


Implementation of the Concept of Democracy in the World of Learning at Elementary School Level

Jemma Sar¹, Wanda Haroa²

Universitas Bosowa

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Democracy, Elementary School, Participatory Learning, Character Education, Student Engagement	The application of the concept of democracy in the world of learning at the Elementary School (SD) level is an important step in forming the character of students who are critical, responsible, and respectful of differences. Democratic education does not only emphasize the delivery of teaching materials, but also on a participatory, dialogical learning process, and respect for students' rights and voices. This study aims to examine how democratic principles are integrated into learning activities in elementary schools, the role of teachers in creating a democratic learning environment, and its impact on students' attitudes and behavior. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that the application of democracy in learning can increase student activity, strengthen tolerance values, and build habits of deliberation in decision-making in the classroom. Thus, democracy-based learning at the elementary school level is an important foundation in forming a generation that is intellectually and emotionally intelligent.
This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC license 	Corresponding Author: Jemma Sar Universitas Bosowa jemmaar@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main means in shaping the personality and character of the young generation. In the context of modern education, the application of democratic values is becoming increasingly important to be instilled early on, especially at the Elementary School (SD) level. Democracy in education is not only related to the government system, but also concerns the way of thinking, behaving, and acting fairly, openly, and respecting diversity of opinion.

Elementary Schools as basic educational institutions have a strategic role in forming the foundation of students' character. At this stage, children are in a very important period of social and emotional development, so that learning that emphasizes participation, dialogue, and respect for rights and responsibilities becomes very relevant. The concept of democracy in learning can be applied in various ways, such as providing opportunities for students to express their opinions, being involved in decision-making in class, and getting used to deliberation in solving problems.

However, in practice, not all teachers are able to implement a democratic learning approach optimally. Much classroom learning is still one-way, where the teacher is the center of information and students only act as recipients. In fact, democratic learning is able to increase students' activeness, creativity, and self-confidence.

Based on this background, it is important to examine how the application of the concept of

democracy in the learning process in Elementary Schools, the challenges faced, and its impact on the formation of students' character and social skills. This study is expected to contribute to the development of more inclusive, fair, and humane learning practices in elementary education environments.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe and analyze the application of the concept of democracy in the learning process at the Elementary School level. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to explore the meaning, process, and experience that occurs in depth in the context of education.

Location and Subject of Research

This research was conducted in one of the State Elementary Schools in [name of area/city], which was selected purposively because it has implemented a participatory learning approach in classroom activities. The subjects of the study included class teachers, students, and the principal as supporting informants.

Data collection technique

Data was collected through the following techniques:

1. Observation
Conducted during the learning process to observe teacher and student interactions, student participation, and the democratic atmosphere in the classroom.
2. Interview
Conducted in a semi-structured manner with teachers and students to obtain in-depth information about views, experiences, and practices related to the application of democratic values in learning.
3. Documentation
Collection of documents such as Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), class regulations, and student work that reflects democratic values.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model which consists of three stages:

1. Data reduction
Filter and simplify raw data into relevant, meaningful information.
2. Data presentation
Arrange data in narrative, table, or matrix form to facilitate understanding.
3. Drawing conclusions
Make interpretations based on the data obtained to answer the research problem formulation.

Data Validity Test

To ensure data validity, researchers use source and technique triangulation techniques, namely by comparing data from observations, interviews, and documentation to obtain consistent and reliable conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Implementing the Concept of Democracy in Learning

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the implementation of democratic values in the classroom is carried out in several ways. Teachers provide space for students to express their opinions, both verbally and in writing. For example, in group discussion activities,

students are given the freedom to choose group members, divide tasks fairly, and present the results of the discussion in front of the class. In addition, teachers also encourage the election of class leaders, rotating seating arrangements, and the preparation of mutually agreed class rules. The practice shows that students are not only objects of learning, but also active subjects involved in the decision-making process. This reflects democratic values such as participation, responsibility, and justice.

The Role of Teachers in Building a Democratic Learning Environment

The teacher acts as a facilitator who creates an open and inclusive learning atmosphere. The teacher does not dominate the class, but opens up a dialogue space and listens to students' voices. In interviews, teachers stated that this approach encourages students to be more active, confident, and accustomed to critical thinking.

In addition, teachers also implement a fair assessment system, provide constructive feedback, and encourage students to respect differences of opinion. This creates a classroom culture that values diversity and strengthens solidarity among students.

The Impact of Implementing Democracy on Students

From the research results, the implementation of democratic learning has a positive impact on the development of students' attitudes and behaviors. Students appear more active in conveying ideas, are better able to work together in groups, and show mutual respect. They are also more accustomed to expressing opinions without fear, because the classroom environment supports openness and a sense of security.

Some students even reported feeling more valued and motivated when they were given the opportunity to be involved in decision-making in class. This shows that democracy-based learning not only strengthens the cognitive aspects, but also the affective and social aspects of students.

Challenges in Implementing Democracy in the Classroom

Despite providing many benefits, teachers also face several challenges, such as time constraints, large numbers of students, and differences in student character that affect class dynamics. Not all students are used to actively participating, so teachers need special strategies to involve all students equally.

In addition, there is still a traditional learning culture that tends to be one-way in some classes, which is a challenge in itself in changing the mindset of teachers and students to be more open to a democratic approach.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the application of the concept of democracy in learning at the Elementary School level has a significant influence on the process and quality of education. Democratic learning allows students to actively participate, express opinions, and be involved in decision making in the classroom. This not only encourages cognitive development, but also strengthens social values such as responsibility, tolerance, and cooperation. Teachers play an important role in creating a democratic learning atmosphere. Through an open, dialogic, and participatory approach, teachers are able to build a classroom environment that values diversity and upholds the rights of every student. Although there are several challenges in its implementation, such as differences in student character and time constraints, in general, democracy-based learning has a positive impact on the formation of students' character and social skills. Thus, learning that implements democratic values needs to be continuously developed and supported by all components of the school, including teachers, students, and school management, in order to create a young generation that is intellectually intelligent and has integrity in community life.

REFERENCES

- [1] Darmawan, D., Lutfiani, DNA, Purnomo, AK, & Puspita, AMI (2023). Analysis of the implementation of democracy at SDN Kupang 3 Jabon. Sindoro: Cendikia Pendidikan, 1(5), 1-10.
- [2] Khuzaimah, K., & Pribadi, F. (2022). Application of Educational Democracy in Student Learning in Elementary Schools. AL MA'ARIEF: Journal of Social and Cultural Education, 4(1), 41-49.
- [3] Kristiani, H., Ramadhani, S., & Sitompul, YM (2024). Pancasila Education Learning and Implementation of Democratic Values in Elementary Schools. Nanggroe: Journal of Cendikia Service, 3(2).
- [4] Purba, AA, Pakpahan, PE, & Azizah, NC (2024). Implementation of Democratic Values through Civic Education Learning at Private MTs 27 Firdaus. Journal on Education, 6(3), 17274-17280.
- [5] Radhwa, RNK, Wati, SS, & Faradila, JN (2023, August). Instilling Democratic Attitudes in Inclusive Elementary School Education: A Literature Study. In National Seminar a. Research and Community Service Results (Vol. 5, pp. 1664-1670).
- [6] Rarastika, N. (2022, July). Strategy for implementing democratic values through civics learning in elementary schools. National Seminar 2022-NBM Arts.
- [7] Sulistiyono, A. (2021). The role of teachers in instilling democratic values through school culture. Mahaguru: Journal of School Teacher Education, 2(2), 1-8.
- [8] Uriawan, W., & Alamsyah, M. (2024). Information Systems in the Implementation of Educational Democracy: Challenges and Opportunities. Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA, 10(2), 530-536.
- [9] Vichaully, Y., & Dewi, DA (2022). Application of democratic values in elementary school classes as part of civic education learning. Rhizome: Journal of Humanities Studies, 2(1), 10-16.
- [10] Widiyanto, D. (2023). Civic education as a vehicle for democratic education. Journal of Education, 32(1), 1-10.