

From place attachment to sense of belonging: promoting good citizenship through civic education

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Civic education plays a crucial role in shaping students' character as good and smart citizens. However, in its implementation, factors influencing students' place attachment and national identity are often overlooked. This is a significant concern as place attachment and national identity can influence students' behaviour in society and the country (Martono et al., 2022). Therefore, transforming the perspective from place attachment to sense of belonging is essential to be applied in civic education to promote good and smart citizenship. This article aims to reconstruct the concept of sense of belonging by exploring the grassroots of place attachment and national identity. Through this argumentation, new insights are expected to be discovered on how place attachment and national identity can be maintained and strengthened through civic education that prioritizes sense of belonging as a crucial factor in shaping good and smart citizenship in students.

Civic education is an essential approach in education that aims to shape good and smart citizens. As a critical part of education, civic education aims to teach democratic values, human rights, community participation, nationalism, and responsibilities in society. However, civic education often focuses only on practical knowledge and skills needed to become a good citizen, without paying attention to the importance of a sense of attachment or sense of belonging to the community and the place where one lives. This article discusses the importance of transforming the perspective of civic education from mere place attachment to a sense of belonging to the community as a whole. Thus, civic education can be more effective in shaping good and smart citizens who not only have practical knowledge and skills but also have a sense of attachment and responsibility to the community and the place where they live. This argument shows that a strong sense of belonging to the community and the place where one lives can increase citizens' participation in social and political activities. This is crucial in shaping an active and responsive society towards existing social and political issues. This article postulates several real-life examples, such as the emotional attachment of Dayak indigenous communities in Kalimantan to the forest where they live (Olendo et al., 2022). Sense of belonging can sustain a person's place of residence because individuals who feel attached and responsible to their community and place of residence tend to have a strong sense of ownership and loyalty to that place. This makes them more concerned and willing to contribute to building and maintaining the environment and social life around them.

Individuals who have a sense of belonging also tend to feel more connected to their living environment, making them more likely to invest in homes and properties, develop strong communities with their neighbors, and even help preserve the surrounding natural environment (Casmana et al., 2023). Additionally, a sense of belonging can help prevent excessive urbanization or high population mobility. By feeling a strong attachment to their



place of residence, individuals are more likely to stay there instead of moving to another place, even if the economic or social situation is less favorable. In a broader context, a sense of belonging can help maintain the sustainability of local communities and preserve the unique cultural and historical heritage of the region. By having a strong attachment to their place of residence, individuals are more likely to participate in efforts to preserve local culture and historical heritage, as well as help maintain the preservation of the natural environment around them. Overall, a sense of belonging can help sustain one's place of residence by encouraging individuals to feel more connected and responsible for the environment and social life around them. By having a strong attachment to their place of residence, individuals are more likely to build and maintain a healthy and inclusive environment, as well as help preserve the unique cultural and historical heritage of the region. In the context of Civics education, changing the perspective from place attachment to sense of belonging can be achieved by integrating learning about the history and culture of the community, introducing concepts such as collective and unifying identities, and providing opportunities to participate in local community activities (Fatmawati & Dewantara, 2022). Civics education that focuses on a sense of belonging can also help reduce inequality and social conflict in society. Through a deeper understanding of the community and the place where one lives, individuals can better understand the perspectives and interests of others and build stronger, supportive relationships.

In the era of globalization and rapid social change, a sense of belonging can also help individuals maintain their identity and existence in a rapidly changing society. By feeling that they are part of a larger community and have a responsibility towards that community, individuals can feel more stable and confident to contribute to the well-being of society. Overall, shifting the perspective of civic education from place attachment to sense of belonging can help shape better and smarter citizens who understand and feel connected to the community and the place they live in. In order to promote positive social and political activities and build a more inclusive and harmonious community, it is important to integrate the concept of sense of belonging in civic education. Civic education can strengthen a sense of belonging in individuals because it teaches important citizenship values, such as community participation, involvement in social and political activities, and rights and responsibilities as a citizen.

In good civic education, individuals will learn about the history and culture of the community, the values and principles of democracy, as well as how to participate in community and political activities. With a deeper understanding of the community and the place where one lives, individuals can feel more connected to the community and develop a stronger sense of belonging. Additionally, in good civic education, individuals will have the opportunity to participate in local community activities, such as social events, clean-up activities, or other activities that can help strengthen their connection to the community (Sulistyarini et al., 2022). By participating in these activities, individuals can feel more engaged and have a sense of responsibility towards the community. Sense of belonging is closely related to nationalism and patriotism. Nationalism is an ideology that encourages individuals to feel proud and have a strong identity as citizens of a particular country. Meanwhile, patriotism is a deep love for the country where the individual lives, including a strong attachment to the culture, history, and national identity of that country. Sense of belonging can also be an important factor in shaping nationalism and patriotism. Individuals who have a strong sense of belonging to their community and place of residence tend to feel more attached to the country where they live. They can feel more proud and have a deeper love for their national identity and culture. In addition, sense of belonging can also help strengthen togetherness and unity in the community. Individuals who feel a strong attachment to their community and place of residence are more likely to work together with people around them and form positive and supportive relationships. This can help strengthen social solidarity and build a strong sense of togetherness in the community. In a broader context, sense of belonging can also help strengthen the state and nation as a whole. Individuals who have a strong sense of attachment

to their country and community are more likely to participate in positive and constructive social and political activities, as well as help strengthen state institutions and democracy. Overall, a sense of belonging can help shape nationalism and patriotism by strengthening attachment and unity in the community. This can help strengthen national and cultural identity, as well as strengthen institutions and democracy in the country.

Should sense of belonging be used in civic education?

A sense of belonging can be a crucial factor in civic education. Civic education is not just about understanding governance and public policy, but also about shaping attitudes and values necessary to be a good and smart citizen. One of the important values in civic education is active involvement in the community and strengthening ties to one's residence and community. In civic education, a sense of belonging can be used to help students develop a strong attachment to their residence and community. This can help students become more involved in positive and constructive social and political activities and form positive and supportive relationships with those around them (Eubank & DeVita, 2023). Additionally, a sense of belonging can help students strengthen their national and cultural identities, as well as build a strong sense of community. Therefore, a sense of belonging can be an effective tool to enhance civic education and help students become good and smart citizens. Therefore, it is important for educators to consider the use of a sense of belonging in civic education to help students develop attitudes and values necessary to be active and contributing citizens (Pesonen et al., 2021). There are several ways that can be used to implement a sense of belonging in civic education, including:

1. **Discussing local issues:** Civic education can be done by discussing local issues relevant to students, such as environmental issues, health, security, or other social issues. This can help students feel more involved in the community and strengthen ties to their residence and community.
2. **Encouraging active participation:** Teachers can encourage active student participation in positive and constructive social and political activities, such as environmental activities, social activities, or political activities. With active participation, students can feel more involved in the community and build positive and supportive relationships with those around them.
3. **Strengthening national and cultural identities:** Teachers can strengthen students' national and cultural identities by discussing the history, culture, and national identity of the country where the students live. This can help students strengthen their attachment to the country and community.
4. **Conducting activities outside the classroom:** Teachers can conduct activities outside the classroom, such as visits to government institutions, social activities, or visits to important places in the community. This can help students feel more involved in the community and strengthen ties to their residence and community.
5. **Implementing problem-based learning approaches:** Teachers can implement problem-based learning approaches that require students to solve real problems in the community. By solving real problems in the community, students can feel more involved and strengthen ties to their residence and community.

When applying the theory of sense of belonging in civic education, teachers need to consider the context and needs of their students. This can help them create meaningful and relevant lessons for their students. In addition, teachers can also integrate technology and media into their homework to make them more engaging and interactive for their students.

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