A Holistic Model for Character Education in Schools
(An Alternative Educational Model)

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Abstrak
Penelitian ini membahas tentang “Model Pendidikan Karakter Holistik di Sekolah”. Pendidikan karakter dianggap sebagai solusi penting untuk menyelesaikan berbagai fenomena kerapuhan moral yang terjadi. Pendidikan yang diharapkan mampu memadukan secara harmoni pembentukan aspek kognitif, afektif, psikomotorik dan spiritual pada diri peserta didik bisa dilakukan dengan menggunakan model pendidikan yang menerapkan pola pendidikan karakter holistik bagi peserta didiknya. Kajian ini dilakukan dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui penelitian studi pustaka (library research). Teknik pengumpulan datanya menggunakan dokumentasi. Selanjutnya dilakukan analisis data dengan cara deskriptif analisis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Pendidikan karakter merupakan proses internalisasi nilai-nilai positif kepada peserta didik agar mereka memiliki karakter yang baik (good character) yang meliputi; aspek pengetahuan (cognitive), perasaan (feeling), dan tindakan (action). Untuk itu, diperlukan upaya memperkenalkan dan menginternalisasikan nilai-nilai kehidupan yang dapat menjadikan peserta didik menjadi manusia yang utuh (a whole human being), yaitu manusia sebagai makhluk individual-sosial, jasmaniah-rohaniah, makhluk otonom sekaligus makhluk Tuhan. Model pendidikan karakter holistik dapat diterapkan di sekolah dengan menggunakan model terintegrasi dalam seluruh mata pelajaran, yaitu dilaksanakan melalui keseharian pembelajaran yang sudah ada di sekolah.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Karakter, Integrasi, Karakter Holistik
Abstract
This research discusses “A Holistic Model for Character Education in Schools.” Character education is considered an important solution to a variety of ongoing moral vulnerability phenomena. It is expected that through education the cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and spiritual aspects in learners can be harmonized. To this end, a holistic model for character education can be applied to learners. This study was carried out using a qualitative approach through library research. The data were collected by documentation technique and later analyzed by descriptive analysis. The research results indicated that character education is a process of positive values internalization in learners for them to possess good character, which comprises cognitive, feeling, and action aspects. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to introduce and internalize life values that are useful for learners to become whole human beings, that is, as individual-social, physical-spiritual, or autonomous-God’s human beings. The holistic character education model can be implemented in schools in an integrated manner across all school subjects. Otherwise put, it can be implemented through the learning process at school on a day-to-day basis.

Keywords: Education, Character Building, Integration, Holistic Character

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most systematic, most effective medium for reinforcing learner character development. Therefore, it is only reasonable that character education becomes a collective commitment of all parties engaged in educational institutions. Education that overlooks character will only goes as far as creating individuals who are smart and clever, but these individuals will not arrive at the point of wholeness as human beings (Samani and Hariyanto 2011).

Ironically, however, not enough attention is paid by education of today to the character development of learners, who are left to develop by nature. There is this notion that with only Intellectual Quotient (cognitive aspect), while disregarding Emotional Quotient (affective aspect) (Muslih 2011:82–83) and Spiritual Quotient (spiritual aspect (Zohar and Marshall 2002:3) a child will be more of a danger as it will be easier for him/her to deviate from or violate basic human values. The likely consequences would by drugs addiction, school drop-outs, destructive behaviors, brawls involving students from different schools, and other negative behaviors. Such phenomena are increasingly widespread, and one of the causes for them is a lack of character education conditioning in learners (Mulkhan 2013:74).

Education implementation that leans toward the cognitive aspect but pays little heed to the affective and psychomotor aspects, or education that tends to favor the
intellect, skill, and sense over emotional, spiritual, social, and other forms of intelligences, results in partial educational outputs and outcomes. This condition causes fragmentation to education (Primani and Khairunnas 2013:20).

Education is supposed to be a process of cultural internalization into the individual and society, allowing them to become civilized (Khobir et al. 2021). Not only is it a means of knowledge transfer, education is also a means of enculturation and socialization. Learners must receive education that touches the basic dimension of humanity. This dimension of humanity covers three most fundamental aspects, namely 1) the affective aspect, which is reflected by the quality of faith, piety, virtue (including noble character and outstanding personality), and aesthetic competence, 2) the cognitive aspect, which is reflected by the thinking capacity and intellectual power to explore, develop, and master science and technology, and 3) the psychomotor aspect, which is reflected by the capability of nurturing technical skills, practical abilities, and kinesthetic competences (Muslih 2011:69).

Character education in schools is indispensable to get the next generation prepared with basic abilities they will need not only to become life-long learners to live in the globalized information era, but also to serve a positive participatory function, whether as individuals, family members, nationals, or global natives (Zuchdi 2013:5). It is considered an important solution to a variety of ongoing moral vulnerability phenomena.

It is expected that through education the cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and spiritual aspects in learners can be integrated in harmony. To this end, a holistic model for character education can be applied to learners.

This study was conducted using qualitative approach and descriptive analysis through library research. The data collection technique used was documentation. This research investigated an array of data sources from the literature in relation to the holistic character education theme. When the data collected was considered sufficient, an analysis was conducted by sorting and classifying the data based on their relevance to the research object. Afterward, a descriptive analysis was conducted. It was an effort to organize and analyze data and then interpret them (Surachmad 1985:139).
THE ESSENCE OF HOLISTIC CHARACTER EDUCATION

Holistic Character Education Definition

Holistic education is a concept of education that fosters the child’s potentials physically, emotionally, socially, creatively, spiritually, and intellectually (Heriyanto 2003:12). Holistic character education in specific is an effort to introduce and internalize life values that learners need to become whole human beings. The life values aforementioned refer to a holistic value system that departs from the human philosophy that sees human beings as individual-social, physical-spiritual, and autonomous-God’s beings (Rukiyyati 2013:198).

Put otherwise, a holistic character education process involves a variety of developmental aspects of the learners, whether they be cognitive, affective, or psychomotor, in a holistic way in the context of cultural life, so that the individual learners could find their identities, meanings, and life goals through their relationships with the society, natural environment, and spiritual values. Character-based holistic education is focused on the formation of all human aspects holistically to make an individual a human being with character (Fitri 2012:148).

Holistic character education strives for and internalizes life values that learners need to become whole human beings. The life values aforementioned refer to a holistic value system that departs from the human philosophy that sees human beings as individual-social, physical-spiritual, and autonomous-God’s beings (Megawangi 2016:198).

Holistic Character Education Goals

The goal of character education is to improve the quality, administration, and outcomes of education in schools toward the formation of character and morals of learners in a whole, integrated, and balanced way according to graduate competence standards. Through character education, it is expected that the learners are able to improve and apply their knowledge independently and to review, internalize, and personalize character and moral values to let them manifest in their daily behavior (Jamal Ma’ruf 2012:42–43).

In addition, holistic character education also aims at helping learners develop in a balanced way, either in the physical or the spiritual aspect. The involvement of both the physical and spiritual elements requires that education be a process that helps with the
growth, development, and empowerment of all the learners’ personality elements (Muhaemin 2012:270). Therefore, the ultimate goal of holistic character education is to shape whole human beings (insan kamil) in intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

**Installing Holistic Character Education Values in Schools**

Character education is carried out by providing education in values or virtues that make up the basic character values of a nation. The virtues attributable to a character essentially are values themselves. As such, character education in essence is the development of values that have their roots in the philosophy or ideology of the Indonesian nation, religions, cultures, and values as formulated in the national education goals (Kurniawan 2013:39).

Implementing holistic character education values would require a supporting curriculum that has an aspect of balance. This curriculum is named a holistic curriculum. As stated by Miller (Miller 2007), a holistic curriculum is a curriculum that uses a framework with elements of balance, integrity, and connectedness.

Such a holistic character education curriculum is embedded in the character education values imprinted on, and expected to be useful for, learners in their lives. Some character education values are taught, developed, and habitualized at school. Among the character education values developed are the love for God and all His creations, responsibility, discipline, independence, honesty, wisdom, respect and politeness, altruism, mutual assistance, cooperation, self-confidence, creativity, hard work, leadership, fairness, humility, tolerance, peace, and harmony (Fitri 2012:152–53). Meanwhile, according to Pala (Pala 2011:23) these values include care, honesty, fairness, responsibility, self-appreciation, and appreciation for others. There are ten universal values in character education, namely respect, responsibility, honesty, empathy, fairness, initiative, diligence, courage, integrity, and optimism. Asnawir mentioned such values as sincerity, modesty, independence, and autonomy (Asnawir 2012:93).

A holistic curriculum must be drafted holistically and must connect all existing education aspects and components to character values. All the materials included in each subject must be aimed at learner character building, whether through the contents or through the learning process, aided with truly appropriate methods and strategies. All school components—the headmaster, teachers, and administrative staff—should share the
commitment to learner character building at school. In the same vein, the school environment, the society in general, and families should work together to support the character education process that is taking place at school instead of inhibiting the internalization of character values in learners.

Megawangi together with the IHF (Indonesia Heritage Foundation), has formulated 9 character values (Megawangi 2016:113) that should be taught to learners: 1) the love for God and all His creations; 2) independence, discipline, and responsibility; 3) honesty, trustworthiness, and utterance of words of wisdom; 4) respect, politeness, and good listenership; 5) philanthropy, altruism, and cooperation; 6) self-confidence, creativity, and persistence; 7) good, fair leadership; 8) kindness and humility; and 9) tolerance, peace-loving, and unity.

Those universal character values do not manifest automatically. It needs conscious development from time to time through a continuous teaching process, such as through learning and practicing, and through character education, for them to manifest. Learners are heavily influenced in a negative way by the media and other sources in their present lives. Since learners spend the larger portion of their time at school, it is hoped that the school establishes an environment that is filled with care and respect to assist learners in learning the core and values of character education. Therefore, a comprehensive approach model in character education that can support the conditioning of the character education values taught within and outside the classroom in the school environment will be needed (Pala 2011:23). Attainment of education goals will be possible if the education process is carried out according to an education model based on the intellectual, moral, emotional, and behavioral character comprehensively at school (Shields 2011:49).

**Holistic Character Education Strategies and Methods**

The strategies that can be used to carry out character education includes exemplification, entrepreneurial activities, weekly moral program, habituation, rewards and punishments, and supervision and behavioral regulation (Iplih 2017:84).

The first character education strategy is exemplification, keeping in mind that humans are basically inclined to imitating others. This strategy is unique in three ways. First, it is easy. It is faster for an individual to see than to act. That is a fact in human life.
Second, errors caused by direct exemplification are minimal. The Prophet himself often educated the companions and other Muslims by exemplifying as is shown in his instruction in this hadith: “Pray as you have seen me praying.” Third, it yields a greater impact, leaves a stronger impression, and imprints better in the heart than theories do.

The second character education strategy is entrepreneurial activity. In an entrepreneurial activity, not only are they given academic-theoretical lessons, students will also be allowed to engage in entrepreneurial instructions. The Islamic character values that can be shaped in learners by this strategy are independence, high levels of work ethics, and diligence, just to name a few.

The third character education strategy is the “Weekly Moral” program. The aim of this strategy is to emphasize to learners a certain character value selected for each week. A new weekly theme is introduced every Monday. To implement this program, not only the role of the teacher, cooperation between all components within the educational institution will also be needed. Anything from the question of whether the school board engages and communicates directly with learners must demonstrate the same weekly moral values. The “Weekly Moral” program carried out will be of use to learner character building as all the existing stakeholders campaign and socialize the selected moral values every week.

The fourth character education strategy is habituation. Habituation itself refers to the habits that characterize and set a certain course for thoughts, beliefs, desires, and discussions. A new habit may transform into character if one takes a liking in or desires the habit and accepts such a desire; repetition of such desire and acceptance will suffice. Learner character can be built on habits. Among the Islamic character values that can be built by habituation are discipline, piety, independence, responsibility, honesty, loyalty, hard work, diligence, perseverance, persistence, thoroughness, passion, dynamic regulation, efficiency, respect for time, productiveness, friendliness, sportiveness, patience, orderliness, obedience, caring environment, faith, and devoutness. Particular among such values is discipline. The habituation through the performance of mandatory shalat in congregation, shalat Tahajjud, or shalat Dhuha could promote learners’ discipline in performing worship and other activities.

The fifth character education strategy is rewards and punishments. This strategy has been exemplified in Islam, as we can find in Quranic verses on threats and
punishments. The terms rewards and punishments are synonymous with the terms *targhib* and *tarhib*, and in substance they also share the same purposes. *Targhib* means promise, while rewards mean the realization of promises. Additionally, *tarhib* takes the form of threats, while punishments are the manifestation of threats.

The sixth character education strategy is supervision or control. This strategy is extremely important to figure out the progress that learners have made in their behavior. Through supervision the guardians or *asatidz* can evaluate whether the learners’ behavior goes along with the standards.

The following additional strategies can also be used: integration of values and ethics in every school subject, internalization of positive values by all school members, habituation and practice, exemplifying and practice, creating an atmosphere suitable for character building at school, and enculturation (Fitri 2012:45).

In the first strategy, integration of values or ethics in every school subject, the outcomes of a character education process cannot be observed immediately; it takes a continued process and consistency to see the outcomes. Here lies the criticality of integrating character education in school life, whether it be inside or outside the classroom. Five forms of integration are involved in this strategy: (1) integration in school subjects; (2) integration in thematic instructions; (3) integration in the creation of an atmosphere suitable for character building and habituation; (4) integration in extracurricular activities; and (5) integration of education programs at school and life in family and society.

The second strategy is internalization of positive values by all school members (the headmaster, teachers, and parents). Character education at school is heavily influenced by teachers’ attitudes. The third strategy is habituation and practice. It can be conducted at school by making learners accustomed to greeting and smiling whenever they arrive at school and leave. The fourth strategy is exemplification. Teachers play an important role in character education as a role-model as well as a source of inspiration and motivation for learners. The attitudes and behaviors of the teachers leave such a deep mark in the hearts of the learners, so their utterances, character, and personality would serve as a reference for the learners. The fifth strategy is the creation of an atmosphere suitable for character building at school, given that school’s role in learner character building is critical.
The sixth strategy, enculturation, is related to the strategy that comes before. Enculturation for learner character education will require the creation of an atmosphere that is suitable for character building. This creation process is extremely affected by the situation and condition of the place where the strategy and the underlying values are to be implemented. To arrive at this goal, the following pathways can be taken. First, a character culture that is vertical (ilahiyyah) in nature can be created. The relationship with Allah the Almighty is established by increasing both the quantity and quality of religious, ubudiah activities at school such as performing shalat in congregation, performing Monday and Thursday fasting, reciting the Quran, performing dua together with others, and so forth. Second, the horizontal (insaniyyah) one should be established by positioning the school as a social institution. The relationship structure that can be built can be classified into three types: (1) superior-subordinate relationship; (2) professional relationship; and (3) peer or voluntary relationship that is based on such positive values as brotherhood, honesty, and mutual respect, among others.

Meanwhile, the values imprinting involved in character education can be carried out using the following methods.

First, to educate by habituation. Habituation has its core in the making an experience a habit, which later manifests as deeds. This habituation method should be applied by teachers in the character building process to accustom learners to show good and virtuous character. Therefore, this method basically is inseparable from exemplification. When there is habituation, there is exemplification, and this holds true the other way round. This method will ultimately be useful in shaping character.

Second, as alluded slightly previously, to educate by exemplification. Teachers as role-models have a huge influence on the growth and personality development of learners. To be role-models, teachers must have the courage to appear differently and distinctively than non-teachers. Teachers’ self-presentation would either make learners feel comfortable in the classroom or, conversely, discourage learners from learning or even attending the class (if the teachers appear disorderly).

Third, to educate by fostering discipline in learners (Mulyasa 2014:165–73). To make character education a success, teachers must be able to inspire discipline in learners. To do so, the teachers must depart from the principle that goes in parallel with the national education goals, that is, democracy. Therefore, any rules related to discipline must be
guided by such a principle: they must be from, by, and for learners. The teachers themselves, meanwhile, upholds the Indonesian principle of *tut wuri handayani*, which means that they should be able to encourage from behind. Learners may be accustomed to apply discipline and obey school rules, smile warmly to others, and demonstrate other habits in their daily lives.

Forth, to educate by orders and prohibitions. Orders are demands that must be realized by actions, hence having an implication for obedience. Prohibitions, on the other hand, are demands against actions, which has an implication for abandonment. School orders and prohibitions usually are set out in a rule, which is supposed to be binding for all school parties, with teachers being no exception. Orders and prohibitions are created to be obeyed, not violated. They are a simple aid for learners to do good deeds and avoid mistakes. It is thus imperative for teachers to provide learners with a concrete explanation on the good values that are contained in school rules, and it is hoped that learners would develop an awareness of the importance of obeying orders and prohibitions (Syarbini 2012:52–53).

Fifth, to educate by lessons learnt from stories. In providing students with an education, including that on character, exemplifying with stories of the past is worth consideration. Some examples would be stories on the conceited such as Qarun and stories on the Tsamud and Ad peoples. Stories are good at fostering learners’ imaginations and inspiring them to be fond of certain characters (Sani and Kadri 2016:154–57).

Sixth, to educate by simulation (role-playing and sociodrama). Simulation in instructions is used to teach learners certain skills, whether they be for professional purpose or for use in everyday life.

Seventh, to educate by guidance. Guidance is given by teachers to their students to provide reasons, explanations, directions, or discussions. Guidance may also take the form of reprimand, investigation into the cause of a problem, and criticism, all of which are intended to cause some changes to learner behavior. It may be given orally, through exercise, or through skills training.

Eighth, to educate by motivation (encouragement). An individual’s behavior does not stand on its own. It is always pushed or pulled by something. Externally formed motivation is more about psychological needs development. Learners need some encouragement in their growth and development process so that they do not easily put a
blame on themselves, feel inferior, or even get frustrated when faced with obstacles and failures (Majid and Andayani 2012:120–23).

**Holistic Character Education Evaluation**

In assessing the outcomes of character education, not only are required to identify the character and competences of a learner upon the completion of a character building and competence learning process, teachers are also required to figure out the changes and progression that the learner has made in his/her behavior.

Character education outcomes are a learner’s overall achievements as indicators of distinctive character and a degree of behavioral change. Therefore, in relation to the implementation of character education at school, the school’s custom in reporting students’ grades in certain subjects through the student grade report should be reformed since these grades are obtained from written tests which observes progress in the cognitive domain more than any other domains (Mulyasa 2014:202).

Learners’ success in cultivating character values can certainly be evaluated through the assessments that are performed by the teacher. The teacher can do such assessments by observing learners’ attitudes and behaviors in and outside the school on a daily basis. He/she can also take a variety of other roads to assess learners’ attitudes and behaviors that reflect whether they have established good character or not (Nur Hasanah 2012)

**Holistic Character Education Model**

Holistic character education can be implemented by integrating character in learners’ activities at school (Nur Hasanah 2012). This character integration can be done in either of the following four models.

The first is to integrate values in the existing school subjects. In this model, character education is not provided through a dedicated school subject. It is integrated in the daily instructions that are conducted at school. The learning materials that are related to values in each subject should be developed, made explicit, and linked to learners’ daily life contexts. Character education is not only taught to learners through verses, postulates, or educational theories. Teachers as the spearheads of instructions should be able to concoct an integrated curriculum to touch all learners’ needs. They must be able to
introduce values, raise awareness of the importance of those values, and internalize those values in learners’ behavior in everyday life through the learning process, either in or outside the classroom, throughout all subjects. Learning activities are aimed at making learners master the targeted and designed competences in order for them to know, realize, or care about values and internalize them in their behavior (Asmani, 2012: 58–59).

The second model is to integrate values into local content. By implementing this model, it is expected that learners will be able 1) to know and be familiar with the natural, social, and cultural environments they are in, 2) to have knowledge, abilities, and skills relevant to their region that may benefit both themselves and their environments as a necessity to live their daily lives, 3) to display behaviors and attitudes that are in line with the values and rules prevailing in their region, and 4) to preserve and develop their local culture values.

The third model is to integrate values in self-development programs. Character education planning and implementation for learners through self-development programs is integrated into daily life at school. First, it is done through routine activities at school. Some examples would be ceremonies on national days, inspection for cleanliness, worship and shalat performance in congregation, and dua offering at the beginning and end of school day, to name just a few. Second, it is done through spontaneous action. This refers to the measure that a teacher or any other education staff member must take at the time he/she catches a student doing a reproachful thing. It also refers to a spontaneous response in the form of praise that he/she must issue when noticing a student performing something praiseworthy. For example, he/she should respond this way when a learner achieves a high score, helps others, or attains good achievements in sport or artistic pursuit. The third is being a role-model. If a teacher or any other education staff member wants a student to show a given behavior and attitude according to the desired character values, he/she must be the first one to demonstrate such behavior and attitude. Lastly, it can be done by conditioning.

The forth model is to integrate character education with extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are activities that are conducted outside class for the purpose of allowing students to pursue their interests, talents, and hobbies. They are complementary to character education implementation. Examples of extracurricular programs are Recital of the Quran, Calligraphy, Nashid, Fine Arts, Theatre, Futsal, Basketball, English Club,

Character education is integrated in all subjects on the assumption that all teachers are character educators. All subjects are assumed to carry a mission to positively shape the character of the learners (Mulyasa 2014:58–61). This model entails that character education is the collective responsibility of all school components.

Integration of character education in instructions is a means to introduce values, raise awareness of the importance of values, and internalize values to learners’ behavior in everyday life, and it may take place both in and outside the classroom across all subjects. Learning materials related to values in each subject should be developed, made explicit, and linked to learners’ daily life contexts.

To encourage meaningful character education in learners’ daily life, contextualization of each material and meaning gained by learners is necessary. Learning contextualization would bring what learners have learnt closer to their life (Sahlan and Prasetya 2012:138).

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, the conclusions below were drawn. First, character education is a process to internalize and instill positive values in learners and to shape good character in them according to such positive values, whether it be based on religion, culture, or national philosophy. The character education values aforementioned cover cognitive, feeling, and action aspects.

Second, holistic character education is pursued by introducing and internalizing life values that learners can use to become whole human beings. That is to say for them to become individual-social, physical-spiritual, and autonomous-God’s beings.

Third, holistic character education can be implemented at school by means of integration to all subjects and by practice in instructions on a daily basis at school. Learning materials related to values in each subject should be developed, made explicit, and linked to learners’ daily life contexts. This model is ultimately expected to be able to integrate the cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical, thinking, feeling, and heart aspects in learners.
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