



Strengthening Constitutional Awareness and National Identity among Indonesian Youth in Malaysia through Community-Based Legal Education

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ABSTRAK

The increasing number of Indonesian youth living abroad has created challenges in strengthening constitutional awareness and national identity within multicultural environments. This community service program aimed to enhance legal literacy and civic responsibility through community-based constitutional education at Sanggar Bimbingan At-Tanzil, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The program employed a participatory approach involving needs assessment, interactive legal education, case-based discussions, reflective learning, and program evaluation. The activities focused on improving participants' understanding of constitutional principles, citizens' rights and obligations, legal awareness, and national values. The results demonstrated increased participant engagement, improved constitutional knowledge, stronger awareness of civic responsibilities, and greater commitment to maintaining Indonesian national identity while living abroad. This program highlights that participatory legal education is an effective strategy for strengthening constitutional literacy, fostering responsible citizenship, and promoting sustainable community empowerment among Indonesian youth in international settings.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, international mobility, and the rapid development of digital communication have transformed the interaction patterns of young people across national borders. Indonesian youth who pursue education, employment, or community activities abroad face increasingly complex social, cultural, and legal environments. Besides adapting to multicultural societies, they are expected to maintain constitutional awareness, legal obedience, and national identity as Indonesian citizens. Constitutional education therefore plays an important role in developing responsible citizens who understand their constitutional rights and obligations while strengthening democratic values and respect for the rule of law. Civic education is recognized as a strategic instrument for preparing citizens capable of participating actively in democratic society while maintaining national cohesion amid globalization. (Kurniyawan & Moeslim, 2024; Prakoso et al., 2024)

Constitutional literacy is not merely knowledge of legal provisions but also the ability to understand, interpret, and apply constitutional principles in everyday life. A sound understanding of constitutional values contributes to increased legal awareness, civic participation, and responsible citizenship. Conversely, inadequate constitutional literacy may reduce civic engagement and weaken citizens' commitment to democratic principles and national identity. Previous studies have emphasized that citizenship education and constitutional learning should encourage critical thinking, democratic attitudes, and active participation rather than focusing solely on memorizing legal concepts. (Purwantiningsih & Kusnadi, 2024; Kurniyawan & Moeslim, 2024)

Recent studies in Indonesia further demonstrate that strengthening civic literacy through innovative educational approaches significantly improves legal awareness and democratic participation among young people. Integrating digital literacy, civic education, and contextual learning enables participants to understand constitutional values more effectively and apply them in social life. Community-based legal education has also been shown to strengthen civic competence because participants are encouraged to discuss actual legal issues and reflect on their responsibilities as citizens through participatory learning methods. (Prakoso et al., 2024; Kurniyawan & Moeslim, 2024; Purwantiningsih & Kusnadi, 2024)

The need for constitutional education becomes even more relevant among Indonesian communities living abroad. Indonesian migrant communities and students frequently interact with different legal systems, cultural norms, and public policies that require adequate knowledge of both their constitutional rights as Indonesian citizens and their responsibilities within the host country. However, community-based constitutional education programs for Indonesian diaspora remain relatively limited, particularly those integrating legal literacy with the strengthening of national identity and civic responsibility. This condition may gradually reduce constitutional awareness and emotional attachment to Indonesian national values if continuous educational interventions are unavailable. (Prakoso et al., 2024; Purwantiningsih & Kusnadi, 2024)

Responding to these challenges, the community service program was implemented at Sanggar Bimbingan At-Tanzil, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, an educational institution serving Indonesian communities. The program adopted a participatory community empowerment approach through interactive constitutional education, legal discussions, case-based learning, and civic reflection. Unlike conventional legal counseling, this program emphasized active participation, collaborative learning, and contextual problem-solving to enable participants to understand constitutional principles while strengthening their sense of nationalism and civic responsibility within a multicultural environment. This approach is consistent with recent developments in civic education that encourage experiential learning and value internalization as effective strategies for developing democratic citizenship. (Kurniyawan & Moeslim, 2024; Prakoso et al., 2024)

The novelty of this community service lies in integrating constitutional education, legal literacy, civic engagement, and nationalism strengthening within an international community setting involving Indonesian youth living abroad. Previous community service activities have generally focused either on legal awareness or civic education separately, whereas this program combines both dimensions through a participatory community empowerment model. Therefore, this community service aims to strengthen constitutional awareness, improve legal literacy, reinforce national identity, and encourage civic responsibility among Indonesian youth in Malaysia. The outcomes are expected to provide a practical model for sustainable constitutional education that may be replicated in other Indonesian diaspora communities.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

This community service program employed a Community-Based Participatory Approach (CBPA), which emphasizes active community involvement throughout the planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up stages of the program. This approach was selected because participatory legal education encourages participants to become active learners who construct legal understanding through dialogue, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving rather than passively receiving information. Previous studies have shown that community participation significantly enhances legal awareness and civic responsibility because participants are directly involved in identifying legal issues and developing practical solutions relevant to their social context (Damayanti et al., 2024; Donny Seta, 2024).

The program was conducted at Sanggar Bimbingan At-Tanzil, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, an educational institution that serves Indonesian migrant communities through educational, cultural, and character-development activities. The participants consisted of Indonesian youth who actively attended learning activities at the institution and were purposively selected because they represent a strategic group in strengthening constitutional awareness, legal literacy, and civic responsibility within Indonesian diaspora communities. This selection is consistent with previous studies emphasizing that legal education programs are more effective when implemented among communities that

directly experience social and legal challenges within multicultural environments (Hadinata, 2023; Tjeppey, 2021).

Prior to the implementation, the service team conducted a preliminary needs assessment through direct observation, informal interviews with community leaders, and discussions with participants to identify problems related to constitutional understanding, legal awareness, and civic responsibility. The assessment revealed that participants had limited opportunities to receive structured constitutional education despite frequently interacting with different legal systems and multicultural social environments. Based on these findings, educational materials were developed covering constitutional principles, citizens' rights and obligations, legal awareness, democratic values, and national identity. Conducting a needs assessment before implementing community education programs is considered essential because educational interventions become more contextual and responsive to community needs (Purwantiningsih & Kusnadi, 2024; Rojak, 2021).

The educational activities were implemented through interactive lectures, group discussions, case-based learning, question-and-answer sessions, and reflective learning. Participants were encouraged to analyze constitutional issues frequently encountered by Indonesian citizens living abroad, discuss legal solutions, and relate constitutional principles to their daily experiences. Rather than emphasizing theoretical legal concepts, facilitators adopted participatory learning strategies that promoted critical thinking, collaborative learning, and civic participation. This instructional approach has been recognized as an effective method for improving legal literacy because experiential learning enables participants to internalize legal values and develop stronger civic engagement (Damayanti et al., 2024; Kurniyawan & Tanshzil, 2024).

Program evaluation was conducted using qualitative methods through participant observation, field documentation, reflective discussions, and participant feedback collected after each educational session. The evaluation focused on participants' engagement during activities, their understanding of constitutional concepts, awareness of legal rights and obligations, and their willingness to apply constitutional values in everyday life. The qualitative findings were analyzed descriptively by comparing participants' responses before and after the educational intervention based on observations and reflections. Similar evaluation methods have been widely recommended in community legal education because they provide comprehensive insights into behavioral change, legal awareness, and community empowerment outcomes (Febrianty et al., 2025; Hadinata, 2023).

Overall, the implementation strategy combined participatory legal education, constitutional literacy, and community empowerment within an international setting involving Indonesian youth in Malaysia. This integrated approach not only enhanced participants' understanding of constitutional principles but also strengthened civic responsibility, national identity, and legal awareness through meaningful community participation. Such an approach aligns with contemporary community empowerment models that emphasize legal education as a sustainable strategy for fostering responsible citizenship and

strengthening democratic participation (Donny Seta, 2024; Makaruku et al., 2026).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The initial stage of the community service program focused on identifying the educational needs and legal awareness of Indonesian youth participating in learning activities at Sanggar Bimbingan At-Tanzil, Kuala Lumpur. Preliminary observations and informal discussions with community coordinators indicated that although participants demonstrated strong enthusiasm toward educational activities, their understanding of constitutional principles, citizens' rights and obligations, and legal protection for Indonesian citizens living abroad remained limited. Most participants had never participated in structured constitutional education programs and possessed only general knowledge regarding Indonesian constitutional values.

Furthermore, participants experienced challenges in understanding the relationship between constitutional rights, civic responsibilities, and their daily lives as members of the Indonesian diaspora. Living within a multicultural environment requires not only adaptation to the legal system of the host country but also continuous awareness of Indonesian constitutional values and national identity. Similar findings have been reported by previous studies, which indicate that legal awareness among young citizens can be strengthened through contextual civic education that combines legal literacy with participatory learning approaches (Damayanti et al., 2024; Hadinata, 2023).

The results of this needs assessment became the basis for designing educational materials emphasizing constitutional literacy, civic responsibility, and nationalism through interactive learning activities that addressed participants' real-life experiences. Following the needs assessment, the community service team implemented constitutional education using a participatory learning approach. Educational activities combined short lectures, interactive discussions, case-based learning, and reflective dialogue to encourage participants to actively explore constitutional values and their application in everyday situations. Rather than emphasizing theoretical legal concepts alone, facilitators encouraged participants to discuss practical legal issues frequently encountered by Indonesian citizens living abroad, including citizenship rights, immigration regulations, ethical behavior, and civic participation.

The interactive learning environment created meaningful opportunities for participants to express opinions, ask questions, and exchange experiences with facilitators and fellow participants. Such collaborative learning significantly increased participant engagement and encouraged critical reflection on constitutional values and responsible citizenship. This finding supports previous studies demonstrating that participatory legal education contributes to stronger legal awareness and civic competence through active community involvement (Donny Seta, 2024; Tjeppey, 2021).

Figure 1. Delivery of constitutional education materials to Indonesian youth at Sanggar Bimbingan At-Tanzil, Kuala Lumpur.



The learning process showed high participant enthusiasm throughout the implementation of the program. Participants actively engaged in discussions regarding constitutional rights, democratic values, legal obligations, and national identity. Interactive case discussions enabled participants to analyze legal situations relevant to Indonesian citizens living abroad and to formulate appropriate legal and ethical responses.

Collaborative learning also encouraged participants to compare their previous understanding with newly acquired constitutional knowledge. This reflective process promoted critical thinking and strengthened awareness that constitutional principles should guide individual behavior regardless of geographical location. Similar educational outcomes have been reported in previous community legal education programs where experiential learning successfully enhanced participants' civic engagement and legal awareness (Febrianty et al., 2025).

Figure 2. Interactive discussion and case-based learning during constitutional education activities.



Qualitative evaluation demonstrated noticeable improvements in participants' constitutional understanding, civic responsibility, and national identity following the educational intervention. Participants became more confident in explaining constitutional rights and obligations, demonstrated greater awareness of legal compliance, and expressed stronger commitment to maintaining Indonesian national identity while living abroad.

Facilitators also observed increased participation during discussions, improved analytical skills when responding to constitutional case studies, and greater willingness to disseminate constitutional knowledge within their communities. These findings indicate that community-based constitutional education not only improves legal literacy but also strengthens participants' confidence in becoming responsible citizens and positive representatives of Indonesia within multicultural societies.

Figure 3. Participants actively engaged in reflection and constitutional literacy activities.



The findings of this community service demonstrate that participatory constitutional education represents an effective strategy for strengthening constitutional awareness and civic responsibility among Indonesian youth living abroad. By integrating interactive learning, legal discussions, and community participation, the program created a meaningful educational experience that encouraged participants to connect constitutional principles with their everyday social realities.

The improvement in participants' legal awareness supports the argument that constitutional literacy should not be limited to formal education but should also be promoted through community-based educational initiatives. Previous studies have similarly concluded that participatory legal education increases civic competence, legal compliance, and democratic participation because participants actively construct knowledge through discussion and reflection rather than passive learning (Damayanti et al., 2024; Donny Setha, 2024).

Moreover, strengthening national identity emerged as one of the most important outcomes of the program. Living within multicultural environments

requires Indonesian youth not only to respect the legal system of the host country but also to preserve their constitutional identity and civic values as Indonesian citizens. The integration of constitutional education with community empowerment therefore represents a sustainable educational model that can be replicated among Indonesian diaspora communities in other countries. This finding is consistent with previous research emphasizing that legal literacy, civic engagement, and community participation collectively contribute to the development of responsible citizenship and social cohesion (Purwantiningsih & Kusnadi, 2024; Hadinata, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This community service demonstrated that community-based constitutional education effectively strengthened constitutional awareness, legal literacy, civic responsibility, and national identity among Indonesian youth at Sanggar Bimbingan At-Tanzil, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Through participatory learning strategies, including interactive lectures, case-based discussions, and reflective learning, participants gained a better understanding of constitutional principles, citizens' rights and obligations, and the importance of preserving Indonesian national identity while living in a multicultural environment. The program also enhanced participant engagement, encouraged critical thinking, and promoted a stronger commitment to responsible citizenship. These findings indicate that integrating constitutional education with community empowerment provides an effective and sustainable approach to fostering civic competence among Indonesian diaspora communities.

To maximize the long-term impact of this initiative, future community service programs should strengthen collaboration among higher education institutions, Indonesian representative offices, and community organizations in organizing sustainable constitutional education programs for Indonesian communities abroad. The integration of digital learning platforms, continuous mentoring, and periodic civic education activities is recommended to reinforce legal awareness and civic participation. Furthermore, this community-based constitutional education model may be adapted and implemented in other Indonesian diaspora communities to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) through the promotion of constitutional literacy, democratic values, and responsible citizenship.

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