

THE POLICY BASE AND THE STRENGTHENING OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This research aims at analyzing the policy base of character education in elementary schools. The policy base applied by government is a system that must be run in line with the legal order. This present research is qualitative descriptive research with library research data collection. The policy base and the strengthening of character education since elementary school are essential factors for success at the next level. It was integrating knowledge on the curriculum and on the teaching-learning process, which is appropriate to the environment. Education must be comprehended as a process of creating humans as a whole and humane for being the right person that is suited to norms and too noble values that exist in society. This cannot be missed from the visions and mission of the school as an educational institution. The process that can be done is by integrating the cultural wisdom of the local environment. Therefore, the output is a school as an educational institution, that the school does create its graduates to have the technical skill and not only academic, but also highly values the cultural moral and the community's local wisdom as Indonesian national identity.

Key Words: *policy, character education, elementary school*

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I. Introduction

The Indonesian government today is trying hard to achieve the success in the character development, particularly to young generation. The government has issued a National Policy of Nation's Character Development in 2010-2025 which is then followed up by the Ministry of Education and Culture by issuing a Character Education Grand Design in 2010. Education process which is started with curriculum that is full of burdens for students and less successful gives a factual effect in daily life. The problem happened nowadays is that many students experience violence at school, the data from Indonesian Child Protection Commission (*KPAI*) points out that around 84% students in Indonesia experience violence at school. The further data from *KPAI* records that 40% students between 13-15 years old have reported that they have experienced physical violence by their peers, and 75% have claimed to have committed physical violence at their school. Additionally, 50% students have reported that they have experienced bullying at their school ("*Hari Pendidikan, KPAI: 84 Persen Siswa Alami Kekerasan di Sekolah*," 2018).

If we see the expected objective of character education, it surely develops and guides character of Indonesian nations as it can manifest *Pancasila* in the daily life. "The Purity, The Fair and Civilized humanity, the spirit of unity, the spirit of citizenship led by the wisdom of wisdom in the deliberation of representation and social justice for all the people of Indonesia" (Indonesia, 2010).

The nature of character education is creating human for being smart, intelligent, and good person. These two natures become problems in human's life nowadays. The target of character education is all ecosystem exists in the education field.

From the report of *Kilasan Kinerja 2017* from the Ministry of Education and Culture year 2017 reported from 514 districts and city, 492 districts/city have had a culture-based education pilot school at the elementary school level and 514 districts/city have had a character-based education pilot school at the secondary level (SMP) (*Kemendikbud*, 2017).

At the present, the development and the advancement of technology are said to be massive. These have positive and negative effects. Globalization era flows so fast into Indonesian children's personality. Parents' lack of attention and bustle towards children make children get much more attention from media and television. Parents are more focused on children's high score at school and less or even no attention to their children's attitude. There are so many cases in community nowadays whether the positive or negative attitude come from modelling the attitude from media and television.

From the statement above, we can see that the function of character education is developing students' basic skill for they have personality that is appropriate to Indonesian national identity which uphold human values.

The character development is a movement that must be supported by a strong policy for its implementation is free from obstacles mainly in the field. The development in the education sector, particularly character education is an effort to manifest the national principle of *Pancasila* into Indonesian nation's attitude in daily life. In its implementation, character education is a factual effort to achieve nations' goal to educate nations' life.

Pointing out the data from *KPAI*, it is important to strengthen character education which is rooted on culture and local wisdom which is considered as a solution for solving that problem and to prepare Indonesian young generation to become golden generation in 2045. The following data points out that quality and character values are as important aspects to build golden generation in 2045 who are skillful in basic literacy and competence of 21st century (*Pusat Analisis dan Sinkronisasi Kebijakan (Sekretariat PPK)*, 2019)

Building A Golden Generation of 2045 Equipped with 21 st Century Skills		
21 st Century skills needed by each student		
1	2	3
Character Quality How a student adapts with a dynamic environment	Basic Literacy How a student applies basic skills routinely	Competence How a student solves complex problems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religiosity Nationalism Independence Mutual Cooperation Integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language literacy Numeracy literacy Science literacy Digital literacy (information technology and communication) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical thinking Creativity Communication Collaboration

<p>Source: <i>Kemendikbud 2016</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial literacy • Cultural literacy and citizenship 	
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The importance of the strengthening of character education is also carried out in several regions, recently the Governor of West Java, Ridwan Kamil, affirms that the importance of character education to young generations is that they are expected to become generations that love their own culture (*“Didik Karakter Generasi Sunda, Ridwan Kamil Gandeng Paguyuban Pasundan,”* 2019).

The development of establishment moves around to all aspects, namely infrastructures, economy, technology, politic, and so forth. However, behind that development, some problems appear in disharmony among communities themselves. We see today that political issue and the issues of ethnicity, religion and race become main menus in the daily life of Indonesian community.

II. Method

This research is library research with the qualitative descriptive method by collecting data of facts released in the media using relevant sources. Data obtained from empirical data and facts collected by interview, documentation, then resolved to the conclusion of the problem received fully.

III. Results and Discussion

1. The Policy of Character Education

The history has documented that the policy base implemented in the basic education is already in line with the national education goal since the Regulation Number 4 Year 1950 about basic education and teaching at school all over Indonesia are implemented, which is then changed into Regulation Number 12 Year 1954, in the subsection 3, the National Law

1954 clearly points out that the education goal clearly shows that the education goal and national teaching create humans who have moral values and good attitude, to become nations who are democratic and responsible for the society's wealth and for the Indonesian homeland. As the time runs and the change of President, the policy of government about education still focuses on the character education which is based on the Indonesian local wisdom. It is said that education at school does not only create Indonesian nations who master technology but also create the ones who have good personality, democratic, responsible, love the homeland, respect the difference existed in society and love the surroundings.

The foundations of the policy of the Strengthening of Character Education are First, the Regulation Number 20 Year 2003 subsection 3, "National education functions to develop and to build character as well as the nations' civilization which is dignified to educate nations' life, aims at developing students' potential to become humans who are believers, be conscious to God, has a noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, smart, creative, independent and to become responsible nations". Second, *Nawacita* Program Number 8 states that the strengthening of nations' character through character development of students as parts of mental revolution. Third, *Trisakti*, that manifests generations who have character in culture.

The particular character education policy of the Indonesian Republic, in this case, the President of Indonesian Republic issues the Regulations of President Number 87 Year 2017 about the Strengthening of Character Education, then is abbreviated as *PPK*. That President Regulation has been ruled about the responsibility of character education on education units to strengthen students' character through exercise, sports, education, family and society that they are as the stages of the National Mental Revolution Movement (*Peraturan Presiden*, 2017).

Moreover, in 2018, The Ministry of Education and Culture (KEMENDIKBUD) issues the Regulations of The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesian Republic Number 20 Year 2018 about the Strengthening of Character Education on the formal education units. Having had this issued Ministerial Regulation is to implement the terms from the subsection 14 of the President Regulations Number 87 Year 2017 which have been mentioned above. These Ministerial Regulations have a purpose in the implementation of character education under the education units to strengthen students' character, where the school is as formal education units organizes a structured formal education and has the level from PAUD, Secondary High School, Senior High School, either in the central level or in the regional one (Kemdikbud, 2018).

There are five values of characters which have been stated by The Ministry of Education and Culture. These five values are from *Pancasila* and become main priorities in the Strengthening of Character Education (*PPK*), those five values are: Religious values, Nationalism, Integrity, Independence and Mutual Cooperation. Each value interacts and connects each other, forming a thorough personality and developing dynamically. In the next discussion, this Strengthening of Character Education (*PPK*) does not change the structure of curriculum but strengthen the curriculum of 2013 which has included the materials of character education. Therefore, in the field implementation, it needs creativity and intra-curricular modification in order to have character education content. This can be added in the co-curricular and extra-curricular. In conclusion, the three things can grow character values and positive character (*Biro Komunikasi dan Layanan Masyarakat Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan dan Tim Komunikasi Pemerintah Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika*, 2017).

The policy about character education that has been stated by government must be applied continuously and sustainably so that it will become a system that supports its implementation. In addition, if the character education is carried out sustainably, it will create young generations who have fighting spirit, independent, and have noble character. Hence, the policy of character education must be started since PAUD continues to elementary level and to the higher level. This must be implemented in a factual thing for each student to strengthen the foundation of long-term development and to strengthen the unity of the Indonesian Republic.

2. The Character Education in Elementary School

As the nations who have noble civilization and norms, moral values and culture must exist in the students' attitude. Education is an agent of change which must be able to change and to fix students' character as nation's generations. It can be said that education must be able to carry out mission from the character building in this present era. The realization of character education in elementary school must be carried out in many ways. The concept of character material must be strong in the curriculum. Education has 2 functions, that is, *transfer of values and transfer of knowledge* (Tilaar, 1999). Therefore, education units must be

discipline in implementing the regulation that has been stated from the level of principal until the level of students in the school's environment.

According to Lickona, there are seven reasons for character education must be taught as follows:

1. Education is the best way to guarantee students having a good personality in their life.
2. Character education is a way to increase students' achievement in the academic context.
3. Character education is very important for students who cannot build strong character for themselves at the other place.
4. Character education prepares students to respect each other and to socialize among communities from various backgrounds.
5. Character education starts from the problems related to social moral, such as impoliteness, honesty, violence, violation of sexual norms, and working spirit in a low learning.
6. Character education prepares a good way in the attitude at the workplace.
7. Character education is a learning of cultural values which is as a part of civilization. (Lickona, 1991)

Character Education Quality Standards have recommended 11 principles to manifest an effective character education at school. Those standards are:

1. Promoting basic values of ethics as a basis of character education.
2. Identifying character education comprehensively to include feeling, thought, and attitude.
3. Building character by using comprehensive approach, proactive and effective.
4. Having a concern in creating community at school.
5. Giving students a chance to have good attitude.
6. Having curriculum that has a broad meaning and appreciating all students then building their character and helping them to reach their success.
7. Doing efforts to grow self-motivation to the students.

8. Utilizing all elements of education units as the moral community that share responsibility on character education and being loyal to the agreed basic values.
9. There are moral leadership division and big support to develop character.
10. Family and society members are functioned as partners in the effort of establishing and developing students' character.
11. Evaluating character education on education units, all functions from staff as educator and positive character manifestation in students' life. (A Husen, M Japar, 2010).

Character education must focus on the cultural values of the local environment, Father of Education in Indonesia, Ki Hajar Dewantara affirmed that education cannot be separated from culture and vice versa. According to Ki Hajar, education in the context of character is an effort to support children's life development both physically and mentally from their God's will towards the general civilization in their environment (Samho, Bartolomeus, 2013).

Considering to the importance of character education at the elementary level, hence, the Minister of Education and Culture in his direction reminds us about how important of teachers' role at school, either at elementary level or secondary level, where in the Regulation Number 20 Year 2003 becomes basic education level. In line with the program (*Nawacita*) stated by the President Joko Widodo, education in elementary school has been informed to include character education, that is, moral or character of 70% and general knowledge of 30%. If the foundation of character is strong, so that students will be good in receiving knowledge, but if their character is weak, it will be dangerous for themselves. And teachers' role becomes very important thing to explore and to invest good character to their students. (*Penyusun Informasi dan Publikasi*, 2018).

At present there are many debates about character education, not only from academics. Where there is a fundamental thing that encourages a consensus of values and cultural similarities. (Lewis, M., & Ponzio, 2016). Multiculturalism and education is a process to implement diversity culture regardless of class and group differences. Multicultural education is important to increase the participation of the surrounding community. General principles that must be noticed in the character education development at elementary school are:

1. Sustainable, the process of nation's character values development is a process that is started since students enter the school until they finish their study line. This process stresses on the process of guiding and supervising students in their school's environment.
2. Exist in all subjects, self-development and school's culture; development of character values that are built both in each subject and in extra-curricular.
3. Values that are taught to students are going through the learning process; in this third stage, character education is internalized through the teaching-learning process and is not included in the main subject. Things that should be focused are about the development of cognitive skill, affective, conative, and psychomotor of students at school.
4. The implementation of the teaching process with active and fun method; in the last stage, character education is conducted in an enjoyable circumstance. (*Direktorat Ketenagaan Ditjen Dikti. Kemendiknas, 2010*)

Education must be comprehended as a process of creating human as a whole and humane for being a good person that is suited to norms and to noble values that exist in society. This cannot be missed from the visions and mission of school as an educational institution. Manifesting the visions and mission of education must be supported by facilities and infrastructures as the important needs.

IV. Conclusion

The policy and implementation of character education in the elementary school system must be run and understood. This is by the function of national culture to develop skills and shape morals, character, and civilization with dignity to educate the nation's life and create students who believe in and are aware of God, have a noble character, healthy and knowledgeable, understand and be responsible. Policies approved by the government at this time have provided regulations and can be integrated into educational material in schools. The process can be done by combining the culture of the local environment. Therefore, the results of this study can be seen that schools as educational institutions not only create competition for professional and academic interests but are also closely related to the moral culture and wisdom of the local community as Indonesia's national identity.

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