

INTEGRATION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS: THE CHARACTER SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

The use of character education in learning, however, is an absolute necessity, because it is considered capable of making students intelligent, but also ready to make students have character and habits so that they become real citizens. be significant both for them and society as a whole. Character education teaches habits of thinking and behavior that help individuals to live and work together as a family, community and nation and helps them to make responsible decisions. In other words, character education teaches students to think intelligently, activating the midbrain naturally. Character education is carried out in an integrated manner into all subjects. The integration in question includes loading values into the substance of all subjects and implementing learning activities that facilitate the practice of values in every activity inside and outside the classroom for all subjects. Character education is also integrated into the implementation of student development activities. Apart from that, character education is carried out through activities. The integration of character education in the learning process at school is carried out from the planning, implementation, to learning evaluation stages in all subjects.

Keywords: Integration, Character Education, Character School

INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort by society and the nation to prepare the younger generation for a better life in society and the nation in the future. This continuity is marked by the inheritance of culture and character that has been

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possessed by society and the nation. In the process of cultural and national character education, students actively develop their potential, carry out the internalization process, and appreciate the values of their personality in socializing in society, developing a more prosperous social life, and developing a dignified national life (Havi et al. ., 2022).

Based on the functions and goals of national education, it is clear that education at every level, from primary education to higher education, must be designed and implemented systematically to achieve these goals. In order to shape the character of students so that they are religious, ethical, moral and polite in interacting with society, education must be prepared, implemented and evaluated well and must integrate character education in it in order to create Indonesian people with noble character (Rambe et al., 2023).

The importance of character education announced by the government through the Minister of Education and Culture, has been recognized from the start by the country's founding fathers. Since the proclamation of independence, the early architects have understood that to understand the purpose of the Indonesian state. In fact, the progress of the country becomes more meaningful and becomes a significant concern, considering that the progress of the nation is largely determined by the nature of the country (Nurasiah et al., 2022). In this way, the principal architects emphasized the importance of character building.

Based on this confirmation, it shows that the use of character education in learning is an absolute necessity, because it is considered capable of making students intelligent, but also ready to make students have character and habits so that they become real citizens. be significant both for them and society as a whole. Furthermore, what is generally related to this problem is the problem of schools and encouraging virtues that receive less attention. Until now, training and moral improvement is currently at the level of remembering, information is lost at the level of daily relationships carrying out activities, at home, at school which functions as well as in daily cooperation (Sulisstyowati & Machful, 2023).

According to Marzuki (Mahanani et al., 2022), character education contains three main elements, namely knowing the good, loving the good, and doing the good. Character education does not just teach students what is right and wrong, but more than that, character education instills good habits (habituation) so that students understand, are able to feel, and want to do good. So, character education carries the same mission as Moral Education or Moral Education. Furthermore (Candrayani & Sujana, 2023) explained that the

important issue here is how this noble character or morals can become a culture, especially for students. This means that the study of noble morals is important, but what is even more important is how noble moral values can be applied in everyday life so that they become students' habits. Culture is a habit or tradition that is full of certain values that grow and develop in everyday life in various aspects of life. Culture can be formed and developed by anyone and anywhere. The formation of a culture of noble morals means efforts to develop traditions or habits in a place filled with noble moral values.

Character education should bring students to cognitive recognition of values, affective appreciation of values, and finally to real values implementation. This is the character (moral) education plan that Thomas Lickona calls moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Dvali, 2024). For this reason, all subjects studied by students at school must contain character education that can lead them to become human beings with character as emphasized by Lickona.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study in this research is qualitative with literature. The literature study research method is a research approach that involves the analysis and synthesis of information from various literature sources that are relevant to a particular research topic. Documents taken from literature research are journals, books and references related to the discussion you want to research (Earley, M.A. 2014; Snyder, H. 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Character building

A. Meaning of Character Education

In character education in schools, all components must be involved, including the components of education itself, namely curriculum content, learning and assessment processes, handling or management of subjects, school management, implementation of activities or co-curricular activities, empowerment of infrastructure, financing , and the work ethic of all school/neighborhood residents (Sholah & Mawaddah, 2023). In addition, character education is interpreted as the behavior of school members who in providing education must have character.

Character education is also defined as everything that teachers do, which is able to influence the character of students. Teachers help shape the character of students. This includes exemplary teacher behavior, the

way the teacher speaks or delivers material, how the teacher tolerates, and various other related things (Meriyati et al., 2024).

The criteria for a good human being, a good citizen, and a good citizen for a society or nation, in general, are certain social values, which are heavily influenced by the culture of the society and nation (Langdale, 2022). Therefore, the essence of character education in the context of education in Indonesia is values education, namely education of noble values originating from the culture of the Indonesian nation itself, in order to develop the personality of the younger generation.

Character education is an effort designed and implemented systematically to help students understand the values of human behavior related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow humans, the environment and nationality which are manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on religious norms, law, etiquette, culture and customs (Merlin, 2023).

Character education teaches habits of thinking and behavior that help individuals to live and work together as a family, community and nation and helps them to make responsible decisions. In other words, character education teaches students to think intelligently, activating the midbrain naturally (Metcalf & Heller, 2022).

B. Basic Values or Characters Taught in Character Education

Thomas Lickona stated that "Having knowledge of moral values is not enough to be a person with character, moral values must be accompanied by a moral character" (Purba, 2024). "Included in this character are three components of character (components of good character), namely knowledge about morals (moral knowing), feelings about morals (moral feelings), and moral actions (moral actions)" (Karnjanapoomi, 2022).

The aspects of the three components of character are (Suardi, 2023): moral knowing. There are six things that are the aim of teaching moral knowing, namely 1) moral awareness, 2) knowing moral values, 3) perspective talking, 4) moral reasoning, 5) making decisions (decision making), 6) self-knowledge. The moral element of knowing fills their cognitive domain.

Moral feeling. There are six things which are aspects of emotions that a person must be able to feel to become a human being with character, namely: 1) conscience, 2) self-esteem, 3) empathy, 4) loving kindness. the good), 5) self-control and humility.

Moral action: These moral actions or actions are the out come of the other two character components. To understand what drives someone to act morally, one must look at character, namely competence, desire and habit.

C. Types of Character Education

There are four types of character that have been known and implemented in the educational process, namely:

1. character education based on religious values, which are the truth revealed by God (moral conservation).
2. character education based on cultural values, including character education, Pancasila, literary appreciation, exemplary historical figures and national leaders.
3. environment-based character education (environmental conservation).
4. character education based on personal potential, namely personal attitudes, the result of an awareness process of empowering one's potential which is directed at improving the quality of education (humanist conservation) (Murwaningsih et al., 2022).

Basic Values in Character Education

In the National Policy for National Character Development for 2010-2025, it is emphasized that character is the result of an integration of four parts, namely exercise of the heart, thought, exercise, and exercise of feeling and intention. Physical exercise is related to feelings, attitudes and beliefs/faith, mental exercise is related to the reasoning process in order to seek and use knowledge critically, creatively and innovatively, sports is related to the process of perception, readiness, imitation, manipulation and the creation of new activities accompanied by sportsmanship, and the exercise of feeling and intention related to will and creativity which is reflected in caring, imaging and creating novelty (Sakti & Rahmawati, 2024).

The character values that are imbued with the Pancasila principles in each of these parts can be stated as follows.

1. Characters that originate from the heart include being faithful and devout, honest, trustworthy, fair, orderly, obeying the rules, responsible, empathetic, brave to take risks, never give up, willing to make sacrifices, and have a patriotic spirit.
2. Characters that originate from thinking include intelligent, critical, creative, innovative, curious, productive, science and technology oriented, and reflective.

3. Characters originating from sports/kinesthetics include clean and healthy, sporty, tough, reliable, resilient, friendly, cooperative, determinative, competitive, cheerful and persistent.
4. Characters that originate from feelings and intentions include humanity, mutual respect, mutual cooperation, togetherness, friendly, respectful, tolerant, nationalist, caring, cosmopolitan (global), prioritizing the public interest, love of the homeland (patriotic), proud to use Indonesian language and products, dynamic, hard working and work ethic (Maguate, 2024).

From the character values above, the Ministry of National Education (now: Ministry of Education and Culture) launched four main character values which are the spearhead of character implementation among students in schools, namely honest (from the heart), intelligent (from the mind), tough (from exercise), and caring (from exercise of feeling and intention).

Thus, there are many character values that can be developed and integrated into learning at school. Instilling all these values is a very difficult task (Alexsandro & Simamora, 2024). Therefore, it is necessary to choose certain values which should be prioritized for instilling in students.

Integration of Character Education in Learning at School

Integrating Character Education in Learning In response to a number of weaknesses in the implementation of moral and character education (character education), especially through the two subjects of Religious Education and Citizenship Education, efforts have been made to innovate character education. These innovations are:

1. Character education is carried out in an integrated manner into all subjects. The integration in question includes loading values into the substance of all subjects and implementing learning activities that facilitate the practice of values in every activity inside and outside the classroom for all subjects.
2. Character education is also integrated into the implementation of student development activities.
3. Apart from that, character education is carried out through management activities of all affairs at school which involve all school members (Imawan & Ismail, 2023).

Of the three forms of innovation above, the most important and directly related to daily learning activities is the integration of character education in the learning process. Integrating character education through the learning process of all subjects in schools is now a model that is widely

applied. This model is adopted with the paradigm that all teachers are character educators. All subjects are also assumed to have a mission to shape the noble character of students (Dela & Pratiwi, 2023).

The integration of character education in the learning process at school is carried out from the planning, implementation, to learning evaluation stages in all subjects. These stages will be described in more detail below.

1. Planning Stage

The first thing to do in the planning stage is SK/KD analysis, developing a character syllabus, preparing character lesson plans, and preparing character teaching materials. This step is carried out to identify character values that can be substantially integrated into the relevant SK/KD. It must be known in advance that the identification of character values is not intended to limit the values that can be developed in the SK/KD learning in question. Teachers are required to be more careful in bringing out targeted values in the learning process (Indriani & Asfia, 2023).

In practical terms, syllabus development can be done by revising the syllabus that has been previously developed by adding character components (columns) to the right of the Basic Competency components (columns) or in the syllabus column to the far right. In this column, fill in the character values that will be integrated in learning. The values included are not only limited to the values that have been determined through SK/KD analysis, but can be added with other values that can be developed through learning activities (not through learning substance) (Wandari & Rohana, 2023).

As with syllabus development, the preparation of RPL in the context of integrated character education in learning is also carried out by revising existing RPL. Revision of the RPL is carried out using these steps (ISKANDAR et al., 2022):

- a. The formulation of learning objectives is revised/adapted. This step can be implemented in the following ways, namely: (1) the existing formulation of learning objectives is revised so that it not only develops cognitive and psychomotor abilities, but also affective (character), (2) adding learning objectives specifically formulated for character.
- b. Service methods must be adjusted so that the approach/method chosen not only facilitates students achieving targeted knowledge and skills, but also develops character.
- c. Learning steps were also revised. Learning activities in each step/stage of learning (introduction, core and conclusion) are revised or added so

that learning activities at each stage facilitate students to acquire targeted knowledge and skills and develop character.

- d. Assessment section revised. Revisions are carried out by changing and/or adding to the assessment techniques that have been formulated. Among the assessment techniques that can be used to determine character development are observation, performance assessment, peer assessment, and self-assessment.
- e. Teaching materials are prepared. Even though the existing teaching materials have met a number of textbook eligibility criteria, namely appropriateness of content, presentation, language and graphics, the materials still do not adequately integrate character education in them. If teachers only follow or carry out learning based on the learning activities in these books, then adequate character education has not gone well. Therefore, in line with what has been designed in the syllabus and RPL which has an insight into character education, teaching materials need to be adjusted. The most likely adjustment made by teachers is by modifying learning activities which can also develop character.

2. Implementation of Learning

Learning activities from the preliminary, core and closing activity stages are selected and implemented so that students practice the targeted character values. As mentioned above, it is recommended that the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning be applied at all stages of learning because these learning principles can also facilitate the internalization of character values in students. Apart from that, the teacher's behavior throughout the learning process must be a model of implementing values for students (Akbar, 2024).

In this learning, the teacher must design learning steps that facilitate active students in the process starting from the introduction, core, to conclusion. Teachers are required to master various active learning methods, models or strategies so that learning steps are easily prepared and can be put into practice properly and correctly. With a process like this, teachers can also observe and evaluate (assess) the process that occurs, especially the character of their students (Winarti & Astuti, 2023).

3. Learning Evaluation

Evaluation assessments must be carried out properly and correctly. The assessment concerns the cognitive, affective and psychomotor achievements of students. However, character assessment is more

concerned with students' affective and psychomotor achievements than their cognitive achievements. So that the results of the assessment carried out by the teacher can be correct and objective, the teacher must understand the principles of correct assessment in accordance with the assessment standards that have been set by assessment experts. The government (Kemdiknas/Kemdikbud) has established Educational Assessment Standards that can be guided by teachers when conducting assessments in schools, namely Permendiknas RI Number 20 of 2007 concerning Educational Assessment Standards. A guidance and counseling teacher should create an assessment instrument equipped with an assessment rubric to avoid subjective assessment, either in the form of an observation assessment instrument (observation sheet) or an attitude scale assessment instrument (Suardin et al., 2023).

If the implementation of character education in schools is considered as part of educational reform, then character education reform can be likened to a tree which has four important parts, namely roots, trunk, branches and leaves. The explanation is that the root of reform is that the philosophical foundation (footing) for the implementation of character education must be clear and understood by the community administering and implementing education. Meanwhile, the stem of reform is a mandate from the government as the person responsible for administering national education, where the standards and objectives for implementing character education must be clear, transparent and accountable. Part of the reform branch is the management of character education, teacher empowerment, and education management which must be improved. In the reform section, there is the involvement of parents, students and the community in implementing character education which is also supported by conducive community culture and living habits which also serve as role models for students in their daily attitudes and behavior. So the four pillars of character education reform above are interrelated and if one of them is not optimal it will disrupt the implementation of character education in schools and other educational institutions (Shodik & Miftahuddin, 2024).

Character education carried out in schools is very important considering that this is where students begin to become acquainted with various fields of scientific study. Starting from noble character values obtained through the learning process in the classroom and outside the classroom, students are expected to become human beings with character

and at the same time have knowledge that is ready to be developed at a higher level of education (Supa'at & Muslim, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Character education is a deliberate (conscious) effort to help humans understand, care about, and implement core ethical values. The hope for character and personality that is formed in students is the dream of successful character education. Students are expected to be able to understand the values instilled in them, completely without any errors in understanding at all. In fact, it is hoped that students will understand the development of these values. Character education is carried out in an integrated manner into all subjects. The integration in question includes loading values into the substance of all subjects and implementing learning activities that facilitate the practice of values in every activity inside and outside the classroom for all subjects. Character education is also integrated into the implementation of student development activities. Apart from that, character education is carried out through activities.

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