

## CULTURE-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION IN MODERNITY ERA

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### **Abstract**

*Education cannot be separated from culture. It is a product of human culture and becomes part of the culture. It also seeks to transform the cultural values in order to achieve both individual and community progress. The implementation of culture-based character education highlights the importance of exemplary elements.*

**Keywords:** *Character Education, Culture, Modernity*

### **A. Introduction**

Talking about character education is actually not a new thing in the education system in Indonesia, this character education has long been an important part of the national educational mission although it is with different emphasis and terms. Currently, the discourse of the urgency of the character education to bounce back and be a material concern as response to the various problems facing the nation, especially the problem of moral decadence such as corruption, violence, fights between students, inter-ethnic clashes and free sex behavior are likely to increase. The phenomenon, according to Tilaar (2005: 3), is one of the conditions of access to people who are in a period of social transformation in the era of globalization.

Robertson in *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, declared this era of globalization will give birth to *a global culture (which) is encompassing the world at the international level*. With the globalization, the problems become very complex. Globalization is

due to technological developments, economic progress and sophistication of the means of information.

The fact above is the greatest challenge for education today. The education process as an inheritance to pass the noble values of a nation which aims to give birth intellectually superior next generation while maintaining the personality and identity as a nation. Here is the location of the essential education which has two main missions, namely "*transfer of values*" and "*transfer of knowledge*". Education today is faced with a situation where the process of education as an inheritance of local values on the one hand face the heat of the global value. According to Tilaar (2005: 17), that condition makes education today has been torn from its existence as an integrated part of the culture. Symptoms of separation of education from the culture can be seen from the symptoms as follows, namely: [1] culture has been restricted to matters relating to the arts, traditional dance, archeological including the affairs of temples and ancient buildings, tombs and traditional literature, [2] the values of culture in education has been limited to mere intellectual values, [3] the other case, the values of religion is not a matter of education but rather is a matter of religious institutions".

The picture interrupted us to return attention to the importance of development of character (character building) Indonesian man who grounded to the treasury of cultural values that we own. Furthermore, Koentjaraningrat gives a way how to keep the symptoms of separation of education from this culture can be resolved soon, he suggested the importance to redefined the seven elements of universal culture, among others: the religious system and religious ceremonies, systems and community organizations, knowledge systems, languages, performing arts, livelihood systems and technology systems and equipment.

Ki Hajar Dewantoro in Tilaar (2005: 68), says that "culture can not be separated from education, even culture is the base or basic education. This formulation reaches far into the future, because it is said to be not only educational based to an aspect of culture that is the

intellectual aspect, but the culture as a whole. Culture became the base of such education must be national. Thus, the culture in question is the real custom namely a culture that lives in the community of Indonesian nationality. While, education has a way to realize the livelihood needs of all aspects of human life and the direction of the goal of education for elevating human level and dignity".

### **B. Culture-based Character Education: Definition and Development of Strategy**

In the culture-based character education, culture is defined as something that is inherited or learned, then pass on what they learned and turn it into something new, that's the point of the educational process. If so, then the task of education as cultural mission must be able to process, namely: *first*, the cultural inheritance; *second*, help individuals in choosing the social roles and taught to perform that roles; *third*, combining a variety of individual identity into a wider cultural scope; and *fourth*, it must be a source of social innovation.

The stages above, reflect the functional relationship between education and culture which contains two main things, namely: *First*, reflective, education is a description of culture progressing. *Secondly*, progressive, education tries to renew, the innovation of culture can reach the progress. Both of these things, line with the duties and functions of education is to continue or pass on the cultures and transform and develop the culture to achieve the progress of human life. Here is the character education in which the educational process is the inheritance of values that exist for each individual at once innovative and dynamic effort in order to renew the values toward more progressing again.

Therefore, the character education is a goal ending from an educational process. Character is the result of gratitude conscience. The gratitude conscience roots from moral conscience. Moral roots from the awareness of life centered on the nature of mind. Moral gives direction, consideration, and guidance to act with responsibility

in accordance with the values, norms which has been chosen. Thus, learning the character can not be separated from learning the values, norms, and moral.

According to T. Lickona (2012), character education can be interpreted as an attempt to shape one's personality through education that the results are seen in a person's real action in the form of good behavior, honest, responsible, respecting the others' rights, hard work and so on. In this case, Russel Williams illustrates character like "muscle" in which muscles will become flabby if the character had never been trained and will be strong and sturdy if it is used frequently. Character is like a bodybuilder continuously training to build muscle that he wishes that such practices become a habituation (Megawangi, 2000). Something potentially true character in humanself, he then will be actual continuously developed, trained through the educational process. Reminding many values should be developed in character education, we can classify character education into three main components, namely:

1. Religiosity, consists of values a) kekhusuan relationship with God; b) the obligation to religion; c) goodwill and sincerity; d) good deed; and e) the retaliation for the good and bad deeds.
2. Independence, consists of values a) self-esteem; b) discipline; c) the work ethic; d) a sense of responsibility; e) the courage and spirit; f) openness; and g) restraint.
3. Decency, consists of values a) love and affection; b) togetherness; c) solidarity; d) mutual help; e) tolerance; f) respect honor; g) eligibility / obligation; h) a sense of shame; i) honesty; and j) acknowledgments and apology (a sense of knowing oneself). (Megawangi, 2007)

In addition, Megawangi in Elmubarok (2008: 111) has compiled more than nine nobles character to be inherited later referred as "nine pillars of character education", namely: a) love God and truth; b) responsibility, discipline and independence; c) mandate; d) respect and courtesy; e) compassion, concern and cooperation; f) confident,

creative and never give up; g) fairness and leadership; h) kind and humble; and i) tolerance and peace.

In terms of teaching the values above, Lickona explains there are three important components in building character education namely moral knowing (knowledge of morality), moral feeling (feelings of moral) and moral action (moral conduct). These three things can be referred implementable in the process and stages of character education.

Character according to the dictionary can be interpreted as a character, behavior, or attitude. What is called by the character? There are 18 values in the educational development of the nation's culture and character designed by Kemdikbud Republic of Indonesia. Starting the school year 2011, the overall levels of education in Indonesia have to insert the character education in the educational process. The model of effective character education, according to the results of research conducted by (Zuchdi et al, 2009: 1-11) is using a comprehensive approach. The pembelajaran is not only through a particular field of study, but integrated into the various fields of study.

The 18th character values are: religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, the spirit of nationalism, patriotism, recognize excellence, friendly or communicative, love peace, love reading, caring environment, social care and responsibility (Ministry of National Education Curriculum Center, 2010: 10). The values of the character are described in the table as follows:

**Tabel 1**  
*Character values according to the Ministry of National Education  
 Curriculum Center*

No.	Character values	Explanation
1	Religious	Attitudes and behavior that obey in doing the teachings of their religion, tolerant toward the implementation of the practice of other religions, and live in harmony with other faiths.
2	Honest	Behavior based on an attempt to make himself as a person who always trustworthy in word, action, and jobs.
3	Tolerance	Attitudes and actions that respects differences of religion, race, ethnicity, opinions, attitudes, and actions of others who are different from themselves.
4	Discipline	Actions show orderly behavior and obey with various rules and regulations.
5	Hard work	Behaviors indicate a really effort to overcome various barriers in learning and assignments, as well as completing the task as well as possible.
6	Creative	Think and do something to generate new ways or the result of something that has been owned.
7	Independence	Attitudes and behavior that is not easy to depend on others to complete tasks.
8	Democratic	Ways of thinking, being attitude and acting which assesses the same rights and obligations of himself and others.
9	Curiosity	Attitudes and actions which seek to know deeper and spread of something learned, seen,

		and heard.
10	National spirit	Ways of thinking, act, and having knowledge that puts the importance of the nation and country above self-importance and group.
11	Love homeland	Ways of thinking, being attitude, and acting that show loyalty, caring, and high appreciation toward language, physical environment, social, cultural, economic, and political nation.
12	Appreciating the achievements	Attitudes and actions that encourage him to produce something useful for society, and recognize and respect other people's success.
13	Friendly and communicative	Actions show a sense of fun to talk, hang out, and work together with others.
14	Love peace	Attitudes, words, and actions that cause others to feel happy and safe on the presence of himself.
15	Love reading	Habits provide time to read a variety of literature that gives virtue for him.
16	Caring environment	Attitudes and actions which seek to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment, and develop efforts to repair the environmental damage that has occurred.
17	Social care	Attitudes and actions have always wanted to help other people and communities in need.
18	Responsible	Attitudes and behavior of people to do his duties, he should do, to himself, community, environment (natural, social and cultural), the country and god almighty one.

Methods and strategies are used various and got possible include inculcation (opposition to indoctrination), modeling, facilitating the value, and the development of *soft skills* which include: to think critically, creatively, communicate effectively, and can solve the problem (Sudrajat, 2011: 47-58). All the communities of school, the principal of school, teachers, learners, administrative staff, even the guard of school, the shop manager of school, and parents of learners, and the community need to work colaboratively in implementing character education program. The place of implementation of character education in the classroom and outside the classroom in various types of activities, including activities at home or in the community should involve the participation of parents of learners.

Development of life skills (soft skills), mainly related to value and moral should be a concern for all parties, especially the government, schools, teachers, and even parents. Learners need to be trained to develop his abilities, both intellectually and morally in the solution of real problems that exist in the environment. Activities that involve both intellectual and moral processes include, among others, to observe, measure, predict, describe, make inferences, creative, discipline, cooperate, respect for others, and build confidence.

The principles used in the development of character education (Curriculum Center Kemdikbud) as follows: *First*, sustainable; implies that the values of character development is a process that is not stopping, started from the beginning of learners entered until completion of an educational unit, even after graduation and plunge into society. *Secondly*, through all subjects, self-development, and school culture, as well as local content; requires that the process of developing character values carried by each subject, as well as in curricular and extracurricular activities.

*Third*, the value is not taught, but developed and implemented; consist the meaning that the material value of the character is not used as a subject as when teaching a concept, theory, procedure, or facts in religious subjects, Indonesian, civics, science, social studies,



mathematics, physical education and health, arts, and skills, or other subjects. Teachers do not need to change the subject to develop character values of the nation. Moreover, teachers do not have to develop the learning process, specifically to develop value. One thing you always have to remember that a learning activity can be used to develop skills in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. *Fourth*, the educational process is done by the learners actively and fun. This principle states that the value of character education is done by the learners, not the teachers. Teachers apply the principle *tut wuriHandayani* in every behavior that is shown by the learners. This principle also states that the educational process is conducted in an atmosphere of learning that causes the sense of pleasure and not *indoktrinatif*. Beginning with an introduction to the notion of value is developed, the teacher leads the learners to be active.

This thing is done without the teacher told the students that they should be active, but teachers plan learning that cause the learners to be active in formulating questions, finding resources and gather information from sources, managing information that they have, reconstructing the facts, data, or value, presenting results of reconstruction or process of development values, fostering cultural values and characters on themselves through variety of learning activities that occur in the classroom, school, and assignments outside of school.

Furthermore, what mission or goal should be targeted in character education? *The first* cognitive, fills the brain, taught from not knowing to knowing, and the next steps can cultivate the mind, so that he can use the minds intelligence to be a smart intelligence. *Second*, affective, related to the feelings, the emotional, the formation of attitudes within one's self with the formation of attitudes, sympathy, antipathy, love, hate, and so on. All these attitudes can be classified as emotional intelligence. *Third*, psychomotor, related to the actions, behavior, and so on.

If three domains are synchronized, we can conclude that from having knowledge about something, then having an attitude about it

and then behave in accordance with what he knows and what he do. Character education, is included the three aspects. One must know what is good and what is bad. Furthermore, how does one have an attitude towards good and bad, where a person to the level of lovinggood and hatingbad. At the next level of act, behave in accordance with the values of kindness, so the morality and noble character will appear.

Character education is a type of education that a hope eventually is to create learners who have moral integrity that capable to be reflected in daily life, both in interacting with God, with human beings and the natural environment. The purpose of the Character Education as expressed by Ki Hajar Dewantoro is "ngerti-ngerasinggelakoni" (aware, feel, and do). This implies that character education is a form of education and teaching that focus on the behavior and actions of students to appreciate and implement the values of characters into daily behavior.

If the character education is the result of a moral act, the moral education approach can be used for character education. To understand about the character, it can be understood various matters relating to the moral concept. For example, the experts have proposed various theories on moral education. According to Hersh (1997), among the various developing theories, there are six theories are widely used, namely: the rational development approach, the consideration approach, the values clarification approach, the cognitive moral development approach, and social behavioral approaches. In contrast to the classification, Elias (1989) classifies the various theories which grows into three, namely: the cognitive approach, the approach affective, and behavioral approach. This classification according to Rest (1992), is based on three elements of morality, which is used to be the foundation of the study of psychology, namely: behavioral, cognitive, and affective.

There are five approaches: 1) inculcation approach; 2) cognitive moral development approach; 3) values analysis approach; 4) values clarification approach; and 5) action learning approach.

### *1. Incultation Approach*

Incultation approach is an approach that gives an emphasis on the cultivation of social values in students. According Superka et al. (2000), the purposes of education based on the value of this approach are: First, received a certain social values by students; Second, changing the values of students who do not conform to social values as desired. The method used in the learning process according to this approach include: exemplary, positive and negative reinforcement, simulations, role play, and others.

### *2. Cognitive Development Approach*

This approach is said as approach cognitive development because its characteristic emphasis on cognitive aspects and development. This approach encourages students to think actively about moral issues and in making moral decisions. Moral development based on this approach is seen as a development level of thinking in making moral judgments, of a lower level to a higher level (Elias, 1989).

Objectives to be achieved by this approach, there are two main things. First, it helps students in making more complex moral considerations based on the higher value. Second, it encourages students to discuss the reasons when choosing value and its position within a moral issue (Superka, et. al., 2000; Banks, 1985). The value teaching process based on this approach is rooted at moral dilemmas, by using the method of group discussion.

Cognitive development approach is easy to used in the educational process in schools, because this approach gives emphasis on the development aspects of thinking skills. Therefore, this approach gives full attention to moral issues and solving problems relating to opposition of certain values in society. The use of this approach is to be interesting. Its use can turn the classroom atmosphere. Kohlberg's theory is considered the most consistent with scientific theory, sensitive to distinguish the ability in making moral judgments, to support the moral development, and exceed various other theories which are based on the results of empirical research.

### 3. *Values Analysis Approach*

Value analysis approach gives an emphasis on the development of students' ability to think logically, by analyzing the problems related to social values. If compared with the cognitive development approach, one of important differences between the two is that the value analysis approach more emphasis on the discussion of the problems that includes social values. Meanwhile, the cognitive development approach emphasis on the individual moral dilemmas. (Superka, 2000).

### 4. *Values Clarification Approach*

Values clarification approach gives an emphasis on efforts to help students in assessing their own feelings and actions, to increase their awareness of their own values. Values educational purposes based on the approach, there are three. First, it helps the students to recognize and identify their own values and the values of others; Second, it helps students, so that they are able to communicate openly and honestly with others, dealing with its own values; Third, it helps students, so that they are able to use their ability to think rationally together and emotional awareness, to understand the feelings, values, and behavior patterns of their own. (Superka, 2000).

### 5. *Action Learning Approach*

Action learning approach gives an emphasis on the business providing the opportunity for students to perform moral deeds, either individually or together in a group. Superka, et. al. (2000) concluded that there are two main goals of moral education based on the approach. First, provide an opportunity for students to perform moral actions, either individually or together, based on their own values; Second, encourage students to see themselves as individual beings and social beings in association with others, who do not have complete freedom, but as citizens of a society, which must take part in a democratic process. The methods of teaching used in the value analysis approach and values clarification are also used in this approach. The

other methods are certain projects to be done in school or in the community, and practice skills in the organization or related among others. (Superka, 2000).

Therefore, they need to be equipped with the relevant knowledge with the progress of era, to master a communication technology which is one of the main characteristics of modern life of the 21st century, equipped by the appropriate skills with jobs, and of course become a moral citizen that support and realize identity or Indonesia's character. If it observed, the source of print media and electronic media lately is crowded by the occurrence of cases that indicate the character of the nation to be questioned. There is a tendency that the emotion and anarchy become the solution to every problem. How not, almost every day we were treated to the news about the various crimes, brawls between groups of students or community groups, and corruption.

Strengthening the character in the present context is very relevant to solve the moral crisis that is happening in our country. Recognized or not recognized at this time happens a real crisis and worry in the community by involving our most precious belonging, namely the children. The crisis is in the form of increasing of free sex.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has made a policy to integrate character education into the curriculum, ranging from pre-school level, primary education, secondary education, both of formal education and non-formal to university.

Character education is expressed by the Minister of Education and Culture, as contained in the site [antaranews.com](http://antaranews.com) 15/05/2010, that character education becomes a necessity because education does not only make learners intelligent mind, but also have good character and manners so that its presence as a member society becomes meaningful, both for themselves and others. This is done because at this time many learners are more concerned with learning outcomes without concerning the character and disposition. The splendor of the learners to cheat in order to obtain good grades, do not have manners, brawl, ditching school, and racing on the highway becomes a basic

necessity to apply character education in teaching in schools, including the teaching of Islamic Education (PAI).

So, what's wrong with the character education or our character? Buchori argues that the character education is formulated into religious studies, citizenship lessons, and manners lessons during the main program is the introduction of values cognitively itself. In fact, character education should bring the learners to the introduction of the values cognitively, value appreciation affectively, and finally into practice in the real value (MONE, 2010: 6). If we want to see a better life for next generations, said Zubaedi (2013: 24), education should be directed to build awareness of the importance of values and meaning behind anything we do. In relation to establish the value and character of the education system, Agustian says two things, namely required an education design not only prioritizes intelligence quotient (IQ), but also emotional intelligence (EQ) and spiritual intelligence (SQ).

### **C. Conclusion**

Education can not be separated from culture. Education is a product of human culture and become part of the culture. Education intends to pass down, forward, describe patterns and currents emerging culture.

Education also seeks to transform the cultural values in order to achieve both individual and community progress. Position and function of education as a center of cultural development, study centers, and the development of sciences for the progress of human civilization.

The Implementation of culture-based Character Education outlines the importance of exemplary elements. Besides that, it should be accompanied by efforts to create a social environment that is conducive for the students, either in the family, at school and in the community. Thus, the implementation of Character Education will be more memorable in order to establish the personality of students. The arrangement of character education should give a balanced emphasis to aspects of the value and process of teaching. Besides that, it should

also give a balanced emphasis to the development aspect of the intellectual, emotional and spiritual students.

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