

# Engrafting Character-Building Education through Extra-Curricular Activities for Kindergarten Students in TK Aisiyah Busthanul Athfal (ABA) Banjarmasin

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**Abstract**— Character-building education is related to character components that contain behavioral values to develop in stages at an early age until higher education. The connection between knowledge of behavioral values with attitudes or emotions. To implement them, it must start at an early age. The government has already developed curriculum, especially in kindergarten. Somehow, extra-curricular activities are needed to help the students of TK Aisiyah Bustanul Athfal (Aisiyah Bustanul Athfal Kindergarten) to engraft character education. Therefore, the aim of this study is to explain in-depth about the extra-curricular activities in TK ABA, Banjarmasin and the effects of each extra-curricular to the students' character building in those kindergartens. The method of this study was qualitative with phenomenology approach. Collecting data was using deep interviews with the headmaster, the parents and the teachers in three kindergartens of TK ABA in Banjarmasin. Inductive content analysis was used to break down the data in small units, to code and name the units according to the content and to group the coded material based on the same concepts. The results of this study indicated that various extra-curricular activities carried out, such as dance, drum bands, Tahfidz Al-Quran and so on can engraft positive character in TK ABA students such as love of Al Qur'an, honest, discipline, independence, communicative, helping others, responsible, confident, cooperation and courageous.

**Keywords** — *Character-Building Education, Extra-Curricular Activities, Kindergarten, TK ABA*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) or Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) in Indonesia has drawn huge attention by the government. There are at least two key policy documents: the National Education System Law No. 20 in 2003 and The Ministry of Education and Culture's Strategic Plan in 2014 [1]. There are two main reasons for the government's attention. Firstly, ECE is the foundation to gain early childhood development aspects to prepare the children for elementary school [2]. Those aspects are child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development [3]. Secondly, the increase of awareness of middle-class residents about the important of ECE [4].

In Indonesia, ECE is an education institution aimed to develop children's physical and spiritual from birth to age 6 (six) years so that children have readiness to enter further education. It has three categories: kindergarten between the age 4 – 6 years old (TK A 4 – 5 years old and TK B 5 – 6 years old), playgroups between the age 2 – 4 years old, and child-care centered between 0 – 2 years old [5]. At the age of 0-6 years, the brain develops very fast up to 80 percent. At that age, the brain receives and absorbs various kinds of information; therefore, many call this period the golden age of the child.

Character-building education can be the answer to character problems that exist in Indonesia [6], because it fosters the development of ethical and responsible individuals by teaching them about the good characters people should implement in their daily life [7]. It teaches the values of caring for other people, honesty, responsibility, and other important traits based on norm religious, legal, manners, culture and customs. Character building education can help students with their academic subjects. Students will learn how to focus on their studies, interact properly with their teachers and fellow students [7].

Character-building education in early childhood [8], are as follows: (1) Religious, attitudes and behaviors which are obedient in carrying out religious teachings and living in harmony with other religious followers. (2) Honest, a person who can always be trusted in words, actions, and work. (3) Tolerance, an attitude of action that respects differences in religion, ethnicity, opinions, attitudes, and actions of others who are different, (4) Discipline, actions that show orderly behavior and comply with regulations, (5) Hard working, behavior that shows genuine effort in overcoming various learning obstacles and tasks, (6) Creative, thinking and doing something to produce new ways or results from something that they have, (7) Independence in completing tasks, (8) Democratic, how to act related to the rights and obligations of himself and others, (9) Curiosity, attitude to know more deeply and extending from something he learned, seen, and heard, (10) The spirit of nationality which places the interests of the nation and state, above the interests of themselves and their groups, (11) Love the country, (12) Appreciate the

pretensions, attitudes, and actions pushing himself to produce something useful for the community, and to admit and respect the success of others, (13) Friendly or communicative, actions that show pleasure in talking, associating and working, together with others, (14) Peace loving, attitude, words, and actions that cause other people to feel happy and safe in his presence, (15) Love reading, the habit of providing time to read various readings, (16) Care for the environment, (17) Care for social, always want to provide assistance to other people and people in need and (18) Responsibility, attitudes and behavior of a person to carry out their duties and obligations, which should be done on oneself, society, environment (nature, social, and culture), country, and God Almighty.

One way to develop the potential, talents, interests, abilities, personality, cooperation, and independence of students is by implementing extra-curricular activities [9]. Extra-curricular activities are activities carried out by students outside the study hours under the guidance and supervision of the education unit [10]. Those extra-curricular activities have several effect to the character building of the early childhood students. There are many kinds of extra-curricular activities in kindergarten, such as coloring, dancing, swimming, marching band and so on. There are also religious extracurricular, such as: Al Qur'an Recital, Tahfizh (Memorizing) Al Qur'an, Calligraphy Al Qur'an, Tilawah (Recital Al Qur'an in the right way) Al Qur'an, Religious Stage, Khitabah (Speech in Arabic), and Commemoration of Islamic Religion Day [11].

There are many researches related to the benefit of extra-curricular activities to shape the character building of early childhood students. Dancing is a movement to express of human feelings and has a specific meaning or purpose. This quasi-experimental study of 23 students in TK Kartika V-38. The result was the effectiveness of dancing to handle the children's socioemotional, such the ability to socialize [12]. Furthermore, [13] stated that dancing has many effect for character building of the students such as: proud feeling, courage, emotion control ability, empathy, responsibility, independent, sociable, creativity, and have high imagination.

Another extra-curricular activity is coloring. [14] did observation of 15 students of TK Pertiwi Bergolo and the result was coloring a picture can improve fine motor skill of children. This skill are going to help the students to hold a pencil and write latter on. Another descriptive qualitative research of 25 TK Jaya Kumara Desa Balinggi Jati, [15] mentioned that to improve the children creativity might use coloring activity by using demonstration method.

Marching band also had significant effect for character building for early childhood students. [16] did a descriptive qualitative research in TK Tunas Gading Depok, Sleman. The result of this research was marching band had several positive character impact for the students, such as: religious, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hardworking, independent, curiosity, communicative, and responsibility.

Further research is about Reyog Ponorogo Art, [17] did a class action research to TK ABA Keniten Ponorogo. The results were, Reyog Ponorogo Art can increase the character values of the children, such as: respect to others, cooperation, independent, discipline and also the love to God the Almighty. This proved that art could have positive impact for the students' characters.

Tahfizh Al Qur'an is the easiest extra-curricular for children, because, the learning technique is simple. Just to hear and say repeatedly, whether you hear your own reading or hear other people's reading. The most important thing is the reading that is heard is the correct reading, so that the memorandum is also correct. In tahfiz learning, students are taught to memorize short letters, short prayers, and hadith. Through this tahfiz learning, it is hoped that religious characters will emerge [18].

Mursid [19] mentioned many kind of extra-curricular and the relation with character building of kindergarten students. Tahsin is good to grow love for Al Qur'an (religious), drawing/coloring to gain imagination. While dancing/singing to gain discipline, swimming to make the children can socialize. Marching band is good for the children to teach them discipline. Finally, Outbound to make the students confident, cooperation, sociable, and love the environment.

Mostly, government's education funding is going to elementary school until higher education. However, almost all ECEs funding were given by foundations or private establishment [4]. Aisiyah is one of the organizations that has formed charitable endeavors consisting of thousands of kindergartens known as Taman Kanak-Kanak Aisiyah Busthanul Athfal (TK ABA) or ABA Kindergarten that scattered all around Indonesia. Since its establishment in 1919 by Nyai Walidah, the ABA Kindergarten was originally initiated named Froebel Kindergarten 'Aisiyiah. It was inspired by the Dutch education system for their toddler children [20]. This year TK ABA is celebrating the one hundred years anniversary; this proves that Aisiyah organization is consistent in developing early childhood education in Indonesia. The goal is to shape the character-building of children in golden age from 0 – 6 years old [21].

In line with this, character education can be inculcated from an early age, one of which is through kindergarten education. ABA Kindergarten for example, with the holding of various extra-curricular activities integrated with the Aisiyiah curriculum will be able to answer the challenges of the times, where children are not only intelligent in terms of knowledge but also have Islamic values engrafted in their personality.

ABA Kindergarten which became the object of this research was 3 ABA Kindergarten, namely: ABA 1 Kindergarten, ABA 2 Kindergarten and ABA 44 Kindergarten. The selection for the three ABA Kindergarten because of: TK ABA 1 was the first ABA kindergarten to be established, TK ABA 2 has the most amount of students and TK ABA 44 was the most recent one established.

Through all the explanation above, we believe that "Engrafting Character-Building Education through Extra-Curricular Activities for Kindergarten Students in TK Aisiyah Busthanul Athfal (ABA) Banjarmasin" is very important to ensure what kind of extra-curricular in each kindergarten. And, how it effect the characteristic of the students.

## II. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research was used to understand more about the phenomenon of the effect of extracurricular to the character building of the students in three TK ABA in Banjarmasin [22,23]. The data collection was by doing deep interview to the headmaster, two teachers and three parents from each TK ABA. Data analysis was done by making

transcript of the interview and then got familiarize with the data to get deeper understanding [24]. The main goals were to gain structural meanings and essence of the experience [25], which was the effect of extra-curricular activities to the students' character building.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focused in the effect of extra-curricular activities of three kindergarten, namely: TK ABA 1, TK ABA 2 and TK ABA 44 in Banjarmasin.

#### A. TK ABA 1

Interview with the headmaster

- "I served as the TK ABA 1 headmaster for 12 years. I started as headmaster on June 1, 2007."
- "I continued the previous principal program, which emphasized the quality of graduates to be disciplined children, respect for teachers and parents."
- "Extra-curricular activities are coloring and dancing."
- "Yes, children love coloring and dancing activities. The routine activities carried out by the school are coloring and dancing competitions between grade levels (TK.A, TK. B) every 6 months, which the prize is the contributions from parents of students."
- "Dancing teachers are from the internal teachers who got training to teach dancing."
- "The dancing practice is twice a week."
- "Children become elated when they were dancing, practice diligently, children also feel happy to be in school during extra-curricular hours, children are also more cheerful when dancing classes begin."
- "Children are more courageous to ask questions about things they have not understood, children are also more confident in choosing colors without teacher guidance, children are also more disciplined and feel ashamed if they come late to school (discipline) and children are more cheerful when participating in dancing extra-curricular activities."
- We can conclude that according to the head master, from two extra-curricular activities: dancing and coloring, the students in TK ABA 1 gain many good character building, such as courageous, confident and discipline.

Interview with the teachers

- "Characters gained for doing extra-curricular activities are: do not be easily despair, be diligent and help each other for example in practicing dance, it is not easy for students to memorize dance movements, but thanks to practice and mutual assistance between students, the practice becomes fun. Independence, they can practice alone with parents' supervision." (T1)
- "Responsibility, such as children are given the opportunity to complete their work in coloring until it is finished. Honest, they can color by themselves without peeking at their more skilled friend by giving variations using bright and attractive colors." (T2)
- We can conclude that according to the teachers, from extra-curricular activities: dancing and coloring, the students in TK ABA 1 gain many good character building, such as: persistent, diligent, cooperative, and independence.

Interview with the parents

- "Children were brave to dance in front of their friends, teachers and parents. Children are more confident when appearing in front of public." (P1)
- "Children become more responsible because with the practice of dancing, he always joined the practice session, the reason is he did not want to miss the practice since he will be ashamed of his friends if he did." (P2)
- "Children easily memorized all kind of colors, not become stingy with their friends; want to share colored pencils if their friends do not have colored pencils. Children also like to participate in coloring competitions held at school or outside of school." (P3)
- We can conclude that according to the parents, from extra-curricular activities: dancing and coloring, the students in TK ABA 1 gain many good character building, such as: confident, responsible, and care for social.

#### B. TK ABA 2

Interview with the headmaster

- "I am the Head of TK ABA 2 for five years, since April 14, 2014."
- "The vision of TK ABA 2 is to become a kindergarten that makes its graduates become children who are honest, skilled at playing musical instruments, active & creative and independent & responsible. The method we use in educating is the method of Beyond Center and Circle Time (BCCT) or the Learning Model with the Center Approach in ECE. The concept of learning is focused on the teacher presenting the real world in the classroom and encourages the child to make the connection between knowledge, experience and application of learning such as playing in daily life, so that the children's brain is stimulated to continue to think actively in exploring their own experiences in study."
- "Children love it when we offer a variety of extra-curricular activities such as swimming, dancing, marching bands and coloring. These activities are all carried out outside the classroom with the trainer being a teacher from outside of the school."
- "The benefits obtained are children become more confident, become excited about each exercise because they like them and we become aware of the hobbies of each child, some likes dancing, some likes marching bands, some likes swimming and also coloring. Children are also became more independent and are not afraid to appear in front of audience."
- "The positive characteristic that emerges in children that like to play marching band and dancing are they tend to be independent when they come to the training, they prepare their own marching band instruments and ask the teacher to immediately start training, children are honest in conveying something they have not understood. They are responsible in returning musical instruments and cleaning the training ground; children are more skilled and enjoy reading new books given by the teacher every week."
- We can conclude that according to the head master, from four extra-curricular activities: swimming, dancing,



marching bands and coloring, the students in TK ABA 2 gain many good character building, such as courageous, confident independence, honest, and responsible.

#### Interview with the teachers

- “The characteristic of healthy living, with regular exercise every week, made children have an awareness to exercise. Discipline by presenting police officer in class to give explanation about traffic signs and respect for teachers and parents by getting used to greeting and kissing hands. (T3)
- Teamwork, responsible and become active in drum band practice such as taking part in training according to the set schedule and practicing the harmonization of the drum band instruments with each other and carrying out the tasks given to them. Responsibility by teaching them to tidy up and return the music instrument after they finish practicing. (T4)
- We can conclude that according to the teachers, from four extra-curricular activities: swimming, dance, marching bands and coloring, the students in TK ABA 2 gain many good character building, such as courageous, confident, independence, honest, and responsible.

#### Interview with the parents

- “Children become easier to mingle with their friends, not shy and we parents know what activities that interest them. Children are more cheerful when they gather with many people.” (P4)
- “We can direct children according to their interests, teach children to be discipline with routine practice and direct children to be better in teamwork. Because like dancing and marching bands where it involved more than one children.” (P5)
- “Children have activities that can train their skills, such as dancing and marching bands. Children are more responsible in following training and competitions.” (P6)
- We can conclude that according to the parents, from four extra-curricular activities: swimming, dancing, marching band and coloring, the students in TK ABA 2 gain many good character building, such sociable, discipline, cooperation, and responsible.

#### C. TK ABA 44

##### Interview with the headmaster

- “I served as TK ABA 44 Principal for 2 years since this kindergarten was first established on 1 August 2017 until now.”
- “TK ABA 44 emphasizes its learning program so that graduates memorize Al-Quran surah and daily prayers, discipline, creative, active, independent, courageous, honest, diligent in praying together in the mosque and maintaining cleanliness. The teachers come earlier than the students do, so that all the teachers can line up every morning in front of the school to welcome students that arrive. The extra-curricular activities are tahfiz Al Qur'an, coloring, dancing and fashion shows.”
- “The students are enthusiastic about the activities carried out. Especially if there is a championship and they join us, they become excited, as well as teaching them to be

courageous in appearing on front of public and *Alhamdulillah* they often get champions.”

- “The benefits obtained from these activities are instilling religious values in children, values of socializing with friends and environment, independence and responsibility. Children also brave enough to have idols like the Muhammadiyah leaders. Children are also not afraid of dentists, police officers and nurses, they tend to be disciplined and follow the advice of dentists, police and nurses to maintain personal safety and hygiene.”
- “Children were discipline to pray, discipline to come in the morning because they already understand what would happen if they arrive late. They also will not be late to dancing rehearsal and tahfiz started. They were also enthusiastic and happy to follow it especially when invited to watch Muhammadiyah figures at the Muhammadiyah University Adijani Al Alabij theater studio Banjarmasin which is often used in the screening of Muhammadiyah's documentary film as a studio.”
- We can conclude that according to the head master, from four extra-curricular activities: tahfiz Al Qur'an, coloring, dancing and fashion shows, the students in TK ABA 44 gain many good character building, such as courageous, discipline, confident, socialize, and responsible.

##### Interview with the teachers

- “Believe and fear Allah SWT by reading Al-Qur'an. As we familiarize children with every day reading Al Qur'an, so that children will experience habituation in themselves. This can also lead to discipline in children. Example, by familiarizing prayer in together in mosque.” (T5)
- “Characterize in mutual understanding, sharing, social interaction between friends. Yes. Like the case of fighting over the coloring tool. After being given, children will understand that fellow friends must share with each other because they both need the same coloring tool.” (T6)
- We can conclude that according to the teachers, from four extra-curricular activities: tahfiz Al Qur'an, coloring, dancing and fashion shows, the students in TK ABA 44 gain many good character building, such as discipline, religious feeling to God the Almighty and sociable.

##### Interview with the parents

- “Children often remind us parents to often recite, pray together at home and diligently go to the mosque.” (P7)
- “Glad that the child became willing to appear in competitions, he was not ashamed to appear in front of a crowd.” (P8)
- “We parents become more discipline in praying because it will be shameful to be reprimanded by children. Children often take part in religious lectures.” (P9)
- We can conclude that according to the head master, from four extra-curricular activities: tahfiz Al Qur'an, coloring, dancing and fashion shows, the students in TK ABA 44 gain many good character building, such as courageous, discipline, confident, and religious feeling.

#### D. DISCUSSION

The Headmasters from three kindergartens mentioned that extra-curricular activities in their schools were coloring, dancing, marching band, swimming tahfiz Al Qur'an and fashion show. Coloring and dancing became the extra-curricular in the three kindergarten. While marching band and swimming were only in TK ABA 2. Tahfiz Al Qur'an was only in TK ABA 44.

Religious character building is obviously mentioned by teachers and parents in TK ABA 44, since they have tahfiz as their extra-curricular. This is in line with [8, 18, 19]. As a religious region, South Kalimantan society still consider religious values are very important to be engrafted to their children.

The next character is honesty. The head master and teachers in TK ABA 2 mentioned this character. They relating it with the marching band extra-curricular activities. That also mentioned by [8, 16]. The students will be so honest if they do not understand about how to play the musical instrument during marching band rehearsal.

Discipline became very important character building according to almost all the headmasters, the teachers and the parents. Some of them related it to discipline in attending dancing rehearsal or marching band rehearsal [16, 19].

The other characters that quite popular among the headmasters, teachers and parents were confident and courageous. They feel proud if the children had the confident and the courage to perform in front of the audiences or follow competition in art or sport [19]. This is the core of having extra-curricular in the first place.

The headmaster and the teachers in TK ABA 2 mentioned independence. This is related to marching band rehearsal, while the children were independence in picking up the musical instrument and playing it [16].

Friendly or sociable was picked by the headmaster in TK ABA 44, Teachers in TK ABA 1 and TK ABA 44, and the parents in TK ABA 2. This is related to dancing and playing marching band. Those kind of physical activities loved by the children, since they do not like to stay quite while rehearsing. Care for social (helping other) mentioned by the parents in TK ABA 1. The parents things that during coloring activities, their children never hesitate to lend their color pencil to their friends in need [8].

The teachers and parents in TK ABA 1 and TK ABA 2 picked responsible, when they think that their children like to join competition in dancing or sport [13, 16]. In the same time the headmaster of TK ABA 44 mentioned that learning tahfiz was make the children responsible to memorize Al Qur'an.

Cooperation is very important as character building values. Teachers in TK ABA 1 and parents in TK ABA 2 this that during extra-curricular activities related to swimming and dancing. The students help each other to rehearsal [19].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that character-building education is an education that must be instilled from an early age, one of which is through extra-curricular activities. The implementation of various extra-curricular activities such as dancing, coloring, swimming, marching band and tahfiz Al-Qur'an were expected to be able to engraft the character building of the children in the

kindergartens such as: religious, honest, discipline, independence, friendly, care for social, responsible, confident, cooperation, and courageous. The next study can focus in extra-curricular activities challenges and the way to overcome it.

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