

CHARACTER BUILDING IN EDUCATION: A PROPOSED THEORY FOR STAI'S ECONOMIC SYARI'AH PROGRAM

Weni Ratnasari

(Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Agama Islam Auliaurrasyidin Tembilahan)

Abstract

Character building in education is a program that has been socialized by the government since 2010. Character building can be integrated in teaching and learning process, it means that every subject must be connected with the norm or value and also improving and application with the daily life. So, the value of character not only shows in cognitive aspect, but they must be internalized as a real accomplishment in social life. Education has responsibility on developing human character, by the effort can be done by planting of local or national culture, changing curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment or evaluation, and habits of all the educators. It is important for educators, staff members and school or university counselors, to promote character building to create an optimal learning environment, create a school, college or university culture welcoming of diversity, and provide safety for all.

Keywords: Character building, education, teaching and learning process.

A. Introduction

There are numerous negative school and even college or university incidents that have happened that reflect poor decision making and unhealthy character traits. The Columbine school shooting, incidents of cyber bullying, harassment of students, and texting inappropriate pictures or threats to others are a few examples. According to one character education program, one way to prevent such negative behaviors is to create a positive school climate that is rooted in shared values and responsible student participation. By building caring environments in which students feel safe

and supported, schools, colleges and universities can reduce the root causes of conflicts and help students gain a sense of belonging and attachment to school. These feelings are an important part of keeping students engaged in the educational process. Across the country, parents, students, and civic leaders are turning to build character through education as a way to help create such strong, healthy learning environments.

Character building was launched by the government in 2010 in order to build new generation's good character through education. Not only schools, but also Universities or Colleges in Indonesia are required to implement character building program. In order to give guidance for the implementation of character building, the Education Authority has already launched three principles: continuity, integration, and development with awareness of the character values. In the character building, educator plays important role as an actor to build student's character. Before integrating character values in teaching and learning process, the educators should design adapted lesson plans with character building included. The adaptation can be done by adding or modifying the learning steps, indicator, and assessment technique.

Based on *Kemendiknas*, the aim of character building is to improve the quality of implementation and outcomes of education in forming students' character or moral as a whole, integrated, and balanced. Through the implementation of character building, the students are expected to be individuals who live in line with Indonesian ideology, *Pancasila*. Character education leads to the establishment of academic culture, that underlines the attitudes, traditions, habits, and symbols practiced by all stakeholders of the school, college and university and its surrounding communities. (*Kemendiknas*).

Character education is a national movement in creating schools, colleges and universities that foster ethical, responsible and caring young people by modeling and teaching good characters through emphasis on universal values that we all share. It is the intentional and proactive effort done by schools, districts and states to instill the students about ethical values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect for self and others. Character education is not a “quick fix”. It means that character education is a long term project that needs support from all parties to reach the goal. In order to teach the character values, character building needs an actor. Here, educators play an important role to teach those values. Educators must be able to find ways to implement the character building in teaching and learning process. Therefore, character education is expected to support the construction of Indonesia’s new generation.

B. Discussion

1. Overview of Character Building

Before define character education, writer cites the definition of character. Berkowitz define character as “an individual’s set of psychological characteristics that affect that person’s ability and inclination to function morally,” it mean that character can direction a person doing good or bad therefore shows function morally. Khon (Schwartz, 2002) define character education as “a collection of exhortations and extrinsic inducements design to make children work harder and do what they’re told. Character education involve three aspects, are: cognitive, feeling and action. According to Tappan and Brown (Schwartz, 2002) character education in formal and non formal can teach by moral experience of teacher, although this experience will give students in self-denial.

Further, Tanan (2008) mentions nine pillars of character in general, there are: believe in God and love with all his creation; independence and responsibility; honesty; respect and courteous manner; philanthropists, cooperative; confidence and hard working; leadership; humble, and; tolerance, peace, and unity. The nine pillars of character can be teach in a holistic educational model with the combine of method knowing the good, feeling the good, and acting the good. Knowing the good is a method which is correlation with cognitive knowledge, feeling loving the good, is one of the way how to correlation between feel and love virtue, so the people are drive to do better. It makes people growing awareness. Therefore the people will act the good and it will be a good habit too in the life day.

2. Developing Character Value in Education

Basically, character values are not taught directly, but they are integrated in the teaching and learning process, self-development activity and school culture. Therefore, educators and all school citizens should integrate those values into the existing curriculum, syllabus, and lesson plan. Before integrating character values in teaching and learning process, educators should design lesson plans with character building included. As Jensen (2001) states, a lesson plan is an extremely useful tool that serves as a combination guides, resource, and historical document reflecting our teaching philosophy, student population, textbooks, and most importantly, our goals for our students. The goals were not only in cognitive domain, but also in affective domain. Therefore, in order to implement character building in the teaching and learning process the adaptation of lesson lesson plan is needed. The adaptation can be done by adding or modifying learning steps, indicator, and assessment technique so that character values can be implemented in teaching and learning process.

There are three principles employed in implementing character building in education so that the students know and accept the character values as theirs and they become responsible for the values. The first principle is continuity. It means that the process of implementing character values is a long-term process, starting from the very beginning to the very end of an education stage. The second principle is that the character values are integrated in all subject matters, self-development activities, and the educational cultures. It means that the character values are integrated in every subject, in every intra-curricular and extra-curricular activities. The third principle is that the character values are not concept that should be taught discretely. Those values will also not be asked in the test. They are integrated in the class activities. However, the students need to be aware that they are in the process of developing character values.

The basic of character building, should be applied since young age because for this moment children can develop their potential maximally, psychologists are call it golden age. But for some families, process of character education feel difficult to implement, particularly for parents who are stuck on a solid routine. Therefore, character education should also be given when children in the school environment. Here is role of educators begin, educators must be spearheading in the classroom, to create good human character.

3. Characteristics of Good Character

Pearson & Nicholson (2000), feel that there are three interconnected areas that represent good character: self, others, and the community. With their own actual self, students can look at self-discipline, responsibility, trustworthiness, courage, and self- discipline. Character traits such as: honesty, respect, empathy, kindness, and caring play into affect with students who have relationships with classmates, teachers, friends, and

family. Therefore, Here are the following good character traits that can be implimented in Education:

- a. Integrity. Integrity is having strong moral principles and core values and then conducting your life with those as your guide. When you have integrity, you main your adherence to it whether or not other people are watching.
- b. Honesty. Honesty is more than telling the truth. It's living the truth. It is being straightforward and trustworthy in all of your interactions, relationships, and thoughts. Being honest requires self-honesty and authenticity.
- c. Loyalty. Loyalty is faithfulness and devotion to your loved ones, your friends, and anyone with whom you have a trusted relationship. Loyalty can also extend to your employer, the organizations you belong to, your community, and your country.
- d. Respectfulness. You treat yourself and others with courtesy, kindness, deference, dignity, and civility. You offer basic respect as a sign of your value for the worth of all people and your ability to accept the inherent flaws we all possess.
- e. Responsibility. You accept personal, relational, career, community, and societal obligations even when they are difficult or uncomfortable. You follow through on commitments and proactively create or accept accountability for your behavior and choices.
- f. Humility. You have a confident yet modest opinion of your own self-importance. You do not see yourself as "too good" for other people or situations. You have a learning and growth mindset and

- the desire to express and experience gratitude for what you have, rather than expecting you deserve more.
- g. Compassion. You feel deep sympathy and pity for the suffering and misfortune of others, and you have a desire to do something to alleviate their suffering.
 - h. Fairness. Using discernment, compassion, and integrity, you strive to make decisions and take actions based on what you consider the ultimate best course or outcome for all involved.
 - i. Forgiveness. You make conscious, intentional decisions to let go of resentment and anger toward someone for an offense — whether or not forgiveness is sought by the offender. Forgiveness may or may not include pardoning, restoration, or reconciliation. It extends both to others and to one's self.
 - j. Authenticity. You are able to be your real and true self, without pretension, posturing, or insincerity. You are capable of showing appropriate vulnerability and self-awareness.
 - k. Courageousness. In spite of fear of danger, discomfort, or pain, you have the mental fortitude to carry on with a commitment, plan, or decision, knowing it is the right or best course of action.
 - l. Generosity. You are willing to offer your time, energy, efforts, emotions, words, or assets without the expectation of something in return. You offer these freely and often joyously.
 - m. Perseverance. Perseverance is the steadfast persistence and determination to continue on with a course of action, belief, or purpose, even if it's difficult or uncomfortable in order to reach a higher goal or outcome.
 - n. Politeness. You are knowledgeable of basic good manners, common courtesies, and etiquette, and are willing to apply those to all people

you encounter. You desire to learn the skills of politeness in order to enhance your relationships and self-esteem

- o. Kindness. Kindness is an attitude of being considerate, helpful, and benevolent to others. It is motivated by a positive disposition and the desire for warm and pleasant interactions.
- p. Lovingness. The ability to be loving toward those you love means showing them through your words, actions, and expressions how deeply you care about them. It includes the willingness to be open and vulnerable.
- q. Optimism. Optimism is a sense of hopefulness and confidence about the future. It involves a positive mental attitude in which you interpret life events, people, and situations in a promising light.
- r. Reliability. You can be consistently depended upon to follow through on your commitments, actions, and decisions. You do what you say you will do.
- s. Conscientiousness. You have the desire to do things well or to the best of your ability. You are thorough, careful, efficient, organized, and vigilant in your efforts, based on your own principles or sense of what is right.
- t. Self-discipline. You are able, through good habits or willpower, to overcome your desires or feelings in order to follow the best course of action or to rise to your commitments or principles. You have a strong sense of self-control in order to reach a desired goal.

4. The Importance of Character building in Education

Families today often provide less supervision and moral guidance than previous generations, leaving children less capable young citizens as they often lack the skills they need to contribute to society. Because of technology and the advancement of education, families are leaving the core

development of their children up to the schools (Benigni, 2006). If the moral development of young teens is an expectation, it is important that communities become more involved to help give students the opportunity to be positive leaders and contribute through community service (Benigni, 2006). Many students with little or no supervision may have nothing to do during the weekends and could find themselves making poor choices, getting into trouble, or using alcohol and/or drugs.

Good character education programs emphasize consequences for choices and support the need for alternatives for teenagers to learn assets that promote good character. With character education programs, it is helpful to have support from all the caring adults in a child's life. Educators can help young people become caring, trustworthy, respectful, and responsible citizens by integrating different character education programs within their schools and community. Educators can be aware of how their students are relating to one another and observe the way students communicate, interact, play and work together in and out of the classroom. School counselors may also contribute to character education by including it in the weekly guidance lessons in the classroom.

In order to implement character education the school staff must become an inclusive, caring, and contributing community in which all share responsibility for character education. In an attempt to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students, effective character education programs are encouraged to take a three-prong approach to include student thinking, feeling, and behavior. The schools may wish to provide opportunities for ethical decisions, and acknowledge appropriate responses. The schools must involve parents and community members as full-partners in the character-building effort.

Tantra (2012) states that there are four reasons why character building should be integrated in education. First, education is an effective process to develop character. It is widely agreed that the character building should be started from the family, and then school and also environment. Education in the family is the fundamental education to develop a child with good character building. Education in the school will also be developed to strengthen the good character building which child has from the family. In the environment, child will have a chance to implement the good character building in daily life interaction. Second, education is a long term process. It means that education is stated from child till died. Character building should be learned from a child. Third, by educating character building beliefs to avoid bad character. Education is not only to develop intellectual quotient, but also develop emotional quotient, social quotient, adversity quotient, ecological quotient, and spiritual quotient. Through education based on character building the students will have opportunity to develop their potentials become optimal. And the fourth is through education, the character building can be thought to the teachers, students and all of the stakeholders of the school.

Character building can be integrated in teaching and learning process, it is mean that every subject must be connected with the norm or value and also improving and application with the daily life. So, the value of character not only shows in cognitive aspect, but they must be internalized as a real accomplishment in social life. Education has responsibility on developing human character, by the effort can be done by planting of local or national culture, change curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment or evaluation, and habits of all the educators. According to Greenberg (2003), education make students be knowledgeable, has skill, healthy, care, responsible, and hard working as a good civilization. To build of student who has basic in character, culture, intellectual and commit to long life

education. The quality of education that must be through by interaction in social life with skills and responsible: to practice of positive habit, no harm and healthy way; to support with ethical and responsible in group, family and school; and to have basic competency, work culture and values as the basic for potential workers or citizens.

5. The Role of Educator in Building the Character

The role of educators is very important because the main aim of the teacher is the character building of the students through academics. Educators have to activate the minds as well as the body of the students. An educator should not only be restricted to teaching which is written in the textbook but should try to come up to the students' expectations for which education should not be confined to merely delivering lectures, because it is another name for mental growth. An educator should teach the students to respect people, regardless of the social status—it is respect which returns you respect. The purpose of the educator is not to cram the student's head with facts but to prepare them for a life of purity and sincerity. This total commitment to character-building is the highest goal of a teacher. What is important is that the child be exposed to an education that predominantly teaches values such as obedience, care, forgiveness, respect and truthfulness etc.

Education should aim at the balanced growth of the total personality of a student through the training of his spirit, intellect, his rational self, feelings and bodily senses. This can only be done by an educator, whether teacher or lecturer. Educator not only caters the spiritual development of the student but is also responsible for the development of the soul—the mind and body. An educator is also a guide to lead students to the righteous path. It is his duty to produce a wholesome child who carries out his obligations as set out by the precepts of Islam. The teacher's directive is to educate a

child by giving him or her mannerisms and etiquette that will serve the child and community, and ultimately make the child understand the purpose of his life and to provide the child with knowledge that will equip him/her to pursue both worldly gains and most importantly after-life gains. Such a child does not feel coerced, stifled or imprisoned but feels motivated, free and eager. Knowledge without character is the same as incomplete Education. The educators can foster students desire, care about and act upon “the good”.

Educator’s role is particularly important and has been compared with that of the prophets. Every prophet is essentially a teacher. On more than one vision, Providence has changed the fate of nations through effective and well directed teaching. This profession is so important and so sacrosanct that the Holy Prophet proudly declared it to be a prominent part of his personality and prophet hood. If an educator realizes the significance of his job, the tremendous responsibility he is shouldering, the share he has in the future development of the nation, and consequently the accountability he will have to lace in the Hereafter, he will at once shudder with the idea of facing the grave consequences of any dereliction on his part.

Educators have to develop the personality of students. The most important component of personality development of character is developing the spirit of service. When an individual learns to invest one's surplus strength, knowledge and power to serve other people, he or she becomes a person, develops a new energy resource, namely character- energy. This is the third and highest human energy resource, over and above the first tow. namely, physical energy and intellectual energy.

C. Conclusion

Character is the solid foundation on which a person's entire life is based. History has, time and again, thrown the statistics at us. Character is the magic ingredient that sets person apart from the rest. Our character will determine our success and each of us has the ability and the potential to develop and strengthen our character. Although character might mean a lot of qualities, the fact is that all the qualities are kind of interrelated. If a person is honest automatically she or he is more dependable, more responsible, and more conscientious. When our overall character improves, it translates into success in all the areas of our lives. Often we tend to disregard the direct influence character has on our successes or failures.

Character building is important for all students. Character building should be taught to students not only to provide knowledge but to provide life experiences that can apply the norms, culture and personal development. Character building is not taught separately into a separate subject, but character education should be integrated in every subject. School staff and families need to communicate and work together to gain knowledge and understand character education programs. According to Pearson, et al. (2000), developing good character requires students to recognize the good, crave the good, and put forth the good. Character building often falls into the school's hands. The school, along with parents or guardians must help children identify core values, adapt and commit to those values, and then put them into practice within their own lives.

It is important for educators, staff members and school counselors, to promote character building to create an optimal learning environment, create a school culture welcoming of diversity, and provide safe schools. Good character education programs may inspire students to continue achieving academically while reducing unwanted behavior. Classrooms need to be a

place where students, teachers, counselors and others live and grow together and it needs to be a place where all students can grow academically, emotionally, physically, and socially. A good character education programs can play a critical role in defining what positive student behavior includes. Character building can be an effective tool to help students explore, define and understand their values.

Rerences

- Benigni, M. (2006). Up beat outreach: A community partnership provides leisuretime leadership opportunities. *American School Board Journal*, 193(3), 40-42.
- Berkowitz, Marvin W. & Bier, Melinda C. 2005. "What works in character education: A research driven guide for educator. <http://www.hiho.ne.jp/taku77>
- Berkowitz, Marvin W, John H. Grych. 2000. Early Character Development and Education. Volume 11: Number I.
- Celce-Murcia. 2001. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Harmer, Jeremy. 2000. *How to Teach English*. Malaysia. Longman.
- Larson, Kelly. 2009. *Understanding the importance of Character Education*. University of Winconsin-Stout.
- Lexmond Jen, Richard Reeves. 2009. *Building Character*. London: Demos.
- Lickona, Thomas. 2001. *The teacher's role in character education*. Boston University.
- Lumpkin, Angela. 2008. *Teachers as role models: Teaching character and moral virtues*.

-
- Ministry of National Development Planning. 2010. *The National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2010-2014*. Jakarta: Ministry of National Development Planning.
- Pearson, Q., & Nicholson, J. 2000. Comprehensive character education in the elementary school: Strategies for administrators, teachers, and counselors. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education & Development*, 38, 243.
- Tantra, Dewa Komang. 2012. Pendidikan Berbasis Karakter. A paper presented on “*Workshop Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran Berbasis Karakter*” in Ganesha Education University Singaraja April, 10th 2012.