

The Role of Character Education in Public Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Character education is a human activity in which there is an educational action effort whose purpose is for the next generation of the nation. At the age of elementary school children's growth and development becomes the most important part of their life. Because a child at that age is likened to a white sheet of paper, the child will accommodate the various information he gets and then will save all the strokes that are written in his memory according to what he gets. This research article aims to get an overview of how teacher behavior and character education can improve the quality of education in Indonesia, especially at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo. The method used is a qualitative method and the technique used is a type of literature review research. The subjects in this study were teachers and students, the objects in this study were character education in elementary schools. Character education aims to improve the quality of implementation and results of education in schools that lead to the achievement of the formation of character and noble character of students as a whole.

Keywords: character education, elementary school students



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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important pillar in the development of children's cognition. Since the beginning of human civilization, education has emerged there. Education is a sequence in the way of acquiring knowledge and self-improvement by humans continuously or continuously. Humans are not immune from limitations and deficiencies so that to complete what they have, humans must process, one of which is through the acquisition of knowledge through education. Education that humans get is not only through formal education but the initial education that humans get is through the family environment and the community environment.

(Hasanah et al., 2022) Education as defined in article 1, paragraph 1 of Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states "Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed by himself, society, nation and state" (Depdiknas, 2003).

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Character is a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and work together, both within the family, community, nation and state. Character can also be called a set of values that underlies thoughts, attitudes and behaviors carried out by individuals with character, who are individuals who can make decisions and are ready to take responsibility for the consequences of the decisions they make. (Subur, 2015).

Character education in elementary schools is one of instilling and forming the character of students, because they are still in a period of development. Therefore the role of the teacher is very important in terms of shaping the character of students, which can be carried out through the learning process in class. This is because it is the teachers who directly deal with students while at school. Teachers must be able to provide examples and role models for students in good behavior, because if this is not the case, students will easily imitate what they see.

Character education is a system of instilling character values in school members which includes components of knowledge, intelligence or will, and actions to implement these values. According to Elkind and Sweet (2004), character education is defined as follows: *"character education is a deliberate effort to help people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values. When we think about the kind of character we want for our children, it is clear that we want them to be able to judge what is right, care deeply about what is right, and then do what they believe to be right, even the face of pressure from without and attachment from within"*.

Samani (2012) argues that the presence of character education is a serious effort in helping someone to understand, care about, and act with a core foundation of ethical and ethical values (p.65). the same as Samani (2012) states that character education is a process of giving demands and reinforcement to students to become whole human beings with character in the dimensions.

of thought, body, heart, and feeling and intention (p.66). According to the Ministry of National Education (2012: 4) character education is interpreted as education that develops national character in students so that they have values and character as their own character, apply values in his life, as a member of society, and as a citizen religious, nationalist, productive and creative.

(Pertiwi et al., 2019) Amri (8) argues that with character education the quality and results of education in every school always lead to the formation of character and have noble morals in a perfect and balanced manner. In line with this understanding (Pertiwi et al., 2019) Barnawi (9) states that the purpose of character education is to create people who have knowledge and also have positive characters. The expected character is not uprooted from the original Indonesian culture as a national embodiment and full of religious (religious) content.

Character building and character education is a must because education not only makes students smart, they also have good manners and manners, so that their existence as members of society becomes meaningful both for themselves and for others. The easiest character building to do is when children are still in elementary school. That is why the government prioritizes character education in elementary schools. This does not mean that other levels of education do not receive attention, but only the portions are different (Ministry of National Education, 2010).

Suryadi (2013: 96) explains that the main cause of the moral and character crisis among students, graduate educators, even educator managers is the occurrence of dichotomization, namely the strict separation between intellectual education on the one hand and value education on the other. Even if based on opinion.

Ajat Sudrajat and Ari Wibowo (2013) explain that to build the character of school students it is necessary to implement three programs, namely (1) quality school culture which includes input quality, academic quality, and non-academic quality, (2) Islamic school culture with a focus on instilling character religious, openness, caring, togetherness, and cooperation, (3) a culture of discipline with a focus on cultivating character, including being religious.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The novelty in this study combines several factors that influence the process of forming a child's character which is complemented by an explanation of the importance of the role of character in a nation. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence the formation of children's character and to know the importance of cultivating character in children and the impact of the failure of character education on children. This research is a library research (library research).

Data analysis begins with collection, grouping, verification, analysis, and related data in the processed data source. From various literature findings, the author finally chose 15 research articles which

were combined and considered relevant to the topic of discussion which will be concluded in the Literature Review.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Character Building

In general, education is an interaction between the factors involved in it in order to achieve educational goals. The interaction of these factors can clearly be witnessed in the learning process, namely when educators teach values, knowledge, and skills to students, while students receive the teaching. The goal of the intellectual education process for students is to supply as much knowledge as possible, more than that, education is a process of giving understanding, understanding, and appreciation to the experiences they know. The highest goal of education is to develop the personality of students as a whole by changing the behavior and attitudes of students from negative to positive, from destructive to positive, from bad to noble character, including maintaining the good character they bear (Hasanah et al., 2022).

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Character education is everything that the teacher does, which is able to influence the character of students. Teachers help shape the character of students based on the principles of character. The following are the principles used in the development of values or national character education, namely (Putri, 2018) :

- 1) Values can be taught or strengthen the noble values of the nation's culture through thought processing, feeling exercise, intentional exercise, heart exercise, and sports related to the object being studied which is integrated with the subject matter,
- 2) The process of developing national values/character is carried out through each subject and in each learning activity,
- 3) The process of developing the values of national character is an ongoing process since students enter the education unit,
- 4) Discussion on various parables of objects that are learned to do thinking, feeling, exercising the heart, and exercising to fulfill demands and the emergence of self-awareness as a servant of Allah, a member of society and the nation as well as a citizen, and as part of the environment in which one lives,
- 5) The program for self-development through routine school culture activities, exemplary, spontaneous activities when events occur, conditioning and integrating character value education with subject matter, and refers to the development of basic competencies in each subject.

Table 1. Values and Description of Character Education Values

No	Value	Description
1	Religious	Obedient attitude and behavior in carrying out the teachings of the religion they adhere to, tolerant of the implementation of other religions, and living in harmony with adherents of other religions
2	Honest	Behavior based on efforts to make oneself a person who can always be trusted in words, actions, and work
3	Tolerance	Attitudes and actions that respect differences in religion, ethnicity, ethnicity, opinions, attitudes, and actions of other people who are different from themselves
4	Discipline	Actions that show orderly behavior and comply with various provisions of the regulations
5	Hard Work	Behavior that shows genuine effort in overcoming various learning and assignment obstacles, and completing assignments as well as possible
6	Creative	Think and do something to produce new ways or results from something you already have
7	Independent	Attitudes and behaviors that are not easily dependent on others Attitudes and behaviors that are not easily dependent on others in completing tasks
8	Democratic	Ways of thinking, behaving, and acting that value the rights and obligations of himself and others

9	Curiosity	Attitudes and actions that always seek to know more deeply and broadly from something that is learned, seen, and heard
10	National Spirit	A way of thinking, acting and having insight that places the interests of the nation and state above self and group interests
11	Love Of The Achievement	Ways of thinking, behaving, and acting that show loyalty, concern, and high appreciation for the nation's language, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political environment
12	Respect For Achievement	Attitudes and actions that encourage him to produce something useful for society, and recognize and respect the success of others
13	Friendly/communicative	Actions that show pleasure in talking, socializing, and working with others
14	Love Of Peace	Attitudes, words and actions that cause others to feel happy and secure in their presence
15	Fond Of Reading	The habit of providing time to read various readings that provide virtue for him
16	Care For The Environment	Attitudes and actions that always seek to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, and develop efforts to repair natural damage that has already occurred
17	Care For The Social	Attitudes and actions that always want to provide assistance to other people and communities in need
18	Responsibility	The attitude and behavior of a person to carry out his duties and obligations, which he should do, towards himself, society, the environment (natural, social and cultural), the state and God Almighty

Character education aims to improve the quality and results of education that lead to character education and noble character learning as a whole, integrated and balanced, in accordance with graduate competency standards in each educational unit. Through character education, students are expected to be able to independently improve and use their knowledge, study and internalize, and personalize the values of character and noble character so that they are manifested in daily behavior.

B. Principles of Character Education

The success of the character education program can be known through the attainment of indicators by students as stated in the graduate standards in each school which include (Hasanah et al., 2022). 1) Practicing the teachings of the religion adhered to in accordance with the stages of human development, 2) Understand your own strengths and weaknesses, 3) Demonstrate self-confidence, 4) Comply with social rules that apply in the wider environment, 5) Appreciate the diversity of religions, cultures, ethnicities, races and socio-economic groups within the national scope.

The strategy for implementing character education can be pursued using various approaches, providing an explanation of the approach to implementing character education, namely: 1) The incubation approach is an approach that focuses on instilling social values so that they are able to be internalized in students, 2) The cognitive development approach views that students are individuals who have cognitive potential that is and will continue to grow and develop, 3) The value clarification approach is to emphasize helping students examine their own feelings and actions, 4) The learning approach to doing seeks to emphasize the efforts of educators to facilitate by providing opportunities for students to carry out moral actions carried out individually or in groups.

C. The Role of Education in Cultivating Character

The modern era has spurred educators to produce the nation's children who are able to place themselves in the midst of rapid changes, multiple choices and life that is quickly full of stress. More than that, educators have a moral obligation to encourage them to become people whose lives are able to explore meaning and have roots in noble values, a strong self-image and ambitions that are beneficial to other humans besides oneself. Educators must produce students who are independent, meaning that they are able to choose based on values, a strong self-image and the right ambitions. Cultivating character in its

role in the field of education is as follows (Daryanto, Damiatun Suryatri, 2013: 68): 1) Character development, (honest, intelligent, caring, tough) is the main task of education, 2) Changing bad habits step by step that will eventually become good. Can change happy but bad habits which in the end become hate but become good, 3) Character is a trait that is embedded in the soul and with that trait a person can spontaneously easily emit attitudes, actions and deeds, 4) Character is a trait that is manifested in the ability to drive from within the class to display commendable behavior and contain wisdom.

D. The Role of Character Education in Schools

One of the difficulties in implementing character education in schools, partly because there are no examples that can be tried or implemented in real activities by schools. That is why, this article will explain the activities that can be applied in the implementation of character education.

Activities in implementing character can be carried out through learning activities, namely by applying innovative learning models, for example, contextual learning models. Some activities that can be implemented at school and in the classroom in order to develop character education are as follows: 1) Habituation activities in terms of discipline can be carried out with ceremonial activities on Mondays, national holidays and by carrying out class pickets and routine health checks by competent institutions, 2) Exemplary, instilling an attitude of "becoming an example" the attitude of being an example is an example of teacher behavior and attitudes through concrete actions and being a role model for students, 3) Conditioning, related to the school's efforts to organize the physical environment, for example, to condition the toilets to be clean, the yard neatly arranged and so on, 4) Co-curricular activities or extra-curricular activities are activities outside of learning activities, 5) Activities through learning, are activities of incorporating character values into the material of each subject.

E. Implementation of Character Education

Teachers play a very strategic role, especially in shaping the character and developing the potential of students. The existence of a teacher in the community can be used as an example and reference for the surrounding community so that the teacher is a spreader of the light of truth and the majesty of values. Teachers must move to empower students towards qualities, especially knowledge and morality.

The presence of the teacher is also not replaced by other elements. Teachers have a very important role in determining quality graduates. Professional teachers are expected to produce quality graduates. In the whole process of character education, the teacher is the main factor who serves as an educator. Teachers must be responsible for the results of teaching and learning activities. Thus, the role of the teacher in the implementation of character education in schools is to provide exemplary inspiration, motivator, dynamist and evaluator.

Exemplary related to the teacher's task as a student role model is to provide a good example with regard to moral, ethical, and ethical issues wherever they are. Inspirator, a teacher will become an inspirational figure if he is able to generate enthusiasm to move all the potential he has to achieve achievements. Automatically the success of the teacher will inspire students. Motivator, after becoming an inspiration, the next role of the teacher is a motivator. The teacher must try so that in carrying out the task it really pushes students towards their goals with high speed, intelligence and wisdom. Evaluator, as a teacher evaluator, must always evaluate the learning methods that have been used so far in character education. In addition, teachers must also be able to evaluate the attitudes and behavior shown by students.

F. Character Education Strategy

The strategy for implementing character education can be pursued using various approaches, providing an explanation of the approach to implementing character education, namely: 1) Value instilling approach, the inculcation approach is an approach that focuses on instilling social values so that they are able to be internalized in students. 2) The cognitive development approach, the cognitive development approach supports that students are individuals who have moderate cognitive potential and will continue to grow and develop. 3) Value clarification approach, the orientation of the values clarification approach is to

provide an approach to help students examine their own feelings and actions. 4) The learning approach does, the characteristics of the learning approach to do seek to emphasize the efforts of educators to facilitate by providing opportunities for moral actions to be carried out individually or in groups.

G. Implementation of Character Education at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo

Organizing character education involves various components of the school, both the Principal, Deputy Principal, and teachers with the following tasks: 1) Headmaster, the principal functions and serves as an educator, manager, administrator and supervisor in the implementation of character education. 2) Vice principal, assisting school activities in implementing, organizing, coordinating and directing, supervising peace, assessment, identification and collection, and compiling reports on the implementation of character education. 3) Teacher, the teacher is responsible to the principal and has the task of carrying out character education effectively and efficiently.

H. Character Education Development Efforts at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo

The efforts to develop character education that have been implemented late by educators at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo are: 1) Morning and afternoon briefings, this is done to provide advice or suggestions, to inform the latest reports, be it information from the department or learning problems. 2) Habit of greeting, the habit of greeting can be seen in students at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo before they enter the learning process, the class leader will lead his friends to give respectful greetings to the teacher who was teaching at that time. 3) Handshake habit, the habit of shaking hands tamoak also among students at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo. Teachers instill an open attitude to students through the habit of shaking hands with teachers, parents, and anyone in society. 4) Student picket assignments, Character education instilled in students at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo can be seen in the procurement of picket assignments for students. 5) Integration in creative Saturday, creative Saturday activity is an activity that raises the positive character of students. These activities include training in singing folk songs, performing arts, love of literacy. 6) Character integration in Subjects, planting character values to students, namely through all subjects. This application can be seen in their lesson plans and syllabus which are formed in character lesson plans. 7) Display of inspirational shop images, the display of pictures of heroes or inspirational figures was also carried out by SDN 105416 Sei Rejo. Displays of these pictures can be seen in all classrooms. 8) There are guidelines for attitudes or behavior in the classroom and in the school environment, the implementation of attitude and behavior guidelines boards in the classroom and in the school field appears to be carried out by SDN 105416 Sei Rejo. In every corner of the classroom and on the outer wall of the classroom there is a code of conduct aimed at students and teachers. 9) Grow if a leader by example to students, every teacher in the class always gives advice to students to be wise and exemplary leaders in behavior in the family, school, and in the community. 10) Involve student parents in supervising and overcoming student misbehavior by sending letters or through home visits. the teacher tries to be consistent in treating students (treats fairly to all students). 11) Be fair to all students is highly recommended in teachers (teachers). This is always done by each teacher when giving lessons or when together with students in the school environment. 12) Instill an attitude of admitting mistakes and trying to fix them, teachers at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo instill the courage to admit mistakes to students. By cultivating the attitude in question, it indirectly has a positive effect on students not to be afraid to admit actions that have been done both intentionally and unintentionally. 13) Teaches students about good competition, students at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo often take part in prestigious competitions, both sub-district and district level competitions. This is inseparable from the motivation and support of various groups, especially teachers. 14) Planting a caring attitude towards others and love for the environment, the inculcation of care and love for the environment is also reflected in SDN 105416 Sei Rejo. Instilling this attitude is often done by teachers during morning briefings, during breaks, and during the teaching and learning process. 15) Planting an attitude of love for local culture the planting of love for culture has been carried out by various parties at SDN 105416 Sei Rejo by wearing traditional clothes in their respective areas and participating in competitions held in the sub-district.

I. The Urgency of Character Education

Character education is currently very much needed because currently the Indonesian nation is experiencing a character crisis in the nation's children. Character in this case is a person's character, character, morals, or personality which is formed from the results of internalizing various virtues that are believed and used as a basis for perspective, thinking, behaving, and acting. These virtues are in the form of a number of moral values and norms, such as honesty, courage to act, trustworthiness, respect for others, discipline, independence, hard work, and creativity.

Character education is considered very important to start with elementary school children because character education is an educational process aimed at developing values, attitudes, and behaviors that exude noble character or noble character. In fact, character education is very important to start from an early age. Because the philosophy of planting now reaping tomorrow is a process that must be carried out in order to shape the character of the nation's children.

Children are the generation that will determine the fate of the nation in the future. The character of the children that will be formed from now on will greatly determine the character of the nation in the future. Children's character will be well formed, if in the process of growth and development they get enough space to express themselves freely. Character education aims to improve the quality of the implementation and results of education in schools that lead to the achievement of the formation of character and noble character of students as a whole, integrated and balanced, according to graduate competency standards.

Through character education it is hoped that students will be able to independently improve and use their knowledge, study and internalize and personalize noble character values so that they are manifested in everyday behavior.

4. CONCLUSION

The term character literally comes from the Latin "character", which among other things means character, character, psychological traits, manners, personality or morals. Meanwhile, in terms, character is defined as human nature in general where humans have many characteristics that depend on the factors of their own life. Character is a psychological trait, morals or character that characterizes a person or group of people. The definition of "The stamp of individually or group impressed by nature education or habit". Character is the values of human behavior related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow human beings, the environment, and nationality which are embodied in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, actions based on religious norms, laws, manners, culture, and customs.

Zubaedi (2012) also revealed that character education is understood as an effort to cultivate intelligence in thinking, behaving, and behaving in accordance with the noble values that become one's identity which is manifested in interactions with God, oneself, among peers and their environment (p.14).

Cultivating character in its role in the field of education is as follows (Daryanto, Damiatun Suryatri, 2013: 68):

1. Character development, (honest, intelligent, caring, tough) is the main task of education
2. Changing bad habits step by step that will eventually become tubs. Can change happy but bad habits which in the end become hate but become good
3. Character is a trait that is embedded in the soul and with that trait a person can spontaneously easily radiate attitudes, actions and deeds
4. Character is a trait that is manifested in the ability to drive from within the class to display commendable behavior and contain wisdom.

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