Shifting From Pseudo-Compliance To Ecological Citizenship: Transformative Learning Through The Waste Alms Program

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Abstract.
The plastic waste crisis in Adiwiyata Mandiri-predicated schools often stems from the limitations of instructive-regulatory approaches (top-down compliance) that only trigger pseudocompliance. This study aims to analyze the implementation process of the Project Citizen learning model based on Experiential-Transformative Learning specifically in the syntax of alternative policy formulation through the "Waste Charity" (Sedekah Sampah) initiative in transforming normative awareness into authentic ecological citizenship at SMP Negeri 2 Balen, Bojonegoro Regency. This qualitative case study involved Civics teachers, Class 9C students, the Adiwiyata Team, canteen vendors, and local waste collectors. Data were gathered through passive participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The findings indicate that the disorienting dilemma of canteen plastic waste leakage was successfully transformed into bottom-up civic action. Through the "Waste Charity" program, students independently collected, sorted, and converted inorganic waste into a funding source for the school's Adiwiyata ecosystem (maintaining fish ponds and classroom gardens). This integration of spiritual values, circular economy, and community partnerships proved effective in shifting student disposition from passive sanction-based compliance to active, responsive, and sustainable ecological awareness. The study concludes that strengthening ecological citizenship requires a paradigm shift from external control to student participative empowerment.

Keywords: *Adiwiyata School, Ecological Citizenship, Experiential-Transformative Learning, Project Citizen and Waste Charity.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Pancasila education in the 21st century demands a fundamental reorientation from merely transferring normative knowledge to fostering ecological citizenship. Conventional approaches that emphasize only the cognitive aspects of the formal relationship between citizens and the state are no longer adequate to address the complexity of modern environmental challenges. Therefore, Pancasila education ideally transforms students' understanding so that they have a moral responsibility for environmental sustainability as an integral part of being a citizen with character. Internalizing the values of environmental awareness, mutual cooperation, and social responsibility autonomously serves as the primary foundation for students to act based on critical self-awareness, rather than simply being driven by passive compliance with regulations (Nurdiansyah & Komalasari, 2023).

In line with this orientation, the Adiwiyata School Program strategically functions as a living laboratory to actualize ecological citizenship values within the school environment. Through the Environmental Care and Culture Movement in Schools (PBLHS), educational institutions are encouraged to create a learning ecosystem that integrates theoretical concepts in the classroom with the actual practice of environmentally friendly behavior (Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry, 2019). The Adiwiyata designation is designed not merely to fulfill an administrative instrument or a competition formality, but rather as an instrument for developing a sustainable school culture. Strengthening this ecosystem is crucial in bridging students' normative understanding with the development of character and ecological citizenship skills in everyday life (Mahendra et al., 2024).

The waste problem and garbage crisis have become a systemic ecological threat from the national to the regional level, requiring collective intervention, including from educational institutions. The idealism of environmental education is currently confronted with the reality of the imbalance between daily waste accumulation and environmental carrying capacity, which has triggered significant waste accumulation. Based on data from the National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN, 2023), the volume of waste

generated in Indonesia has reached 34.09 million tons per year. This escalating crisis has a direct impact at the local level, as recorded by the Bojonegoro Regency Environmental Agency (2024), which showed an increase in daily waste volume of up to 3,400 m^3 per day. This condition emphasizes that addressing the waste crisis can no longer rely on a single approach but requires the active participation of all elements of society.

The high rate of waste generation in the public sphere reflects the environmental management paradox that also surrounds educational institutions. Schools, which ideally play a strategic role in character building and fostering a culture of ecological citizenship, still face challenges in waste management within their environments (Winarno, 2020). Regulations regarding the PBLHS Movement have not been able to consistently transform the daily behavior of school residents (Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation, 2019). Consequently, a gap has emerged between the ideals of environmentally conscious school curriculum and regulations and the practices of plastic waste management at the operational level.

This gap phenomenon is empirically reflected at SMP Negeri 2 Balen, Bojonegoro Regency. Despite having received the Adiwiyata Mandiri award and having a track record of environmental management since 2017, the school continues to face the problem of plastic waste leakage from the canteen and office activities. Various structural intervention approaches have been implemented, ranging from drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the canteen management to encouraging students to bring their own food containers and tumblers. However, this formal, regulatory-based policy lasted only about two months before being relaxed again due to being considered cumbersome and slowing down the canteen service flow. This finding aligns with a study by Al Wafi (2023), which emphasized that policies limiting single-use plastic waste in schools are vulnerable to operational failure if not supported by the readiness of service infrastructure and adaptive habituation from the entire school community.

The failure to sustain these regulatory interventions indicates a fundamental gap between rigid, top-down compliance and students' inherent ecological moral awareness. The implementation of Adiwiyata regulations, which focus on meeting formalistic criteria, tends to foster pseudo-compliance for administrative purposes, without addressing the affective dimension or ethical awareness of students (Safitri et al., 2020). Consequently, once supervision weakens or demands for daily practicality increase, students' environmentally friendly behavior easily degrades back to conventional consumption patterns. If this gap is left unchecked, the Adiwiyata Mandiri School designation risks becoming trapped in mere administrative formality and fostering passive environmental citizenship. Therefore, the situation of waste leakage in schools needs to be utilized as a disorienting dilemma to stimulate critical reflection among students (Labobar & Kapojos, 2023).

The reorientation of the Pancasila Education learning model through Project Citizen based on Experiential-Transformative Learning integrated with the Rights and Obligations of Citizens material presents a strategic solution to transform normative awareness into ecological citizenship action (civic action). Through this approach, students act as active subjects who formulate and propose solutions in the syntax of new policy proposals. The success of this idea is demonstrated through the "Trash Charity" program formulated independently by students to collect, sort, and manage the proceeds from the sale of inorganic waste to finance the school's Adiwiyata ecosystem. The novelty of this research lies in the process of transforming normative awareness into ecological citizenship action based on bottom-up participation that emerged from the syntax of new policy proposals in the Project Citizen model in schools with the Adiwiyata Mandiri predicate (Handayani & Wibowo, 2023; Prasetyo & Dewi, 2023).

This research has crucial academic and practical urgency in evaluating the effectiveness of the Project Citizen model based on Experiential-Transformative Learning to facilitate the birth of bottom-up innovation from students. This approach positions school environmental problems not merely as an administrative burden, but as a contextual learning medium that triggers reflective encouragement and critical thinking. As emphasized by Budimansyah (2019), the implementation of Project Citizen combined with transformative experience-based learning can change the citizenship disposition of students from merely passive recipients of rules to agents of change who are responsive and critical to public issues. Based on this urgency, this study aims to analyze in depth the process of Project Citizen implementation, especially at the syntax stage of new policy proposals through the idea of "Trash Charity" in transforming normative awareness into real and sustainable ecological citizenship behavior at SMP Negeri 2 Balen, Bojonegoro Regency. The actualization of

the “Trash Charity” idea provides concrete evidence of how student participation can bridge the gap between formalistic compliance and authentic civic action (Febriani & Rachman, 2023).

II. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type to examine in depth the process of forming ecological awareness (ecological citizenship) of students in the school environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The case study approach was chosen to explore the bounded system of interactions and empirical phenomena in the implementation of the Project Citizen model based on Experiential-Transformative Learning in overcoming the paradox of waste management at SMP Negeri 2 Balen, Bojonegoro Regency (Merriam & Tisdell, 2019). The determination of the location and research subjects was carried out purposively based on the criteria of direct involvement in the Adiwiyata Mandiri ecosystem (Sugiyono, 2020). The subjects of this study included the Pancasila Education subject teacher as a learning facilitator, students who formulated the idea of "Sedekah Sampah", the school Adiwiyata Management Team, and representatives of the canteen management as operational support actors. The researcher acted as the main instrument (human instrument) who planned, collected, analyzed, and concluded data in the field.

Data collection was conducted through a combination of three main integrated techniques to ensure the depth and reliability of information (Mahendra et al., 2024). These three techniques included passive participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observations focused on directly observing the dynamics of Civics learning and students' ecological actions in the school area. In-depth interviews were used to uncover the shift in student awareness from mere normative compliance to active ecological awareness (Nurdiansyah & Komalasari, 2023). Meanwhile, documentation studies included a review of Pancasila Education teaching modules, Project Citizen portfolios, and Adiwiyata supporting documents. All collected data were tested for validity through source and technique triangulation to cross-check the consistency of information between informants and compare findings from various data collection techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The collected and validated qualitative data were then analyzed interactively and continuously, referring to the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2019) model, which includes three main stages. In the data condensation stage, researchers sorted, simplified, and focused the raw data on the syntax of the new "Trash Alms" policy formulation and shifts in students' daily behavior. Next, in the data display stage, the data were arranged in the form of a logical narrative and a categorization matrix to map the application patterns of the Project Citizen model in shaping the character of ecological citizens (Fasya et al., 2024). The final stage, conclusion drawing/verification, was carried out in stages and continuously verified throughout the research process to obtain a complete and valid understanding.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The problem of plastic waste has become a chronic issue in various educational ecosystems, including at SMP Negeri 2 Balen, Bojonegoro Regency. Within the dynamics of school activities, the canteen plays a strategic role as a vital public facility and is also the largest contributor to plastic waste generation. As an institution with the Adiwiyata Mandiri designation, the school has a moral and structural responsibility to take on a role as a policymaker by establishing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for canteen partners and prohibiting the sale of single-use food packaging (Wicaksono, 2025). Initially, this regulation succeeded in encouraging operational compliance, with the canteen serving food buffet-style using large containers and paper portion sheets to reduce the use of single-use plastic packaging.

However, this environmental policy, which relies on top-down compliance interventions, has proven to suffer from a sustainability deficit. Supporting policies such as requiring students to bring tumblers and requiring independent dining areas, intended as a demonstration of their love for nature, only lasted for two months. Practicality, demands for efficient canteen service, and high customer demand prompted the canteen to return to providing plastic cups and disposable packaging. Despite repeated warnings from the school, the canteen management consistently cited market dynamics and consumer demand as justification for ignoring regulations.

The failure to sustain the canteen regulations reflects a fundamental paradox between the idealism of the Adiwiyata curriculum and the operational realities on the ground. The implementation of sanctions- and instruction-based regulations without adaptive habituation only results in pseudo-compliance that easily degrades when supervision is relaxed. Formal reprimands have proven to fail to touch the affective dimension or moral-ethical awareness of canteen economic actors and students. Nevertheless, this plastic waste leakage phenomenon has become a disorienting dilemma that is invaluable in learning Pancasila Education for grade 9C on the Rights and Obligations of Citizens, namely as a trigger for building students' critical awareness of public issues in their environment.

In response to the environmental crisis in the canteen, Pancasila Education learning was oriented through the Project Citizen model based on Experiential-Transformative Learning. This model reorients the role of students from merely passive recipients of norms to active subjects who directly analyze public problems in their schools. In the syntax of alternative policy formulation, students identify and compare three solution options: (1) providing separate trash bins (organic and inorganic), (2) completely stopping the use of plastic packaging in the canteen, and (3) recycling plastic waste into items with sales value.

Through a process of deliberation and critical discussion, the student group agreed on and formulated an innovative, bottom-up initiative called the "Sedekah Sampah" program. This initiative represents novelty because it successfully integrates the spiritual-social value of "sedekah" with civic action. This program aligns in principle with the Zero Waste School initiative, particularly in the collaboration between the school, students, and the community in converting plastic waste into tangible and useful value (School, 2024). This program focuses not only on waste collection activities but also includes character education and empowerment of the entire school community.

The "Trash Charity" concept is realized through a structured division of roles and the utilization of a deep learning framework between the school and the surrounding community (Feri, 2025). Every day at 0 o'clock (6:40–7:00 a.m. WIB), all students donate waste, coordinated by the Student Council (OSIS) and the on-duty teacher. Organic waste is distributed to the Adiwiyata Team and the agricultural extracurricular activities to be processed into compost. Meanwhile, inorganic waste (especially plastic) is collected and sold to scrap material collectors around the school. This pattern not only solves the waste problem but also strengthens strategic partnerships between teachers, students, and the surrounding community within a contextual learning ecosystem.

The main attraction and uniqueness of the "Sedekah Sampah" program lies in the management and allocation of funds from the sale of inorganic waste. Unlike conventional practices where proceeds from commercialized waste are kept or distributed as personal financial incentives, all (100%) of the funds obtained are transparently allocated to finance the operational costs of the school's Adiwiyata ecosystem. These funds are used independently to finance feed, maintenance, and the purchase of seeds for the school's three fish ponds (two tilapia ponds and one catfish pond). In addition, these funds are also used to repair pots and regenerate plants in the gardens in front of each classroom. This school-scale circular economy integration proves that civic action-based waste management can create financial independence in supporting environmental sustainability in schools.

Although the program has only been running for approximately two weeks, its impact and effectiveness indicate a significant behavioral transformation. Plastic waste generation in the school environment has decreased rapidly. This phenomenon demonstrates a shift in students' civic disposition from mere formalist compliance (passive citizenship) to authentic moral-ecological awareness (active ecological citizenship). The internalization of these environmental values is reflected in the students' daily habits, where they no longer simply contribute to the waste in the morning, but instead proactively hunt for plastic waste during recess to donate the next day. In fact, the students have independently provided special trash bins in their respective classrooms to accommodate their daily inorganic waste.

The successful factualization of the "Sedekah Sampah" program confirms that sustainable ecological awareness cannot be formed through the imposition of a single regulation (top-down), but rather through active participation that provides meaning and a sense of ownership for students. Synergy and collaboration across elements—from school administrators, canteen partners, teachers, students, to the surrounding community

(collectors)—are the keys to success in breaking down the gap between normative knowledge in the classroom (civic knowledge) and concrete civic action (civic action). Thus, the Project Citizen model based on Experiential-Transformative Learning has proven effective in transforming the disorienting dilemma of the waste crisis into a momentum for the formation of authentic, responsive, and sustainable ecological citizen characters at SMP Negeri 2 Balen.

IV. CLOSING

This study concludes that the instructive regulatory approach (top-down compliance) through SOP instruments and formalistic appeals has proven to experience a sustainability deficit in addressing the plastic waste crisis in the school environment. In contrast, the reorientation of Pancasila Education learning through the Project Citizen model based on Experiential-Transformative Learning successfully transformed the disorienting dilemma of canteen waste leaks into a momentum for the formation of authentic ecological citizenship awareness. Through the syntax of alternative policy formulation, students are no longer positioned as passive recipients of regulations, but rather act as co-creators of public policy that produces bottom-up innovations in the form of the "Sedekah Sampah" program.

The factualization of the "Trash Charity" concept has been empirically proven to bridge the gap between normative knowledge (civic knowledge) and real civic action (civic action). The integration of the spiritual-social value of "charity" with the circular economy—where 100% of the proceeds from the sale of inorganic waste are allocated to finance the school's Adiwiyata ecosystem (maintenance of fish ponds and classroom plants)—is able to foster a sense of ownership and the school's financial independence. Consequently, there is a shift in students' civic disposition from pseudo-compliance to active, responsive, and sustainable ecological habituation. Synergy between the school institution, students, canteen partners, and community partnerships (collectors) is the main key to realizing the Zero Waste School ecosystem.

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