

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING THROUGH THE SCHOOL OF CHANGE TO FORM ACTIVE CITIZENS IN NGANJUK CITY

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Abstract

Political development training through the “School of Change” aims to form citizens who are active, critical and contribute to democratic life. This research uses a qualitative approach to explore the training process, program effectiveness, and its impact on increasing citizen participation. The training process involves several stages, namely identifying participants’ needs, providing material through interactive discussions, decision-making simulations, problem-solving workshops and evaluation. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The research results show that the “School of Change” plays an important role in increasing participants’ understanding of political rights and obligations, discussion skills, and the ability to collaborate in decision making and budget planning. A participatory and contextual approach to training has proven to be effective in encouraging the active involvement of training participants. Participants also demonstrated increased critical awareness of social and political issues at local and national levels. Thus, this training becomes a relevant model of political education to create citizens who are able to play an active role in the development of a democratic society in the future.

Keywords: Politics, Citizenship, Education, Democracy, Participation.

مستخلص البحث

التدريب على التنمية السياسية من خلال “مدرسة التغيير” يهدف إلى تكوين مواطنين نشطين، ناقدين، ومساهمين في الحياة الديمقراطية. استخدم هذا البحث منهجاً كينيفياً لاستكشاف عملية التدريب، وفعالية البرنامج، وتأثيره على زيادة مشاركة المواطنين. تشمل عملية التدريب عدة مراحل، وهي تحديد احتياجات المشاركين، وتقديم المواد من خلال مناقشات تفاعلية، ومحاكاة صنع القرار، وورش عمل لحل المشكلات، والتقييم. تم جمع البيانات من خلال المقابلة المتعمقة، والملاحظة المباشرة للمشاركين، وتحليل الوثائق. أظهرت نتائج البحث أن “مدرسة التغيير” تلعب دوراً مهماً في تعزيز فهم المشاركين للحقوق والواجبات السياسية، وتنمية مهارات النقاش، والقدرة على التعاون في صنع القرار والتخطيط المالي. كما أثبت النهج التشاركي والسياقية في التدريب فعاليته في تشجيع المشاركة النشطة للمشاركين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أظهر المشاركون وعياً نقدياً متزايداً بالقضايا الاجتماعية والسياسية على المستويين المحلي والوطني. وعلى، يعد هذا التدريب نموذجاً تعليمياً سياسياً مناسباً لإعداد مواطنين قادرين على لعب دور نشط في تطوير مجتمع ديمقراطي في المستقبل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السياسة والمواطنة والتعليم والديمقراطية والمشاركة.



INTRODUCTION

One of the main pillars of democracy is political participation, which represents the active participation of society in determining the direction of policy and the future of the country. However, the current condition of community political participation shows complex dynamics. Although digital technology and social media have opened up new spaces for political engagement, such as bold campaigns and public discussions, in-person participation has declined.¹

Interactions between two or more people always involve political relations, so everyone is called political, even though only a small portion of society carries out political activities. Democracy is not a perfect order for regulating human life. However, history has proven that democracy as a model of state life has the smallest chance of insulting humanity. Therefore, even though in various documentation of this country the word democracy is not often found, the founders of the country since the movement era tried hard to apply the principles of a democratic state to Indonesia.² According to Ramlan Surbakti, Political participation is influenced by several factors, namely awareness and trust in the government. Awareness of people's rights and obligations as citizens is known as political awareness. This relates to a person's knowledge of the societal and political environment as well as their interest and attention to the societal and political environment in which they live. However, trust in government is an individual's response to government. Whether the government is considered trustworthy and influenced or not.³

In essence, a country is considered democratic when its people have the opportunity to participate in decision making, have equality before the law, and receive a decent income due to fair distribution of income. Democratic education is closely related to how education is carried out in a democratic system. Education that prepares people to become democratic citizens is known as democratic education. Democracy education provides knowledge about democratic principles, human rights, and the mechanisms of democratic government. One way to build a democratic and responsible society is to provide democratic education. Therefore, it is very important for everyone to continue to learn about democracy and develop democratic attitudes in everyday life. Because a lack of understanding about political education can influence society and the political decision-making process. Someone who does not understand the basics of democracy and human rights

¹ Rahmiyati Mii, et al., "Political Education in Increasing Political Participation", *Journal of Governance and Politics (JPG)*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (2023).

² Fadli Ramadhanil et al., "Design for Community Participation in Election Monitoring", Publisher: Partnership for Governance Reform in Indonesia in Collaboration with the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem), (June: 2015).

³ Ramlan Surbakti, "Understanding Political Science", Publisher: PT. Grasindo, (Jakarta: 1997).

tends to be more easily influenced by people who are irresponsible or with bad intentions.⁴ Schools of change have an important role in shaping the character and knowledge of training participants. Based on the results of the interviews, researchers can conclude that schools of change can function as 1) agents of change, 2) education, 3) practical training, and 4) discussions and studies.⁵ Political participation is an activity carried out by citizens in the form of involvement in civic activities such as in decision making. Political participation has been used in various meanings to refer to behavior, attitudes, and perceptions that are important components of political participation. According to Miriam Budiarto in Ahmad Zulfikar, political participation can generally be defined as the activity of a person or group of people to actively participate in political life, including by electing a state leader directly or indirectly, as well as voting in general elections, attending general meetings, become a member of a party or social movement with direct action.⁶ According to Miriam in Rahmiyati, political participation is the activity of a person or group of people to actively participate in political life by electing state leaders and influencing government policy directly or indirectly (public policy).⁷ In Febriansyah's research, he believes that political education has an important role in shaping people's understanding of their rights and obligations as citizens and also understanding the importance of maintaining integrity in general election activities. However, in reality, many people are less aware and do not have sufficient understanding of the urgency of these rights and obligations.⁸

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. To obtain the necessary data, a qualitative researcher must adhere to the principle of informant voluntariness when interacting with the informants or situations they study.⁹ In this research, we examine the training process carried out by the school of change. This research took place at the Change School Institute in the Winong area of Nganjuk City. The research subjects consisted of students, mass organizations and also politicians who had just served as members of parliament, and training

⁴ Sri Utaminingsih and Shella Rachmawaty, "The Importance of Political Education in Increasing Citizen Participation in Kuripan Village, Ciseeng, Bogor", *Abdi Laksana: Journal of Community Service*, Vol. 4, no. 1, (January: 2023).

⁵ Results of Interviews with Change School Resource Persons, (Nganjuk, Friday: January 24 2025)

⁶ Zulfikar, A., "Youth Participation in the Political Year", *Youth Participation in the Political Year. -: MOTHER-Rxiv*. (2018).

⁷ Rahmiyati Mii, et al., "Political Education in Increasing Political Participation".

⁸ Febriansyah Putra, et al., "Analysis of Hoaxes in Elections: A Review from a Political Education Perspective", *Naradik: Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, Vol. 2, no. 1, (2023), p. 97.

⁹ Gumilar Rusliwa Somantri, *Understanding Qualitative Methods*, *Social Humanities Research*, Vol. 9, no. 2 (2005). p. 62.

program managers. In collecting data, researchers used interview techniques, documentation and in-depth observation to explore the experiences and views of training participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Training Implementation at the School of Change

The research results show that the “School of Change” plays an important role in increasing participants’ understanding of political rights and obligations, discussion skills, and the ability to collaborate in decision making and budget planning. A participatory and contextual approach to training has proven to be effective in encouraging the active involvement of training participants. Participants also demonstrated increased critical awareness of social and political issues at local and national levels. Institutions that concentrate on governance studies, bureaucratic innovation, and community empowerment are called “schools of change.” The school focuses on a variety of core activities related to government, including school planning, advocacy, and training relevant to government topics. The planned activities that this institution wants to implement include political training and education which aims to increase public understanding of bureaucratic functions and government processes. This also includes efforts to empower strategic groups, for example farmer groups, so that they better understand their role in relations with the government. The description of the training implementation at the School of Change includes several important aspects designed to empower participants, especially the younger generation, in understanding and participating in the political process. The following are some key elements of training implementation:

1. Training Objectives: Training at the School of Change aims to increase participants’ political knowledge, so that they are not easily provoked by emotions and can understand the importance of political knowledge in everyday life. This includes training in planning, budget management, and advocacy.
2. Training Method: Training is carried out actively through study, discussion and brainstorming. Participants are invited to participate in discussions about current events, which helps them understand that each event is a valuable lesson in the political context.
3. Stakeholder Involvement: School of Change invites various parties from the government and related stakeholders to participate in the training. This aims to enable participants to learn directly about budget planning and management and how the community can participate in development.

4. Competency Improvement: Through this training, participants are expected to increase their competency in terms of budgeting and planning, as well as understand their rights to be involved in the development process.
5. Activity Routine: School of Change regularly holds study and discussion activities to continue to improve participants' understanding. These activities help create a dynamic and interactive learning environment.¹⁰

With this approach, the implementation of training at the Change School focuses on empowering participants to become active and informed citizens, and able to contribute to the political and development process in society, especially the Nganjuk Regency area.

The School of Change offers comprehensive, structured training in the areas of planning, budget management, and advocacy. The main aim of the training is to produce agents of change in the community who are competent and able to play an active role in regional development. Armed with the knowledge and skills acquired, participants are expected to be able to prepare effective plans, manage budgets transparently, and carry out effective advocacy for the benefit of the community. Ultimately, this training aims to create active citizens who are able to bring positive change to Nganjuk City. The training process is designed through several stages and preparations that have been carried out previously, including identifying participants' needs, providing material through interactive discussions, decision-making simulations, problem-solving workshops and evaluations. The overall success of the program depends on the initial stages of training, so that the training is effective and achieves the desired goals, the following steps must be taken:

First, is determining the training objectives, identifying needs and who the participants are and what will be conveyed in the training (for example, the purpose of the event is to increase political awareness or certain skills), so that a facilitator or presenter is needed that is tailored to the training needs. In this case, the change school uses an efficient method, namely by dividing each person's tasks according to the job disk that has been given to them.

Second, change school training planning includes; Material, method training, time and place as well as facilitator. Discussing the material here, the topic must be in accordance with the direction and objectives so that the results received by participants are in accordance with the expected results and participants can easily understand it. And for every material provided, the school change team provides not too much material, only a few core materials so that the methods that will be used can really be applied to participants in the training within the specified time duration. The

¹⁰ Results of Interview with Resource Persons at School of Change, Friday 24 January 2025, 14.00 WIB.

time and place will be carried out in accordance with the socialization schedule that has been made. Ensure the location is easy to access and reach by potential participants. Then bring in a facilitator who is competent in their field in accordance with the study or material that will be provided so that it is relevant to the topic that has been created which is the aim of the training implementation.

Third, Training logistics preparation and equipment include; Participant, Equipment and Accommodation, Materials and Resources. Ensure that all registered participants can attend by registering participants. Provide event rundown to participants for time, location and material to be discussed. Ensure that the training location has adequate facilities for presentations. such as projectors and screens, comfortable space. Prepare training materials to be used, such as guidebooks, paper, presentations, handouts, or online materials if available.

Fourth, *Training* Implementation, at this stage it is important to ensure that the training implementation runs according to the method that has been prepared and planned, such as managing the time used for all material running smoothly so that the material provided can be absorbed well and maximally without being rushed. Next, attract participants to be active and participate in the training by holding interactive discussions, questions and answers, simulations and providing time to exchange experiences.

Fifth, training evaluation After the implementation has been completed, the school change team evaluates and records important matters discussed together in the training, then observes participant involvement so that it can be seen whether the training has succeeded in achieving its objectives with the expected quality and runs as planned. At this stage the school of change uses a feedback discussion method with participants to listen directly to responses about the training that has been attended and direct practice with several participants who are members of community organizations to measure the results of the knowledge and skills gained from the training in daily social life.¹¹

Sixth, follow-up plan; This follow-up plan is a strategic step taken by the school to change several trainings that have been implemented, including:

- a. Continued development plan based on training evaluation to provide further training if necessary
- b. Providing materials to participants by providing access to materials that have been delivered via drive and guidebooks if available

¹¹ Results of Interviews and Observations in Change School Activities, Friday 24 January 2025. 16.00 WIB.

- c. Monitoring and support are provided to participants and community organizations to continue working and who wish to work by creating innovative political education, advocacy or workshops for the community within them by applying the knowledge and skills gained from the training. conducting studies on governance, advocacy, budget planning and other cadre activities.

By implementing these stages, the training held during the change will be more structured and effective in achieving the goal of forming active citizens.

School of Change Concept

Political education is emphasized on individual citizens. Because it emphasizes individual processes and autonomy, the (formal) political education model is carried out by providing sufficient space for citizens to express and express opinions. Methods used in political education, among others. *First*, an exchange of ideas (brainstorming), namely generating ideas suddenly, then starting a discussion based on those ideas. *Second*, buzz groups, where each participant turns to a colleague to the left or right, and then has a short one-on-one discussion. *Third*, special studies, where participation creates a description of how a problem that has arisen in the past is faced and responded to by society. *Fourth*, debate. In this case, participants take different positions from each other, act in opposition to an issue and put forward arguments that are different from others. *Fifth*, expectations, which is a method in which participants state what they hope for. Sixth, open discussion, where each participant can speak without interruption.¹²

The School of Change emphasizes several key aspects that are very important in forming a society that is politically aware and actively participates in the government process. Political education is considered fundamental for building public awareness regarding the budget, government and the development process, with the aim of producing good leaders through a transparent process and anticipating deviant behavior such as money politics. In addition, it is hoped that active participation from all stakeholders in politics is not only limited to general elections, but also includes a deeper understanding of the functions of government institutions and the DPR. Community empowerment is also a main focus, with emphasis on the importance of understanding the function of the bureaucracy and the role of the community in relations with the government, including strategic groups that can contribute to the government process. Honesty and good examples from leaders and government officials are also emphasized, so that they can set an example of positive political behavior. Thus, the main focus of the School of Change is

¹² Arlis Prayugo and Rahadi Budi Prayitno, "Political Education as a Learning Process to Form Political Awareness and the Role of Citizenship", *Edukasia: Journal of Education and Learning*, Vol. 3, no. 3, (2022). p. 431.

sustainable political education, community empowerment, and active participation from all parties in the governance process.¹³

A school of change can be defined as a change agent that focuses on innovation in political education, government oversight, and human resource development. The main goal of the School of Change is to empower society, especially the younger generation, to have a deep understanding of politics and be able to actively participate in the development process. The main focus of the school change concept includes several important aspects. The school concept for change in accordance with the vision and mission being built is:

1. Study of Governance and Bureaucratic Innovation, the school of change focuses on the study of governance and innovation in bureaucracy, as well as community empowerment. It includes core activities such as school planning and governance-related advocacy.
2. Community Empowerment: There is special attention to community empowerment to understand the functions of the bureaucracy, including farmer groups and strategic groups which play an important role in the relationship between government and society.
3. Political Education: Political education is considered very important to build public awareness about budgets, government and the development process. This involves a broader understanding of the function of government institutions and the DPR, not just during elections.
4. Stakeholder Participation: All stakeholders in the political process are expected to actively participate in political education, which must be carried out on an ongoing basis to create good leaders and prevent deviant behavior in politics.

Thus, the concept of a school of change emphasizes the importance of studying bureaucracy, community empowerment, comprehensive political education, and active participation from all parties. The School of Change seeks to create a society that is more intelligent and involved in the political process, as well as forming the character and knowledge needed to become active and responsible citizens. The training and development program at the School of Change is designed to empower the community, especially the younger generation, in understanding and participating in the political process.¹⁴ (change media director interview, January 2025)

Information for Active Citizens

Active citizens are citizens who not only fulfill their obligations as citizens, but are also actively involved in the process of state life. This involvement covers various cultural, social,

¹³ Interview Results with the Director of the Change School, Thursday 23 January 2025, 13.00 WIB.

¹⁴ Results of Interview with Resource Persons at School of Change, Thursday 23 January 2025, 14.00 WIB.

economic and political aspects. People across countries participate actively in defending and strengthening democracy, overseeing government policies, and contributing to decision-making processes that impact their own lives and their countries. They are not only aware of their rights and obligations as citizens, but they are also interested in participating in activities that benefit society. An active citizen can be defined as someone who is expected to use their abilities to improve the lives of their community through economic participation, volunteer work, public service, and other activities that improve the quality of life of the community.¹⁵

Those who not only have citizenship status, but are also proactively involved in various aspects of national and state life. They are aware of their rights and obligations and participate in developing and advancing their country, especially at the local level such as Nganjuk City. Through the School of Change, participants are expected to become active citizens who are able to identify problems in the Nganjuk Regency area. The characteristics of active citizens that we want to develop through this training are those who are caring, critical, initiative, collaborative and brave. They are able to become agents of change in their environment.

Political education is not only a matter of opinion, thought and opinion, but also leads to relationships with action. Therefore, that study politics it always takes place in relation to doing real. So, in this case political education always chooses the following elements. *First*, character formation through the attitude, confidence, character and personality of each person. *Second*, practices, actions and deeds towards increasing improvement (transcendence) for political and societal structures. *Third*, democratization in all areas of social society and life. *Fourth*, social criticism, and criticism of political errors (political fallacy) committed by the rulers and political party regimes. *Fifth*, continue with practical and real efforts to overcome conflicts caused by differences in interests and political ideology.¹⁶

Characteristics and Indicators of Active Citizenship

The future sustainability of the political system is very dependent on the success of going through the transition process to democracy that is stable, peaceful and free from violence.¹⁷ However, democracy is currently still relatively weak. Some of the problems that have emerged on various social networking media are as follows: (1) poor performance of political parties and

¹⁵ Wikipedia. (2024, july monday). *citizenship*. Retrieved January Friday, 2025, from Wikipedia the free encyclopedia: https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kewarganegaraan?utm_source=chatgpt.com

¹⁶ Adena Nurasih Siregar, et al., "Political Education as a Form of Increasing Participation and Awareness of Millennials in the 2024 Simultaneous Elections", General Ceria Indonesia Journal, Vol. 1, No. 2, (2023). p. 106.

¹⁷ Kris Nugroho, "Consolidation of Democracy", Society, Culture and Politics, Th. 14, no. 2, (2001).

representative institutions; (2) crisis of people's political participation; (3) control that emerges in democracy.

The political characteristics of Nganjuk residents can be seen through several aspects that reflect the challenges and potential in increasing political awareness. The political awareness of Nganjuk residents varies, with some having a good understanding of the importance of participation in general elections and government processes, while others are less informed and more focused on personal or material interests. One of the challenges faced is the influence of money politics, which reflects the tendency to choose leaders based on material lures, not quality or integrity. For this reason, participation in ongoing political education is very important, including an understanding of budgets, government and development processes, to encourage more active political participation. In addition, the behavior of leaders and government officials also influences the political characteristics of citizens, where the integrity and transparency of leaders can encourage greater participation. The involvement of community organizations in providing political education and raising awareness is also key in encouraging constructive political participation. Overall, the political characteristics of Nganjuk residents show the need for continuous political education to build a society that is more active, informed and participates in the political process.

Indicators that can influence Nganjuk residents to be active in the political process include the following important aspects: *First* The existence of those in power, such as the government and its officials, must provide clear and transparent information to the public, as well as provide sincere suggestions and input to build public trust. *Second* Political education that is effective and carried out on an ongoing basis is also very important, because it can increase people's understanding of the budget, government and the development process, thereby encouraging their involvement in the political process. *Third* The participation of community organizations also plays a major role in providing political education and constructive input, which in turn increases citizen awareness and participation. *Fourth* Behavior and integrity leaders and officials' the government also has a big influence, because if they show honesty and commitment to the interests of society, this will encourage citizens to participate more actively. Finally, awareness of rights and obligations in the government system is very important, because people who understand their rights and obligations tend to be more active. Education that emphasizes this understanding can increase citizens' political participation. By paying attention to these indicators, it is hoped that Nganjuk residents can more actively participate in political and government processes.

Success Factors for Schools of Change

Several factors that influence the success or failure in implementing training at the School of Change include: Support budget This is an important thing for the School of Change as a non-profit institution, indeed many activities are supported independently because the availability of funds is the most important thing in carrying out training activities effectively. In principle, the training is held simply with sufficient space and facilities, but the most important thing is that this does not reduce the meaning and results obtained. Apart from budget support, quality of materials and teachers also plays an important role in the success of training. Relevant material and competent teachers can increase participants' understanding. Level participant involvement in training also very influential. Participants who actively participate and interact during training will achieve better results compared to passive participants. The relevance of the training program to needs Local communities are also an important factor. Training that is appropriate to real conditions will be easier for participants to accept and implement. Final, good evaluation and feedback from training participants is very helpful in improving the program in the future. Without proper evaluation, it is difficult to know whether the training is effective or not. From these success factors, the School of Change can increase the chances of success in implementing training and achieving community empowerment goals more effectively. Political education is a process that is not instant, so all stake holders must start learning to provide honesty and open participation. The behavior of officials is the most important example for providing political education, including politicians, because educational politics is continuous and never ending. So, if the political elites do not provide good role models, society's way of thinking and behaving will become increasingly dangerous.¹⁸

The Impact of School Political Education on Change

Training has a significant impact on participants' participation in political life. First, training increase political literacy participants, so that they better understand the political process and realize the importance of involvement in elections and other democratic processes. In addition, there are more participants aware of obligations and their rights as citizens, which are important to form individuals who critical and active. Training also focuses on developing character and a sense of responsibility, encouraging participants to contribute to the development of society and the country. With better political knowledge, participants are expected to be able to manage their emotions and participate more rationally in political discussions. Lastly, the training provides an

¹⁸ Results of Interview with Resource Persons at School of Change, Thursday 23 January 2025, 11.33 WIB.

understanding of budget planning and management, so that participants feel they have the right to be involved in the development process and decision making that affects their lives. Overall, training plays an important role in creating more informed and engaged individuals, which in turn can strengthen democracy and civic participation. The following are some of the impacts that occur after training by the school of change:

1. Increasing Political Literacy, the training provided by the School of Change helps participants understand the political process better. People are becoming smarter and able to understand that politics is a long journey that requires knowledge and skills.
2. Awareness of Obligations Training participants become more aware of their obligations as citizens. They learn about the state's responsibility to the people and vice versa, which is important for building a critical and active society.
3. With a better understanding of politics, people are more motivated to actively participate in elections. They view elections as an opportunity to elect the best leaders and contribute to the democratic process.
4. Practical Skills Development Training from the school of change covering planning and budget management provides participants with practical skills that can be applied in everyday life. This allows them to be more involved in development and decision-making processes at the local level.

Understanding Political Interests trains participants to understand that in the world of politics there are no eternal opponents, only eternal interests. This helps them to be wiser in responding to political dynamics and not easily influence emotions. Overall, the training conducted by the School of Change contributes to increasing people's participation in political life, making them more active, informed and responsible citizens.

CONCLUSION

Political development training through the "School of Change" in Nganjuk City aims to form citizens who are active, critical and contribute to democratic life. This training process involves several stages, namely identifying participants' needs, providing material through interactive discussions, decision-making simulations, problem-solving workshops, and evaluation. The research results show that the "School of Change" plays an important role in increasing participants' understanding of political rights and obligations, discussion skills, and the ability to collaborate in decision making and budget planning. A participatory and contextual approach to training has proven effective in encouraging the active involvement of training participants, as well

as increasing critical awareness of social and political issues at local and national levels. This training was also characterized by broad stakeholder involvement, including the government and related stakeholders. Routinely, the School of Change holds study and discussion activities to continue to improve participants' understanding. Thus, this training becomes a relevant model of political education to create citizens who are able to play an active role in the development of a democratic society in the future. Apart from that, this training also focuses on empowering participants to become active and informed citizens, and able to contribute to the political and development process in society.

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