Online Learning and Character Education Problems During the Covid-19 Pandemic
(A Religious Education Lecturer's Perspective)

Telly Delly Wua[1,*] Apeles Lexi Lonto[2], Mardan Umar[3]

[1,2] *Pancasila and Civic Education Departement, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Negeri Manado*
[3] *Da'wah Management Departement, FUAD, IAIN Manado.*
[*]*Corresponding author. Email: telly_wua@unima.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

Character Education remains an educational priority in a variety of situations and conditions, including during the covid-19 pandemic. The urgency of character education cannot be ignored, especially in the midst of the development of technology and information that is increasingly advanced. Interaction between human beings began to be replaced by the presence of technology such as online learning during the covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, character education during this pandemic should be a top priority. This study seeks to examine the problems faced by educators in character education in universities in the perspective of Religious Education lecturers. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive by collecting data through observation, online interviews, and documentation studies. This research data is sourced from lecturers of Religious Education in universities. The results of this study show that the problem of student character education during the covid-19 pandemic with online learning model, is limited interaction between lecturers and students. Restriction of physical direct contact causes lecturers to be less maximal in character learning. In addition, the ability to use information technology and the availability of internet networks are also obstacles. Similarly, the seriousness of students in following online learning is a common problem in character learning during the covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Character Education, Online Learning, Pandemic Covid-19

1. INTRODUCTION

Character education remains an educational priority including during the covid-19 pandemic. Katilmis, Eksi & Ozturk (2011) agree that character education programs have positive effect on character development and academic success [1]. So, character education is very important process. Mustari (2014) stated that character education will always be important from time to time [2]. Intelligence equipped with good character, that's the true goal of education (Majid & Andayani, 2010) [3], Umar (2020) said the same thing, that character education has an important role in children's education [4].

The Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, issued a rule, which states that online/distance learning is focused on increasing students' understanding of the corona virus and the covid-19 outbreak. As for learning activities and assignments, it may vary between students, according to their respective interests and conditions, including in terms of gaps in access/learning facilities at home. Evidence or learning activity products are given qualitative and useful feedback from the teacher, without being required to give quantitative scores/values. Based on this rule, learning during the pandemic is carried out online and does not really emphasize the character aspect. This is the concern for character educators, that learning during a pandemic will have a bad impact on the development of the nation's character.

People still see that classrooms are real schools and online classes are less effective. People do not think that online classes can help in children's education. This is due to the low educational interaction between educators and students. So that the values of character education will be neglected. Interaction between human beings began to be replaced by the presence of technology such as online learning during the covid-19 pandemic.

If previously there were so many schools that had used technology in learning, then in this unusual condition, all schools in Indonesia were forced to apply technology in the teaching and learning process. even though technology is not fully able to help the process of learning remotely become easier to implement. there are many obstacles faced by students in using technology in the distance learning process, especially for students and teachers who live in remote areas, those who live in remote areas, coupled with economic conditions that do not allow parents of students to have access to smartphone and have to buy internet quota to access the internet every day.

Intania & Sutama (2020) stated that one of the big obstacles in online learning is the difficulty of the internet network [5]. This is evidenced by the difference

in the reach power of the internet network in several regions. in areas that have good internet networks, of course, there will be no problems, but for students who live in areas that have difficulty reaching the internet network, it will certainly be a big problem in the learning process. This is the gap that occurs in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), character is an inner trait that affects all thoughts, behavior, character, and character possessed by humans or other living creatures. Some parties consider that knowledge, skills, and good character do not always have to rely on classrooms through educators who officially teach at schools, but should be obtained from parents and adults at home and around them (community based education) [6].

In reality, the family environment has not been able to function optimally in the implementation of children's character education. Likewise, community-based character education is not fully capable of forming characters that are in accordance with expectations. Therefore, the role of the school is very important to condition a controlled learning atmosphere with binding rules so that students can be formed properly according to the goals of character education.

Based on this description, the researcher wishes to find out how the opinion of religious education lecturers regarding character education during the COVID-19 pandemic, with several research questions, namely: 1) Can character learning be done optimally through online learning?; 2) What are the lecturers' views on the problems of online character education?; 3) Which one is more optimal in character learning? online learning, offline learning or a combination of online and offline learning?. This research is expected to be able to express the views of religious education lecturers on the effectiveness of character education with online learning during the pandemic.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Milliren & Messer (2009) stated that the school functions as an arena where students can practice virtue and transcend their school life [7]. Based on the results of research conducted by Atmazaki, et al. (2020:152) found that for a character educator, schools have an important role in the character education of students. The majority of educators, namely 98.4% of educators surveyed, said that schools have an important role in strengthening student character education, because 90% of their schools have programs and carry out character education in their schools. In addition, 80% of educators stated that they have an important role in character education in the school environment. Thus, the role of educational institutions and the school environment has an important position in character education [8].

Character formation consists of three related aspects, namely moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action or moral behavior (Lickona, 1991). So that education

Early childhood character begins with providing understanding and knowledge about good attitude through the learning process, then strengthen that understanding so that become a belief and be lived, and carried out in daily activities continuously to become a habit [9].

The noble values of the nation and state as well as religion are character values that must be an integral part of all Indonesian citizens to achieve success and progress. Because character has a close relationship with nation building. According to James Dale Davidson and Rees-Mog (1997) as cited by Megawangi, "all strong societies have solid moral foundations [10]. To avoid the destruction of the nation, it is necessary to start an effort to form a good and moral character of the nation. One of the efforts taken is to develop character education, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In reality, learning during the COVID-19 pandemic did not provide many solutions for the formation of the character of students. Online learning that is being carried out at this time still provides opportunities for optimal character formation so that it is necessary to improve and develop character education programs that are in accordance with the situation and conditions.

3. METHODS

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection was carried out by observing and interviewing informants consisting of lecturers of religious education related to research issues, namely character education through online learning during the covid19 pandemic.

The research conducted in-depth interviews to find out the views of religious education lecturers on character education. As for the lecturers of religious education who were used as sources of information, they were lecturers of Islamic religious education, Protestant Christians and Catholic Christians in the city of Manado.

Documentation studies are carried out by searching for written data, both from the mass media, government reports and scientific writings that support research studies. The process of data analysis activities is carried out by collecting all the data which is then reduced to the data that is not selected. reduction is done by selecting only the relevant data.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learning during a pandemic requires the process to take place online. This certainly gets mixed responses from educators. We asked the informants questions about how the views of religious education lecturers on character education conducted online. The answers given by religious education lecturers were quite varied. based on the informants' answers, three majority answers were put forward, namely the learning process is not optimal, internet network problems, and low motivation to learn

(figure 1). online learning is still not optimal in education, including character education for students. In addition, the difficulty of the internet network in some areas causes problems in learning to be more complex. The gap between regions that have good internet networks and regions that have difficulty accessing the internet is an important concern in online learning. Problems like this cause a decrease in the enthusiasm and motivation of students to learn, even including a decrease in the enthusiasm of teaching lecturers. This certainly has a negative impact on the learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic.
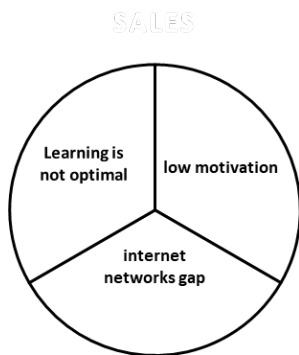

Figure 1. What are the lecturers' views about online character education?.

Character education through online learning is felt not to take place optimally by educators. data from informants shows that religious education lecturers doubt that online character education can take place optimally. Therefore, the researcher asked the informant questions. Can character learning be done optimally through online learning?. The result is that 46% doubt that online learning works optimally for character education. (figure 2).
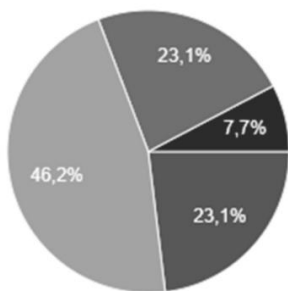
Figure 2. Can character learning be done optimally through online learning?.

The data from this informant made researchers ask about the best solution for character education in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. which character learning is effective.
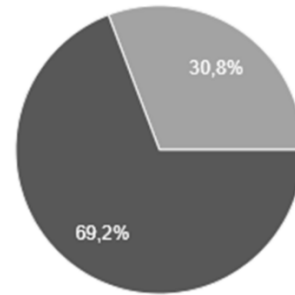
Figure 3. Which Learning Suitable For Learning Characters?

Based on that data, religious education lecturers argue that character education is more effective offline (69%) and 30% want a combination of offline and online learning.

Character education is education that is intact in developing the potential of students and forming good character. Therefore, character education should prioritize direct interaction between educators and students. This is intended so that educators can optimally optimize the potential of students as a whole.

In connection with education that takes place as a whole and comprehensively, the questions that must be analyzed are how the process is, who can do it, what must be prepared, and so on. The holistic education process must be able to develop the full potential of children, empower existing intelligence, and optimize all talents possessed. In addition, cooperation between various parties in the scope of education must be carried out such as schools, families, communities and government institutions. It also fulfills the holistic requirements, namely the integration and linkage between the functions of educational institutions and institutions outside the holistic character education system.

Education will never be separated from the discussion about humans as educators and students. In learning, both have an important role in achieving educational goals. On the one hand, educators strive to develop the potential of students by creating good learning conditions and situations as well as instilling noble qualities, while on the other hand students seek to learn, practice, follow the direction and guidance of educators, imitate, imitate attitudes as an effort to shape his character. Thus character education cannot be separated from direct interpersonal relationships in education, including in the school environment as a form of direct education.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and the description above, it can be concluded that online character education in the view of the religious education lecturers is considered not optimal, because there are so many problems both related to the requirements for character-based learning, as well as the availability of internet facilities in several areas. In addition, religious education lecturers argue that character education cannot be fully implemented online, because it requires interaction between educators and students in the learning process.

Lastly, religious education lecturers stated that character education needs to be done through offline learning, and it can also be done by combining online and offline learning, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors made equal contributions to the study. starting from the process of data collection, data analysis, and preparation of research results.

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