

DESIGNING A BRIGHT FUTURE: HOLISTIC EDUCATION AS THE KEY TO CHARACTER AND COMPETENCE BUILDING

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Abstract

A holistic approach in modern education is essential as it aims to prepare individuals for the challenges of the 21st century. Holistic education seeks to integrate the development of students' academic, emotional, social and spiritual aspects, with the aim of creating balanced and adaptive individuals. In fact, the holistic approach in education is considered to support the formation of strong character and diverse competencies, through interactive and collaborative learning methods that involve the active involvement of the community, including family and society. As such, holistic education focuses not only on academic outcomes but also on building whole people who are ready to contribute positively and effectively in society and the future world of work.

Keywords: Holistic Education, Key to Character Building, Competence

Introduction

Education has a very important role in shaping individual character and competence. In facing the challenges of globalisation and rapid technological development, an education system is needed that not only focuses on academic aspects, but also on holistic character and competency development. Holistic education offers a holistic approach, which includes students' intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual aspects. (Judijanto et al., 2024); (Iksal et al., 2024). This approach differs from conventional approaches that tend to separate these areas and often emphasise academic achievement alone. In addition, education helps in developing critical thinking skills, creativity and the ability to co-operate with others in various contexts. A quality education encourages students to recognise and understand diverse cultures and experiences, and teaches tolerance and empathy which are needed in a multicultural society. (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022)..

On the competency side, education provides the basic knowledge and technical skills essential for individuals to succeed in their careers. From basic literacy to high-tech expertise, education provides the tools that enable individuals to lead productive and

meaningful lives. (Madden et al., 2020). Moreover, a balanced approach to education between theory and practice allows students to hone problem-solving and adaptation skills that are crucial in the fast-paced digital era. Thus, education not only produces individuals who are competitive in their professional fields, but also strengthens the resilience and competitiveness of a nation in the global arena. (Lavy, 2020).

In many countries, including Indonesia, the current education system still faces various challenges and limitations. One of the main issues is the lack of attention to character development and non-academic competencies. Many educational institutions prioritise test scores and academic achievement as indicators of educational success, while other important aspects, such as critical thinking, creativity, social skills, empathy and ethics, are often overlooked. (Dishon & Gilead, 2021).

In fact, in the context of the world of work and life after graduation, strong character and various non-academic competencies play a vital role. For example, the ability to work in a team, communicate well, and have a high work ethic are some of the competencies that are highly valued by employers. Therefore, there is a need for a paradigm shift in the education system, in order to be more holistic and prepare students to face the demands of the real world. (Xie et al., 2020).

Holistic education seeks to address this issue with a more comprehensive approach that integrates academics with character development and other competencies. This concept not only equips students with knowledge, but also with the values, skills and attitudes needed to become balanced and productive individuals. (Winarni et al., 2020).

However, the implementation of holistic education still faces various obstacles, including the lack of understanding and acceptance from various stakeholders in education. Therefore, this study aims to explore the benefits and challenges of holistic education and provide recommendations for its effective implementation in the education system.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach used to collect, review, and analyse information and data that already exists in various written sources, such as scientific journals, books, documents, academic publications, and other articles. The main purpose of this method is to understand the existing knowledge landscape on a particular topic, identify research gaps, and formulate a strong theoretical framework. The process involves systematic steps, including the search for relevant literature, critical evaluation of the sources found, and synthesis of information to produce a comprehensive review that can support or guide further research. (Sahar, 2008); (Arikunto, 2000); (Fadli, 2021).

Results and Discussion

The Relationship of Holistic Education with Character Building and Student Competence

Holistic education is an educational approach that focuses on developing all aspects of an individual, intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. The

goal of holistic education is to create balance in children's growth and development, enabling them to become a whole and balanced person. (Ramdani et al., 2021).. This approach integrates various disciplines and learning experiences that are contextualised, relevant and meaningful, and encourages students to understand the relationships between the elements of life and their existence in the wider world. Thus, holistic education not only prepares students for academic success, but also to become responsible, thoughtful individuals with a sense of care for society and the environment. (Anis et al., 2021).

Holistic education rests on several key principles that ensure the approach covers all aspects of individual development. One of the key principles is the emphasis on integration and balance. Holistic education does not only focus on academic or intellectual aspects, but also gives balanced attention to students' emotional, social, physical and spiritual development. With this balance, students are expected to develop all their potential optimally and harmoniously. (Dewantara et al., 2021). In addition, the principle of connectivity emphasises the importance of building strong relationships between students, teachers, families and communities, linking classroom learning to their real-life experiences. This helps students see the relevance of what they are learning and how it applies to everyday life. (Peng et al., 2020).

Another principle is student-centred education, where the needs, interests and learning styles of individual students take centre stage in the education process. Participatory and interactive learning encourages students to be actively involved in the learning process, providing a more meaningful and in-depth learning experience. Respect for diversity is also a fundamental principle, where holistic education respects and values individual differences, whether in terms of culture, background, or ability (Quinn et al., 2020). (Quinn et al., 2020). This education aims to develop the values of tolerance, empathy, and respect for others. Through these principles, holistic education not only seeks to form intelligent and competent individuals, but also individuals who are balanced, thoughtful, and contribute positively to society. (Aimah et al., 2023).

Holistic education has a close relationship with character building and student competence, as this approach places the development of all aspects of the individual at the centre of the educational process. One of the main objectives of holistic education is to create a balance in students' emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual growth, which is an important foundation in character building. By paying attention to every aspect of student development, holistic education aims to form individuals who not only have knowledge and skills, but also strong moral and ethical values. Students are encouraged to recognise and understand values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy and caring, all of which are important in building good character. (Platt, 2020).

In the context of competency building, holistic education offers an approach that emphasises relevant and integrated learning experiences. Competence is not only achieved through theoretical knowledge but also through practical experiences that develop critical and analytical skills, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. (Rina et al.,

2020). Through active and participatory learning, holistic education provides opportunities for students to learn through real-life experiences and projects that enable them to apply knowledge in real-life situations. This leads to the development of deeper and more sustainable competencies as students understand the context and relevance of what they are learning. (Alimron et al., 2023)..

The social relationships built in a holistic education environment also play an important role in character and competence building. Healthy and positive interactions between students, teachers and the community promote social and emotional growth that is essential for character building. Students learn to work together in teams, communicate effectively, and contribute to their community, developing essential social skills and a strong work ethic. Holistic education teaches the importance of diversity and intercultural understanding, realising attitudes of tolerance and co-operation among students of different backgrounds. (Pulimeno et al., 2020).

Thus, holistic education not only equips students with academic knowledge but also moulds balanced individuals with strong character and diverse competencies. In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the ability to think critically, adapt to change, and have a high social and moral awareness is crucial. With a holistic approach, students have greater potential to become thoughtful leaders, responsible citizens, and innovative contributors to society. Through holistic education, the goal of fostering a generation with character and competence can be more easily achieved, supporting the development of individuals and society as a whole.

Implementation of Holistic Education in the Current Education System

The implementation of holistic education in today's education system requires a paradigm shift from traditional education that focuses on purely cognitive aspects towards a more integrative and holistic approach. In holistic education, the curriculum is designed to cover various disciplines and integrate elements such as emotional, social, ethical development, as well as physical and spiritual development. Education takes place not only inside the classroom, but also outside the classroom through extracurricular activities, community service, and experiential projects. This approach views students as whole individuals with various needs, potentials, and talents that must be developed in a balanced manner. (Santoso, 2021).

Teachers in a holistic education system act as facilitators and mentors who help students discover and develop their potential. They are not only tasked with teaching subject matter, but must also support the development of students' character and social-emotional skills. Teachers are expected to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where students feel safe, accepted and motivated to learn. (Irwan et al., 2024); (Juliani & Aslan, 2024). By using student-centred learning methods, teachers can help students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and foster a spirit of cooperation and respect for diversity. (Antika et al., 2024).

The application of technology also plays an important role in supporting holistic education. Educational technology provides access to a wider range of learning resources and enables more flexible and adaptive learning methods. For example, e-learning platforms can be used to accommodate various learning styles, while digital collaboration tools allow students to work together on cross-disciplinary projects and interact with experts from different fields. (Santoso, 2021). In addition, technology can also be used to monitor students' progress more comprehensively and provide timely and useful feedback to their learning process. (Jiyenbaevich, 2022)..

Overall, the implementation of holistic education in the current education system aims to create individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also have strong character and are competent in various aspects of life. Through this holistic approach, students are expected to grow into balanced individuals, able to face complex challenges and contribute positively to society. Holistic education emphasises the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders, including schools, families and communities, to create a learning ecosystem that supports students' holistic growth and development.

Conclusion

Holistic education is a comprehensive approach in educating students to face future challenges. Holistic education does not only focus on academic aspects, but also integrates the social, emotional and spiritual aspects of students. By doing this, holistic education aims to develop individuals who are balanced and able to adapt to environmental changes and global challenges. Through interactive and collaborative learning methods, students are encouraged to explore their full potential and contribute positively to society.

Furthermore, holistic education highlights the important role of the community in the education process, including the involvement of the family, school and community. Collaboration between these three elements is essential to create a supportive and productive learning environment. That way, students not only gain the necessary academic knowledge but also develop strong character and competencies needed in the world of work and everyday life. Therefore, holistic education is key in designing a bright future by forming individuals who are characterful and competent in various aspects of life.

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