Implementation and Reinforcement of Student Character Education in Palembang City

Mardiah Astuti ¹, Fajri Ismail ², Padjrin ³

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Abstract

The study aimed to analyze the inculcation of student character values in schools in Palembang City. The study used a quantitative descriptive method. The data collection used observation, questionnaires, and documentation. The sample of the research was 66 samples with quota sampling technique. The study found that the lack of exemplary reinforcement and habituation decreased the understanding and reflection of students' behavioral character values. Furthermore, learning about character values was integrated through the subjects of Civics and Islamic Religious Education. While the school gave the exemplary family and community reinforcement in the form of regulations, policies, and cooperation between schools, families, and communities regularly, as well as habituation of living with character in daily life was still not optimal. It needed to be optimized again so that the character values in students were closely and maximally attached to students both from speech and action.

Kata kunci:
Penataan; Pendidikan Karakter; Karakter siswa


1 UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia
Email: mardiahastuti_uin@radenfatah.ac.id
2 UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia
Email: fajriismail_uin@radenfatah.ac.id
3 SMP Negeri 03 Palembang, Indonesia
Email: dhapadjrin@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Moral decadence had been rampant in the world of education so that it had become a blurry portrait in the world of education. It can be seen from the rise of negative behavior by students such as fights, cheating, drugs, and others. Character degradation was a matter of concern. The problem of decreasing student character occurred in various regions in Indonesia and even the world. In a study conducted on students in Pekalongan, the deviant behavior encountered in student violence, fights, beatings, and courtship exceeded the limit or showed characterless behavior (Yuniati A, 2017).

The research conducted by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) in five Asian countries, namely Vietnam, Cambodia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Indonesia, showed that 84% of acts of violence against students occurred in schools in 2015 (ICRW, 2015). In 2016, in Indonesia alone, violence occurred; the perpetrators were 135 students (Gunawan & Hafiz, 2020). The nature of aggression, physical fights, threatening, and hurting other students showed the lack of character in students. In a study, this attitude was caused by naughty peer affiliation, weak parental monitoring, poor school performance affecting character (Li & Cheng, 2017).

The character can be formed through education (Asa, 2019). A good education guided one’s life (Sudrajat, 2011) and was useful in developing one’s potential for the good things needed by him, society, and the state. So that students did have high knowledge and had high character (Rachmadyanti, 2017). Individuals with the character had a sense of love, responsibility, honesty, courtesy, caring, compassion, humility, tolerance, peace-loving, and all other good behavior. Religious values were things that can be applied in character education (Anwar, 2016). The children would become good people if they grew up in exemplary and good habits (Suyanto, 2012). Being identified by the National Research Council, the character was a prerequisite for a person’s development in life and work (Lavy, 2020).

The human character was a good behavior as a gift from Allah SWT to humans and was formed and developed from opinions, thoughts, attitudes, and actions (Achmad, 2020; Hasan, 2011; Padjrin, 2016). In general, the human character had good (taqwa) and evil (fujur) traits. Actualization of character development was done by maximizing good (taqwa) and minimizing evil characters (Achmad, 2020). Good character was related to good behavior, such as loving-kindness and behaving well, so that it emerges from within him a good character, having high self-confidence, being honest, respectful, caring, responsible, disciplined, brave, honest, diligent, and with integrity (Anwar, 2016; Sudrajat, 2011; Zuhdi, 2011). This behavior can be formed through the educational process. In Indonesia, it was called character education. Character education was contained in the seven philosophies and messages of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, which included visionary or thinking ahead (Sutarna et al., 2021).

Research conducted by Tang (2019) found that the character of curiosity and self-control had a significant effect on academic achievement. In comparison, the character of caring, curiosity, and self-control had a significant effect on student welfare. Character can be formed in four ways, namely: the first was learning. All components of education must instill character values in the family, school, and community environment. It was in line with what was shown in a study that stated that character values must be instilled, practiced by all components of education, and integrated into every subject (Rosad, 2019; Sudrajat, 2011). The character can be developed through problem-solving program-based learning that positively affects character (S. Kim et al., 2019) or educational media. Educational media had a positive impact on children’s knowledge (Borzekowski, 2018). Character learning can be through character education. It included character knowing or awareness of character, knowledge of character values, ability to take lessons, ability to take an attitude when facing problems and know yourself. Character feeling (feelings about the character) consisted of conscience, which was knowledge of the truth, and having a sense of obligation to do what was right, self-esteem which was treating and respecting others positively as we want to be treated or appreciated, humility, empathy, self-control, and loving the good. Moreover, character
action resulted from character knowledge and character feelings, namely listening, expressing, and formulating (Rosad, 2019).

The second was exemplary. Character values must be exemplified continuously by all school components. Exemplary through cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects was the most effective and essential method of character education if it was carried out thoroughly by teachers in the educational environment (Munawwaroh, 2019; Rosad, 2019; Sudrajat, 2011). The third was reinforcement. School life with the commendable character was realized if it was supported by environmental arrangements and support activities such as smile banners, greetings, and greetings in the school environment, regular involvement of family collaboration for students who skipped school, liked to be angry, and so on (Rosad, 2019; Sudrajat, 2011). Furthermore, the fourth was habituation. Habituation in discipline was a strategic step in shaping the character that leaders can implement, educators, students, and education staff in the educational environment (Rosad, 2019; Sudrajat, 2011). Social ethics, dress etiquette, punctuality, and students’ character towards education staff, educators, and leaders were character habits implemented in schools. Character habituation can also be lived through learning, extracurricular and intra-curricular activities (Rosad, 2019).

In the research, Saptatiningsih (2021) explained that character education materials indoctrinated with the indoctrination method in formal institutions would not build the nation’s character because the implementation of character can only be built based on habits, spiritual and affective values. Unlike previous research, this study analyzes the inculcation of student character values in schools in Palembang City. This study will see how exemplary, strengthening, and habituation in character education is carried out.

METODE

The study used a quantitative descriptive method. The study population was teachers and students at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels in Palembang City for the 2020/2021 academic year. The study populations were 340 elementary, junior high, and high school students. With quota sampling technique, the samples were 66 people, consisting of 20 elementary school students, 20 junior high school students, 20 high school students, 2 elementary school teachers, 2 junior high school teachers, and 2 high school teachers. Data were collected through observation, questionnaires, and documentation for three months, from February to April 2021. Then the data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Learning

Learning about character values was obtained by students from the school environment, family, and community. This learning can be seen from the results of the questionnaire in Figure 1:

![Figure 1. Implementation of Character Education in the Learning Process](image-url)

Learning about character values was obtained from the school, family, and community environment. Learning character values in schools were reflected in religious subjects, citizenship, and all subjects integrated into character values. In the family environment, character values were
given in the form of advice, while in the community environment, the learning of character values was reflected in local, regional policies. More details are in Figure 2:

![Figure 2. The percentage of learning about character values in the school, family, and community environment](image)

**Exemplary**

In general, students got exemplary from teachers in the school environment, parents in the family environment, and neighbors in the community. More details are in Figure 3:

![Figure 3. Exemplary of students in school, family, and community](image)

Exemplary as above, was mostly done at the school and the family. More details can be seen in Figure 4:

![Figure 4. Percentage of exemplary aspects of character education in school, family, and community](image)

**Reinforcement**

In general, reinforcement of character values in school, family, and community provides motivation, discipline, regulations, policies, supervision, and regular communication. In a study, character values were given to students every Monday in a flag ceremony through the speech of the ceremony supervisor (Virgustina, 2019).
The results of the questionnaire showed that the reinforcement of character values given to elementary, junior, and senior high school students in Palembang city was shown in Figure 5:

![Figure 5. Reinforcement of character values in students in the school, family, and community](image)

The school environment dominated the reinforcement given. Reinforcement was given in the form of motivation, supervision, intense communication, and discipline. The percentage of reinforcement of character education for students in Palembang City was as shown in Picture 6:

![Figure 6. Percentage of reinforcement aspects of character education in school, family, and community](image)

**Habituation**

Habituation in cultivating character values was generally carried out through school, family, and community regulations. The family had a role for their children, namely: teaching. The loss of role models from parents and a less conducive environment were problems in character education for students (Julaeha, 2019). The lack of support from parents of students was one of the factors causing the cultivation of character values that has not been running optimally (Marzuki, 2018). As in Figures 7 and 8:

![Figure 7. Habituation of character values in students at school, family, and community](image)
People of character were people who knew good things, loved good, and did well. Good character can be formed with education. Character education included knowledge, feelings, and actions (Rosad, 2019). Implementation of character education can be through learning, exemplary, reinforcement, and habituation. In one study, characterless people had a high potential to engage in characterless acts such as cyber-bullying (Gao et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, character learning was taught explicitly in the curriculum or implied lessons integrated into character values. Civics and Islamic Religious Education subjects were one part of character learning. This subject was taught to students from the lowest and highest level schools (Tim Observer, 2021). Suppose the value of character education was implemented through Civics. In that case, it could be said that the character values for Civics include the principal of the main character and the value of the main character. The principal character values of Civics were to create students who were: religious, honest, intelligent, authoritarian, democratic, and caring. While the central character values of Civics were to create students who were: nationalist, obedient to social rules, respect diversity, aware of the rights and obligations of self and others, responsible, think logically, critically, creatively, innovatively, and independently. These central character values can be developed more broadly to strengthen the function of Civics as character education (Dianti, 2014; Juliardi, 2015). Whereas in Islamic religious education, the characters that can be instilled were religion, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love for the homeland, respect for achievement, friendly, communicative, peace-loving, fond of reading, environmental care, social care, responsibility through the material of the Qur’an, aqidah, fiqh, morality, and history (Mamlu’ah, 2016).

The observations showed that 87.5% of character learning was obtained through Civics and Islamic Religious Education subjects. Learning was given for two hours of lessons equivalent to 90 minutes per week. Moreover, 75% of character learning was obtained in the community (Tim Observer, 2021). Character education through character learning must be carried out in a planned manner. The results of research in Indonesia and Malaysia showed that character education in schools was carried out programatically, starting from the formulation of plans to evaluation (Karuniawati & Nadeak, 2021). In a study, learning preparation starting from prayer and checking the neatness of students’ uniforms, the learning process by teaching teamwork, and closing the teaching and learning process by praying and greetings were positively correlated in character building (Marini et al., 2019). Character learning can also be carried out through an integration process in routine activities at school, exemplary, conditioning in other subjects, and school culture as a student learning environment (Lubis & Nasution, 2017; Sardiman, 2012).

The same thing was also found in a study that showed a positive relationship between extracurricular activities and student character (Han et al., 2017). The student-teacher relationship and the motivation given to students in the school environment increased positive development in students, such as students’ beliefs about their future and so on (Alm et al., 2019). However, character values other than those contained in school regulations such as etiquette for older and younger

Figure 8. Percentage of habituation aspects of character education in school, family, and community

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people, caring, honesty are still cognitive. The study's findings align with previous research that most teachers had not optimally implemented character education for their students (Citra, 2012) and still only took place in the cognitive realm (Barus, 2015). In the case of online learning, most students were not honest in doing assignments. This case was in line with the results of Hadayani’s research which showed that 61.4% of students practiced religion, 14.4% did not practice it, and 20% had not instilled the values of honesty and politeness while studying at home (Hadayani et al., 2021).

Exemplary was important in character education. Education through exemplary was better than education through discipline, which caused physical and psychological punishment. Research in Taiwan showed that physical and psychological punishment would only cause persecution for students (Chen et al., 2020). Persecution and violence from teachers, parents, or adults were factors that caused behavioral deviations socially (Nkuba et al., 2019). A study showed that the level of education through applying discipline in schools fostered punishment support disproportionately targeting minorities (Welch, 2018). A study showed that adolescent character deviation would cause depressive symptoms in adulthood (J. Kim et al., 2020). Attitudes of depression, anxiety, stress significantly predicted suicidal ideation (Jie Zhang et al., 2017). Exemplary was also part of strengthening character education (Dwintari, 2017). The study results showed 75% of the level of exemplary in the community and 78.75% in the school and family environment (Tim Observer, 2021). This obstacle showed that the exemplary had not been optimally provided in schools.

In contrast, the exemplary in the family and community was still minimal because of the busyness and lack of care from each party (Tim Observer, 2021). Students' character was strongly influenced by the school environment, family, and community where the child grew up (Sudrajat, 2011). The results of previous studies showed that the family environment dominated students' character by 10.6%, the school environment by 8.40%, and the community environment by 8% (Muhardi, 2016). Similarly, it was also found that school climate significantly influenced problem behavior (Ly et al., 2021; Reaves et al., 2018). This contrasts with research found in China which stated that school climate did not affect adolescent acquaintances (Jingyi Zhang et al., 2020).

The reinforcement of character education can be in school regulations such as dress codes, school on time, religious extracurricular activities, Youth Red Cross and Scouts, routine supervision by parents and family, or activities and policies in the community. In a study, the reinforcement of character in students in Magelang Raya occurred because it was supported by good local wisdom values (Sukron Mazid, Danang Prasetyo, 2020). The peer group environment was an essential part of strengthening character education. Social friends were friends where children often gather (Suryana, 2016). Partners had a significant influence on character (Susanto, 2016), especially for college students. A study showed that the delinquent behavior of girls was more susceptible to influence than boys (McMillan, C., Felmlee, D., & Osgood, 2018), and boys had a much higher involvement of aggressive and non-aggressive delinquents than girls (Liu & Miller, 2020). Students who had a friendly environment with bad personalities were the cause of character deviations. Bullying was one example of character deviation. In one study, both bullies and victims were equally vulnerable to threatening and attacking behavior (Hong et al., 2021). The history of student delinquency was needed as a protective attachment as reinforcement of character that functioned as a monitor of student character from time to time (Lee et al., 2018).

Students who were still in the stage of emotional development and were looking for identity, were indeed easily influenced by peers because of their loyalty to their friends. A study showed that adolescents who were in contact with delinquent peers were more likely to become victims and perpetrators of bullying in the form of physical, verbal, and social bullying (Cho & Lee, 2018). The findings showed that the reinforcement of character values was 88.75% in the school, 75.25% in the family, and 73.50% in the community environment. While at the junior high school level, in the form of regulations, motivation, supervision, communication, and feedback on student behavior was carried out by the homeroom teacher, a small number of teachers, families, and the community (Tim
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Periodic family supervision of student behavior also had an essential role in strengthening character education in schools. In a study that was collaborated between schools and parents of students was able to reduce the level of juvenile delinquency (Sabatine et al., 2017), parents' mistakes in educating their children were one of the causes of student character deviations (Suyadi et al., 2021; Yuniati A, 2017). The perception that teacher support and care for students was a reinforcement in character education because it can be part of prevention programs in schools (Forster et al., 2017).

To obtain maximum character education, it was necessary to familiarize students in the school, family, or community environment. Habitation was an essential factor in instilling noble character in students. Parenting and learning patterns were part of forming habits. Research in Malaysia, authoritative parenting had a significant relationship to students' morals towards God and themselves (Ghani et al., 2014). If the environment were good, students would get used to behaving well. In a study, it was shown that the school environment affected students' character (Ardiansyah et al., 2019). Habitation can also be done using teaching materials that contained good values (Nugrahani, 2017) and became a school strategy in shaping students' character (Faradiba & Budiningsih, 2021; Suriansyah & Aslamiah, 2015). Policies in the school environment influenced character. In one study, the efforts of educators and policymakers seeking to prevent and reduce delinquency and teacher training on signs of lack of character in the form of aggression or violence were able to shape students' character and reduce delinquency in schools (Le & Stockdale, 2011).

Technological advances in the global era were one of the causes of the decline in character values in students outside the realm of research. In today's era, students were not far from cell phones. Students can access many things through their mobile phones. A study showed that character deviations in cyberspace were getting higher (Bae, 2017). The results showed an effect of using gadgets on students' character, namely the higher the use of gadgets, the children tended to be apathetic, irrational, lazy, closed, lacked empathy for others, and individualistic (Rahmandani et al., 2018).

The findings of this study indicated that the inculcation of character values in the habituation factor in the school environment was 83.00%, the family was 81%, and community was 75%. In schools, habituation was carried out through school rules and policies. In this study, habituation was dominated by the school environment, then in the family and community environment with a reduced percentage, but still relatively high. Habitation of good behavior at school was not an obstacle to the decline of character values in students (Tim Observer, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the lack of exemplary, reinforcement, and habituation was a factor in the decreased understanding and reflection of student behavior character values. Furthermore, learning about character values was integrated through Civics and Islamic Religious Education subjects. While the exemplary provided by the school, family, and community, reinforcement in the form of regulations, policies, and cooperation between schools, families, and communities regularly and habituation of living with character in daily life was still not optimal. It needed to be optimized again so that the character values in students were closely and maximally attached to students both from speech and action.

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