, to strengthen the Civics Education system in shaping social ethics in the digital age.

Keywords: Civic Education; Social Ethics; Digital Era

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology in the digital era has significantly impacted daily life in society. The social transformations that have occurred along with this technological advancement have had a significant impact on the behavior, perspectives, and lifestyles of today's younger generation. While the rapid flow of digital technology has had a positive impact on the younger generation, such as facilitating rapid access to information, it has also presented significant challenges in maintaining the nation's noble values, including ethical values in social life(Yunita et al., 2024). Digitalization has had a significant impact on the social lives of the nation's younger generation. In this digital era, the younger generation must be able to maintain and preserve noble values and social values in their daily lives.

Social ethics is a crucial value in social life. Social ethics reflects the quality of relationships between individuals and their social environment. Essentially, social ethics encompasses values such as courtesy, empathy, tolerance, responsibility, and a sense of justice. In the current digital era, the value of social ethics is of great concern, with many young people failing to apply social ethics in their daily lives. The fading of these ethical values can threaten the quality of individuals within overall social harmony. In this context, education plays a crucial role in building character and internalizing moral and social values. One relevant and strategic subject to address this challenge is Civics Education (Harefa, 2025).

Civics Education plays a crucial role in shaping the character and social ethics of the younger generation. Essentially, Civics Education is an educational system that encompasses issues related to character formation and social values consistent with the nation's personality. Character formation and social ethics are crucial elements that must be instilled in the younger generation from an early age (Anshori, 2025). Therefore, Civics Education can serve as a foundation for instilling noble values, norms, and social ethics as a foundation for national and state life. The PKn curriculum includes various materials closely related to social ethics, such as legal norms, Pancasila values, democracy, the rights and obligations of citizens, and a culture of tolerance. Therefore, through an appropriate learning process, Civics Education has significant potential to shape social ethics in the younger generation, particularly students (Harefa, 2025).

Strengthening civics education in schools is highly strategic because it prepares students not only to acquire technical skills but also to develop strong moral and social ethics to become a workforce that is not only professionally competent but also socially responsible, ethically sound, and able to adapt well to their surroundings. Civics education can be an effective vehicle for developing ethical attitudes through a learning process that involves real-life social experiences, so that students' social ethics become more ingrained and reflected in their daily interactions (Yuliani et al., 2025).

However, the effectiveness of Civics Education in shaping social ethics still faces various challenges and has not been fully realized. This is evident in numerous cases in the field, which demonstrate that although many young people, particularly students, have received Civics Education, they do not necessarily apply these social values in their daily lives. This is due to various factors, such as a lack of learning approaches, weak role models from the surrounding environment, and the dominance of popular culture that conflicts with social ethical values (Harefa, 2025). Therefore, appropriate evaluation and strategies are needed for implementing Civics Education in the current digital era.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that in the current digital era, students have minimally realized social ethical values. Therefore, strengthening Civics Education is essential to develop social ethics for students in this digital era. Social ethics is an essential part of everyday life in the social environment. Therefore, this research is essential to examine: 1) What are the humanistic values in Civics Education?; 2) What is the role of Civics Education in shaping social ethics in students?; 3) What are the challenges and appropriate strategies for strengthening Civics Education?

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. A descriptive qualitative approach aims to understand the phenomena that occur. In this study, the author uses literature data sources obtained from various scientific journals, both international and national, books related to the research, articles, and trusted internet sources. There are several stages in this study: data collection, data reduction, data analysis, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Through this literature study, the author obtained data related to strengthening Civic Education in shaping social ethics for students in the digital era. This research is expected to provide understanding and insight for readers, and the results of this study can be used as a reference for other researchers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Humanistic Values in Civics Education

Civics Education plays a crucial role in shaping the national identity of the younger generation, particularly through an understanding of humanistic values. These humanistic

values are found in Pancasila, which serves as a moral and ethical guideline for the younger generation. Pancasila, as the foundation of the state, embodies noble values that align with the personality of the Indonesian nation (Nurhasanah et al., 2024). Essentially, Pancasila serves as the foundation for Indonesian society, where all these noble values have served as the foundation of the nation's civilization. Therefore, it can be said that the values contained in Pancasila embody the ideals and goals of the Indonesian nation.

Pancasila, as the guiding principle of the Republic of Indonesia, adheres to humanistic and religious values. This can be seen in the first and second principles. The first principle, "Belief in the One and Only God," demonstrates the religious values of the Indonesian nation. The first principle serves as a reference for realizing the subsequent principles. The second principle, "just and civilized humanity," outlines humanistic and ethical behavior, upholding the dignity of every human being. Humanistic-religious values are part of the goals of national education (Tanjung et al., 2024). In this regard, the values of Pancasila form part of the humanistic values that can serve as a foundation for facing the digital era. These Pancasila values can serve as guidelines in daily life.

Civics Education plays a crucial role in instilling humanistic values, such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and social justice. Instilling these values can shape behavioral patterns that reflect social ethics, such as respecting others, understanding differences, and upholding equality without discrimination. In this regard, the humanistic values embodied in Pancasila can serve as a reference in everyday life within the social environment (Harefa, 2025). Therefore, instilling humanistic values in Civics Education is crucial.

Furthermore, according to Ki Hajar Dewantara, Civics education contains six important elements, namely 1) Freedom values; 2) Humanity values; 3) Spiritual values; 4) Moral values; 5) Social values; 6) Leadership values (Wartono & Puji Susanti, 2025). These elements are part of the humanist-religious education concept initiated by Ki Hajar Dewantara. These six elements can be used to face various changes in the era, including the digital era. Therefore, humanist values are very important to be realized in each individual, especially the younger generation of the nation as the heirs of Indonesian civilization. Where, these humanist values are very useful in facing various changes in the times. By including humanist values in Civics Education will facilitate the realization of the instillation of humanist values in students.

This section is the main part of the article the results of research and is usually the longest part of an article. The results of the research presented in this section are the result of a clean process of data analysis such as statistical calculations and testing process or other processes for the achievement of its research. State the findings of the research concisely. If research's results provided in tables or pictures, please apply it clearly.

The Role of Civics Education in Shaping Social Ethics

Civics Education is a values education that aims to help students understand their role as critical, active, and moral citizens in a nation and state. One effective way to develop citizens with character, ethics, and responsibility is through civics education. In addition to teaching the state system, Civics Education also helps internalize noble values such as tolerance, honesty, and mutual cooperation (Sari et al., 2025).

In the current digital technology era, Civics Education plays a crucial role in shaping students' social ethics. In this digital era, there are numerous challenges to be faced in shaping students' social ethics due to the rapid and rapid pace of social change. Students' social patterns are heavily influenced by significant advances in information and communication technology. Students are highly vulnerable to unethical behavior and moral degradation due to their easy access to various digital content, including social media. Thus, civics education helps students build strong and ethical character not only in their daily lives but also teaches students social ethics that can help them use technology wisely and understand the social impact of their

behavior in the digital world (Saryono, 2024).

Civics education not only provides students with normative knowledge but also builds strong morals through the application of morality, solidarity, and a sense of nationalism. This is crucial for producing a young generation that is not only technologically proficient but also able to maintain civility and human values in their social interactions, both in the digital world and in person (Santoso et al., 2023). Civics education also helps students become more critical of the digital content they consume and share. As part of civics education, digital literacy helps students understand fake news, hate speech, and harmful digital behavior, so they can be more discerning and responsible when interacting online. These efforts are crucial for building a healthy and moral digital community. Ultimately, this will have a positive impact on students' social development (Wati & Mardiana, 2025).

Through Civics education, students are taught to understand their rights and responsibilities as good citizens. They are also taught to demonstrate social sensitivity, tolerance, and empathy when interacting with others on a daily basis. Furthermore, Civics education provides students with the digital ethics they need to manage social interactions in cyberspace wisely and critically (Gunawan et al., 2022). In this regard, Civics education plays a crucial role in shaping students' social ethics in the digital age through several stages, including: 1) instilling morals and social ethics; 2) increasing digital literacy; and 3) developing the concept of digital citizenship. These various stages can help improve social ethics in students in the digital age.

Challenges in Shaping Social Ethic

Social ethics can be understood as a set of rules and values that serve as guidelines for living in society. These values do not emerge automatically but require a learning process and instillation from an early age. One strategic pathway for instilling social awareness is Civics Education (Yunita et al., 2024). Through PKn, students are not only guided to understand their rights and obligations as citizens but also trained to respect others, maintain harmony, and foster a sense of caring. However, its implementation is not simple. The dynamics of globalization, the rapid flow of information, and the influx of foreign cultural influences often trigger shifts in values that challenge the educational system in developing social ethics (Sembiring et al., 2024).

One of the most crucial issues is the impact of social media on the behavior of the younger generation. Many students communicate more intensively online than through face-to-face interactions. This situation often gives rise to unethical actions, such as hate speech, intolerant behavior, and digital bullying. Emphasized that students' social media habits significantly influence the development of their digital ethics. Without a strong foundation of ethical education, students are vulnerable to negative behavior (Yuliani et al., 2025). Therefore, Civics education is required to focus not only on rote learning but also to provide learning spaces that foster ethical behavior skills, particularly in the increasingly dominant digital space.

In addition to challenges in the digital realm, environmental issues are also an important indicator in instilling social ethics. The increasingly apparent ecological crisis drives the need for heightened social awareness, especially among adolescents, the nation's future generations. Meidinata (2024) demonstrated that when environmental issues are integrated into Civics learning, students demonstrate a higher level of social awareness. Through concrete programs, such as waste awareness projects, climate change discussions, and tree-planting campaigns, students learn that protecting the environment is a shared responsibility, not just a personal obligation (Meidinata et al., 2024). This confirms that strengthening social ethics will be more effective if Civics material is connected to real-life issues, including Indonesia's cultural diversity, which demands tolerance and acceptance of differences as a manifestation of the practice of Pancasila (Sembiring et al., 2024).

The role of teachers in fostering social ethics through Civics is crucial. However, the learning methods used often emphasize memorization and theory alone. Students, however, need real-world experiences to deeply ingrain ethical values. (Yuliani et al., 2025) emphasize that contextual and interactive approaches, such as discussing bullying cases or implementing social projects, are more effective than solely textbook-based learning. In this regard, teachers serve not only as transmitters of material but also as role models who demonstrate empathy, honesty, and a sense of responsibility in everyday life.

Beyond schools, family and community support also play a significant role in the successful internalization of social ethics. Students will find it difficult to implement civics values if they witness contradictory behavior in their environment, such as intolerance, indiscipline, or social indifference. Therefore, synergy between schools, families, and communities is essential to strengthening ethical values. (Meidinata et al., 2024) emphasize that experiential education is far more meaningful because students not only receive theory but also witness and experience directly how social ethics are implemented in everyday life.

Although the challenges in developing social ethics through civics are quite complex, due to the influence of digital technology, environmental issues, and social diversity, this effort remains highly feasible. The key lies in implementing contextual learning methods, strengthening the role of teachers as role models, and actively involving families and communities. With these steps, civics can be a crucial instrument in shaping a generation with morals, caring, and responsibility. As explained by (Meidinata et al., 2024) (Yuliani et al., 2025), and (Sembiring et al., 2024), civic education needs to continue to adapt to the dynamics of the times so that social ethical values do not stop at the discourse level, but are truly present in the behavior of the younger generation.

Strategies for Strengthening Civic Education in Shaping Social Ethics

Civic education plays a crucial role in shaping civic awareness in future generations by prioritizing the values of tolerance and democracy. In this regard, education about citizenship rights encompasses rights such as the right to vote and be elected in general elections, the right to justice within the legal system, and the right to adequate education and healthcare. Furthermore, education about civic obligations is a crucial aspect in building individual commitment and responsibility for living together in society (Dewi & Buldani, 2024). Civic education also fosters character with social ethics based on Pancasila, which is acquired through civic education.

Social ethics are the norms that govern how individuals act morally in society. These ethics encompass mutual respect, mutual assistance, concern for the social environment, and upholding the rights of others (Anshori, 2025). Ethics is a fundamental skill that every human being must possess to shape their life as a nation and state. Therefore, civics education is expected to equip citizens to develop good citizens with social ethics. Civics Education in the modern context aims not only to provide an understanding of the country's political and legal systems but also emphasizes the formation of social character.

Several strategies can be used to reinforce social ethics, including teacher strategies in the learning process (Anshori, 2025). Approaches that actively involve students, such as discussions of social issues, deliberation simulations, case studies, debates, and civics projects, can foster students' understanding and ethical awareness. Similarly, (Gunadi et al., 2023). Several core values of Pancasila, such as humanity, social justice, and unity, are taught through group discussions, case studies, and personal reflection, which engage students in solving social and political problems in Indonesia.

The learning strategies used in Civics significantly influence the success of developing social ethics. Approaches that actively involve students, for example through discussions of social issues, deliberation simulations, case studies, debates, and citizenship projects, can foster

students' ethical understanding and awareness. Ethical learning helps create a learning environment that supports the goals of civics education by building character, moral values, and critical thinking skills necessary for active participation in society. Ethics plays a crucial role in supporting the goals of civics education. Civics education aims to develop competent, responsible, and active citizens (Purwantiningsih, 2023).

The strategy for strengthening character through project-based Civics learning (Project Citizen) begins with strengthening students' critical reasoning skills by providing basic competency materials on responsive and proactive attitudes toward threats to the nation and strategies for overcoming them based on the principle of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity). In an increasingly complex society, teachers play a strategic role not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as facilitators in the internalization of national values, particularly the awareness that diversity is a nation's strength. Thus, Civic education learning is directed at forming a young generation that has critical thinking skills, is able to be aware of various threats to the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia, and is proactive in seeking solutions to national problems as a form of shared responsibility in maintaining unity (Sulistianingsih et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Civics Education plays a crucial role in fostering social ethics in students in the digital age. In today's digital age, many students are unable to apply social values in their daily lives. This is despite the fact that social ethics are the foundation for harmonious living within society. Therefore, strengthening Civics Education is crucial to fostering social ethics in students in the current digital age. This strengthening of Civics Education encompasses humanistic values within PKn, strengthening the role of Civics Education, understanding the complex challenges of fostering social ethics, and developing appropriate strategies for fostering Civics Education. Therefore, strengthening Civics Education will significantly assist in fostering social ethics in the digital age. However, strong collaboration between the government, the community, the younger generation, institutions, stakeholders, and others is essential for the strengthening of Civics Education to be realized effectively and sustainably.

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