

The Synergy of Multi-activities in Educating Students' Character at Schools

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Abstract: School is a potential place to acknowledge students' character education. Character education is the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable the learner to make informed and responsible choices. To achieve this, schools have to facilitate students with some character development programs through the activities designed for both co-curricular and extra-curricular setting. When the schools are able to create such programs in which all students are welcomed and respected, feel a sense of belonging, and are inspired to achieve to the best of their ability, high expectations for all students in learning, academic achievement and citizenship and character development will be considerably realized. Schools are expected to serve the students' interests and wants right. As long as I observed a Muhammadiyah based Elementary School the so-called SD Muhammadiyah Terpadu in Ponorogo East Java seems to implement the character education through some modified activities. The school which is claiming as one of the character building schools in Indonesia has tried to formulate its education into four major programs namely; integrated learning process, message in week, extracurricular activities, and school culture model. The principle of the character development is not merely based on the instructional oriented but habit formation.

A. INTRODUCTION

When schools become the framework for constructing meaning for living and a bridge to understanding the value of a fulfilled life, students become proactive achievers discovering what it means to develop their potential for themselves. The process of attaining the goal so called character education. Character education is the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable the learner to make informed and responsible choices. It involves a shared educational commitment that emphasizes the responsibilities and rewards of productive living in a global a diverse society. Character education enables students to come face to face with the realities of life. It encourages them to think critically and then act responsibly. Lickona (1993) defines character education as "the deliberate effort to develop virtues that are good for the individual and good for society. In his idea, Character education programs provide positive changes in children's behavior, specifically in helping each other, being truthful, and not blaming others. The responsibility of the education, therefore, has to accommodate both academic development and character

building. As social agent, students are expected to be well-equipped with intellectual capacity and ethical dimensions.

Responding the parents complains on the moral decline in society and troubling trends in youth character which rising youth violence, increasing dishonesty, growing disrespect for parent and authority, peer cruelty, sexual precocity, and ethical illiteracy model of character education cannot neglected anymore. The smart solution should be taken into account. Schools are potential sources to start promoting this morality by teaching the young, directly and indirectly, such values as respect, responsibility, caring, trustworthiness and honesty. As one of the schools in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah based Elementary School the so-called SD Muhammadiyah Terpadu (SDMT) in Ponorogo East Java seems to implement the character education through some modified activities. The school which is claiming as one of the character building schools in Indonesia has tried to formulate its education into four major programs namely; integrated learning process, message in week, extracurricular activities, and school culture model. The principle of synergy of multi-activities in the character development is not merely based on the instructional oriented but habit formation.

B. Integrated learning process

The first program is developed by integrating the habit of doing prayer together and reading Qur'an and Hadist before starting the formal class. The target of this activity is to teach values and habits through the hidden curriculum. The prayers are done twice i.e dhuha and dhuhur. To be imam (leader of prayer) is selected from the students whose master some Qur'an verses under the teacher supervision. Dhuha is conducted at 6.30 in the mosque. Students are instructed to bring the sholat equipment from their home. The teacher monitor the movement of prayer and right pronunciation of verses. He/she will correct students' miss reading and wrong pronunciation or even give punishment when the students are making noise and distract others. The character will be attained from this kind of activity are responsibility, discipline, and cooperativeness.

The second program is daily memorizing the verses of Qur'an and Hadist. Students are targeted to know by heart the Qur'an verses according to the each level. Grade 1 six short surah, 1- 20 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 4 Hadist, Grade 2 six short surah, 1- 20 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 4 Hadist, Grade 3 six short surah, 21- 39 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 5 Hadist, Grade 4 five short surah, 40- 61 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 6 Hadist, Grade 5 five surah, 62 – 82 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 5 Hadist, Grade 6 two surah, 83 – 103 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 5 Hadist, Grade 6 two surah, 104 – 121 verses of Al Baqoroh, and 6 Hadist. Since it is one of the school excellence program, every students have to complete and be assessed on the end of semester. The result will be used to give a remedial program. To make students easy to memorize, the teacher uses some strategies such as SGM (super great memory), quantum teaching, and so forth. This activity is targeted to the values of responsibility, discipline, trustworthiness.

C. Message in week

This breakthrough is designed to provide the students with some valuable exposures. The expected messages containing moral values are written in three languages; Arabic, Indonesian, and some in English. In order students are able to read and observe easily than the poster formed messages are displayed visible in every corner and every classroom. The words or sentences chosen as the messages are quoted from the Qur'an and Hadist and popular inspirational quotes. The characters want to be achieved are various based on the messages delivered. For example the quote which says; *layas robana ahadukum qoiman* (eating and drinking should not be by standing) enforces the students to be polite, caring, and ethical. The quotes of '*orang yang beriman tidak membuang sampah sembarangan*' reminds the students to be responsible and love on the cleanness.

D. Extracurricular activities.

The activities are designed to give students opportunities to develop their potency in terms of talents and interests. Students have freedom to choose which extracurricular are appropriate with their wants. The kind of activities provided by the school for them are music, theatre, self-defense, football, volleyball, table tennis, badminton, pramuka, and qiro'ah (artful reading Qur'an), painting. To be well-managed for the school organizer, each student is only permitted to select and join maximum two branches of extracurricular. The programs are conducted on Saturday from the morning to the afternoon. The principal of choosing this time is to avoid bothering the regular program. In order to get the optimum result, every activity is handled by professional trainers.

E. School culture model.

To create a friendly classroom environment, school has programmed 3 Ss (Smile, Salam (*greet*), Say Hello), Stand in Line for lunch, and charitable habit. It looks simple for students and teachers, but it is quite difficult to be consistent. It needs much more time to practice. The 3 Ss takes place in the morning especially when the teachers welcome the students' coming in front of the entrance gate. They greet students with simple questions related to their activities before visiting school. This moment is felt positive to arouse their self confidence when teacher act as care giver treating them with love and respect.

The stand in line culture for waiting the time to get the meal for lunch seems unique. Students with their plate and spoon are patiently standing in line for asking rice, vegetable soup, and side dish from their teachers. Each student is not allowed to take the meal alone without any permission. This program recognizes a respectful, responsible, and good community. School wants students develop self-discipline, personal management and emphatic citizen. Therefore, it is believed to encourage students learning and maturing as social being.

Having charitable behaviors is noble. Affluent people are obliged to share their belonging with the poor ones. Empathy for others is essential characteristics to be educated for students. In the corner of the school offices is placed a glass holed box which is to train students like to deposit their small money for social interest. Whenever one of students are suffering from any problems, the money have been collected can be used to help decrease the suffering. Sometimes students give extra money to add the money will be given to their friends who are in trouble. This model is effective to motivate student become generous, caring, and solidarity.

F. Conclusion

The function of education is not only geared towards the intellectual, but towards attitude, behavior, disposition, and sensibilities as well. It is important to set forth curriculum standards and reform designs that clearly include character education. Educating the whole person should encompass all domains of learning; cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The school then has a priority not only in intellectual quotient (IQ) but also emotional quotient (EQ) to determine success in school and in life.

We believe that school is such a duplication of real society that we want our school continue to be safe models of effective relationships where students can learn about and put into practice human character attributes such as respect, responsibility, fairness, and empathy. Normally speaking, when given the opportunity to explore practical strategies and innovative ways to set and achieve goals, students both in regular and special education programs, can apply concepts taught in character education to situations in real life. What has been implemented in SD Muhammadiyah Terpadu Ponorogo clearly describes the character education by nurturing the best of human and universal qualities that students need to be successful in their communities and workplaces through integrating the teaching process, displaying weekly banner, providing various extracurricular activities, and exposing school culture model. Character education applied in SDMT reflects a whole- school effort. All members of the school community share the responsibility to teach, model and demonstrate the universal attributes in all classrooms, extracurricular activities, and school environment. The more we respect others, the more we are respected.

Similarly model has been quoted by Andrews (2011). In an effort to teach children how to be responsible, respectful, and honest throughout their lives, schools throughout the United States have implemented structured character education classes. For the most part, parents are extremely supportive of these types of programs because they want their children to learn how to respect others, how to have integrity, and how to exhibit self-control. Pinkard, (2011) illustrates character education or character building for children is a full-time job just as building strong bodies which demands quality materials and daily exercise, just as body building demands quality nutrition and daily exercise. Character building won't take a day or a week or a month. It is something which should be continued throughout the child's life.

G. Recommendation

During the implementation, students look active involving in every activity being programmed. The sustainability and effectiveness of this program outside cannot rely on the school effort. It needs contribution from others. Here are a few recommendations possible to be considered; (1) School should collaborate with students' parent to monitor the character development at home, (2) Ensure that students actively join the character education programs, (3) Expand access to other institution for promoting the character attributes in more wide scope, (4) Be Consistent. The moral messages you send must be clear, consistent and repetitive, (5) Be Concrete. Building character and teaching ethics is not an academic undertaking, it must be relevant to the lives and experiences of your children, and (6) Be Creative. Effective character development should be creative. It should be active and involve the child in real decision-making that has real consequences.

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Kumpulan Materi Tahfiz Quran-Hadist. SDMT Ponorogo Cetakan 2011

Biodata

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