

# Nasional Character-Based Education Quality Improvement Management in Early Childhood Education

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**Abstract:** This study aims to describe the management of improving the quality of learning based on national character in early childhood education. So that these goals can be achieved properly, a qualitative approach is used with a literature study design in several PAUD institutions. Data was collected from school principals, teachers, educational staff and relevant references. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively descriptively. The results of the study show that: (1) planning for improving the quality of character-based learning is based on the national curriculum, school curriculum, school flagship programs and extracurricular activities with an integrated curriculum system; (2) the implementation of improving the quality of character-based learning is carried out based on a commitment to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the school with an active learning system, integrating character values in the learning process, and intervention and habituation in instilling character values in students; and (3) evaluation and quality control of character-based learning is carried out using an authentic assessment system.

**Keywords:** education quality management; character building; early childhood education programs

## INTRODUCTION

The current era of progress in information and telecommunications technology has become one of the factors that has a very large influence on the development of national character, especially the mass media, especially electronic media with the main actor being television. The nation's moral values written on Pancasila gradually began to fade. In fact, if these values are imbued and implemented in life, it will clearly help the Indonesian people to become a nation of morality and dignity. The decline in the morale of this nation will also result in the collapse of good manners, mutual cooperation and religious tolerance. Various alternatives to overcome the moral or character crisis have been carried out by the government, including education which is considered as a preventive alternative. This is because education is a long-term effort in building a better nation and having Pancasila morality in order to overcome a moral or character crisis by carrying out character education at every level of education. Character education is one option to overcome the moral degradation of the Indonesian people at every age, especially in early childhood. There are various ways to apply it, from telling stories, singing, setting an example, habits, and many more.

Efforts to improve the quality of schools need to be carried out continuously because schools are places to give birth to generations of the nation. The higher the quality of the school,

the higher the quality of the graduates. Competition for school quality is actually school competition too, because parents of prospective students will entrust their children to schools that are considered quality. And one of the important aspects of quality needed by parents is the formation of the character of their students.

This is in accordance with the objectives of Education in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System that "National education functions to develop capabilities and form dignified national character and civilization in the context of educating the nation's life, aiming at developing the potential of students to become human beings who believe and have faith in God Almighty, have noble character, be healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens". Based on this, schools must have programs that can improve and develop good character for students.

Through character education at school, students instill good habits so they are used to doing them wherever they are. The methods that teachers can use to develop character are by directing, habituating, exemplifying, strengthening, and punishing. One program that implements good habits in schools is school culture. In early childhood education it is very necessary to pay attention to and implement character education for a better future for Indonesian children. With character education it is also hoped that children will grow fully or perfectly. At the age of 0-6 years, in this period

the child's brain is developing very rapidly. They will be able to absorb quickly everything they see or hear. The first years of a child's life are a very important and critical period in terms of physical, mental and psycho-social growth, which runs so fast that the success of the first years largely determines the child's future. The government has shown its political will in human resource development from an early age. early childhood education programs (Sinaga, 2018).

## METHODS

The type of research used is kualitatif method literature study. The literature study method is a series of activities related to methods of collecting library data, reading and taking notes, and managing research materials (Zed, 2008:3). Literature study is an activity that is required in research, especially academic research whose main objective is to develop theoretical as well as practical aspects. Literature studies are carried out by each researcher with the main objective of finding a foothold/foundation to obtain and build a theoretical basis, frame of mind, and determine provisional conjectures or also known as research hypotheses. So that researchers can group, allocate organize, and use a variety of literature in their fields. By conducting a literature study, researchers have a broader and deeper understanding of the problem to be studied. Conducting a literature study is carried out by researchers between after they determine the research topic and determine the formulation of the problem, before they go into the field to collect the necessary data (Kartiningrum, 2015).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Character education is the process of instilling certain characters as well as providing seeds so that children are able to grow their distinctive character while carrying out life. With character education it is hoped that children can grow with good character. Character education in early childhood is very important, where at the age of 0-6 years is a period when a child's brain is developing rapidly, so that they will be able to absorb quickly everything they see or hear. There are nine pillars of character that need to be formed in children, namely: (1) Love for God and the universe and its contents, (2) Responsibility, discipline and independence, (3) Honesty, (4) Respect and courtesy, (5) Compassion, caring and

cooperation, (6) Confident, creative, hard work and never give up, (7) Justice and leadership, (8) Kind and humble (Sumual, 2022).

The character-based education model is the formation of a complete human being with character, namely developing the physical, emotional, social, creative, spiritual and intellectual aspects of students optimally. To form true human learners, the following steps can be taken: 1) Apply learning methods that involve the active participation of students, namely methods that can increase student motivation because all human dimensions are actively involved by being given subject matter that is concrete, meaningful, and relevant in context of life (student active learning, contextual learning, inquiry-based learning, integrated learning); 2) Creating a conducive learning environment (conducive learning community), so that students can learn effectively in an atmosphere that provides a sense of security, appreciation, without threats, and provides encouragement; Providing character education explicitly, systematically and continuously; and 4) Teaching methods that pay attention to the uniqueness of each student, which apply all aspects of human intelligence (Manasikana & Anggraeni, 2018).

Character education can not only be done theoretically, but also needs to be implemented. Their dependence on modern technology and foreign culture makes students and the wider community far from the noble values of culture and religion. Even the application of culture- and religion-based character education is still very difficult to become an alternative for our young generation today (Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Agama & SOSIOLOGI Zaenal Abidin, 2021).

The formation of character there are three things that take place in an integrated manner. First, children understand good and bad, understand what action to take, are able to prioritize good things. Second, have love for virtue, and hate bad deeds. This love is a torch or passion to do good. For example, a child doesn't want to steal, because he knows stealing is bad, he doesn't want to do it because he loves virtue. Third, children are able to do good, and are used to doing it. Through the process of nine important character pillars instilled in children. He started from the love of God and the universe and its contents; responsibility, discipline, and independence; honesty; respectful and polite; affection, caring, and cooperation; confident, creative, hard working, and never give up; justice

and leadership; kind and humble; tolerance, peace, and unity (Sinaga, 2018).

Efforts that can be made by teachers and parents in building the character of early childhood: 1. Treat children according to the child's characteristics. 2. Foster a positive understanding of children from an early age 3. Fulfilling children's basic needs, including the need for affection, provision of nutritious food. 4. Get used to children socializing and interacting with the surrounding environment. 5. The pattern of teacher and parent education that is carried out both at home and at school is interrelated. 6. Provide support and appreciation when the child displays commendable behavior. 7. Provide environmental facilities in accordance with the age of development. 8. Be firm, consistent and responsible (Sinaga, 2018).

The implementation of a quality learning process is a demand that must be fulfilled by every teacher in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as a professional educator as mandated by the 2015 National Education Standards Agency concerning educational process standards which explained that the learning process in educational units is held interactively, inspir - creative, fun, and challenging the motivation of students to participate actively, as well as providing sufficient space for initiative, creativity, and independence in accordance with the talents, interests, and physical and psychological development of students. This process standard was created in order to create high quality education and learning so that the education units in Indonesia have high competitiveness at the regional, national and even international levels (Trisnantari et al., 2019).

National character-based education in the 2013 Curriculum aims to improve the quality of educational processes and outcomes, which leads to the formation of the character and noble character of students as a whole, integrated and balanced, in accordance with graduate competency standards in each educational unit (Mulyasa, 2013: 7). Character education can be integrated into all learning in every field of study contained in the curriculum. Learning materials related to norms or values in each field of study need to be developed, made explicit, and linked to the context of everyday life. Therefore, value education and character building are not only carried out at the cognitive level, but touch on internalization, and real practice in everyday life in order to shape the competence of students

(Retnawati, 2015).

Competency-based education that is held in schools and madrasas at every level and level must be organized systematically based on good management of improving the quality of learning so that the goals of national education can be achieved properly. The formation of the competence, attitudes and character of students at the school and madrasah level receives enormous attention in internalizing character values in the entire learning process in schools and madrasas so that they have academic and non-academic competencies. Based on the research results, it can be explained that a person's success is not solely determined by knowledge and technical abilities (hard skills), but is also determined by the ability to manage oneself and others (soft skills). The results of the study also revealed that success was only determined by about 20 percent by hard skills and the remaining 80 percent by soft skills. Even the most successful people in the world can succeed because they are supported more by soft skills than hard skills (Akbar, 2000). Therefore, improving the quality of national character-based education must be strengthened so that the goals of national education can be achieved properly and are able to prepare human resources (human resources) with quality and character (Trisnantari et al., 2019).

## CONCLUSION

Management of improving the quality of character education is needed in the world of education, it is an art and science in managing character education resources to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently. If the governance of an educational institution uses a good management system, it will produce good quality education and be ready to compete with other institutions. Education stakeholders really hope for quality education or educational institutions. This must be continuously pursued by all parties, both the central government, local governments, entrepreneurs, educational institutions, teachers, lecturers, education staff, and other academic communities who care about education. On the other hand, educational institutions must be able to provide good and quality services so that they are not abandoned, and in this way educational institutions will continue to exist and survive until the end of time.

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