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Character education trend in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Character education is an educational concept to form and foster a Muslim personality as a whole (*syumuliyah*). This literature study aimed to determine the implementation of character education and supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of character education in formal schools in Indonesia. Data analysis techniques by means of data reduction, data display, and conclusion. Based on research findings, the trend of implementing character education in Indonesian formal schools has the same spirit in the content of character education. In formal schools with the status of public schools, the implementation of character education follows government regulations as stated in the Strengthening of Character Education (SCE), which is an implication of Islamic teachings. As for formal schools with private status on an Islamic basis, character education tends to be oriented towards cultivating *akhlakul karimah* (moral education) combined with government regulations. The implications of this research lead to the cultivation of character values that are embedded in social attitudes and spiritual attitudes as provisions for students' daily lives. The supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of character education are also discussed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the main key to human resource development. The quality of human resources is expected to be able to create a Golden Indonesia 2045 that is just and prosperous, safe and peaceful, as well as progressive and global. This education will determine where this nation will meet its future, whether to become a large, civilized, intelligent and ready to adapt to the changing times or on the other hand, become an underdeveloped nation and sink into its own problems [1], [2].

Education is not only a process of knowledge transfer but also a process of value transfer. The balance between knowledge and character values will result in the figure of scientists and experts who have a soul and a sense of kindness in carrying out every mandate that they carry. For this reason, the role of teachers is very important in the educational process that occurs in formal schools. The quality of teachers will determine the quality of the future of the educational process. The role of the teacher during learning includes preparing learning materials, teaching and evaluating learning. Teacher professionalism is the key to success in carrying out their main duties as educators [2]–[4].

In general, the teaching of education taught in schools in Indonesia emphasizes that "everyone is an educator and every home is a place for education". This means that every member of the family who is more mature must be able to teach spiritual, social, knowledge and skills to provide for life in the future

(community based education). This spiritual and social attitude will form the character of students. In the 2013 curriculum, the character of high school students is included in core competency I, living and practicing the teachings of their religion and core competence II, developing behavior (honest, disciplined, responsible, caring, polite, environmentally friendly, mutual cooperation, cooperation, peace-loving, responsive and proactive) and showing attitude as part of the solution to various national problems in interacting effectively with the social and natural environment and in placing oneself as a reflection of the nation in world relations. Character education is an educational concept to form and foster a Muslim personality as a whole (*syumuliyah*) [5], emphasizing the distinctive character possessed by every Muslim [6], as well as creating an ethical young generation, responsible, and care for others and the environment through teaching good character [7], [8].

In the Al-Quran there is much explanation about Islamic education, as in surah al-Luqman: 13 which means: "*And 'remember' when Luqmân said to his son, while advising him, "O my dear son! Never associate 'anything' with Allah 'in worship', for associating 'others with Him' is truly the worst of all wrongs"*. In this verse, it means that the education that is most emphasized is character education carried out by parents at home, because education from parents is the first education a child gets before getting education from outside such as school or *madrasah* [9].

The current condition of the world of education in Indonesia still does not fully reflect the goals and ideals of education, including not being able to give birth to person with character. This can be seen from the current phenomena such as: increasing juvenile delinquency such as bullying, brawls, promiscuity, even crime [1], [10], [11]. Meanwhile, the Indonesian nation puts a mandate on students through education to be formed into qualified individuals, not only reason but also conscience. Therefore, this character education is expected to be a bridge in achieving the ideals of the Nation.

The concept of character education is the spirit of Islamic teachings. Islam itself not only prepares humans to be safe in the world, but also in the hereafter [12]. Character education in the Islamic world is also known as moral education (*muwashafat*) [13]. Character education is oriented towards purifying the soul and obedience to God. The end result of character education is oriented towards the formation of an Islamic personality (noble morals) in a Muslim [14]. It can make him dynamic and able to face all the challenges of the times. It is also the formation of a generation of leaders who are intelligent and devout as well as the pious generation individually and socially. Finally, it is the formation of an active and responsive Muslim person in doing good deeds to build the ummah and advance the culture of Islamic civilization.

So far, character education in Indonesian schools has been implemented a lot, both public and private schools [15], however the implementation that was achieved was not maximal [16], [17]. Students already understand the Oneness of Allah and do not approach things that smell of shirk, but *muraqabatullah* (feeling owned by Allah SWT) students still need to be strengthened because they are still some lie and take things that are not their right. Students have carried out the prayers properly such as always in congregation, dzikir, prayers and recitations of the Al-Qur'an, but still do not pay attention to adab in carrying out these prayers. Students have been instilled *ta'dzim* (respect) towards their teachers by always greeting and shaking hands when meeting teachers, but there are still many students who speak impolitely and underestimate their teacher's orders [16].

Here are alternative strategies in implementing character education in schools [18]. They include: i) Integrating character education content that has been formulated into all subjects, ii) Integrating *muwashafat* education into daily activities at schools and dormitories; iii) Integrating character education into programmed or planned activities; iv) Build collaborative communication between schools with parents of students; and also v) Can be improved through the use of simulation [2].

In Indonesia, character education in public schools is in accordance with government regulations in Presidential Regulation Number 87 concerning Strengthening Character Education (SCE) [19]. Then this Presidential Regulation was updated with the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 2018 concerning Strengthening Character Education in Formal Education Units [20]. SCE is an educational movement under the responsibility of the education unit to strengthen the character of students through harmonization of heart, feeling, thinking, and sports with involvement and cooperation between educational units, families and communities as part of the National Movement for the Mental Revolution (NMMR). SCE is implemented by applying *Pancasila* (five principles of the Indonesian state's philosophical foundation) values in character education, especially including religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love for the country, respect for achievement, communicative, love, peaceful, fond of reading, caring for the environment, caring socially, and responsible.

As for Islamic-based private schools, character education tends to be oriented towards cultivating akhlakul karimah (known as moral education/*muwashafat*). This moral education aims to create Muslim morals in accordance with Islamic teachings. Characteristics of moral education, especially in spiritual purification and obedience to God [13]. As the Prophet said:

إنما بعثت لأتم صالح الاخلق

which means: "*Verily I was sent to perfect good morals*".

Good morals are part of good deeds that can increase faith, have a heavy weight in the scales, and are one of the causes for a person to enter Heaven. The owner of good morals is very loved by Allah SAW and Rasulullah *Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam* [21].

"*Verily, Allah is most gracious and loves generosity and noble morals and hates low morals*."

It is a noble character that exalts a person in the sight of Allah, as said the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*.

إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لَيُدْرِكُ بِحُسْنِ خُلُقِهِ دَرَجَةَ الصَّائِمِ الْقَائِمِ.

"*Indeed, a believer with good morals, will reach the degree of one who shaum (fast) during the day and pray in the middle of the night*".

This is in accordance with the narrative of 'Aisyah *Radhiyallahu anhuma*:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ خُلُقاً.

"*Rasulullah Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam is the most good man in character*".

Likewise, the Friends of *Radhiyallahu anhum*, they are the people who are the best in character after Rasulullah *Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*. Previous research that has been carried out includes: character education at home during the pandemic [22], character education during pandemic [23]–[26], the role of parents in improving character education during pandemic [27]. Based on the conditions of the description, this study aimed to determine: i) The implementation of character education; and ii) Supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of character education in formal schools in eight provinces in Indonesia. The samples taken were spread in the provinces of Yogyakarta, East Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, South Sumatra, West Sumatra, East Java, and Central Java based on a literature study. The benefits of this research are for the repertoire of character education implementation programs in formal education units, contributing to character-based education theory (general), as well as providing an overview for organizers in character education that is in accordance with school implementation.

2.   RESEARCH METHOD

This was a literature study. Documents are obtained from theses and scientific journals by means of primary data obtained first collected and then grouped in each island in Indonesia. The scattered data is then taken 1 or 2 locations as a sample from the area within an island with the criteria of taking data from public and private (Islamic) schools. The data obtained in the field is quite a lot, for that it needs to be recorded carefully and in detail (data reduction). Then, the data collection technique was done qualitatively by tabulating (data display). The data analysis technique was carried out by in-depth analysis of character education in public and private (Islamic) schools in Indonesia then concluded [28].

3.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study determined the implementation of character education. It is also supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of character education in formal schools in Indonesia. The results of a literature review on the implementation of character education for formal schools in Indonesia is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Implementation of formal school character education in Indonesia

No.	School	Character	Implementation
1	SMPIT Salman Al Farisi Yogyakarta [16]	Implementing 7 standard IT school character*: *Salimul aqidah, shahihul ibadah, matinul khuluk, mutsaqaful fikr, munazzhomun fii syu'nihi, qawwiyul jism dan harisun li waqtihi*	Through the delivery of material, program activities, modeling, habituation, mentoring, advice, and rules.
2	SMPN 10 Samarinda [14]	Faith and piety, honesty, tolerance, discipline, respect, courtesy, benefit for others, responsibility	This is carried out by establishing student character standards, building religious culture, and providing supporting facilities, establishing competency standards for graduates, and dividing the person in charge of tarbiyah for each student.
3	SMP IT Cordova Samarinda [14]	Implementing 10 standard IT school character*	This is done by setting 10 student character targets, building a religious culture, establishing competency standards for graduates, dividing each student's murabbi/mentor tarbiyah, providing supporting facilities.
4	SMP IT Abu Bakar Yogyakarta [29], [30]	Implementing 10 standard IT school character*	In general, the implementation of moral education is carried out through 3 things: i) The concept of integration; 2) A moral approach that is built-in in every lesson and activity and is independent as a separate subject; and 3) Regulations based on the al-Qur'an and as-Sunnah. .
5	SMP IT Izzuddin Palembang [31]	Implementing 10 standard IT school character* In addition, character values that are applied to oneself (personality), such as: honesty; to be responsible; healthy lifestyle; discipline; hard work; confidence; think logically, critically, creatively, and innovatively; independent; and love science. Characters that are applied to the social /environment: ta'zim and respect; polite in saying and acting; aware of rights and obligations; appreciate work and achievements; Social care; jum'at prosperous; environmental care. Nationalist/national character: nationalist, obedient, and democratic.	Using an integrated approach that rests on 3 pillars: development of school programs and policies, learning programs, and partnerships with student guardians. Apart from that it is based on the 5 pillars of education as the key of strategy: knowing policy, feeling policy, loving policy, wanting policy, and doing policy.
6	SMP Muhammadiyah 2 Malang [32]	Religious values, nationalism, independence, integrity, and mutual cooperation are packaged in Islamic education (Islamic, Muhammadiyah, and Arabic)	Implementation of character education through: integration into subjects, daily activities, and school-programmed activities as well as building communication and collaboration between schools and parents of students. The method is with peer habituation and exemplary
7	SDN Percobaan Padang [33]	Religious values, nationalist, independence, mutual cooperation, integrity	Integrating the strengthening of character education into the curriculum, through classroom management, selection and use of learning methods, and thematic learning.
8	SMA N 1 Banjarmasin [34]	Implementing 18 standard character**	The implementation of character values is carried out in intracurricular and extracurricular activities
9	SMA Muhammadiyah di Tanah Grogot Kalimantan Timur [34]	Implementing 18 standard character** which is packaged in Islamic education (Islamic, kemuhammadiyahan, and Arabic)	The implementation of character values is carried out in intracurricular and extracurricular activities
10	MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Sokaraja, Banyumas [35]	Implementing 18 standard character**	The implementation of character values is carried out in every lesson and self-development activity
11	MI Ma'arif NU Global Blotongan Sidorejo Salatiga [36]	Religious, nationalism, integrity, independence, and cooperation	The implementation of character values is carried out in every lesson and self-development activity

*The entire Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT) applies 10 standard character values (*muwashoffat*): Aqidah that is straight (*salimul aqidah*), *true worship* (*shahihul ibadah*), noble character (*matinul khuluq*), independent (*qadirun 'alal kasbi*), broad-minded (*mutsaqqaful fikri*), healthy and strong (*qawiyyul jismi*), sincere and disciplined (*mujahidun linafsihi*), organized in affairs (*munazhzhom fii syuunihi*), managing time well (*harisum 'ala waqtihi*), beneficial to others (*nafi' un lighoirihi*).*
** 18 character standard: religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love for the country, respect for achievement, friendly/communicative, love peace, love to read, care for the environment, care for social and responsibility.

As for ma'arif schools and public schools, character standards are designed based on the Ministry of National Education's character standards in accordance with Presidential Regulation Number 87, 2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education (SCE) [19]. This Presidential Regulation was further updated by the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20, 2018 concerning Strengthening Character Education in Formal Education Units [20]. In these rules, there are 18 character education that must be taught in formal schools, including: religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, spirit of nationality, love for the country, respect for achievement, friendly/communicative, love peace, love to read, care for the environment, care social, responsibility.

Based on the analysis in Table 1, it can be distinguished the standard character reference that is implemented in each school as shown in Figure 1. Basically, the character standards in formal schools, both those with the status of public schools and private (Islamic) schools, have the same. It is just that the terms are different and the references are different. The difference can be seen from the terms, for example, the character of honesty, tolerance, respect, courtesy and responsibility are included in one noble character (*matinul khuluq*); the characters of *salimul aqidah* and *shahihul ibadah* are included in the characters of faith and piety. This difference lies in: i) Vision and mission and policies in setting character standards for each school; ii) Activities to support character education, such as routine activities, programmed activities, and spontaneous activities; and iii) SCE guidelines in public schools follow instructions from the Ministry of National Education, while in private (Islamic) schools they vary according to the specific concept of each school. The implementation of character education in school programs is also adjusted to the culture that exists in each school. This actually becomes a characteristic of the school and gradually brings out community branding for the school, for example school branding that provides basic religious knowledge in schools Muhammadiyah, character school branding in IT schools, *tahfid* School branding in *ma'arif* schools.
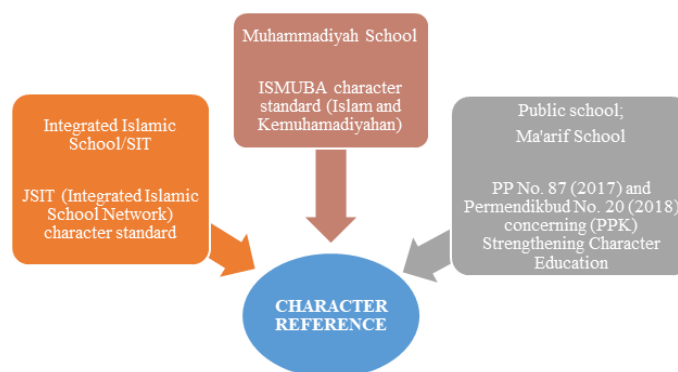

Figure 1. Reference to character standards in each formal school

The values in character education developed by the Ministry of Education come from religion, *Pancasila*, culture and national education goals [37]. The character values developed are derived from values in relation to religiosity, personality, fellow and environment, and nationality [31]. In general, these values can also be classified into two directions: character values that are vertically related to God (*hablumminallah*) and horizontal relationships with fellow humans (*hablumminannas*) and the environment. When viewed in terms of its components, character education according to Lickona [38] emphasizes the importance of three components of good character, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral actions.

The implementation of character education in formal schools, both Islam-based and public schools, has the same steps. It is starting from planning a character education program that is included in the annual work plan, forming a character education team by issuing a decree from the principal, preparing resources the supporting power as outlined in the school budgeting planning, issuing policies for commitment to all school members, arranging schedules and carrying out it on an ongoing basis, and periodically evaluating character education programs. The sequence of these steps can be simplified in Figure 2.
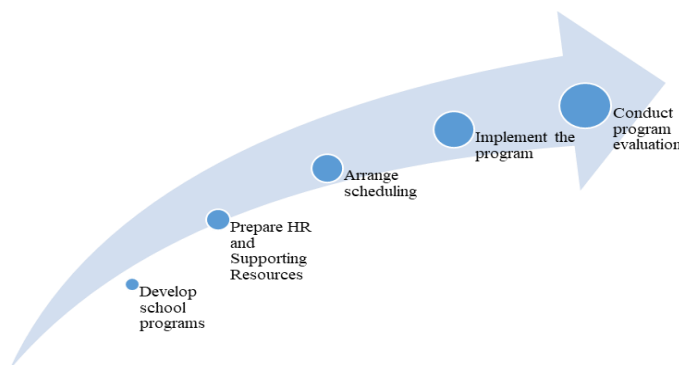
Figure 2. Steps to implement character education

Implementation of character education can be done through integration into each subject; i) Through co-curricular and extracurricular programs as a means of self-development and habituation activities; and ii) Through school culture; through community participation which all rests on religious values [39]–[41]. The biggest contribution in character building is in habituation activities. Character education cannot be formed suddenly (instantly) but must be trained seriously and proportionally through habituation. The implementation method can be done with understanding, habituation, and exemplary. The steps in implementing character education according to Fitri [42] include: i) Planning and formulating the characters to be taught to students;ii) Preparing environmental resources that can support character education programs; iii) Ask for the joint commitment of all school members in carrying out character education programs; iv) Carry out character education continuously and consistently; v) Carry out program evaluation.

The implementation of character education will be effective and efficient if character education is based on a clear vision and mission, an integrated approach, detailed basic character formulations, strong principles, use of appropriate methods, involving the roles and responsibilities of all education components in schools and participation of parents at home [31]. Changes in student behavior that arise after internalizing the values of character education include: i) Strengthening akidah in every activity by always praying when starting and ending something; ii) Be more diligent in reading the Qur'an and memorizing; iii) *Ta'dzim* teachers and older people always say greetings and shakes; iv) More polite; v) More *tawadhu'* (humility); vi) More disciplined; vii) The language starts to get organized by always saying permission, *afwan* or help; better time management; viii) Starting to be orderly in appearance, arranging items, mattresses, cabinets; ix) More sensitive to the environment; and x) More humanist [16], [36].

In addition, the impact (outcome) of the implementation of character education according to Udin [34] includes: i) Providing motivation to always be honest at all times, not lying with anyone; ii) More respect for elders; iii) Give thanks for what has been received; does not hurt other people's feelings; iv) Further increase worship, because later there is an afterlife; v) Respect other people's work; vi) Change attitudes that are less for the better; vii) Knowing to be a strong future leader; viii) Trained to make creative assignments in making assignments; ix) Students are trained to think independently; x) Environmental care sees friends who need help. Students who have high academic abilities have a better understanding of the concept of character than students with moderate and low academic abilities [43].

3.1. Supporting factors and obstacles to the implementation of character education

The supporting factors in implementation of character education that are reflected in formal schools include: cooperation and active role of parents, school members, stakeholders, moral and material support from policy makers, school facilities. These supportive factors are the key to success in implementing character education [8], [17], [44]. On average, in private (Islamic) schools, routine activities such as reading the Qur'an, writing, listening and memorizing them have become a habit so that they do not become an obstacle to the implementation of character education. The obstacles in implementing character education include: i) Educators who do not understand the application of character education [16], [45]; ii) The school system does not yet have a standard concept related to application of character education, so that the output is less targeted; iii) The characteristics of students who come from different backgrounds, so that it affects the aspects of interest, learning speed, and adjustment to educational patterns in certain schools; iv) The influence of social media on students [29], [46]; v) Lack of openness, support, cooperation, and the active role of parents in the childcare process [47], [48]; vii) Character planting takes a long time, and the results do not appear to require patience immediately; viii) Inadequate school facilities for the implementation of character education [30], [44], [49].

There are several solutions for those problems. The first is providing guidance to educators on character education through official meetings, training, sending teachers to licensed character education training meetings. The second is develop an operational curriculum which includes the Character Education Program; adhere the required character education guidelines from the ministry of education and culture, research and technology and synchronizes the guidelines with school programs in the Medium Term Work Plan and Annual Work Plan School. The third is, since the beginning, the school has conducted diagnostic tests on students, carried out character learning based on student differentiation, provided space for self-development activities through extracurricular programs based on interests and talents. Morover, provide education and direction and understanding regarding the use of social media in schools, make rules regarding the use of school social media and must be enforced, provide examples of the use of social media in positive learning. Furthermore, improve communication and coordination more intensively with parents and involve parents in school activities such as parenting, parents' schools, and meetings in school office meetings. Hence, consitence in providing guidance which leads to the creation of characters, choosing characters which in the process of formation do not take long but the results can be seen and felt in everyday life such as discipline can be done through habituation of congregational prayers on time, order can be accustomed through the culture of queuing in ablution, tolerance for group work. Lastly, make a portion of the budget in the school's RKJM in character education as a priority in school activities.

4. CONCLUSION

The trends of the implementation of character education in formal schools in Indonesia have the same spirit in the content of character education. It is instilling the habit of doing well in terms of daily morals/behavior which shows as a character of goodness (*akhlaqul mahmudah*) for provision in life in a society based on the values of the Qur'an and *Pancasila* values as the basis and philosophy of the Republic of Indonesia. In public schools the implementation of character education follows government regulations as stated in the Strengthening of Character Education (SCE) which is an implication of Islamic teachings. As for Islamic-based private schools, character education tends to be oriented towards cultivating *akhlaqul karimah* (known as moral education/*muwashafat*) combined with government regulations.

The limitation of this study is that the research sample is still limited to schools distributed in eight provinces in Indonesia. It is consisting of public schools and private (Islamic) schools. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a wider study of the sample so that the results can be generalized.

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