

Character Problems of Elementary Students and Parental Engagement in Schools

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Abstract—Character is one of the important issues in the process of children's education. Education are not only meant to deliver children to be intelligent and competent, but also directed to deliver children to become individuals who have a positive character that makes it a person who plays a role in building human civilization. This paper aims to provide an overview of a number of characters that are important to be learned by children, main problems of children character, the importance of parental engagement in character education and the factors that influence parental engagement . The method used are multi-methods, quantitative and quantitative approach. The respondents of this study were 34 teachers and 346 parents from a number of elementary schools in Yogyakarta. Based on this studies, the results show that five characters are considered important by parents and teachers, namely honest, religious, responsibility, independent, and discipline. According to teachers and parents have been found five main problems of children character. There are poor of discipline, dependence, poor of responsibility, poor of literacy and poor of religiosity. There are three type of Parental Engagement in School, namely proactive type, follower type and ignorant type. The factors that influence parental engagement such as religiosity and parenting style.

Keywords—*character problems, parental engagement, religiosity, parenting style*

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of education is to increase the faith and devotion and also noble character in order to educate the life of the nation. In detail, the goals of the national education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and devote to God the Almighty, have noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens. From the description of the purpose of education, it is clear that the core values of national education are the manifestation of human beings with character, such as faith and devotion, noble character, independence and responsibility [1].

The role of parents in the family is not only provide physical or material needs for their children, but always educate their sons deeply. One of the most important is to deliver children to have good character or *akhlaq al-karimah*. For this reason, there is a need for good

collaboration with teachers through the involvement of parents in children's character education in schools.

Educational psychologists call this phenomenon of involvement as parental engagement which is defined as a partnership between family, school and society, through increasing parental awareness of the benefits of their involvement in their childrens' education, as well as providing skills to parents to be able to do so [2]. Parental engagement in children's education is characterized by active communication with the school, the existence of learning connectivity at home and at school, forming a strong community and identity in children, clarifying the role of the family in achieving school goals, consulting with the school in making decisions about children, collaborating with parties outside the school that lead to the achievement of educational goals, and participation in programs initiated by the school [3].

Currently there are many cases that show the character crisis of children in the nation. At all levels of education from elementary school to university level, there are often actions that contradict with the purpose and noble goals of education. The cases of student brawls, bullying, sexual violence that ended with murder, drug abuse, free sex, pornography, and various other delinquents were present as a sad reality. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) shows that the number of victims of pornography and online crime has reached 1,022 in 2015. The details are 11% of victims of online violence, 15% of CD porn objects, 20% of online child prostitution, 21% of online pornography, 24% has pornographic material, 28% is online pornography. In 2014 there were 932 cases or jumped compared to 2011 which amounted to 188 cases [4]. The fading of the values of honesty, politeness, caring in social life has become a real concern.

Ideally, every parent fulfills their responsibilities as a caretaker to care for and educate their children. This is because the burden of responsibility for the first and foremost education of children is in the hands of their parents [5]. Prophets in ancient times have shown what parents should do to their children. A good mandate does not only strive to provide physical or material needs for their children, but always strives to educate their sons deeply.

One of the most important is to deliver children to have good character or noble character [6].

II. PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT CONCEPT

Parental engagement is any form of behavior that supports and connects with children or components in an interactive environment, has a purpose, and can be directed at meaningful learning and effective results [7]. Parental engagement includes various interactions and experiences to support children's independence and learning activities. Parental engagement involves the important role of parents and teachers in children's learning and development. Parental engagement is focused on developing positive attitudes of children through learning and education, building motivation and self-confidence as learners and helping children to develop feelings of pleasure in learning [8].

Parental engagement in children's education has seven aspects [2]. The first is communication (communicating). Parents actively communicate with the school personally to convey various things related to children's education in school.

Second is learning connectivity at home and school (connecting learning at home and at school). Parents try to make connections between what is learned in school and learned at home, both values, habits, or other things. Third is building community and identity. Parents try to form a strong community and identity for their children so that they develop the spiritual, social, emotional, and moral aspects of children. Fourth is to assert the role of the family (recognizing the role of the family). Parents clarify their position with the school, which is to support the school's goals, doing it, and show enthusiasm.

Fifth is to consult in terms of decision making (consultative decision making). Parents consult with the school when making various decisions concerning children, such as participating in competitions, traveling for other purposes when children are not on school holidays, and so on.

Sixth is collaborating with parties outside the school (collaborating beyond the school). Parents collaborate not only with the school, but all parties, including the community and all resources that can strengthen and support achievement in school.

Seventh is participation (participating). Parents want to participate in programs or activities carried out by the school. For example, occasionally involved in student learning activities inside and outside the classroom, providing support and evaluation to the teacher, and others.

According to Sheridan et al, there are three aspects in parental engagement, namely aspects of warmth, sensitivity, and responsiveness, support for autonomy and self-control and participation in learning [9]. First: aspects of warmth, sensitivity, and responsiveness. The aspect of warmth, sensitivity, and responsiveness is the behavior of parents who care for children by giving affection, warmth and sensitivity, and the presence of responsiveness and attention. Parents need to be sensitive to children so that children feel that they are loved and cared for. When parents give warmth, children will feel their parents are connected

to it, creating interactions that are important for fulfilling the child's love needs.

Second: Support for autonomy and self-control. The aspect of support for autonomy and self-control is the behavior of parents who give children positive guidance, support freedom in self-development, teach discipline, and self-regulation. Parents in this case support and give freedom to children to make their own choices ([9].

Third: Participation in Learning. The aspect of participation in learning is the behavior of parents who participate and support children in learning activities. The behavior of parents who support children in learning is realized by providing learning facilities and helping to improve children's learning outcomes through parental involvement in learning [9].

III. STUDY AND RESULTS

Based on the qualitative study involving 34 teachers in Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, it is known that as an intensive party dealing with students, the teacher finds negative characters that are actually shown by students, such as undisciplined, dishonest, less religious, lazy to learn and impolite behavior [10]. The recapitulation of data from the studies is as follows.

TABLE 1. THE CHARACTER PROBLEMS OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO THE TEACHER (SOURCE: DIANA, 2018:17-18)

No.	Character Problem	Percentage
1	Poor of discipline	56%
2	Poor of honesty	44%
3	Poor of religiosity	32%
4	Laziness to learn	24%
5	Impoliteness	24%

From the table the results of the study found that the 5 most problematic characters according to the teacher are poor of discipline, poor of honesty, poor of religiosity, laziness to learn, and impoliteness

On the other hand, the characteristics of discipline, honesty, religiosity, responsibility, as revealed in this preliminary study are important characters, characters that should thrive among students. The following are the results of the recapitulation of important characters according to the teacher:

TABLE 2. IMPORTANT STUDENT CHARACTERS ACCORDING TO THE TEACHER (SOURCE: DIANA, 2018: 16-17)

No	Character	Percentage
1	Honesty	91%
2	Discipline	88%
3	Religiosity	47%
4	Responsibility	44%
5	Respectful and polite	29%

From the table above it can be seen that the most important characters possessed by students according to the teacher are honesty, discipline, religiosity, responsibility, and respectful/ polite.

Researchers have also conducted a survey on 346 parents in elementary schools to find out the important characters according to parents and become a problem in their formation. The results are as follows:

TABLE 3. PROBLEMS CHARACTER OF ELEMENTARY STUDENT (SOURCE: DIANA, 2019: 28)

NO	Character Problem	Percentage
1	Poor of Discipline	18%
2	Dependence	15%
3	Poor of responsibility	14%
4	Poor of literacy	9%
5	Poor of religiosity	9%

From the table, the results of the study found that the 5 most problematic characters according to parents were poor discipline, dependence, poor of responsibility, poor of literacy, poor of religiosity.

TABLE 4. IMPORTANCE CHARACTER OF STUDENT ACCORDING TO PARENTS (SOURCE: DIANA, 2019: 29)

No.	Character	Percentage
1	Honesty	18%
2	Religiosity	14%
3	Responsibility	14%
4	independence	10%
5	Discipline	9%

From the table, the results of the study obtained 5 characters which are the most important students character according to parents are honesty, religiosity, responsibility, independence, and discipline.

The next result findings from the study shows that there are 3 types of parents in terms of their engagement in school, namely the proactive type, follower type, and total surrender type. The first type is proactive parents. They showed a high commitment in moving the school committee, were active in meetings between the parents and the school, actively asked and give suggestions for the teacher/ school, even if needed could be involved in searching financial resources for the school development.

The second type is the follower's parents. They just followed what was asked by the school or the school committee, were willing to attend the meeting held by the school, but did not show the activity of conveying constructive suggestions, not willing to be more in-depth in matters at school. The third type is the total surrender type. They gave up the affairs of their children completely to the school, were not active in the activities of the school committee, did not pay attention to the development of their children in school, and certainly were not involved in matters related to the school development.

The number of parents engaged in children's education in schools is more dominated by the second and third types, namely the follower type and total surrender type. Teachers perceive parents to be generally less willing to be involved in children's education in school. The majority of parents only show concern for children's education in relation to the obligation to pay education fees and attend when taking report cards. Some parents are quite involved in the activities of student parents meetings, social services, AMT (achievement motivation training) for parents and students, outbound activities, house-to-house recitation, joint prayer and muhasabah. However, in the teacher's assessment, parents are not willing to be involved further. The majority of parents are considered low/ lacking in involvement. Most of them are even 'resigned' to the school. This is evident when parents get invitations from school, there are still many who do not heed the invitation.

Parents are more likely to prioritize other activities than to pay attention to their children [10].

IV. DISCUSSION

Not all parents care about character education, many of which are still oriented towards purely cognitive judgment. The higher the education of their children, the lower the involvement of parents in the education of children in school. Kindergarten children have parents who are more involved in children's education in school than elementary and high school children. Elementary school children have parents who are more involved in children's education in school than high school children [10].

Setiono, a professor of developmental psychology, said that there was a new trend in society - especially parents - in Indonesia to further enhance their dependence on the school. The greater their submission to the school in terms of delivering their children to growth and development to become a person of faithful, intelligent, independent, and so on. Parents increasingly strengthen their position to only play a role in the area of providing education funds and various other educational material needs for their children. Of course this situation is considered a setback [12].

Parental engagement in children's education in school has a positive effect on themselves and their children. Parents involved in the education of happier children, satisfied with their children's achievements, believe in the future prospects of their children [13]. Children who have parents involved are also higher in test results, lower drop-out rates, higher personal competencies, higher self-efficacy in learning, increased social skills, increased social capital, better adaptation at school, more involved in activities at school, and have higher confidence in the process of education in school [2]. Parental engagement in the formation of children's character leads children to be more positive in evaluating their overall behavior, psychosocial development and mental health [14]. Parental engagement has significantly improved students' academic performance and achievements in school [3,15,16,17]. Parental engagement also makes children add to learning by not only learning while at school but also at home [18].

V. CONCLUSION

Based on this studies, the results show that five characters are considered important by parents and teachers, namely honest, religious, responsibility, respect and courtesy, and discipline. According to teachers and parents have been found five main problems of children character. There are lack of discipline, dependence, lack of responsibility, lack of confidence and lack of enthusiasm. Various forms of parental engagement namely proactive type, follower type and ignorant type.

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