

# Analysis of Character Education Based on School Culture on Elementary School Students (A Case Study Qualitative)

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Abstract. The movement to strengthen character education is the foundation and main spirit of modern education. The purpose of this study is to describe character education based on school culture and its effect on elementary school students. The research method used is a qualitative research method with a case study approach. The sample of this study consisted of principals, teachers, students and school committees determined through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Data collection techniques used are in-depth interviews, participatory observation, focus group discussions and document analysis. The data analysis technique used in qualitative research is an interactive analysis model consisting of data reduction, data collection, presentation and conclusion. The results of the study indicate that: (1) the implementation of strengthening school cultural character education consists of basic guidelines for strengthening character education, policy socialization, implementation strategies, related parties; (2) the findings of character education activities include culture of uniform, culture of healthy eating, culture of morning greetings, culture of sharing with others, culture of playing traditional games, extracurricular activities, outing classes and school ambassadors; and (3) maximized character values, namely religious, nationalist, independent, integrity and mutual cooperation. The conclusion of this research is that school culture character education can maximize the character of elementary school students with good planning and implementation of various activities.

Keywords: Character education, School culture, Elementary school, Case study qualitative

# 1 Introduction

The 2013 curriculum that is being implemented in Indonesia carries the 21<sup>st</sup>-century education paradigm. The 21<sup>st</sup>-century education does not only focus on 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills, but also pays attention to strengthening the character of each student. Character

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education is very important to strengthen the personality of students and is expected to be the main foundation in building Indonesian people who are pious and ready to compete in the future [1]. Character education is a combination of two words, namely education and character. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, character education is a power or effort to advance the mind, body and character. So that it is in harmony with the surrounding environment and nature [2], [3]. Efforts to prepare a golden generation in 2045 that will always be pious, nationalist, tough and independent is part of the ideals of the Indonesian nation, but efforts are needed to make it happen because the social problem that we have recently heard is about student brawls in Indonesia [4].

There are many types of problems are in the world of education. Other problems include the degradation of moral manners that now exist in the educational environment, for example, cheating on friends during exams, not obeying the teacher's advice, not wanting to shake hands when meeting with the teacher, opening the door without saying hello, not saying hello when meeting with the teacher, speak loudly when with older people, do not immediately carry out worship and many others. This shows the lack of success in strengthening character education in schools with teachers, at home with parents, and in the environment with the community [5]-[7].

The 2045 golden generation seeks to develop a positive attitude based on IESQ (Intellectual Emotional Spiritual Quotient) so that the 2045 generation will have a mental ready to compete with other developed countries (Manullang, 2013). However, the current problem cannot be allowed to drag on because the strengthening of character education is still very weak at this time [8], [9]. Supposedly, children have received character education from an early age so that later they can manage cognitive, affective and psychomotor attitude. So that in the future they will become quality human beings who can certainly encourage the progress of a nation for the better. Inappropriate ways greatly affect this degradation, for example from the school system which is currently towards intellectuality, paying less attention to morality [10], [11]. This can be seen by the existence of an exam system, which is the benchmark for the cognitive value of students without paying attention to affective aspects.

School institutions are currently a very large foundation in strengthening character education through various strategies, including curriculum, discipline enforcement, classroom management, both through school programs that have been launched [12], [13] Strategy itself is the means used to achieve goals. According to [14] basically, it is from schools that the character of students can be formed by implementing programs that have been made by schools. Character formation in elementary school can be formed by consistently instilling character education from families, schools and the surrounding community [15]. Given the importance of strengthening this character education in the 4.0 era where the human side might be a little lost, it is necessary to hold cooperation between various parties including the school, family and environment. Where in this era there was a change in the civilization of society which was marked by changes in the joints of life, culture, society, including education. Teachers as sources of knowledge must also understand the technology that is developing at this time, so that they can guide or direct students and not fall into modern technology at this time [16], [17].

Broad insight to face this era of globalization requires a place to convey it, namely through the field of education. Because education is an effort to form young people who excel. Education is a pillar where there are educational actions for the perpetrators. This education can also be a process of continuous human self-improvement. Education related to moral and ethical formation is character education. This character education has a goal, namely to form a person's personality in a child's personality development school, because it does not only involve one cognitive aspect, but also affective and psychomotor aspects [18], [19]. Education is considered less capable in developing the morale of students, because currently practice in the field of education is nothing more than scholastic exercises, such as knowing, comparing, training and memorizing [20], [21].

Schools must have a strategy to overcome the character crisis through Strengthening Character Education. The Strengthening Character Education must develop five character values including religious, nationalism, independence, mutual cooperation, and integrity [22], [23]. This character crisis can be overcome through the integration of intra-curricular and extracurricular activities. Every school certainly has a diverse culture, but all schools have the same goal, namely to form the character of students who understand norms and etiquette, and of course school activities are also formed as motivators or encouragement for students [24], [25]. There are many studies that raise the topic of character education in elementary schools such as [12], [13], [14], [15], and [16], but none of them examines character education in terms of school culture in schools that are designated as pilot character education in Indonesia, especially for elementary school students.

Based on the explanation of the background above, the purpose of this study is to describe the character of education based on school culture and its effect on elementary school students with a focus on (1) the implementation of strengthening school culture character education; (2) finding of character education activities; and (3) maximized character values in strengthening this character education.

# 2 Method

The approach in this study uses a qualitative approach, using the type of case study research that seeks to describe a current situation. It can be explained that this qualitative research is a research whose data is in the form of words that have their own characteristics because they do not contain numbers as data [26]. This qualitative research looks more at the actual situation that occurs in the field, not the situation that should occur in the field [27]. [28] state, "Study case of this research is a form of qualitative research based on human understanding and behavior based on human opinion. Subjects in the research can be individuals, groups, agencies or communities". This study describes the phenomenon of strengthening character education and its effect on elementary school students.

The samples in this study were teachers, students and representatives of each stakeholder in elementary schools. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique of data sources with certain considerations. In this study, the sample criteria included being willing to be the subject of research, understanding activities or all things related to strengthening character education and being in school for a long time. Furthermore, so that the research data is more in-depth, a snowball sampling technique is used, which is a way of sampling data sources that are initially small in number, but eventually become large.

Data collecting techniques used in this study were in-depth interviews, non-participatory observation and documentation. In-depth interviews conducted in this study used an open interview type where the interview process based on the questions was not limited to (unbound) answers. Furthermore, non-participatory observation in this study means that the research is only an observer of the research subject and is not directly involved. Furthermore, documentation in this study is used as a method of collecting data by viewing or analyzing documents made by the subject himself or by others about the subject related to the topic.

The data analysis technique used in this study is the data analysis technique of [26]. The first stage in analyzing qualitative data in this study is data reduction. Second, the data presentation stage. At this stage, research data is presented in the form of graphs or charts and tables or other forms with the aim of making it easier to understand. Third, drawing conclusions. The process of drawing conclusions can only be done when all the varied data is simplified, compiled or displayed using certain media, then it can be understood easily. This conclusion becomes information that can be presented in the research report and placed in the closing section.

### **3** Result and Discussion

# 3.1 Designing Activities for Strengthening Character Education Based on School Culture

Based on the results of interviews, it was obtained that elementary schools strengthen character education, namely the appointment as a national reference school in character strengthening by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology. This appointment departs from the realization of the NAWACITA of the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo. The government cooperates with the ministry of education and culture to carry out a mental revolution program with the aim of preparing the younger generation to have strong and virtuous characters. According to the principal,

"Strengthening character education is designed as a form of effort not only to educate students cognitively but also to develop character and nobility according to Pancasila which we make as a way of life. This school has a basis for strengthening character education in the form of NAWACITA, Ministerial Decree, Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education and School Policies The implementation of strengthening character education is also based on the policy, namely the Decree of the Director of Elementary School Development Number 2835/D2/KP/2016 concerning the establishment of piloting elementary schools for the strengthening of Character Education phase 1 in 2016". Number 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education. The Strengthening Character Education is aimed at building and forming comprehensive self-improvement, in order to form individual self-ability by deepening the main values, namely, being independent, nationalist, integrity, religious, and mutual cooperation [29], [30]. The purpose of character education in Indonesia is none other than educating the nation's children to become the next generation who has a dignified character and national civilization. In its implementation, the government focuses on several character values that can shape the integrity of each individual or child. [31], [32].

Furthermore, character education strengthening programs are disseminated through socialization. The form of socialization of the strengthening character education program is through meetings, direct activities, socialization at the beginning of the year, socializing school programs, then inviting parents to be directly involved in these activities. For example, at the end of the year they hold an art performance because parents are invited to directly prepare and carry out activities for each class. In addition, the dissemination of strengthening character education programs was also conveyed through electronic media such as Facebook, the web, and elementary school's Instagram. The character education strengthening program needs to be socialized so that the role of character growth and cultivation can be continuously carried out by the entire educators for their children [3], [25], [31]. Thus, togetherness and good communication are factors that support the realization of a conducive and healthy family environment and social environment as part of efforts to support children's character development [14], [30].

Strategies and methods for strengthening character education are carried out through various activities in the learning process and extracurricular activities. Through school culture there are various kinds of work that are collaborative with parents. Parents come to school to talk about their profession, because there are figures that children can imitate. For example, there is an independent character and hard work so that children can realize their dreams and work. Furthermore, the strategies used in strengthening character education vary widely such as lectures, role-playing, question and answer, discussion, modeling, demonstration, exploration, etc. This is supported by the opinion [3] and [5] that character education in schools can be realized by conducting assessments in the form of notes on the child's personality or character, synchronizing and habituation in both extracurricular and intra curricular activities, and strengthening the role of the family as the first and foremost educator in character growth and habituation of child.

Several parties involved in the strengthening character education program are the principal as the leader of activities, educators and education staff as implementers of the implementation of strengthening character education. The principal as a leader is also a role model for strengthening school culture-based character education [8], [33]. Teachers as educators and implementers of strengthening character education in schools, because teachers have more interaction in the classroom with students. Educational staff such as gardeners, school guards, security guards and other educators have a role in the implementation of strengthening character education in the school environment. Each school complements each other, supports each other, provides input, and

strengthens each other which makes the school a center for the implementation of character education [14], [34], [35].

This is supported by the theory [16], [25], [35] which states that the closest environment for children is parents and family. However, the domicile environment at home and the social environment of friends is a strategic environment for children to obtain character education. There is a need for active participation in the immediate environment of children through intense dialogical communication between parents, family, friends and the environment with children. The principal and teachers as one of the main actors of character education are obliged to build positive interaction and communication with parents to monitor the development of student character education.

### 3.2 Activities for Strengthening School Culture-Based Character Education

Based on a collection of observational data, interviews and document analysis, it was found that various activities were carried out in an effort to strengthen school culturebased character education. First, the culture of clothes/uniforms of Surakarta City which is carried out every Thursday by educators and students. The following is a typical clothing design for the city of Surakarta.



Fig. 1. Typical uniform of Surakarta

Second, a healthy eating culture at school. The healthy eating culture in schools makes children receive food that has been guaranteed nutrition by the school, such as the food served to students includes four healthy five perfect. Third, the culture of Morning Greeting. The Morning Greetings culture is carried out by every teacher in the morning at school according to the picket schedule of each teacher on duty. Fourth, the culture of sharing with others which is held every Friday. Fifth, the culture of playing traditional games. The culture of playing traditional games is carried out every break by students.



Fig. 2. Morning Greeting Culture



Fig. 3. Traditional Game Playing Culture



Fig. 4. Gamelan Extracurricular

Sixth, extracurricular. Extracurricular includes compulsory extra (Scouting, Read and Write Qur'an, and English) and elective extracurricular (sports and cultural arts). Extracurricular activities are carried out every Monday to Friday after teaching and learning activities at 01.15 to 02.20 p.m. Seventh, Outing Class. Outing class is a learning process that is carried out outside the classroom or outside school. Eighth, School Ambassador. The school environment always familiarizes stakeholders, teachers and students to care about the environment and feel the need to have a school Environment Ambassador. In addition, there are literacy ambassadors who are not only limited to reading books in existing libraries but as inspiration for all students regarding academic achievement.

One of the ways to strengthen students' character is through a school culture approach as the grand design of character education, because character as a "moral excellence" or morality is built on various virtues (virtues) which in turn only have meaning when it is based on prevailing values in culture [2], [13], [36]. Character and culture developed in schools must be aligned with local, regional and national character and culture. For this reason, character education and national culture need to be developed based on local wisdom. Like school culture, it can strengthen the behavior of students who love their regional cultural heritage [1], [37]. Education is not only aimed at forming students to be smart, intelligent, knowledgeable, and intelligent but also oriented to forming human beings with noble character, personality, and morality. Education must also pay attention to culture as a result of human creativity, taste, and initiative because culture encapsulates the results of human noble work [24], [35], [38].

#### 3.3 Character Values

Some character values that appear as follows. First, religion. Religious character appears when students have a sense of gratitude for cultural heritage, worship at school according to their respective religions, pray before and after learning and pray before and after eating healthy.



Fig. 5. Habituation of Worship Together

Religious values appear in the habit of healthy eating culture, worship culture together, sharing with others. Second, Nationalist. The nationalist character is manifested by a love for the regional cultural heritage, namely the traditional clothes of Surakarta City and traditional games. Students wear traditional clothes every Thursday and play traditional games to foster a sense of love in children for the legacy of their ancestors. Third, Integrity. The character of integrity is shown by the discipline of students leaving for school on time, being disciplined in wearing school uniforms and being responsible if given assignments by the teacher. Fourth, Independent. An indicator where students are said to be independent is when students can do their own assignments, students are independently aware of the importance of maintaining school cleanliness, namely by throwing garbage in its place and taking food and then washing dishes by themselves. Fifth, Mutual Cooperation. The character of mutual cooperation is carried out when students help each other between students, together with all school members clean the school environment, empathize and care for others, and can work together in learning.



Fig. 6. Mutual Cooperation in Traditional Games

Based on the results of the research above, it can be concluded that the five main values of character education appear to be maximal. First, the value of religious character is one of the personality values that instills obedient behavior and attitudes in carrying out religious teachings. [37] and [39] explained that religious values are one of the personality values that instill obedient behavior and attitudes in carrying out religious teachings. Religious character has an important role for students in facing the challenges of changing times and increasing moral degradation. Religious character education is instilled to improve spiritual abilities and make students human beings who have noble character, faith, have a sense of brotherhood and piety to the creator as well as self-control from actions that deviate from the teachings of Islam, and can be a stronghold for students in carrying out life in the midst of currents. increasing globalization [8], [15], [18], [40]. Second, [41] says that, "The value of nationalist character is a way of thinking, behaving, and acting that shows loyalty, concern, and high respect for the language, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political environment of the nation, placing the interests of the nation and state above the interests of themselves and their groups". The values of nationalism that are instilled through habituation in schools are very effective. Because with the habituation it will be directly applied in everyday life. And from the habituation process, it will be able to reduce the procedures for doing or living habits to children through the child's behavior or giving concrete examples and examples in life, so that children are accustomed to doing actions and habits of living independently [4], [10], [12], [21], [22].

Third, [42] state, "The character value of integrity is the value that underlies behavior in an effort to make himself a person who can be trusted in words, actions, and work, and has commitment and loyalty to human and moral values. The character of integrity includes an attitude of responsibility as a citizen, actively involved in social life, through the consistency of actions and words that are based on the truth". Someone with integrity also respects individual dignity and is able to show an example [7], [43], [44].

Fourth, the value of independent character is an encouragement in a person to carry out learning activities with full confidence and confidence in his ability to complete his learning activities without the help of other people [9]. Independent students have confidence in themselves, their learning activities are self-directed, have a sense of responsibility, have their own initiative, are happy with problem centered learning [23], [45]. Fifth, the value of the mutual cooperation character appears with the following behaviors: (a) not running or avoiding trouble; (b) not easily influenced by the opinions of others; (c) Critical, creative and innovative; (d) solve problems with deep thinking; (e) do not feel inferior if you have to be different from other people; (f) solve problem without asking for help from others; (g) strive to work with diligence and discipline; (h) take responsibility for one's own actions [46], [47]. It is expected that students can show have empathy and a sense of solidarity, respect for others, be inclusive, be able to commit to joint decisions, be able to work together, reach consensus, anti-violence, anti-discrimination, help, and volunteerism [11], [48]. The Strengthening Character Education based on school culture is carried out by habituation of the main values in the daily life of the school; exemplary among school members, involvement of all education stakeholders, building norms, rules, and school traditions, developing the uniqueness, excellence, and competitiveness of schools as the hallmark of the school, providing wide space for students to develop their potential through literacy activities, and extracurricular activities [8], [15], [33].

### 4 Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that: (1) the design process for strengthening school cultural character education consists of designing activities, school policies, policy socialization, implementation strategies, and related parties; (2) the findings of character education activities include culture of clothing, culture of eating healthy, culture of morning greetings, culture of sharing with others, culture of playing traditional games, extracurricular activities, outing classes and school ambassadors; and (3) maximized character values, namely religious, nationalist, independent, integrity and mutual cooperation. So, it can be concluded that school cultural character education can maximize the character of elementary school students. The limitation in 504 L. E. W. Fajari et al.

this study lies in the subject of research in one of the pilot elementary schools on strengthening character education. Therefore, the recommendation for further researchers is to be able to expand the research subjects into several pilot elementary schools on strengthening character education spread throughout Indonesia. Furthermore, further researchers can examine other levels of education such as early childhood, high school to university.

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