

## ***Implementation of Life Skills Through Character values in TK Prestasi Global***

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to describe the implementation of character value-based life skills education for 4-7 year olds at TK Prestasi Global. The implementation in question concerns planning, implementation of life skills education, learning, evaluation or assessment, supporting and inhibiting factors, and solutions to overcome them. The type of research used is a descriptive qualitative approach. The subjects of this research were Kindergarten A, Kindergarten B, teachers, and principals. Data collection techniques used interviews, documentation, and observation. The data that has been collected is then analyzed and reduced according to interactive techniques using the Miles and Huberman model, namely from data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data were tested for validity using triangulation of methods and sources. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that: 1) the cultivation of life skill values based on character values in TK Prestasi Global is implemented with three stages, namely planning, implementation, and assessment; 2) the values of discipline, honesty and mutual cooperation that have been instilled and successfully achieved; 3) supporting factors; curriculum that contains discipline, honesty and mutual cooperation materials; cooperation with stakeholders such as teachers, communities, facilities and infrastructure; methods; media; habituation and sustainability at school and at home; 4) inhibiting factors: children's characteristics and abilities are different; children are still in the stage of easily changing attitudes; habituation at home and school is different; the level of family education; and the large number of students makes the focus of teacher attention uneven; and 5) How to overcome the problem by implementing life skills based on character values with parent-teacher cooperation or mutual consultation.*

**Keywords:** *Implementation of life skills, character values*

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### **Introduction**

The constitutional purpose of national education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens. (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional. 2010) Education is a human process in life that puts the goal as something to be achieved, the planned goal is abstract so that the plan is made specifically not to complicate the achievement of higher goals. Similarly, because education is guidance to develop humans

towards certain ideals, then the main problem for education is to choose the direction or goal to be achieved.

Education in Indonesia has a strategic domain to build the nation in order to become a dignified nation. In general, education aims to create people who are knowledgeable, intelligent, moral, have high technology and science and have skills to build their nation. One of the factors that must be done to improve the quality of life in Indonesia is through improving the quality of education. This shows that the quality of education determines the quality of life of the nation and state. (Indra, 2016)

Character education is education that regulates a person's attitude or behavior to have good character. Salls (Salls, 2007) explains that character education is the process of transferring values so as to present a good character. The first step in the formation of children's character is character education from an early age so that education is very necessary. Characters that are taught early on in children are done to form a good personality and noble morals. Activities that can be applied to form these characters are through activities related to early childhood.

Good character will be seen in the child's personality in developing self-potential. The concept of life skills is a development of the concept of life skills. skills are the abilities needed so that children can interact and adapt with other people, and the community or environment in which they live, including decision-making skills, problem solving, creative and critical thinking, effective communication, building relationships between people, self-awareness, empathizing, overcoming emotions, and overcoming stress. (Anwar, 2004)

The problem being faced by Indonesia is that the early education system is currently too oriented towards the development of the left brain (cognitive) and pays less attention to the development of the right brain (affective, empathy, and taste). An education system that can build a person who has good character both personally and socially and is ready to live his world. An education system that is suitable to produce intelligent and noble qualities is one that is humanist and positions students as individuals as well as members of society.

The challenges in the future have several indicators that have been seen, demanding independent humans, so students must be equipped with life skills with content, learning processes and other activities at school. Life skills here are not solely related to narrow economic motives, such as skills for work, but involve socio-cultural aspects such as being capable, democratic, resilient and having a culture of learning throughout life. With this, education aimed at life skills is essentially education to form character and ethos. (Mulyasa, 2006)

Subjects related to character education (such as ethics and religion) in practice emphasize the right brain and left brain aspects (memorization or just "know"). Whereas character building must be carried out systematically and continuously involving aspects of "Knowledge, feeling, and action". (Thomas Lickona, 1991) Character is behavior that is based on values based on religious norms, culture, law/constitution, customs, and aesthetics. Character education is essentially carried out through the cultivation of values: honesty, discipline, mutual help. It should be a perspective that assumes that the choice of moral behavior is essentially rational as a response that is sourced and derived from understanding and reasoning based on the goals of humanity and justice.

Character education cannot be separated from the character identity used as a reference. The character is referred to as the basic character. character education without the basic character will not have a definite goal. Character education in Indonesia is based on nine basic characters, among others: 1) love for God and the universe and its contents; 2) responsibility, discipline and independence; 3) honesty, 4) respect and courtesy, 5) compassion, care and cooperation; 6) confidence, creativity, hard work and perseverance; 7) justice and leadership; 8) humility; 9) tolerance, peace and unity.

Education must be rooted in the community as parents, teachers, principals and all stakeholders should always try to encourage education services to provide adequate skills. This is done so that students can interact in the current life process which is closely related to change, and skills to enter the future that need to be developed.

This research raises the problem of education that has tended to be verbalistic which aims at subject matter alone and runs only one way (one way communication) and the improvement of life skills that are lacking and the development of the character of Prestasi Global Kindergarten students needed in everyday life. The purpose of this research is to find out how to improve students' life skills through existing learning so that they have good character in TK Prestasi Global.

## **Literature Review**

### **A. Life Skills**

#### **1. Definition of Life Skill**

Life Skill or commonly referred to as life skills when viewed from language comes from two words, namely Life and Skill. Life is defined as life, while skill is proficiency, cleverness, skill. So that language life skills can be interpreted as proficiency, intelligence, life skills. Generally in everyday use people call life skills with the term life skills. A more comprehensive explanation of life skills is proposed by IOWA State University: life skills are defined as follows "a skill is a learned ability to do something well, skills are not only defined as the ability to do something, more than that, skills are interpreted as a learned ability to do something better. So being able to do something is not enough to be said to be capable, but the ability to do something must be shown better and obtained through a learning activity.

Life skills defined by Lifes Skill 4 kids explain, In essence, life skills are an "owner's manual" for the human body. These skills help children learn how to maintain their bodies, grow as individuals, work well with others, make logical decisions, protect themselves when they have to and achieve their goals in life. Essentially, life skills are defined as a kind of practical guidance that helps children learn how to maintain their bodies, grow to become an individual, work well with others, make logical decisions, protect themselves when they have to and achieve their goals in life.

Life skills motivate students by helping them to understand themselves and their own potential in life. So that they are able to develop life goals and carry out a problem-solving process when faced with life problems. The term life skills according to the Ministry of National Education does not merely mean having certain skills (vocational jobs), but must have basic functional supporting abilities such as reading, calculating, formulating, and solving problems, processing resources, working in teams, continuing to learn in the workplace using technology. (Ministry of Education, 2004).

Life skills education according to Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System is part of non-formal education. This is contained in Article 26 Paragraph 3 reads: "Non-formal education includes early childhood education, youth education, women's empowerment education, literacy education, skills education and job training, equivalency education, as well as skills education and job training, equivalency education, and other education aimed at developing student abilities. (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional. 2010)

Furthermore, in the explanation of Law No. 20 of 2003 article 26 paragraph 3 concerning life skills education reads "Life skills education is education that provides personal skills, social skills, intellectual skills, and vocational skills for work or

independent businesses" the purpose of life skills is to build an attitude of independence to gain skills as a provision for work and self-development (skilled orientation) (UU No. 20 Tahun 2003 Pasal 26 ayat 3).

According to several experts, they provide definitions related to life skills or life skills, namely:

- a. The Children's United nations Fund has defined life skills as a set of psychological and personal skills that help people make carefully considered decisions, communicate effectively with others, develop coping skills with their surroundings, and manage themselves that lead to progress and success.
- b. UNICEF divides life skills as Management skills, Self-awareness, Self-confidence, Confirmation of identity and responsibility, Self-resilience. It includes sub-skills such as cognitive skills
- c. Malik Fajar explained that life skills are skills needed for work in addition to skills in the academic field.
- d. Brodin, life skills or life skills as a continuum of knowledge and abilities needed by a person to become independent in life. Another opinion says that life skills are skills that must be possessed by someone in order to be happy in life.
- e. Anwar explained that life skills are the abilities needed to interact and adapt with other people or the environmental community where he is, including decision-making skills, problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking.

So it can be understood that Life skills are students' skills in the learning process of how they are able to work well with others, make logical decisions, protect themselves and achieve goals in their lives.

## **2. Purpose of Life Skills**

Education in general can be oriented towards life skills which aims to function education according to its nature, namely developing the human potential of students to face their role in the future (Anwar, Pendidikan Kecakapan Hidup, 2015). The objectives of life skills are as follows:

- a. Actualize students' potential so that they can solve the problems they face
- b. Developing students' human potential to face their roles in the future
- c. Equipping students with skills as independent personalities

## **3. Types of Life Skills**

The Ministry of National Education divides life skills into four types, namely:

- a. Personal skills (personal skills) which include selfawareness skills and rational thinking skills (social skills)
- b. Social skills
- c. Academic skills
- d. Vocational skills (Anwar, Pendidikan Kecakapan Hidup, 2015)

Self-knowledge skills are basically an appreciation of oneself as a creature of God, society and the state and realizing and being grateful for the advantages and disadvantages that one has, as well as making it an asset in improving himself as an individual who is beneficial to himself and his environment.

## **B. Character Education**

Character education is very important and needed in shaping students' personalities. Suyanto (Suyanto, 2021) defines character as a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and work together in the scope of family, community, nation and state. Children with good character are children who can make decisions and are ready to take responsibility for the consequences of their decisions.

Zulhan (Zulhan, 2010) explains that there are 5 characters that must be developed, namely: 1) trustworthy; includes honesty, keeping promises, having high loyalty, personal integrity (commitment, discipline, always want to excel), 2) respect for others behavior to put the public interest above personal interests, ready for differences and not feel the most right, 3) responsible is a combination of behavior that can be held accountable, everything that is done must dare to bear the consequences, think before acting, 4) fair which includes: open attitude, impartiality willing to listen to others and have empathy, 5) love and care which includes: showing kindness behavior, living with truth values, sharing happiness, willing to help others, not selfish, not rude and sensitive to the feelings of others.

## **C. Character Building in Early Childhood**

Early childhood education is the most basic education for a child's life with education at this time determining the continuity of the child to form a good personality. Age character formation can follow a certain pattern, namely a regular, disciplined behavior (meaning that various types and patterns of behavior can be developed through scheduling continuously until the expected behavior is attached to the child strongly and becomes part of his positive behavior (Surdayanti, 2012).

The principles of character education and life skills that must be implemented by educators and PAUD institutions are: 1) through examples and exemplary, 2) done on an ongoing basis, 3) comprehensive teriintegrasikan in all aspects of development, 4) create an atmosphere of affection, 5) actively motivate children, 6) involving educators and education personnel, parents and communities and 7) the existence of assessment.

Stages in implementing character education, there are several prerequisites that a character educator teacher must have. First, the educator makes himself a role model or figure with noble character, for example, doing good, being friendly, prejudiced and having enthusiasm. Second, educators prioritize the goal of developing the character of their students in the implementation of the educational process, third, educators always conduct open dialogue, fourth, teachers foster a sense of empathy for children, namely by inviting children to feel what others feel, fifth, teachers integrate character education values in various learning activities, sixth teachers create a supportive environmental atmosphere, seventh, teachers build a series of activities to apply character values at home, at PAUD institutions and in the surrounding community.

## **Methods**

This research relates to early childhood life skills education at T K Prestasi Global with a character approach through existing learning to have good character through qualitative life skills. This approach uses a type of qualitative research because it is used for in-depth study of social problems with the aim of understanding their nature and meaning for those involved

(Nasoetion, 1992). This research approach uses a qualitative approach because qualitative research has two main objectives, namely: 1) describe and explore and 2) describe and explain. So this research pays attention to social situations in general, including aspects of places, actors, and activities that interact synergistically. (Sugiyono, 2012)

This type of research is field research because it can be seen where this research was conducted. The approach used is descriptive research, which is a research method that describes current or past phenomena. This qualitative research approach includes an explanation of the research object, research assumptions, and research data collection and analysis techniques. In qualitative research conducted by researchers, in essence, it is comprehensive and emphasizes more on the process, therefore qualitative research is interactive when observing the object under study, namely mutual influence (interactive / reciprocal).

Qualitative research is also conducted to gather knowledge and insight. The research conducted by this researcher is an effort to find the relationship between learning and life skills education approaches to improve the character of TK Prestasi Global students. This research uses a constructivist approach, which is an approach that emphasizes that knowledge is always the result of cognitive construction of reality, which occurs through the activities of several students, then students draw the necessary diagrams, categories, concepts, and knowledge structures for knowledge (Cresswell, 2010).

## **Result and Discussion**

Based on the problems related to children's character, it is important to provide education from an early age, because in Islam it is very important to educate children. The Qur'an explains that Allah talks about the character of Luqman's family, which is a kind of instructional exercise for his children. Also the Prophet's hadiths explain the forms of educating children, and through his commands and actions directly educate children.

The role of life skills in relation to character is closely related where life skills are personal and interpersonal behavior to develop a person's personality with noble character. The development of life skills must foster future generations who have personal and social competencies to become a good person. Development can be well promoted so that children become individuals who are able to adapt to the environment. Based on the work of the brain, it is found that children have the necessary skills for life from birth. Differences are the answer. The higher the child's ability to respond, the easier it is to stimulate it. A constant supply of proper stimulation develops life skills. Research results can be concluded.

### **1. Cultivation of life skills values based on character values**

Skill development is a combination of knowledge and selected skills (such as drawing, writing, coloring) and social-emotional skills to apply those selected skills to specific behaviors. The five stages of life skills include:

- a. First, empathy (self-awareness). This empathy describes the ability to feel something that others feel. This means that children feel or are sensitive to the feelings of friends, parents, and teachers around them. This ability must be supported by the ability to be self-aware, knowing one's own shortcomings and weaknesses in order to recognize others from a different perspective.
- b. Second, interpersonal communication. Communication skills should be developed from an early age, as communication with others is still developing at certain times in childhood. Therefore, development must be done with the ability to carry out human relations.

- c. Third, decision-making when solving problems (problem solving). The problems that children will inevitably face in the future are choices about various things, from the simplest to the most complex.
- d. Fourth, creative and critical thinking. Creative thinking is needed in all situations and circumstances, especially when facing and solving problems. Creative thinking helps children see things from different perspectives, without fear of making mistakes.
- e. Fifth, being able to overcome emotional problems. These problems are not only related to logic, but also to coping with stress, so that the child's quality of life is not impaired, but improved.

Early childhood is a strategic period for the formation of children's character and intelligence. Simulation is a children's game. The simulation problem refers to the simple and daily tasks for which it is responsible. The application of the simulation method in character education in early childhood not only aims to acquire skills, but also emphasizes the formation of children's character through simulation.

## **2. Application of the Value of Discipline, Honesty, and Mutual Help in TK Prestasi Global**

The results of the theory if analyzed, Life Skills are very important to be instilled early in early childhood at TK Prestasi Global in particular. The learning system at TK Prestasi Global is very suitable if it is used as character building for children at TK Prestasi Global. Global Achievement Kindergarten learning generally trains students to learn discipline, honesty and mutual help. The learning provided by teachers at TK Prestasi Global is none other than the relationship between Life Skills that can affect children's character:

- a. Discipline in this case TK Prestasi Global teaches discipline is obeying the rules in all aspects of life, whether religion, culture, socialization, school and others. In other words, discipline is a condition created and formed through a process of a series of individual behaviors that show the values of obedience, loyalty, order and order in school. The characteristics of children who have self-discipline are: tidying up the playing equipment after playing, paying attention to the explanation from the teacher, putting school equipment in the place provided.
- b. Integrity teaching is a concept related to consistency in actions, values or principles regarding various things produced. If a child understands and is able to apply integrity then he has an honest person and has a strong character.
- c. Empathy teaches a sense of empathy when we put ourselves in the shoes of a friend or someone and share our grief together. Empathy is the ability to see a situation from another person's perspective. It involves a person's point of view, emotions, and difficulties. The child puts themselves in their shoes and feels what they feel. Characteristics of a child who has care:
  - 1) Showing things that happen around them
  - 2) Light-hearted in helping friends
  - 3) Cares about family and other people, for example family members who are sick, in trouble, or experiencing a disaster
  - 4) Have a sense of affection but because the child's social sphere is still narrow, this sense of affection is reflected in the behavior of keeping his belongings, loving pets, or caring for plants
  - 5) Loving social activities and togetherness in doing something happy to be in a group. The concern of Prestasi Global Kindergarten children in establishing relationships between friends by showing tolerance among others. Like caring if there is one of their

friends, experiencing a disaster. The children of TK Prestasi Global will comfort their peers.

### **3. Supporting Factors for Implementing Life Skill and Character Development**

Supporting factors include: (a) A curriculum that contains materials on discipline, honesty and mutual cooperation. The curriculum applied in TK Prestasi Global is an independent curriculum. This curriculum strongly emphasizes the content of character values in children, therefore the curriculum used is very supportive of the application of life skills development and character values, (b) Parents' cooperation with teachers, usually the teacher will approach parents so that their children are taught the same habits at home. If there are children who behave badly, the teacher will work with parents so that the child can change his attitude, (c) Methods, when the teacher teaches with interesting methods, pleasant voice intonation, interesting teaching styles, the child will be happy and the learning will be easily remembered by the child, (d) Media, the media used also greatly affects the entry of learning in children. Teachers usually provide painting tools, scissors, or other art tools to develop children's potential and imagination, (e) Habituation and sustainability at school and at home, the environment from family and playmates can also affect children's behavior in class, therefore parents must be able to provide attention like a best friend for their children, and teach children according to the habits applied at school. This can support children in applying life skills and character values at home or at school.

### **4. Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Life Skill and Character Development**

In implementing life skills and character in early childhood, there must be inhibiting factors. In an interview by one of the teachers at TK Prestasi Global, the inhibiting factors include: (a) The characteristics and abilities of children are different, some children lack confidence. Usually children are shy to express their opinions to the teacher or tell stories, (b) Children are still in the stage of easily changing attitudes, sometimes the influence of the friendship environment at home is not good so that children who have been taught the value of rising values in class can behave contrary to what is taught in class, (c) Habits at home and school are different. The habits taught by teachers are sometimes different from the habits taught by parents at home. There are times when teachers have taught good habits to children in class but parents do not teach habits to children at home so that the process of implementing life skills and character does not run smoothly, (e) The level of family education, the way parents teach with teachers is sometimes different. There are families who realize that learning at school must also be done at home, but there are also those who do not realize this, (f) The large number of students makes the focus of the teacher's attention uneven. The average number of children in class B is 25 children, so the teacher cannot pay attention to all children. It is possible for teachers to make mistakes in class, therefore teachers always try to maximize their teaching related to the application of life skills and character values in children.

### **5. How to Overcome Problems in Implementing Life Skill and Character Development**

The problems that occur are the same as those in the inhibiting factors. TK Prestasi Global has several ways to overcome this, including: (a) Teachers contact the parents of the child concerned if the child behaves badly. Cooperation between teachers and parents must be done so that children can be advised and the teaching applied at school can be continued at home. This can familiarize children with life skills and character values. Not only that, the teacher will also



make a report on the child's semester report card and can consult face-to-face on how to solve the child's problems, (b) If the child lacks confidence, the teacher usually motivates the child to continue to dare to express his opinion. Then the teacher seduces and persuades him slowly so that the child wants to gradually tell about what he feels.

## Conclusion

Life skills simulation can develop early childhood character. Proper class management arrangements can provide equal opportunities for children to simulate. It is necessary to involve parents in the development of early childhood character at the Global Achievement Kindergarten Institute. Parent observation reports are very useful for teachers to develop children's character that has not yet emerged.

Research on early childhood character development through life skills simulation was carried out with three cycles. Each stage has components of learning planning, implementation, reflection. The first simulation model was developed by researchers based on the condition of character development in the field and early childhood learning concepts. By developing teacher assessment developed from the success indicators of each character. The level of character development is categorized into three, namely: not yet developed (BB), starting to develop (MB), Developing (B). assessment of the level of children's character development includes an assessment of mastery of success indicators in the cultivation of a character.

## Discussion

Based on the above conclusions, the lessons learned are: a) the need to increase the competence of PAUD teachers in developing simple and easy-to-understand scenarios for children, b) the need for parental involvement in applying the value of life skills through character values. This is very useful for teachers in developing characters that have not yet emerged, c) supporting factors in implementing life skills and character values in children are from the curriculum which contains character values, teacher cooperation with parents, methods and media used by teachers, and continuous habituation both at school and at home, d) inhibiting factors in implementing life skills and character values at Global Achievement Kindergarten are different characters and abilities of children, children's attitudes are easily changed, habituation at school and at home is different, the level of family education, and the large number of students so that the teacher's attention is uneven, e) how to overcome problems in implementing life skills and character values is to cooperate with parents to teach their children at home and teachers always motivate children to always dare to express their opinions or feelings.

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