

The Social Education Role in Shaping Students' Global Awareness in Higher Education

¹Mila Hariani, ²Rahayu Mardikaningsih

¹Mayjen Sungkono University of Mojokerto, Indonesia

²Sunan Giri University of Surabaya, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 8 October 2021

Revised 17 November 2021

Accepted 22 December 2021

Key words:

Social education,
Global awareness,
Higher education,
Global curriculum,
Learning methods,
Social responsibility,
International cooperation.

ABSTRACT

Social education in higher education plays an important role in shaping students' global awareness, preparing them to become responsible global citizens. Global awareness includes an understanding of social, economic and environmental issues occurring in different parts of the world, as well as the ability to contribute to creating sustainable solutions. This study aims to analyze the factors that influence the effectiveness of social education to build students' global awareness, including the role of curriculum, learning methods, international experience, and support from lecturers and campus environment. The research method used is a literature study by reviewing various previous studies related to social education and global awareness in higher education. The results show that the integration of global perspectives in the curriculum, discussion-based learning methods and collaboration, as well as opportunities for involvement in international activities such as student exchanges and academic cooperation, contribute greatly to increasing students' global awareness. There are challenges in implementing social education, such as limited resources, lack of understanding of the urgency of global awareness, and structural barriers in the higher education system. Universities need to adopt more innovative strategies to strengthen social education, including increased global cooperation, training for educators, and developing more contextualized curricula. Students can be better prepared to face global challenges and contribute positively to community.

INTRODUCTION

The role of higher education is not only limited to the development of academic and professional expertise, but also to shape students' social awareness and global responsibility in an increasingly complex era of globalization. Social education serves as a means to enhance students' understanding of global issues, such as social inequality, environmental sustainability, human rights, and world peace. Students who are well educated on these issues will be more sensitive to social change and ready to take responsible action at the local and global level. Universities have a responsibility to ensure that their graduates are competent in their fields, have a broad perspective on global challenges and are able to contribute to creating sustainable solutions (Spring, 2018). The integration of social education in the higher education curriculum is crucial to build a generation that has global awareness and is able to adapt to diverse social and cultural dynamics (Penprase, 2018).

The implementation of social education in higher education faces various challenges, including the lack of a curriculum that leads to global awareness and students' low understanding of international issues that affect their lives. Many educational institutions still focus on theoretical approaches and do not sufficiently instill the values of real social engagement (Collaço, 2017). As a result, students often do not have a deep understanding of international challenges that can affect their lives, such as climate change, social inequality, or humanitarian crises occurring in various parts of the world. Not all lecturers have sufficient global perspectives to teach the material so that the transfer of global awareness values to students is less than optimal (Steiner & Posch, 2019). A more structured approach is needed in social education so that students can develop into socially sensitive global citizens who are able to act ethically and responsibly in various aspects of global life (Howlett et al., 2016).

* Corresponding author, email address: milamasroni@gmail.com

Although social education plays an important role in shaping students' global awareness, there are still various problems in its application in higher education. One of the main obstacles is the lack of effective integration in the curriculum. Many universities still consider social education as a complementary course, not as a core part of the learning process (Schleicher, 2020). This causes students to have less opportunity to understand the concepts of global awareness in depth (Gleason, 2018). The theory-centered learning approach without direct involvement in social activities is also a major obstacle. As a result, students find it difficult to relate theory to the global realities they face on a daily basis (Franco et al., 2019).

Another problem arises in terms of the readiness of the teaching staff. Not all lecturers have a deep understanding of global issues and how to effectively teach them to students (Bourn, 2021). The lack of training for educators to develop teaching methods based on global awareness causes the delivery of material to be less than optimal. The success of social education largely depends on how educators are able to connect theory with real conditions in the international world (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Kromydas (2017) emphasized that educators who not given adequate training, then social education will be difficult to have a significant impact on students.

There are also external constraints that affect the effectiveness of social education to build students' global awareness. One of them is the difference in social and cultural contexts in various countries that make social education approaches cannot be uniformed. Universities in developed countries tend to have more access to global resources and networks compared to universities in developing countries. As a result, students in some regions may not get the same opportunities to develop their global perspective. More inclusive efforts are needed so that all students, without exception, can gain learning experiences that can enrich their understanding of global social issues.

Social education in higher education has a very important role to shape students into individuals who have global awareness and social responsibility. Borders between countries are increasingly blurred in the current era of globalization due to the rapid development of technology and communication. Students are not only expected to have high academic competence, but also to have a broad understanding of global issues such as climate change, gender equality, poverty, and human rights (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2021). Students can understand the relationship between social phenomena in various parts of the world and develop an attitude of empathy and responsibility to face global problems with social education integrated in the curriculum.

The urgency of social education to build global awareness is increasing given the many social challenges faced by today's youth. Universities have a responsibility to equip students with critical thinking skills, cross-cultural communication, and adaptability in various international contexts (Banks, 2006). Without adequate social education, students tend to have limited perspectives on world problems and are less able to contribute effectively to building a more inclusive and equitable community. Strengthening social education in higher education is an urgent need so that students can play an active role in creating positive changes at the local and global levels.

The purpose of this study is to analyze how social education in higher education can shape students' global awareness and prepare them to be responsible global citizens. This research also aims to identify the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of social education to increase students' global awareness. These factors include aspects of the curriculum, learning methods, and student involvement in various social and international activities. This research is expected to provide insights for educational institutions to design more effective strategies to instill global values in students.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is a literature study approach or literature review. The literature study was chosen because it allows researchers to collect and analyze various relevant scientific sources regarding social education and the development of global awareness in higher education. According to Creswell (2014), this approach is effective for identifying key concepts, theories, and trends in previous research so as to provide an understanding of the topic under review.

The data sources used in this research come from scientific journals, academic books, research reports, and official documents from educational institutions and international organizations. The data obtained was then analyzed using the descriptive analysis method, in which researchers grouped, compared, and compiled findings from various literatures to obtain relevant conclusions. According to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a valid technique for understanding social phenomena through interpretation of available data.

Data validity is obtained through source triangulation, namely by comparing various references that are credible and reliable. This step is taken to ensure that the research results have a strong and reliable theoretical foundation. This research provides an overview of the role of social education to build students' global awareness and offers recommendations for universities to improve the effectiveness of their social education programs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Social Education to Shape Students' Global Awareness

Social education in higher education plays an important role in shaping students' global awareness. Global awareness refers to an individual's understanding of global issues, cultural diversity, and the interconnectedness of the world's communities (Merryfield, 2008). Social education helps students to understand the interconnections between different communities in the world, which broadens their horizons on how global events can affect local communities and vice versa. Through a curriculum designed to include a global perspective, students can develop a broader understanding of the challenges facing global society, such as social inequality, climate change, and human rights (Banks, 2006). Such a curriculum allows students to develop critical thinking skills about important issues and their relevance in the social and political context of the world. Social education serves as an effective tool to build global awareness among students.

One of the ways social education shapes global awareness is through the integration of courses that address international issues. Courses that emphasize international relations, global policy, and environmental sustainability can help students understand the complexities of the modern world (Reimers, 2020). A curriculum that covers international topics gives students greater insight into how countries interact in areas such as economics, politics and the environment. This allows students to understand global dynamics and the interconnectedness of countries. Discussion-based learning methods and case studies from various countries allow students to see a problem from various perspectives so that they are more critical to analyze global issues (Noddings, 2005). Students can develop sharper critical thinking skills, allowing them to understand global challenges more deeply. This method also teaches students to appreciate the diversity of cultures and perspectives in dealing with the complex issues facing the world today.

Participation in student exchange activities and international cooperation is also an important element in shaping global awareness. Students can experience first-hand different cultures and understand the social and economic challenges faced by other countries (Deardorff, 2009). Cross-cultural experiences allow students to develop a broader perspective on the world and make them more sensitive to global issues. This experience increased their empathy and sense of responsibility as global citizens, while broadening their horizons on collaborative solutions that can be applied in a global context (Andreotti, 2011).

Social education in higher education also plays a role in developing intercultural communication skills that are essential in the era of globalization. The ability to communicate effectively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds is essential in the modern world of work (Byram, 2012). This skill focuses not only on the ability to speak multiple languages, but also on a deep understanding of different cultural values, norms and perspectives. Students can more easily adapt and work in a multicultural international environment by understanding cultural differences and respecting other perspectives (Schattle, 2008). A deeper understanding of different cultural values enables students to respond to these differences in a more sensitive and thoughtful manner. This ability is very useful, not only in social interactions, but also in the world of work which increasingly includes various cultures and backgrounds. The intercultural communication skills honed make students not only ready to work in international teams, but also contribute to creating a more inclusive and collaborative environment on a global level.

There are still challenges in implementing social education oriented towards global awareness. Some higher education institutions still have curricula that do not emphasize aspects of globalization and cultural diversity (Knight, 2008). Although social education is supposed to cover global topics, many universities still focus on local or national aspects, without giving enough space to understand the dynamics of the wider world. As a result, students do not always have a deep understanding of global issues that affect their lives and the world as a whole. Limited access to international programs for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds is a barrier to an inclusive global experience (Marginson, 2018). Not all students, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, have the opportunity to engage in international student exchange or internship programs. This limited access to international experiences creates a gap between those who can experience global life first-hand and those who do not have the opportunity. There is a need for policies that support inclusivity in global-based social education.

The effectiveness of social education to build global awareness also depends on students' involvement in social activities and organizations that support human values. Activities such as international volunteering, global seminars, and collaboration with non-governmental organizations can provide practical insights into world issues (Kurniawan & Darmawan, 2021). Students are able to understand the theory, as well as apply it in real life.

Overall, social education in higher education contributes greatly to shaping students who have global awareness and responsibility as global citizens. Opportunities to engage in international experiences, as well as the development of intercultural communication skills with a more inclusive curriculum approach, students can be better prepared for the global challenges of the future (Kromydas, 2017). Higher education institutions need to continue to improve the quality of social education in order to create a generation that is more concerned about global problems and ready to provide real solutions.

Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Social Education for Building Global Awareness

Social education in higher education has an important role in building students' global awareness, but its effectiveness is affected by various factors. One of the main factors is the curriculum implemented. A curriculum that covers global issues such as human rights, sustainability, and social justice will give students a broader insight into the world (Knight, 2008). A curriculum that integrates these topics allows students to understand the connections between local and global issues and gives them the tools to analyze larger issues. Universities that integrate interdisciplinary learning and real-world experiences in their curriculum tend to be more successful in shaping students' global awareness. The interdisciplinary approach allows students to look at an issue from various perspectives, be it from the fields of social science, politics, economics, or the environment. This enriches their understanding of the complexity of global issues and how effective solutions often involve multiple disciplines.

The teaching methods used also affect the effectiveness of social education. Experiential learning approaches, such as global case studies, cross-cultural collaborative projects and student exchange programs, can enhance students' understanding of different world perspectives (Deardorff, 2009). This hands-on experience allows students to not only learn theory, but also apply their knowledge in a broader context. Interactive methods involving critical discussion and reflection also help students develop a more inclusive and responsible mindset towards global issues. In-depth discussions and reflections allow students to analyze problems from various perspectives, while encouraging them to question existing assumptions. Teaching methods that incorporate these elements also help students to develop communication and collaboration skills that are essential in dealing with complex global issues.

The diversity of the campus environment is another factor that contributes to shaping students' global awareness. Campuses that have students and lecturers from various cultural backgrounds allow for a wider exchange of ideas (Altbach & Knight, 2019). This diversity allows for interactions that enrich students' learning experience. Students can better understand social and cultural differences, which in turn increases their awareness of global issues. Students not only learn about global theories or concepts, but also experience social and cultural differences first-hand. The exchange of ideas that occurs in lectures, seminars, and social activities allows students to see problems from various perspectives. This encourages them to be more open and appreciative of differences, and to realize that global issues such as social inequality, climate change, and humanitarian crises affect people in different ways depending on their local and cultural contexts.

The role of the lecturer to provide insight and guidance is also crucial. Lecturers who have a global perspective and international experience can provide a broader understanding to students. They can help students to relate the theories taught to real global phenomena, so that students not only learn concepts in the abstract, but also understand how they are applied in relevant international contexts. Lecturers with an international background can also share personal experiences, real cases, or current research related to global issues, which can make learning more vivid and relevant. According to Marginson (2018), lecturers who are able to effectively connect theories with global phenomena will increase students' awareness of world realities. Lecturers who act as discussion facilitators, encouraging students to think critically and explore various perspectives, will help create an environment that supports the development of students' global understanding.

Access to technology and media is also a factor that affects the effectiveness of social education to build global awareness. Students who have access to global information sources can more easily understand world events, global trends, and social impacts that occur in various countries (Selwyn, 2019). Technology makes it easy for students to access the latest news, research reports, and analysis on global issues, such as climate change, social inequality, and humanitarian crises. This access allows them to stay up-to-date with global developments and provides greater insight into the challenges facing the international community. The use of technology in learning, such as e-learning and digital platforms, also allows students to engage in cross-country discussions more actively.

Student involvement in extracurricular activities and social organizations also contributes to increasing global awareness. Activities such as United Nations session simulations, international volunteer programs, and humanitarian projects give students hands-on experience to understand and respond to global issues (Hudson & Hudson, 2018). Active participation in organizations oriented towards social change can shape students' empathy and responsibility towards the global community (Kromydas, 2017). Students learn how international organizations and individuals can work together to provide solutions to social problems. They also experience first-hand the positive impact of their involvement, which builds a deeper awareness and understanding of the importance of contributing to the global community.

Policy support from higher education institutions to strengthen social education is also an influential factor. Universities that have inclusive policies and support internationalization programs tend to be more successful in building students' global awareness (Knight, 2008). This policy includes student exchange opportunities, international research collaboration, and faculty capacity building in global education. Such policies can ensure that university graduates are not only ready to work in the local market, but also adapt to global challenges and contribute to sustainable development at the international level.

The social and cultural environment in which students are raised also influences how they receive and respond to social education in higher education. Students who come from environments that are more open to diversity tend to adopt a global perspective more quickly than those who grow up in more homogenous environments (Maringe & Foskett, 2019). Students' social background is one aspect that needs to be considered in social education.

Students' critical thinking skills are also an important element in the effectiveness of social education. Successful social education is one that is able to encourage students to think critically about the information received, both from the media and academic sources (Paul & Elder, 2019). Students can assess an issue from various points of view before forming an opinion or taking action.

Economic factors also affect the effectiveness of social education. Students from more stable economic backgrounds tend to have more opportunities to participate in international programs, global seminars, or student exchanges, all of which can enhance their understanding of the global world (Rizvi & Lingard, 2018). This opportunity is more limited for students from economically challenged families.

The government's role in supporting social education in higher education is crucial to ensure that higher education policies can create graduates who have global awareness and social responsibility. National policies that support character education and global awareness in the higher education curriculum can strengthen the effective implementation of social education. Regulations that encourage international collaboration and recognition of social education can increase student engagement in global issues. This regulation not only encourages educational institutions to introduce social values and cultural diversity, but also ensures that students have the necessary competencies to contribute on a global scale. Understanding the factors that influence the effectiveness of social education to build students' global awareness, universities can design better strategies to create graduates who are ready to face the challenges of a globalized world.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that social education in higher education has a significant role in shaping students' global awareness. Higher education is not only a place to acquire academic knowledge, but also an environment that allows students to understand global issues, increase empathy, and develop critical attitudes and responsibilities as global citizens. Factors such as a curriculum integrated with a global perspective, interactive learning methods, and international experiences, whether through student exchanges or academic cooperation, contribute greatly to the effectiveness of social education to create global awareness. Support from lecturers, an inclusive campus environment, and access to media and information technology are important elements to strengthen students' understanding of global social issues.

There are various challenges in the implementation of social education in higher education, such as the lack of a global-based curriculum, limited resources, and resistance from some parties who have not realized the urgency of global awareness in the world of education. Concrete steps are needed to strengthen social education, such as curriculum development that is more contextual and relevant to global issues, training for educators to be able to deliver material with a more effective approach, and increasing cooperation between universities on an international scale. Students are expected to develop into individuals who have academic competence, and have high social awareness so that they can contribute to creating a more just, harmonious and sustainable world.

REFERENCES

- Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2019). The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(3), 290-305.
- Andreotti, V. (2011). *Actionable Postcolonial Theory in Education*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Banks, J. A. (2006). *Diversity and Citizenship Education: Global Perspectives*. Jossey-Bass.
- Bourn, D. (2021). *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Global Education and Learning*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40.
- Byram, M. (2012). Language Awareness and (Critical) Cultural Awareness-Relationships, Comparisons and Contrasts. *Language Awareness*, 21(1-2), 5-13.736.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Collaço, C. M. (2017). Increasing Student Engagement in Higher Education. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 17(4), 40-47.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2009). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. SAGE Publications.
- Franco, I., Saito, O., Vaughter, P., Whereat, J., Kanie, N., & Takemoto, K. (2019). Higher Education for Sustainable Development: Actioning the Global Goals in Policy, Curriculum and Practice. *Sustainability Science*, 14(6), 1621-1642.
- Gleason, N. W. (2018). *Higher Education in the Era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Springer Nature.
- Howlett, C., Ferreira, J. A., & Blomfield, J. (2016). Teaching Sustainable Development in Higher Education: Building Critical, Reflective Thinkers Through an Interdisciplinary Approach. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 17(3), 305-321.
- Hudson, P., & Hudson, S. (2018). *Education for Global Citizenship: A Practical Guide for Schools*. Routledge.
- Knight, J. (2008). *Higher Education in Turmoil: The Changing World of Internationalization*. Sense Publishers.
- Kromydas, T. (2017). Rethinking Higher Education and its Relationship with Social Inequalities: Past Knowledge, Present State and Future Potential. *Palgrave Communications*, 3(1), 1-12.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language Teacher Education for a Global Society: A Modular Model for Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, and Seeing*. Routledge.
- Kurniawan, Y., & D. Darmawan. (2021). The Adaptive Learning Effect on Individual and Collecting Learning. *Journal of Social Science Studies*, 1(1), 93 - 98.
- Marginson, S. (2018). Higher Education, Economic Inequality and Social Mobility: Implications for Emerging Asia. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 63, 4-11.
- Maringe, F., & Foskett, N. (2019). *Globalization and Internationalization in Higher Education: Theoretical, Strategic and Management Perspectives*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Merryfield, M. M. (2008). Scaffolding Social Studies for Global Awareness. *Social Education*, 72(7), 363-366.
- Noddings, N. (2005). *Educating Citizens for Global Awareness*. Teachers College Press.
- O'Connor, K., & Zeichner, K. (2021). *Preparing Teachers for Global Citizenship Education: Challenges and Possibilities*. Routledge.
- Paul, R., & Elder, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Professional and Personal Life*. Pearson.
- Penprase, B. E. (2018). The Fourth Industrial Revolution and Higher Education. *Higher Education in the Era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution*, 10(1), 978-981.
- Reimers, F. M. (2020). *Educating Students to Improve the World*. Springer.
- Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2018). *Globalizing Education Policy*. Routledge.
- Schattle, H. (2008). *The Practices of Global Citizenship*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Schleicher, A. (2020). *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing our Youth to Engage the World*. OECD Publishing.
- Selwyn, N. (2019). *Digital Technology and Education: Rethinking Education in the Digital Age*. Routledge.
- Spring, J. (2018). *Globalization of Education: An Introduction*. Routledge.
- Steiner, G., & Posch, A. (2019). Higher Education for Sustainable Development: Students' Perspectives on Learning for Sustainability. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 232, 197-1406.