



TEACHER'S EFFORTS TO DEVELOP THE CHARACTER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH CHILD- FRIENDLY EDUCATION

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Abstract

Every human being has various characters, especially children in elementary school. Children aged 7-12 years are in the "golden age", where character begins to form. The character of students seems to have not been implemented well in the school environment, even though it is very important to form a good personality. The purpose of this study is to determine the important role of teachers in developing student character in elementary schools through child-friendly education. This research method uses a descriptive and qualitative approach, to describe, illustrate, and explain the teacher's efforts in developing student characteristics with data collection techniques, observation, and interviews. The results of the study indicate that teachers are good and able to understand the characters that must be applied to students, the role of teachers is quite significant in developing student character through habituation learning activities, school culture, extracurricular activities and the school's vision and mission.

Keywords: Developing Character, Child-Friendly Education, Teacher's Efforts

Abstrak

Setiap manusia memiliki karakter yang berbeda-beda, terutama anak-anak di sekolah dasar. Anak usia 7-12 tahun berada pada "masa keemasan", dimana karakter mulai terbentuk. Karakter siswa nampaknya belum terimplementasi dengan baik di lingkungan sekolah, padahal sangat penting untuk membentuk kepribadian yang baik. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui peran penting guru dalam mengembangkan karakter siswa di sekolah dasar melalui pendidikan ramah anak. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif dan kualitatif, untuk mendeskripsikan, menggambarkan, dan menjelaskan upaya guru dalam mengembangkan karakteristik siswa dengan teknik pengumpulan data, observasi, dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru sudah baik dan mampu memahami karakter yang harus diterapkan pada siswa, peran guru cukup signifikan dalam mengembangkan karakter siswa melalui kegiatan pembelajaran pembiasaan, budaya sekolah, kegiatan ekstrakurikuler dan visi misi sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Mengembangkan Karakter, Pendidikan Ramah Anak, Upaya Guru

Introduction

In this 21st century, students are required to have character values including components of knowledge, awareness, willingness, and follow-up in implementing these values. But in reality, the required character values are not realized properly because students have not been able to apply them in everyday life. The role of teachers here is very important in educating and shaping the character of students in the world of education so that the required character values can be realized in everyday life.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 concerning the National Education System, Chapter I Article 1 (**Kemendikbud, 2003**), states that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have spiritual religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20, concerning the National Education System, Chapter I Article 3 (**Kemendikbud, 2003**) states that national education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the life of the nation, aiming to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

In developing the function of national education, the role of educators (teachers) is very important, as written in Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Chapter I Article 3, that educators are educational personnel who are qualified as teachers, lecturers, counselors, learning guides. Teachers are professional personnel who are tasked with planning and implementing the learning process, assessing learning outcomes, providing guidance and training, as well as conducting research and community service, especially for educators in elementary schools.

Teachers must be able to teach, educate, and train students in Indonesia to become children with character as demanded by today's education. The types of character that are to be instilled in students, as recommended by the Ministry of National Education, are: first, the character of loving God and all His creations; second, independence and responsibility; third, honesty/trustworthiness, diplomacy; fourth, respect and politeness; fifth, generosity, likes to help each other and work together/cooperation; sixth, self-confidence and hard work; seventh, leadership and justice; eighth, kindness and humility, and; ninth, the character of tolerance, peace, and unity (**Jalil, 2012**). This is a challenge for teachers, where in addition to being required to be professional teachers, they must also be able to understand the characters possessed by students. These challenges include student diversity, technology and information, classroom management, evaluation and assessment, time and workload, and limited resources. (**Mubarok dkk., 2024**)

Character has the meaning of human behavioral values related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow human beings, the environment, and nationality which are manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on religious norms, laws, manners, culture, and customs. (**Rachmadyanti, 2017**) Character education is a system of instilling character values to school residents which includes components of knowledge, awareness or will, and actions to implement these values, both towards God Almighty (YME), oneself, fellow human beings, the environment, and nationality so as to become perfect human beings. Meanwhile, according to (**Thomas Lickona, 2016**), the definition of character education is a deliberate effort to help someone so that he can understand, pay attention to, and carry out core ethical values.

It can be concluded that character education is an effort that can be done to understand and carry out ethical values such as being grateful to God Almighty, oneself, others, the environment and the nation. From the results of research at MI Muhammadiyah Tegalurung, character education values include two stages, namely planning and implementation. Planning is the initial stage in implementing character education including activities to socialize curriculum devices, planning school and student regulations, and direction from the curriculum section regarding character value planning through the creation of Syllabus and RPP in the learning process in the classroom. The implementation of character values is realized through the learning process in the classroom, school conditioning, habits and character culture to instill positive character values in students.

Research Methods

The research method uses a descriptive and qualitative approach to describe, elaborate, and depict teachers' efforts in developing student characteristics in today's educational demands. The qualitative approach is by using data collection techniques, observation, and interviews (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data collection in this study was conducted by searching for articles online, searches were conducted using the keywords "Child-Friendly Education", "Character Education", "Teacher Efforts to Develop Student Character" and obtained from research and observations at MI Muhammadiyah Tegalurung which met the criteria, namely the discussion of child-friendly education, character education, and teacher efforts in developing student character. The Concept of Child-Friendly Education in Building the Character of Lower Grade Students at MI Muhammadiyah Tegalurung.

Result and Discussion

Research Result

Character education in elementary madrasah schools can be done through child-friendly education to make it easier for teachers to teach human behavior values. According to Arismantoro, child-friendly education means creating a conducive learning environment so that children can learn effectively in an atmosphere that provides a sense of security, appreciation without threats, and provides encouragement. Meanwhile, according to (Yulianto, 2016), child-friendly education is a process of how a child can be excited, enthusiastic, and happy in following lessons in class, instead of being burdened and making learning at school a scary specter. That way, they can gain knowledge well, follow learning comfortably and safely.

As the result of the research in MI Muhammadiyah Tegalurung, when there is a student who asks for help from the teacher, the staff must be served wholeheartedly without discrimination. So that students feel comfortable and there is no fear at all because the interaction pattern is built using a family pattern. According to Machful Indra in (Kurniawan, 2015), the steps that can be taken to shape the character of elementary school students include the following:

First, determine the character: character determination is done based on the expected character goals in the sense that after following the entire learning process, the character formed is the character that has been determined. Determining the character for elementary school students should be adjusted to the characteristics of elementary school students, for example, the character of discipline and responsibility. This character is considered appropriate because the characteristics of elementary school children are that they like to play, move, and work in groups. Second, implementing character building: the

implementation of character building is carried out through learning by integrating the determined characters into learning. Integration can be done in the following ways: a) determining character by reviewing competency standards (SD) and Basic competencies (KD) in the content standards (SI) which contain the instilled characters. b) developing the characters contained in SK and KD into indicators. c) including characters in the syllabus and learning implementation plan. Third, Character behavior habits: character behavior habits will shape students' characters as found by Kurniawan that in character formation, there needs to be habits that are carried out repeatedly and consistently.

Based on this, it can be interpreted that in forming students with good personal character, the instilled character must be done repeatedly. For example, forming students with disciplined character, disciplined character will be formed if it is done repeatedly, so that students are accustomed to disciplined behavior. Disciplined behavior carried out by students indicates that the formation of student character has been successfully instilled. In addition to the steps that can be taken to form student character, teachers must also be able to condition students so that they are easier and more comfortable in accepting what is taught by the teacher. An area can be included in the child-friendly category if it has the following characteristics (Ichsan & Bahrul, 2017)

First, children are involved in decision-making about the future of themselves, their families, and their environment. Providing open opportunities, for example in decision-making about the future of themselves, their families, and their environment, accompanied by trust in the child's abilities, is an attitude that is highly expected by teachers. Without this attitude, no matter how great the equipment provided at school will not be optimal in helping the child's development. Teachers must be confident in the child's abilities; this belief and trust will make their attitude provide freedom and place the child as the subject and center of learning. So, children will be helped to believe in themselves and their abilities, they will not hesitate to try and realize their desire to explore and develop their potential. Second, ease of obtaining basic education, health and other services for growth and development. Through education, everyone learns all the things that are not yet known. Through education, a knowledgeable person will be born. The same is true for health which is very important for human survival. In relation to the development of child-friendly areas, a child must receive education and health services easily. Because children are the generation that continues the continuity of this life. Third, the existence of open space for children to gather, play, and be creative with their peers safely and comfortably must also be considered by the school. This is done to anticipate accidents that can happen anytime, anywhere, considering the age of children who are still not physically and mentally mature in planning and using their bodies. Fourth, the existence of rules that protect children from violence and exploitation. Cases of violence that often occur must be a full concern in the world of education. This is because cases of violence that occur on average at the age of elementary school children, both sexual violence or discrimination. Therefore, schools must really pay attention to and protect children from all forms of violence by making regulations and policies that support child protection. Fifth, there is no discrimination in any way related to ethnicity, race, religion, and class. Discriminatory attitudes should not occur in creating a child-friendly area. Indonesia consists of various ethnicities, races, religions, and various groups. Therefore, it is necessary to instill an attitude of mutual respect and appreciation for each other which of course starts from a child.

This can be done in learning activities and daily life. From the characteristics of child-friendly education above, it can be concluded that an education can be said to be child-friendly if by looking at the conditions of a safe, comfortable, and loving learning

environment at school, the relationship that is established with a sense of love and affection between students and teachers, parents, and fellow friends is very influential in shaping a child's character. (Saifurrohman, 2014) Meanwhile, child-friendly schools have the following characteristics: (a) Fair treatment for male and female students, (b) learning process with varied learning methods so that students feel happy to follow the lesson, (c) the teaching and learning process is supported by teaching media, (d) students are involved in various activities that develop competence, (e) Students are involved in class arrangement, (f) Students are involved in expressing their ideas in creating a school environment. Teachers can provide reinforcement through materials from activities in the school environment such as school culture, habits, extracurricular activities, the school's vision and mission, and the surrounding environment.

It can be concluded that character education is an effort that can be done to understand and carry out ethical values such as being grateful to God Almighty, oneself, others, the environment and the nation. From the results of research at SDN 4 Kotakarang, character education values include two stages, namely planning and implementation (Siska, 2018). Planning is the initial stage in implementing character education including activities to socialize curriculum devices, planning school and student regulations, and direction from the curriculum section regarding character value planning through the creation of Syllabus and RPP in the learning process in the classroom. The implementation of character values is realized through the learning process in the classroom, school conditioning, habits and character culture to instill positive character values in students.

Discussion

Character is certainly inherent in every individual, which is reflected in behavioral patterns in everyday life. According to The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Character is "the aggregate of features and traits from the individual nature of some persons or things" (the entirety of the characteristics that form the character of a group of people or things). A person's character can be influenced by external factors, namely the environment (nurture) and internal factors, namely innate (nature). (Muzfirah & Nurhayati, 2020) Meanwhile, according to Lickona, character is the ownership of "good things". As parents and educators, our job is to teach children and what character is contained in our teaching.

From the results of research in several journals, it can be concluded that the role of teachers in developing student character through child-friendly education is very important in helping to develop student character. This is manifested by various supporting indicators, such as from the presentation of the school's vision and mission, supporting facilities and infrastructure, school culture, extracurricular programs, habitual learning, play facilities, interests and talents and various other indicators. (Nuri & Endang, 2019) Efforts made by teachers can be implemented during classroom learning activities; habituation when in the school environment and outside school; extracurricular activities that can develop students' interests and talents, sense of responsibility, courage, good socialization, and cooperation in groups; realizing and implementing the school's vision and mission related to the development of student character. So, the author hopes that MI teachers can implement these efforts so that students can become individuals with good character.

A character can be seen from two things, namely first, as a set of conditions that have been given for granted, or have existed for granted, which are more or less forced on us. This character can be considered as something that already exists (given). Second, character can also be understood as a level of strength through which an individual is able

to master the condition. This character can be called a willed process. Meanwhile, according to (Cahyono, 2017) that the core of character education is not just teaching students knowledge about what is good and what is bad. But more than that, character education is the process of instilling (internalizing) positive values in students through various appropriate methods and strategies. Character development that has been based on faith in Allah as God, has necessitated obedience to both parents who brought him into the world. However, this obedience is not without conditions, because when both parents teach children to do shirk or do actions that are prohibited by religion, then the child is not required to obey them, however, good attitudes and treatment as well as politeness and humility towards both are still ordered by religion. According to (Muzfirah & Afdal, 2022) research, to instill and grow the character of the nation, scouting uses ten pillars which become the code of honor. The code of honor has the meaning of a norm (rule) which becomes a measure of awareness of morals stored in the heart that is aware of its self-esteem, and becomes the standard of behavior of scouts in society. The ten pillars are called *dasa dharma*.

Human values are poured into the school's vision which is then socialized to the school community, they then build a joint commitment to realize the vision. Based on this vision, a program of learning activities for values and character is then prepared through various activities held at school, namely through the learning process in the classroom, habits in the school environment, and others. Activities carried out by teachers include: Teachers always smile and greet students when they meet them both in and outside the school environment; Line up in front of the class before entering the class and are led by one of the students, always greet and pray when starting and ending learning, teachers can apply a smiling attitude to students when explaining the material so that students are comfortable and not stressed when learning takes place, be open to students when students want to ask about material that they do not understand, use innovative and creative learning models so that students can actively participate in learning, can develop a character of responsibility, helping each other, working together with others and using real media (tools) in learning; Do not commit acts of violence, discrimination, and bullying, so that children can develop their potential; A student who asks for help from a teacher or employee must be served wholeheartedly and do not discriminate; Facilities such as classrooms and practical laboratories are also good so that they will support the process of implementing character education values in schools; Provision of worship facilities, and implementation of religious activities that are relevant to the vision in order to develop a religious atmosphere and character; The implementation of various extracurricular activities in educational units can develop good character, for example, scouting extracurricular activities that can develop the character of students to be brave, responsible, able to socialize well, able to work together in groups; extracurricular dancing, sports, which can develop students' interests and talents; The role of parents and the community can also help in developing good characteristics and as a control/controller of student character. students in the world of education.

Conclusion

Child-friendly education implemented in the school can create a child-friendly environment, namely creating a safe, comfortable, healthy and conducive atmosphere, accepting children as they are, and appreciating children's potential. Thus, children are no longer objects in education but as subjects, children are free to be creative in learning with an educational environment full of love. In relation to this, child-friendly education at MI



Muhammadiyah Tegalurung includes; Physically Friendly, Non-Physically Friendly, Learning Activities in the classroom, and Learning Activities outside the classroom.

Suggestion

For further researchers, Character Education can be re-examined using quantitative methods. The influence of children's character formation does not only focus on non-academic activities, it can be developed again.

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