

**APPLICATION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION WITH  
CHARACTER**

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**Abstract**

*The Indonesian nation intends the formation of a nation's next generation that is morally upright and intellectually intelligent. Numerous examples of pupils who are educated yet lack moral character, and hence cannot be expected to be the nation's future builders. This requires stakeholders to take strategic steps in regulating the education system in Indonesia. As one of the proclaimed character education programs, this program is expected to reintroduce hope for the future of Indonesian education by instilling good values among all involved and as school residents, enabling them to have knowledge, awareness, and action in carrying out character values. As a matter of fact, the concept of good character education will fail if teachers who educate and teach in schools are unable to serve as positive role models for students'*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the current era of globalization, the Indonesian nation has been able to produce adequate quantity of Human Resources (HR), however, there is one important thing that must be emphasized, namely to produce human resources who are ethical, moral, polite, and able to interact with the community well, while still upholding the nation's personality. In other words, the Indonesian people want to ensure that the country's next generation is well-educated and well-rounded in both character and morality. Students who are intelligent but lacking in moral character cannot be expected to lead the country into a brighter future. As a result of this situation, policymakers are forced to develop character education initiatives.

Character education is a process of instilling positive values in all those involved and as school members, so that they have the knowledge, awareness, and ability to act on such principles. All school personnel participating in character development are essentially attempting to cultivate pupils' character. These factors are critical in order for pupils to observe, live, and get concrete instances or examples from a suitable atmosphere that fosters and develops their personalities.

The concept of character education will collapse if teachers who educate and teach in schools are unable to behave as positive role models in their own behavior and behavior in schools. Teachers in schools are supposed to provide a positive learning environment in order to mold, develop, and build their pupils' character. Character education is difficult to achieve success if the teacher's spirit is motivated solely by a desire for employment or social position; in this situation, character education will be unable to be implemented optimally if the teacher as the implementer of education lacks excellent character.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

### **2.1. Definition of Character Education**

According to Megawangi Ratna (2004) Character education is a system for determining and teaching virtues such as self-control, respect for others, stewardship of the environment, and pride in one's legacies. However, the development of a person's individual character can only be done in the context of the relevant social and cultural context in which they live. That is to say, pupils' social, cultural, and national identities can still be cultivated in the classroom without removing them from their current context. Pancasila is the nation's social and cultural environment, thus cultural and character education is to instill Pancasila principles in the self of education through soul, mind, and physical education.

According to the Ministry of National Education (Depdiknas) (2010), character education is everything the teacher does, which is able to influence the character of students. Teachers help shape the character of students. This includes examples of how the teacher behaves, the way the teacher speaks or conveys the material, how the teacher is tolerant, and various other related matters. Based on the grand design developed by the Ministry of National Education, psychologically and socio-culturally, character formation in individuals is a function of all individual human potentials (cognitive, affective, active, and psychomotor) in the context of socio-cultural interactions (in family, school, and community) and lasts a lifetime.

Therefore, it can be concluded that character education is a process of changing the character, psychology, morals, character of a person or group of people to become adults (whole humans/*insan kamil*).

### **2.2. Character of an Educator**

Teachers in the era of globalization are required to be able to equip students with commendable character values which are not enough just to be conveyed, but through habituation and example. This is because various advances in today's modern era are very easy to influence and shift the values of good character from students to characters that are no longer suitable for eastern culture. According to Sulistiani and Sukarman (2020) the task of the teacher is not only transfer of knowledge, but also transfer of value and transfer of skills. Thus, the goal of national education to realize Indonesian people as a whole through heart, thought, taste, and exercise so that students have competitiveness in facing global challenges will be achieved.

Character is a quality or trait that remains continuous and eternal which can be used as a characteristic to identify a person, an object or event. Uzer Usman (2001) also said that the teacher is a position or profession that requires special skills as a teacher. This work cannot be done by people who do not have the expertise to carry out activities or work as teachers. People who are good at speaking in certain fields cannot be called teachers. To become a teacher, special requirements are needed, especially as a professional teacher who really masters the intricacies of education and teaching with various other knowledge that needs to be fostered and developed through a certain period of education or pre-service education.

Moreover, Muchlas Samani and Hariyanto (2013) revealed that there are various characters that must be possessed which are sourced from the Qur'an and or the Hadith of the Prophet SAW, including: 1) Maintaining self-respect; 2) Diligent work looking for sustenance; 3) Stay in touch, maintain communication; 4) Communicate well and politely,

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likes to give greetings; 5) Honest, not cheating, keeping promises, and trustworthy; 6) Do justice, help each other, love one another, and love one another; 7) Patient and optimistic; 8) Love and respect for parents, do not cheat; 9) Forgiving and generous; 10) Empathy, compassion as a manifestation of goodness; 11) Speaks the truth, not lie; 12) Always be grateful; 13) Not arrogant and haughty; 14) Noble character (morals); 15) Do good in all things; 16) Have shame and faith; 17) Say good or be silent; 18) Consistent, istiqamah; 19) Be steadfast, do not despair; 20) Responsible; 21) Peace-loving.

According to Zulkifli & Indah (2015) good teacher characteristics are:

1. Understanding and respecting students, teachers must be able to understand students who have potential, not as empty bottles. Teachers must be democratic, not authoritarian
2. Mastering the subject matter given. A teacher must master the subject matter not only in the cognitive aspect but also in the value and its application to human life.
3. Adjusting lesson materials to the individual abilities of students. The teacher must adjust the lesson material to the average ability of students, there are fast, medium, and slow students in learning. A teacher must also pay attention to the individual differences of students, including their talents and abilities
4. Enabling students in terms of learning. A teacher should avoid the D4 way of teaching (come, sit, listen and be quiet). Teachers must provide opportunities for students to be active in the classroom.
5. Giving understanding and not just with mere words:
  - a) Provide direct understanding by introducing the object, then the understanding, and then the child can formulate that understanding in his own words
  - b) Using teaching aids in the learning process
  - c) Teachers should avoid verbalism or knowing words but not knowing their meanings
6. Connecting lessons to student needs
  - a) Explain or show the benefits contained in the lesson material being taught
  - b) Teaching learning materials needed or felt useful for students
7. Has a specific purpose with the learning materials provided
  - a) Understand the various levels of educational goals, ranging from national, institutional, curricular educational goals to instructional goals
  - b) Shows the goals to be achieved in the learning process
8. Not bound by one textbook. Texts should be viewed as minimal learning material and not the only source used by teachers, including sources from the internet and encyclopedias.
9. Not only teaching in the sense of conveying knowledge but always developing the child's personality. Not only prioritizing the achievement of intellectual intelligence but also emotional and other intelligences. Includes cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects
10. Have good classroom management skills. A good teacher has good classroom management skills and can ensure good student behavior, when students learn and work together effectively, instilling respect for all components in the classroom.
11. Can communicate well with parents. A good teacher maintains open communication with parents and keeps them updated on what is going on in the

classroom in terms of curriculum, discipline, and other issues. They make themselves available to phone calls, meetings, or emails.

### **2.3. Implementation of Character Education with Character**

According to Sutarjo Adisusilo (2014), character becomes an identity, a feature, and even a permanent trait. So character is a set of values that have become a habit of life so that it becomes a permanent trait in a person, for example hard work, unyielding, honest, simple, and others. It is by this character that the quality of a person is measured. Moreover, here are four basic characteristics of character education. First, the interior regularity in which every action is measured against a set of values. Values become the normative guidelines for every action. Second, coherence that gives courage, which makes a person firm in principle, not easily swayed by the situation. This coherence is the basis that builds trust in each other, without coherence, one's credibility will collapse. Third, Autonomy means that someone internalizes values from the outside so that they become personal values, become inherent traits through free decisions without coercion from others. Fourth, firmness and loyalty. Persistence is a person's resistance to covet what is considered good, and loyalty is the basis for respect for the chosen commitment.

In order for the implementation of character education to run effectively, Thomas Lickona (2012) has developed 11 (eleven) principles for effective character education, namely: 1) Character education must promote ethical core values as the basis for the formation of good character; 2) Character must be understood comprehensively including in thoughts, feelings, and behavior; 3) Effective character education requires a genuine and proactive approach and promotes core values in all phases of school/campus life; 4) The school/campus must be a caring community; 5) Provide opportunities for students to take moral action; 6) Effective character education must be complemented by a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that values all learners and helps them to achieve success; 7) Character education must really try to develop students' personal motivation; 8) All staff must be a learning community and a moral community that all share responsibility for the ongoing character education, and strive to develop the same core values that guide character education for students; 9) Implementation of character education requires the necessary moral leadership for both staff and students; 10) Schools must recruit parents and community members as full partners in character building efforts; 11) Evaluation of character education must also assess the character of the school, assess the function of school staff as character educators, to assess how students manifest good character.

Furthermore, Hendriana & Arnold Jacobus (2017) states that the implementation of Character Education is carried out by habituation of character in schools as follows:

1. Religious: a) praying before and after lessons, b) celebrating religious holidays, c) providing opportunities for all students to worship.
2. Honest: a) providing facilities where lost items are found, places for announcements of found or lost items, b) transparency of financial reports and periodic class assessments, c) prohibition of cheating.
3. Tolerance: a) providing equal services to all class members without discriminating against ethnicity, religion, race, class, social status, and economic status, b) providing services to children with special needs, c) working in different groups.

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4. Discipline: a) having attendance records, b) giving awards to disciplined school members, c) having school rules, d) enforcing rules by giving fair sanctions for violators of the rules, e) getting used to being present on time.
5. Hard Work: a) creating an atmosphere of healthy competition, b) displaying slogans or mottos about working and studying hard, c) creating conditions for work ethic, never giving up, and learning endurance.
6. Creative: a) creating learning situations that foster creative thinking and acting, b) giving tasks that challenge the emergence of new works, both authentic and modified.
7. Independent: creating a school atmosphere that builds the independence of students.
8. Democracy: a) make decisions together through deliberation and consensus, b) open class management elections, c) implement dialogical and interactive learning models.
9. Curiosity: a) creating a class atmosphere that invites curiosity, b) available communication or information media.
10. National Spirit: a) conducting routine school ceremonies, b) holding ceremonies for national holidays, c) organizing national hero day commemorations, d) having a program to visit historical places, e) participating in competitions on national holidays, f) working the same as classmates with different ethnicity, socio-economic status.
11. Respect for the Motherland: a) using domestically made products, b) providing information about Indonesia's natural and cultural wealth, c) using good and correct Indonesian language, d) displaying photos of the president and vice president, state flags, state symbols, maps of Indonesia, pictures of Indonesian people's life (images of traditional clothes, traditional dances, traditional houses, traditional weapons, and traditional musical instruments).
12. Appreciating Achievements: a) awarding students' work, b) displaying signs of Character Habits of Ideas.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Character education is a process of instilling positive values in all those involved and as school members, so that they have the knowledge, awareness, and ability to act on such principles. The concept of character education will fail if the teachers who educate and teach in schools are unable to behave as positive role models in their own behavior and behavior in schools.

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