# Implementation of Character Education in Elementary School Using The QR Code During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| | The application of character education during the Covid-19 pandemic underwent changes that needed to be adapted to conditions, one of which was character education in elementary schools. This study aimed to know the implementation of character education using the QR Code at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau. This study was conducted by implementing qualitative method. The data were collected through documentation and interviews with two teachers and the principal of the school while the data analysis was conducted through inductive techniques, through steps of data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion. The research findings showed the following results: 1) character education was still carried out despite the Covid-19 pandemic; 2) the use of QR code technology in the form of photos or videos made them attractive for the students Thus, the character education by using QR codes for character education at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau could run well regardless of the Covid-19 pandemic. |

**How to Cite:**

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a means to build intelligence and shape the personality of students to have a better character than before. Education is also an effort of the community and the nation in preparing its young generation for the sustainability of the life of the community and the nation for a better future (Astrid, 2012). Education must continue to develop and create the generation that is expected by the nation and the state, even the government seeks education to be the key in shaping the nation's character. Murtako (2015) explains that in the education system, especially in Indonesia, character education has long been an important part of the national education mission, although with different emphasis and terms. Education is expected not only to educate students to be a smart generation, but also to have noble character. As said by Apriani (2016) that character education is very important for students,

because character education is a deliberate and focused effort to help students understand, care, and act in accordance with ethical values. Character formation is basically a form of conscious effort made to change attitudes and behavior (Jalaluddin, 2012).

Some of the problems faced in the world of education in Indonesia are students are more easily contaminated with negative things and do not have the ability to control themselves so that it leads to fights between students, using drugs, watching porn videos. Mukminin (2014) mentions that misguidance of an individual may result in a less commendable character towards the environment, therefore good character must be formed for each individual, so that each individual can animate every action and behavior. In addition, what is also a trend in the world of education today is a shift in children's behavior so that it requires our concentration or special attention to develop character education in schools. Education is not just a transfer of knowledge but also character placement as mandated by Dewantara (2004). Even the Government has made many improvements in the curriculum, increasing teacher competence and quality, developing character education, and four main policies in the field of education. nationally through the concept of independent learning. The program includes several concepts, namely the National Standard School Examination, National Examination, Learning Implementation Plans, Zoning Regulations for Admission of New Students (Prabandari, 2019). The process of preparing character education can use various appropriate methods and strategies. Each school can carry out character education that is adapted to school conditions or school policies. However, every school basically has the same goal in carrying out character education, which is to form a good personality for each student.

The Covid-19 pandemic has turned out to be an obstacle in various sectors, one of which is the education sector. As stated by Setiawan (2021) that the education unit is one of the sectors affected by the Covid-19 outbreak so that it hampers the direct learning process in schools. school. The Covid-19 pandemic has also changed the teaching process to online. Learning, with the situation and conditions of teachers who have different experiences from previous habits, requires a lot of adjustments, but this will be different if the teachers have received briefing or training, so that the preparation, implementation and evaluation can be carried out optimally (Yansen et al., 2021). The implementation of online learning from home was not easy to implement. There are many things that need attention, both from the parents and the environment. The very limited internet network both in the city and in the village is a problem that is often faced in completing the online learning process during the pandemic. Therefore, indirectly students are required to understand the material independently. Students must be curious about the new material provided by the teacher and have a greater sense of responsibility for the learning carried out in order to complete each task given within the specified time frame. Character education expects students to have a greater sense of responsibility for the learning carried out, especially during the pandemic (Intania & Sutama, 2020).

Learning from home is not just changing the pattern of learning from face-to-face or conventional to technology-based or online. Maria et al. (2021) stated that learning from home does not only complete main competence/basic competence, but what is more important is improving the quality of worship and character education of students at home. Thus, collaboration between schools and parents is very important for the success of this

character education so that it can continue even in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic (Yansen et al., 2021).

The rise of online learning today requires technology to develop faster starting from software, hardware, documentation, data security and others. Apriani (2016) mentions that technology has a role to play in developing student character education, because it can encourage students' trust, respect, perseverance, responsibility and courage. Digitization The process of transferring data and information which was originally more to print and electronic media, is currently growing very rapidly with the help of the internet and telephone models that can be connected directly to internet media which we know as sartphones, one of the results of these developments and needs is Quick Response Code (QR Code) which is a fast bridge between offline content and online content (Majid et al., 2021). Using QR codes to develop student learning multimedia in elementary school students. This multimedia can help students understand the material more easily, this is in line with research conducted by Ahmad and Axelino (2021) regarding the development of QR Code-based learning media, where the learning media is practical and effective as an alternative learning media that can be used in elementary learning.

Before conducting the study, a preliminary study was conducted by interviewing the principal of SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau. Based on the results of the interview, it was found out that before integrating the QR Code, the teachers felt quite overwhelmed in managing the class in a fun way. They felt difficult to engage the students to the things that they usually did before pandemic. However, after the students were given the QR Code, they enjoyed doing their regular activities such as prayer, reading the Qur'an are routine activities done every day as well as students' independence activities such as helping parents to sweep, clean their beds, water plants, help parents cook, and other activities, are the components of assessment in character building during a pandemic. These habits were carried out continuously, so they were expected to have a positive impact on students. Based on this, researchers were interested in finding out the implementation of character education by using the QR Code at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau.

There were only few researches conducted in the use of QR Code in character education. Solihatin et al. (2021) investigated the production of QR Code-based character education teaching materials using R&D method. The result of the study showed that they saw an increase on the outcome of learning after using QR Code. Rahayu et al. (2021) also did an R&D in using QR Code in thematic modules in the PPK subject. The result showed that using QR Code could be seen as one alternative of teaching aid for teaching PPK subject in the thematic modules. Aransyah et al. (2022) conducted an SLR method on the use of QR Code media in Civil Education subject. The result of the study showed that QR Code could be implemented in Civil Education subject to increase democratic character as QR Code was fun for students and teachers. However, none of them discussed the implementation of QR Code in teaching character education. Therefore, this becomes the gap of the study with the ones published previously.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Character Building

National character education and culture is defined as education that develops cultural values and national character in students so that they have their own values and character, apply these values in their lives, as community members and citizens who are religious, nationalist, productive, and creative (Ismia, 2018). Rosidatun (2018) reveals that character is related to what appears in everyday life both in attitude and in action, while Ningsih (2015) argues that character education is an effort to develop the growth of noble character (character), thoughts, and growth. child flower. Wadu et al. (2021) say that character is the values of human behavior related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow humans, the environment and the nation which are manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on applicable norms. Dalmeri (2014)(2014) in his research argues that character education does not only teach what is right and what is wrong, but more than that instilling good habits (habituations) so that students understand, are able to feel, and want to do it. someone who is directly driven by the brain. Thus, it can be concluded that a conceptual definition of character education is synthesized as an effort to build and continue to improve one's character in accordance with values in order to become a human being who knows, loves and does goodness to God Almighty, oneself, others, and the environment as well as practice it in their daily life.

There are some factors that can influence the success of character education conducted in online learning. Fahroji (2020) mentions that the success of online character education or during the Covid-19 pandemic is influenced by several factors, including learning design, motivation, time management, and technology. The statement is also supported by Abu et al. (2015) who state that character education is a deliberate effort to influence student behavior through repeated adjustments. Character education can thus continue even in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires students to learn from home (Yansen et al., 2021). So, to ensure that the successfulness of the character education in online learning some measurements should be considered.

Parents also offer help for the teachers in forming character education. According to Setiawan (2021)the role of parents is an important factor in the effectiveness of the process and assessment of the character education of students, even in the formation of the character of students as a whole in the family. The role of parents or guardians in character education of students during the Covid-19 period is as educators, facilitators, supervisors and companions, motivators, examples of good figures (Prabowo & Heriyanto, 2013). Therefore, to be able to do the task well, the teachers need assistance from the parents.

### QR Code Media

The QR code is an addition to the standard barcode. Its main function is to provide shortcuts between related products and connection systems (Sever, 2020). Sever (2020) also says that QR code shortcuts can redirect users to websites, default text, images, maps, videos, etc. In addition to the business and production sectors, QR codes have been widely used in museums, libraries, identity cards, posters and banners. Ahmad & Axelino (2021) state that QR Code is a two-dimensional barcode that can store data. Thus, it can be said that QR Code

is a technology developed through a matrix that can be used as a shortcut that is able to direct users to something they want such as videos, images and others.

Seeing the potential benefits of QR codes, this tool is widely adopted around the world for various products, advertising, even in the world of education. This is in line with the research conducted by Rabu et al. (2019) which mention that QR codes are used in classroom learning, and it is very effective to do so. Then Munirah (2019) mentions that QR codes also allow the development of innovative systems based on the paradigm of timely learning and collaborative learning, can be used to connect digital resources to printed text, materials enriched learning can serve and motivate students with various requirements, even Firmansyah (2019) mentions in his research that students' QR is practically used for learning activities and strengthens the character of curiosity, and is able to improve student learning outcomes and provide solid material understanding. Thus, the QR code is one solution when learning is done online, it can make it easier for students to do learning in class or carry out activities at home that are in accordance with character education.

**METHOD**

This research was a descriptive study with a qualitative approach that intended to describe, reveal, and explain the implementation of character education at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau by using QR Code. Qualitative research, according to Palmer and Bolderson (2006), aims to obtain insight into the distinctive meanings and behaviors encountered in various social phenomena through the subjective experiences of the participants. The data were collected in January 2022, when Covid-19 pandemic was still happening. Data collection techniques used were interviews and documentation. Interviews with two teachers and the principal of the school were used to obtain information about school policies to internalize character values, the strategies teachers used in creating learning that contained character values, and student learning experiences related to character values. Documentation was used to obtain data on school programs for the implementation of character education, lesson plans made by the teacher as a written guide in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, and the QR Code used by the teachers. Data analysis suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) was conducted through inductive techniques, by incorporating the steps of data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions.

**FINDINGS**

**Implementation of Character Education**

SDIT Mutiara Cendekia is a school which in its daily activities is colored by habituation to instill character values in its students. These activities were carried out throughout the day starting from morning habits such as Dhuha prayer, and Quran memorization, then learning activities, until coming home from school. Activities that were usually carried out directly at this school, have finally switched to their respective homes due to the Covid-19 pandemic, thus requiring schools to conduct online learning. As stated by the principal: "The students should do the things that they usually did at school, even though they did it at home. It is because it was required for them to do those activities. They

should continue doing the daily activities and the good habit of performing Dhuha prayer, memorizing the Quran, and helping their parents do the house chores" (AD, Personal communication, January 2022). Based on the results of interviews, it was found that students continued to carry out daily activities in learning and habituation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Students are asked to carry out positive activities at home such as performing Dhuha prayer independently, memorizing the Quran, helping parents such as washing dishes, watering plants, sweeping the house and yard, tidying the bed, and even helping mothers cook in the kitchen. Therefore, it can be concluded that the character education still ran despite the pandemic condition.

The tasks as motivator, facilitator, and advisor for students were also conducted by the teachers. As mentioned by AS: "The teacher becomes a guide for their students, teachers must ensure that students remain disciplined during the learning process and do the tasks given, always direct students to always maintain cleanliness and health in accordance with health protocols, invite students to worship and pray. Thus, teacher has responsibilities and become examples in the application of character education" (AS, Personal communication, January 2022). The statement was also supported by VI who stated:  "Teachers at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia also make plans such as analyzing KI/KD to identify character values, develop syllabus, and make teaching materials, then the teacher carries out the implementation according to the plan such as being a motivator, mentor, facilitator, advisor, and as an example for students, as well as the teacher as an assessor in every activity carried out by students that contains character values and then evaluates" (VI, Personal communication, January 2022). Therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers still did their tasks in the pandemic.

To ensure that the students did what they were told to do, the teachers needed help from the parents to provide guidance for their children. The role of parents was multiplied, apart from being a parent, they also played the role as teacher at home. It was stated by VI: "Parents become teachers for their children, namely helping students carry out learning, teaching and giving explanations about the material sent by the teacher at school. They also serve serve as facilitators for their children, such as providing a cellphone/notebook or laptop to support their children in carrying out learning. They also act as motivators for their children, when students start to feel bored, parents give encouragement and encouragement, and parents communicate to teachers to get refreshment in learning to find solutions (VI, Personal communication, January 2022). Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers needed to collaborate with parents to make sure that the students understood and did their tasks.

**The Use of QR Code to Help Teachers Deliver The Lesson**

To provide convenience in the implementation of character education at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau, create a QR Code for several character behaviors that have been set by the school. The character values as outlined by the teacher in a photo or video were made as attractive as possible with a touch of technology in the form of a QR Code distributed in every learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic. The learning process using a QR Code on a smartphone was able to provide excitement and motivate students to instill the good habits. This statement was supported by two of homeroom teachers VI and AS. Based on interview with VI, she mentioned: "The teacher tried to integrate technology

in teaching and learning process as the students should work using handphone or laptop. We made the QR Code to make the students feel curious and eager to learn" (VI, Personal communication, January 2022). The statement from VI was also added by AS who said: "Due to online learning, the teachers could not teach the students directly. However, the tasks of teachers should still be done. Therefore, the teachers tried to incorporate technology into the teaching and learning process. One way to do that is by using QR Code as an interesting way to deliver the lesson" (AS, Personal communication, January 2022).

Based on the QR Code provided, it could be seen that the teachers really worked hard to make the QR Code. As being told by AS: "Before creating the QR Code, the teachers should find appropriate videos, pictures for the lessons. If we could not find videos or pictures, we made the videos by ourselves. After that we uploaded the video to the school's YouTube account. After that we created the QR Code using the QR Code Generator. Then we shared the QR Code to our students through WhatsApp (AS, Personal communication, January 2022).  The examples of QR Code used by the teachers can be seen the pictures as follows:



Picture 1: The examples of QR Code made by the teachers

When the researchers tried to scan the QR Codes made by the teachers in picture 1, all of them still worked fine. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers did an excellent job in providing the QR Code. When asked how the teachers used the QR Code, VI answered: Firstly, the teachers share the QR Code to students through WhatsApp group. Then, the students watch the video or see the picture given through the QR Code provided. After watching the video or seeing the picture, the students must do follow up tasks, such as they must record a video showing them performing the do'a or they must do the tasks required. Finally, the students through the parents must send the recording or the proof that they did the tasks to the WhatsApp group (VI, personal communication, January 2022). It can be concluded that QR Code served as a media to make the students curious in finding out the tasks they were required to do.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of the document analysis and interview, a description of the implementation of character education in SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau during the Covid-19 pandemic by using QR Code is described as follows:

Covid-19 pandemic has caused riot in many aspects of life, one of them was in education. The same thing also happened to SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau. Based on the results of interview, the teachers really tried hard to overcome the problems despite the pandemic situation. One of them was the habituation method at school or at home in instilling and developing students' characters, and synergies must be carried out between school teachers, parents, and the community in instilling and developing character education. Character education during the Covid-19 pandemic was not ignored by teachers even though its implementation was adjusted to the current situation. The implementation of strengthening the character education of students remains a priority in the learning process even though it is carried out through online learning. This is in line with the statement from Fahroji (2020) who mentioned that the success of online character education or during the Covid-19 pandemic is influenced by several factors, including learning design, motivation, time management, and technology.

The success of character education depends on the role of the teacher. Based on the results of interviews, the teachers did their best to do their task by integrating QR Code to the teaching of character education. The students were still asked to do the tasks they did at school. The attitudes and behavior of students were strongly influenced by the concept of character formed by the teacher. The statement was in line with Abu et al (2015) who stated that character education is a deliberate effort to influence student behavior through repeated adjustments.

However, in the pandemic situation, teachers could not work alone. They must be supported by parents. In this case, the parents played important role in helping the teacher. According to Setiawan (2021), the role of parents is an important factor in the effectiveness of the process and assessment of the character education of students, even in the formation of the character of students as a whole in the family. The fact shows that parents or guardians and even family members of students have a very important and more important role in the character education of students. In addition to having to earn a living, supervise and assist students, parents or guardians need to provide learning facilities so that the online learning process of students can be carried out. The role of parents or guardians in character education of students during the Covid-19 period is as educators, facilitators, supervisors and companions, motivators, examples of good figures (Prabowo & Heriyanto, 2013).

To provide convenience in the implementation of character education, SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau created QR Codes for several character behaviors set by the school. This is in line with statement from Ataji et al. (2022) who stated that the use of QR Codes to assist the implementation of character education during the pandemic was found helpful in providing interesting learning for elementary school students. The result from interview also conformed with the study from Firmansyah (2019)) who mentioned that students' QR is practically used for learning activities and strengthens the character of curiosity, and is able to improve student learning outcomes and provide solid material understanding. All in

all, SDIT Mutiara Cendekia has successfully integrated the QR Code in their character education.

Character education is required both at school and at home, and the results of character education can be seen in the willingness of students to assist their parents' work at home during the Covid-19 pandemic. Parents are positive about the character education provided by teachers, despite the fact that online learning is available. Collaboration between the school and the parents is critical to the success of this character education. Character education can thus continue even in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires students to learn from home (Yansen et al., 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the results of the implementation of character education at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau using the QR Code are the implementation of character education was still carried out despite the Covid-19 pandemic and character values were expressed in the form of photos or videos made attractive with a touch of QR Code technology. From the results of the study, it was also found out that QR Codes were really helpful for the teachers in instilling character education at SDIT Mutiara Cendekia Lubuklinggau. Other researchers who are interested in conducting similar research might want to try doing a survey or mixed-method research investigating the same problems.

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