



The Implementation of Character Education at Pasuruhan State Elementary School, Central Java

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Abstract. Character education plays important role in developing students' personalities. The aims of this study are to describe what character traits are instilled by the teachers and how the teacher instills these character traits in the students at Pasuruhan State Elementary School. The study employed a qualitative approach. The data were collected through an interview with a female teacher and observations. The results of this study indicate that Pasuruhan State Elementary School has implemented 5 character traits: spirituality, passion for reading, honesty, independence, and tolerance. In instilling the characters, the teachers used the following strategies: 'habituation' and 'continuous reminder', 'setting a good example, and 'providing advice. The study has pedagogical implications, particularly in terms of the teacher's role in building students' positive characters and the strategies that can be used in nurturing those characters.

Keywords: Values · Education · Character education · Elementary school

1 Introduction

Education is one of the main foundations for civic design and development. According to Lickona, the purpose of education is to guide students in the process of forming human beings who are equipped with the knowledge and ability to make decisions, have a noble character, and cultivate a spiritual heritage within themselves. Nations and civilizations associated with them (1).

In the International Education Dictionary, education has at least three main characteristics as follows:

1. The process of developing skills, attitudes, and other forms of behavior in the community in which they live.
2. The social process in which a person is exposed to environmental influences that are selected and controlled (especially at school) to achieve optimal social competence and personal development.

3. Personal development or character development [1].

The occurrence of a lot of vandalism in the national context, for example inter-ethnic sentiment, ethnic conflict, drug cases, student brawls, child abuse, theft everywhere, bullying cases, shows the weakness of the nation's courage. The negative impact occurs due to lack of attention to character building. The formation of character from an early age, including elementary school, will foster good national cultural character and is the main key in developing the countr [2]

The definition of education according to LAW no. 20 2003 is a conscious and planned effort to create a calm and pleasant learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential, have the spiritual strength of the god of religion, self-control, have a noble personality, intelligence, quality and skills needed for self, society, nation, and state [3].

It is clear that characters play important roles in education. Novak defines character as "a harmonious blend of all the virtues that can be identified in religious traditions, literary history, sages or sane people in stories." [4] Meanwhile, Muslich describes character as the values of human behavior expressed through thoughts, attitudes, feelings, emotions, religions, and lawful words and deeds with respect to Almighty God, self, other people, environment and nation, norms of culture, and customs [4]. In Indonesia, National education states the following cultural and national characters: Spirituality, Integrity, Tolerance, Discipline, Hard work, Creativity, Independence, Respect, Curiosity, Nationalism, Persistence, Communicative, Harmony, Passion for reading, Caring, and Responsibility [5].

Restructuring or transforming Indonesia's national education can begin with the deepest aspects of national education: the re-creation of character, and the intelligence that reflects competence. With a strong and resilient character and high skills, created by a good education, can meet or overcome various needs, challenges, and new needs. Therefore, in addition to intellectual development, student personality development is very important [6].

The development of student personality can be fostered through character education. Taufik (2012) asserts that character education is an effort made by educators systematically and at the same time to improve the quality of students' personality values by instilling positive personality values [7].

Character education has the function of (1) developing the basic potential to be generous, noble, and personable (2) strengthening and building multicultural nation behavior (3) improving national civilization that has the ability to compete globally in association. Character education is carried out through various media, including family education units, civil society, political society, government, business and mass media, [8].

The process of character education must be carried out from an early age and must be maximized at elementary school age. Humans have good potential since birth, but this potential must be nurtured and developed through family, school and community socialization, [9].

Character education in elementary schools is an effort to instill character values to build character for elementary school students. Considering that the era of globalization is a moral generation, it is necessary to educate this personality to raise the spirit of the

nation's generation. There are many character values that need to be applied to elementary school students. Because elementary school is the right place to instill personality values. Character education aims to build the character of students to be able to face the situation of this global era. At the same time, it also aims to raise the spirit of the nation's generation so that this nation is strong and intact.

Realizing that character education is crucial in elementary school, the current study is interested in investigating how character education is implemented in Pasuruhan State Elementary School in Central Java. To this end, the study formulates the following questions:

1. What characters are instilled in school?
2. How does the teacher instill character education to students?

2 Literature Review

2.1 Character

Based on the understanding of language, character is a personality or a habit. Meanwhile, according to psychologists, character is a belief system or habit that guides an individual's actions. Therefore, if knowledge about a person's personality can be known, then they will also see how the individual behaves in certain conditions. From the aspect of understanding, personality and morals do not have a significant difference. Personality and morals can be interpreted as an action that occurs without further thought because it is ingrained in the mind, or both can be called habits [10].

According to Michael Novak, character is "a harmonious blend of all the virtues that can be identified in religious traditions, literary history, sages or sane people in stories." By Masnur Muslich character is meant the values of human behavior expressed through thoughts, attitudes, feelings, emotions, religions and lawful words and deeds with respect to Almighty God, self, other people, environment and nation, norms of culture and customs [4].

National characteristics and cultural values can be drawn from various educational theories, educational psychology, socio-cultural values, religious theory, Pancasila, and the 1945 Constitution. National education contains 18 educational values based on culture and national characteristics, namely: 1) Religious, 2) Honesty, 3) Tolerance, 4) Discipline, 5) Hard working, 6) Creativity, 7) Independence, 8) Democracy, 9) Curiosity, 10) Patriotism, 11) Appreciation towards achievement, 12) Courteous, 13) Love peace, 14) Love reading, 15) Conservation, 16) Social care, 17) Logical thinking, 18) Responsibility [5].

2.2 Character Education

Character education is education that supports the social, emotional and moral development of students. In simple terms, character education can be understood as anything positive that a teacher does and influences the character of the students he teaches [9].

Character education is everything that teachers do that can influence student character. Teachers help shape the personality of students. This includes exemplary teacher

behavior, the way the teacher speaks or communicates material, the way the teacher is tolerant, and many other related things [8].

Character education basically aims to form a nation that is tough, competitive, has noble character, is ethical, tolerant, gotong royong, has a patriotic spirit, is dynamic, advanced in knowledge and technology, all of which are imbued with faith and meaningfulness to God Almighty based on Pancasila [8].

2.3 Previous Study

There are previous studies focus on implementation of character education. Jenny Lilawati (2017) evaluates the Implementation of Character Education in Elementary School Students [11]. This study adopted a qualitative descriptive method. Analyze research data through data reduction, presentation, and inference. The findings suggest that character building is implemented in learning, exemplary behavior, habits, and extracurricular activities. The factors affecting the implementation of character education include supporting factors and inhibiting factors.

Fathinnaufal (2020) evaluates the Implementation of Character Education in Elementary Schools [12]. This study aims to analyze the implementation of role construction in SDN 006. The type of research used was qualitative. The data collection techniques used in this study are interview techniques and data documentation, in addition to data analysis techniques through data collection and simplification. The results of this research were that the implementation of character education in SDN 006 went well, according to the results of the interview with the principal, which indicated that during the habituation process, students took turns praying before starting the learning activities, creating a culture of friendliness and smiling.

Slamet Widodo (2019) evaluates The Implementation of Character Education in Elementary Schools: an Evaluation Research]. This study aims to describe the implementation of character education for elementary school (SD) students in Surabaya. The research method used in this study is an evaluation research method. Data from the results of this study indicate that elementary schools in Surabaya have implemented character education. Schools have made character education an academic vision in both explicit and implicit forms.

Sofyang Mustoip (2018) evaluates Character education implementation for students in grade IV SDN 5 Sindangkasih regency of Purwakarta West Java [14]. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection was carried out by data triangulation, namely interviews, observations, and documents. The results of the study show that the character values adopted by this school are religious, disciplined, independent, respect for achievement, communication and responsibility which are in line with the vision and mission of SDN 5 Sindangkasih.

Annisa Tasya Marsakha (2021) evaluates Management of Character Education in School: A Literature Review [15]. This study is a literature search. A literature search was performed to retrieve articles from 2015 to 2020 in the Schools Online Character Education Administration database. The outcome of the review of 22 articles was the administration of character education in schools. Moral education requires coordination between the teacher and all school members, the school, students' parents, and the

community in order to achieve the proposed goals, especially for students who are assimilated and instilled with moral values in their lives.

3 Method

The current study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach. The context where the study was conducted is Pasuruhan State Elementary School in Pati, Central Java, Indonesia. The data were collected through an interview with a female teacher and observation of teaching learning process in the classroom as well as the school environment. The data were analyzed using content analysis.

4 Result and Discussion

The result of the study is presented in accordance to the research questions.

4.1 Type of Characters Instilled at School

The results of this study indicate that Pasuruhan State Elementary School has instilled 5 characters: spirituality, passion for reading, honesty, independence, and tolerance. During observation, the teacher imparted 'spirituality' character by asking the leader of the class to lead the prayer before and after the lessons. Similarly, the study found that the teacher nurtured 'passion for reading' through classroom activities such as making clippings and reading aloud. In addition, 'tolerance' was observed when the teacher asked the students to work in groups to solve a problem. The teacher also taught the students to be 'honest' by asking them to do their homework by themselves not copying others' work.

In the interview, the teacher stated that she helped the students to develop their 'independence' character by providing a task for them to do their own.

Q: How do you instill independent character in students?

A: In the character of independence, I instill it by giving tasks to be done alone without the help of parents or friends. Then the next day I will ask whether it is true that they did it themselves or not.

The instillment of the characters found in the study are in line with Presidential Decree No. 87 of 2017, Ministry of Education and Culture (2017) stating that there are five main characters from Pancasila and Priority Development of Characters Intensive Education is the Movement (PPK), namely Religion, Ethnicity, Integrity, Independently and in cooperation with each other. These values cannot develop independently, but are interrelated [16].

Some of the characters in this study is also found in other studies [12] who investigated the implementation of religious, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and integrity characters in Sangkurilang State Elementary School 006. In a similar vein, [17] reported the implementation of religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, self, love of country, respect for achievement, curiosity, communicative, caring environment, social care, and responsibility in State Elementary School Rampal Celaket 1 Malang. Also, [18] found that the students in Rabangodu Utara State Elementary School 19 showed the following character traits: religious, honest, diligent, disciplined, and caring/responsible.

4.2 Strategies to Instill Character Education

During interview the teacher said that she used ‘habituation’ strategy to assist the students to build positive characters.

Q: In instilling character, what strategies do you use to shape student character?

A: The strategy I use is habituation, in this way students will get used to the character values that I apply more quickly.

In Permendikbud Number 23 of 2015 concerning Character Development, Article 1 paragraph (4) stipulates that: habituation is a series of activities that must be carried out by students, teachers, and education staff with the aim of fostering good habits and forming a good generation and positive character. This habituation pattern is seen as important as a method of character development or character education.

Beside ‘habituation’ the teacher also used other strategies, such as reminding students continuously to do well at school, providing advice when students make mistakes, setting a good example for students, and encouraging them to practice positive characters in their daily activities.

Q: Besides habituation, are there any other methods that you use?

A: Another method that I use is by reminding students and giving advice in a better direction. For example, giving advice when someone does something wrong, reminding them to do good, and always encouraging them to do something positive.

The practice of ‘habituation’ was also found by Sari and [19] in their library research to investigate the implementation of anti-corruption in Indonesian Elementary School. In a similar vein, [20] reported that the teacher in Mutiara Cendekia Islamic Elementary School cultivated noble characters to the students by cultivating or habituation, always reminding students of good things, giving educative warnings and punishments, providing examples or being role models, and motivating students to practice positive characters in their daily life.

Strategy of ‘setting a good example’ was also voiced by the teachers of Physical Education of Elementary Schools in Sumedang Regency [21]. On the other hand, other studies emphasized on other strategies in cultivating noble characters such as self-development activities (routine activities, spontaneous activities, exemplary and conditioning) and integration in thematic learning (Syllabus and lesson plans and the learning process) [18]. Integrated Thematic learning [17], and active participation of family and community [18].

5 Conclusion

It can not be denied that instilling positive characters since early age is crucial. In the context of Pasuruhan State Elementary School, the teacher is fully aware of the urgency of nurturing positive characters of the students.

It is through ‘habituation’ and ‘continuous reminder’, ‘setting good example’, ‘providing advice’ that the teacher is able to assist her students to build five characters: spirituality, passion for reading, honesty, independence, and tolerance. The study implies that any teachers have important roles in building the students’ positive characters and they can employ various strategies in helping the students practicing positive characters.

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