

IS CHARACTER EDUCATION USEFUL FOR STREET CHILDREN?

Chandra Perwira Negara, Elly Malihah Setiadi & Wilodati

Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Education, Universitas Pendidikan, Indonesia

Received: 26 Apr 2018

Accepted: 05 May 2018

Published: 17 May 2018

ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the problem of moral degradation among street children. They not only become victims of abuse and discrimination by others, but also experience a moral decline due to a bad environment. This study uses a qualitative approach with case study methods that attempt to reveal various information in depth. Based on the analysis, the results of this study conclude that (1) Character education should involve various parties such as parents, school, and government (2) Street children are vulnerable to moral eradication, thus demanding character education. (3) Character education should refer to comprehensive strategies, methods, and approaches.

KEYWORDS: *Character Education, Street Children*

INTRODUCTION

Getting an education is a human right for everyone. This means that everyone is entitled to a good teaching organized by the government and certain private institutions. In simple terms, education has two goals, namely to help people become smart and smart and help them become good human beings. Most schools aim at how their students become smart and intelligent, but neglect to make them good people. This means that moral issues are not easy tasks and even tend to be very difficult. Thus, it is only natural that the application of character education should be held as early as possible.

The role of teachers should not be limited to the cognitive enhancement of learners only, but the need to form character building (Huber, 2013, p. 311). The formation of character is very important considering the moral condition in society is increasingly problematic. Especially when talking about street children who tend to become victims of violence, whether physical, psychological, or sexual. In addition, if the street children remain left alone with a bad environment, then the moral decline becomes more severe. They will be contaminated by bad behavior on the streets. Actually, many of them have a young age and are compulsory to learn. However, the condition that has dropped out of school, and looking for work on the streets seems more tempting than studying in the classroom.

In the opinion of Schurink (1993), 'street children are men or women under the age of 18 have left their home environment either part-time or permanently, then spend most of their time on unattended roads to meet physical and emotional needs such as food, clothing, and nurturing '. From this definition, it appears that unattended life makes them have freedom in behaving, the even very potential to deviate.

The phenomenon of street children is evidence that the government is negligent in providing learning opportunities for lower social class. Whereas street children are part of the generation that should be considered for the

future of the nation. If that is ignored, the possibility of the destruction of the nation will be closer to the marking of rampant bad behavior. As Lickona points out (in Muslich, 2013, p.35) that there are ten signs of the times to watch out for if these signs exist, then a nation is heading for destruction. The signs are as follows: (1) increasing violence among adolescents (2) bad language and language use (3) strong peer group influence in violence (4) Increased use of drugs, alcohol and free sex (5) the lack of good and bad moral guidance (6) the decline of work ethic (7) the lower the respect for parents and teachers (8) the low sense of responsibility of individuals and citizens (9) to defuse dishonesty (10) and hatred among people.

It is undeniable that what has been mentioned above has occurred among street children in Indonesia. Masrukhi (in Bajari, 2012, p.5) reported the results of a study by the Women Study Center of Diponegoro University - Semarang. That about 28 percent of girls on the streets experience cases of sexual harassment, rape, prostitution, the creation of pornographic materials, and trafficking for sexual gratification. The results reinforce the findings of the Yayasan Duta Awan (YDA) Foundation in 1998, stating that out of 500 street children surveyed in Semarang, 12.9 percent have had sexual intercourse more than 8 times per month. 48.4 percent do it but not routinely, 6.5 percent do it once per month, and 16.2 percent do it 2-3 times per month with different partners.

Seeing these signs then puts the importance of organizing character education in schools. As Leming stated (1997, p.11) that character education is always associated with moral degradation among the younger generation. Schools are required to play roles and responsibilities in socializing the values of goodness that can then shape the character of students. Character education in schools should be organized and systematized through the curriculum. This effort to facilitate in measuring the level of successful character education that is applied.

METHODOLOGY

The approach used in this research was a qualitative approach with the type of research method was the case study. Data collection technique in this study is observation, interview, and documentation. That the data obtained can be accountable, verifiable and reliable, so in this study perform the triangulation of data.

DISCUSSIONS

Definition of Character Education

Education according to John Dewey (in Muslich, 2013, p. 67) is 'the process of intellectually and emotionally oriented intellectual faculties toward nature and fellow human beings'. The uniqueness of this understanding is that the goal of education not only leads to the man himself, but rather involves the human relationship with nature. According to Mahfud (2011, p.32) simple and general, 'meaningful education is an attempt to cultivate and develop innate potentials, both physical and spiritual, in accordance with the values that exist in society and culture'. According to Mahfud (2011, p.32) simple and general, 'meaningful education is an attempt to cultivate and develop innate potentials, both physical and spiritual, in accordance with the values that exist in society and culture'.

Etymologically, the word character is derived from the Latin *kharakter* or the Greek *kharassein* which means to sign or the French character that means to make sharp (Majid and Andayani, 2012, p. 11). While terminologically, according to Koesoema (2010, p. 80) understand the same character with personality, that is characteristic, style, or characteristic of a person derived from the formations received from the environment. In line with that opinion, E.

Mulyasa (2012, p. 3-4) defines a character with human nature in responding to situations embodied in its behavior. Characters can also be defined as the totality of inherent and identifiable personal traits on unique behavior, which distinguishes individuals from other individuals.

Meanwhile, according to Lickona (2012, p. 83) the character has the characteristics of forming moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. More can be seen through good character components as follows:

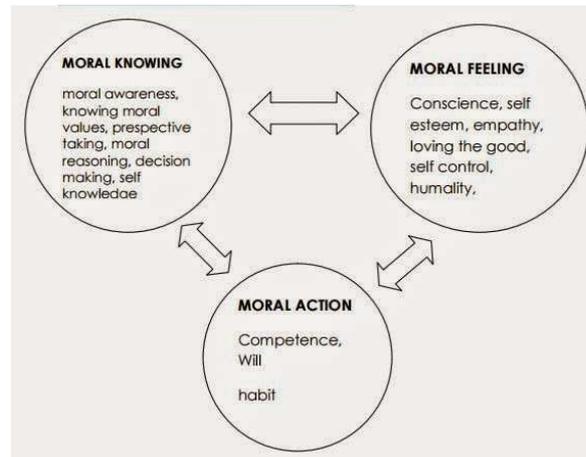


Figure 1: Good Character Components (Lickona, 2012, p. 84)

The three components are interconnected. Moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions do not serve as separate parts. Moral knowledge can enhance moral feelings that eventually lead to moral action. All of them create a good character in a person.

The definition of character education can be interpreted as a conscious and deliberate effort in helping to optimize the development of the character of learners. To support this optimization requires the involvement of all components in the school, both curricular and extracurricular. William & Schnaps (in Zubaedi, 2015, p. 15) 'understands character education as an effort by school personnel, families (parents) and communities, to help children and adolescents to be caring, opinionated and responsible.' In line with the above understanding, Lickona (in Samani, 2012, p.44) 'characterizes character education as a genuine effort to help one in understanding, caring, and acting on the basis of core values - ethical value '.

Character Education Benefits

According to Lickona(2012), there are seven reasons why character education should be delivered. The seven reasons are as follows.

- The best way to ensure the children (students) have a good personality in life.
- Ways to improve academic and non-academic achievement
- Helps students to form the strong character for themselves
- Preparing students to be able to respect others and be able to live in diverse societies.

- Resolve the students' moral-social problems, such as immodesty, dishonesty, violence, sexual deviance, and a low work ethic (study).
- Prepare good characters to be able to adapt to work
- Learning cultural values that are part of the work of civilization

Character Education Strategy in the School (Formal / Non-Formal)

The approach used by the Ministry of National Education in the development of character education, first through Top-Down, is an approach through policy intervention in the form of regulation, socialization, cooperation and monitoring-evaluation. Secondly, through the experience of practitioners, which can be the best experience that can be applied by the educational unit. Third, through the revitalization of the program, which can be optimized by strengthening roles in the scout, science and sports, honesty canteen, and so forth.

Comprehensive Approach in Character Education

The best way to implement character education is through a comprehensive approach. This means character education should offend cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions by integrating into school life. A comprehensive approach by Thomas Lickona (1997), p. 65-75) can be seen in the following picture:



Figure 2: A Comprehensive Approach in Character Education (Lickona, 1997, p. 66)

From the image of the comprehensive approach above, it can be seen that the character comes from a sense of responsibility and respect. Both aspects arise based on moral knowledge about good and bad about something, then feel the character (moral feeling) is already embedded in the self, so that in the end formed moral action. A comprehensive approach mentions the existence of twelve points to be done in character education, as follows:

- Develop a caring attitude inside and outside the classroom
- Teachers act as mentors, models, and mentors
- Creating a class community that cares about the environment
- Applying discipline to students, teachers and parties involved

- Creating a democratic environment in schools
- Teach character through the curriculum
- Implement cooperative learning
- Develop reflective learning
- Develop learning that encourages conscience/awareness
- Teach ways to resolve conflicts
- Making parents and society a partner in character education
- Create a culture of good character in the school environment

Character Education Method

According to Mulyasa (2014, p. 165-189), character education can be done by various methods. The method of learning character is as follows:

- Habituation, that learning should be delivered in an interactive atmosphere, fun, exciting, full of encouragement, motivation, and provide more space for the learner in the form of his competence to achieve goals. The process can be done by among others habituation. Habituation is something that deliberately done repeatedly so it becomes a habit. Habituation at its core is an experience, it is something that is practiced.
- Exemplary, exemplary teachers greatly affect the growth and personal development of the learners. This exemplary role and function are very important in shaping the personality of children, to prepare and develop human resources. As exemplary, of course, personal and what the teacher will get the spotlight of learners and people around the environment who consider as a teacher. Aspects of uncertainty can include basic attitudes, speech styles, work habits, experience through mistakes and clothing, human relations, thought processes, neurotic behavior, tastes, decisions, health, and lifestyle in general.
- Student discipline development, teachers should be able to cultivate the discipline of learners, especially self-discipline. Teachers should be able to help learners develop their behavior patterns, raise their standards of conduct, and implement rules as a tool to enforce discipline. Here also required a democratic attitude in order to achieve optimal educational goals.
- Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), contextual learning is one of the learning models that can be used to streamline and succeed character education in school. CTL emphasizes the relevance of learning materials with the real life of learners, so that students are able to connect and apply the competencies of learning outcomes in everyday life.
- Play a role, through which learners try to explore relationships between people by way of demonstrating and discuss it so that together learners can explore feelings, attitudes, values, and various problem-solving strategies.

- Participatory learning, defined also as the involvement of learners in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. The participatory learning indicators include the involvement of emotional and mental learners, adanya willingness of learners to contribute to achieving goals, and in learning activities, there are things that benefit learners.

Values in Character Education

In order to strengthen the implementation of character education, the government has identified 18 values that come from the nation's religion, culture, and philosophy. The developed values are as follows (Syarbini, 2012, p. 25-28):

- **Religious:** Attitudes and behaviors that are adherent in implementing religious teachings that are adhered to, tolerant of the implementation of other religious services, and live in harmony with followers of other religions.
- **Honest:** A behavior based on an attempt to establish itself as a person who is always trustworthy in words, actions, and work.
- **Tolerance:** Attitudes and actions that appreciate differences in religious background, ethnicity, ethnicity, opinions, attitudes, and actions of others that are different from himself.
- **Discipline:** Actions that demonstrate orderly conduct and abide by various rules and regulations.
- **Hard work:** Behaviors that show genuine efforts to overcome obstacles to learning and tasks, and complete the task as well as possible.
- **Creative:** Think and do something to produce new ways or results from something that has been owned.
- **Independence:** Attitudes and behaviors that are not easy depending on others in completing the task.
- **Democratic:** The way of thinking, acting, and acting that judge equally the rights and obligations of himself and others.
- **Curiosity:** Attitudes and actions that always seek to know more deeply and extensively from what they learn, see, and hear.
- **The Spirit of Nationality:** The way of thinking, acting, and insight that places the interests of the nation and the State above self and group interests.
- **Love of the Homeland:** The way of thinking, acting, and doing that show loyalty, awareness, and high appreciation of the language, the physical, social, cultural, economic and political environment of the nation.
- **Respect for Achievement:** Attitudes and actions that drive itself to produce something useful for society, and recognize and respect the success of others
- **Friendly/Communicative:** Actions that show the pleasure of talking, getting along, and working with others.
- **Peaceful Love:** Attitude, words, and actions that cause others to feel happy and secure for their presence.
- **Love to Read:** The habit of providing time to read the various readings that give good to him.

- **Caring for the Environment:** Attitudes and actions that always seek to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, and development efforts to repair the already existing natural damage.
- **Social Care:** Attitudes and actions that always want to provide assistance to other people and communities in need.
- **Responsibility:** Attitudes and behavior of a person to carry out his duties and obligations which he ought to do to oneself, society, environment (nature, social, and culture) of the state, and God Almighty.

Although it has formulated 18 values of the nation's character formers, the educational unit can determine its development priorities to continue the pre-condition values that have been developed. Selection of these values moved from the interests and conditions of each educational unit, which is done through context analysis, so that in its implementation there may be different types of character values developed between one school and or one area to another. Implementation of character values to be developed can start from the essential values, simple, and easy to implement, such as: clean, neat, comfortable, disciplined, polite and polite. The four groups of character configurations have the following core character elements (Zubaedi, 2015, p. 193)

Table 1: The Core Character Elements

No.	Group Configuration Character	Core Character
1.	Manner of Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious • Honest • Responsible • Social care • Environmental care
2.	Manner of Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart • Creative • Like to Read • Curiosity
3.	Manner of Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy • Clean
4.	Manner of Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care • Cooperative

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of character education to make people intelligent and good must be considered by all parties. Families, school institutions, mass media, and governments must work together so that character education is applied to everyone including street children. Street children not only experience weaknesses in access to basic needs, but also abuse and discrimination from others. This can then have a profound effect on their psychology. In addition, they also experience moral erosion due to the bad environment and lack of supervision. Without serious efforts from all parties, the organization of character education will only end up being a discourse.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges to the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education for the funding through LPDP Scholarship. Any remaining errors are the author responsibility.

REFERENCES

1. Bajari, Atwar. (2012). *AnakJalanan: DinamikaKomunikasidanPerilakuSosialAnakMenyimpang*. Bandung: Humaniora.
2. Huber, Marsha M, and Shirine L. Mafi. (2013). *Education par excellence: Developing personalcompetencies and character throughphilanthropy-based education*. *Journal of Accounting Education: Elsevier*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jaccedu.2013.07.001>
3. Koesoema, Doni. (2010). *PendidikanKarakter: StrategiMendidikAnak di Zaman Global*. Jakarta: Grasindo.
4. Leming, James S. (1997). *Whither Goes Character Education? Objectives, Pedagogy, and Research in Education Programs*. *Journal of Education: Boston University*. Volume 179, Number 2.
5. Sukmawati et al., *The Implementation of Character Education on Civics Education Subject Atjunior High School of UPI*, *International Journal of Educational Science and Research (IJESR)*, Volume 8, Issue 1, January-February 2018, pp. 45-54
6. Lickona, Thomas. (1997). *The Teacher's Role in Character Education*. *Journal of Education: Boston University*. Volume 179, Number 2.
7. Lickona, Thomas (Terjm). (2012). *Education for Character: MendidikUntukMembentukKarakter – BagaimanaSekolahDapatMemberikanPendidikanTentangSikapHormatdanBertanggungjawab*. Jakarta: PT BumiAksara.
8. Mahfud, Choirul. (2011). *PendidikanMultikultural*. Yogyakarta: PustakaPelajar.
9. Majid, Abdul dan Dian Andayani. (2011). *PendidikanKarakterPerspektif Islam*. Bandung: RemajaRosdakarya.
10. Mulyasa, E. (2012). *ManajemenPendidikanKarakter*. Jakarta: BumiAksara.
11. Muslich, Masnur. (2013). *PendidikanKarakter: MenjawabTantanganKrisis Multidimensional*. Jakarta: PT. BumiAksara.
12. Samani, MuchlasdanHariyanto. (2012). *Konsepdan Model PendidikanKarakter*. Jakarta: PT RemajaRosdakarya.
13. Saptono. (2011). *Dimensi-DimensiPendidikanKarakter: Wawasan, Strategi, danLangkahPraktis*. Jakarta: Esensi – Erlangga Group.
14. Schurink, W. (1993). *Street Children: An Investigation into The Causes and Incidence of The Problemin The RSA*. Pretoria, South Africa: Human Sciences Research Council.
15. Sudrajat, Ajat. (2011). *MengapaPendidikanKarakter?.JurnalPendidikanKarakter*: Yogyakarta: UNY.
16. Syarbini, A. (2013). *Model Pendidikan Karakterdalam KeluargaRevitalisasi PeranKeluargadalam MembentukKarakter AnakMenurut Perspektif Islam*. Jakarta: PT. Elek Media Komputindo.
17. Zubaedi. (2015). *DesainPendidikanKarakter: KonsepsidanAplikasinyadalamLembagaPendidikan*. Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group.