Strengthening Character Education Through Islamic Religious Education: Analysis of Character Education Models

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to look at the role of Islamic religious education in strengthening character education. The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and group discussion forums. This research was conducted in three junior high schools in Bandung, Indonesia. The research findings show that strengthening character education is carried out using three models, namely strengthening class-based character education, strengthening school-based character education, and strengthening community-based character education. From the results of the analysis, strengthening class-based character education has been well implemented in the three schools. The stages carried out in strengthening class-based character education are the integration of strengthening character education in literacy programs, strengthening through classroom management, strengthening through learning methods, strengthening character through literacy movements, and strengthening character through classroom guidance. All of these stages have been carried out optimally in the three schools. Furthermore, strengthening school-based character education is carried out by instilling noble character values that are integrated into the culture or school rules. Strengthening school-based character education is carried out in the good category. Finally, strengthening community-based character education can be said to have not been optimally carried out properly. Strengthening community-based character education is carried out by means of school collaboration with parents, communities, and important actors in society. Strengthening community-based character is carried out in various activities such as inviting ustad to fill in religious activities, study tour activities, and practice in the community.

Keywords: Character Education, Character Education Models, Islamic Religious Education

A. INTRODUCTION

Currently, Indonesia is facing the problem of weakening national character. The noble character, politeness and religiosity that have been maintained and become Indonesian culture so far feel foreign and are rarely found in the midst of society. In its development, the formation of character in the nation's next generation has been attempted in various forms and efforts, but until now it has not been implemented optimally (Bredemeier & Shields, 2019; Peterson, 2020). Character is a characteristic that distinguishes one human being from another. Character is the basic thing that is owned by every human being. At present, there are many cases of character decline that have occurred in Indonesia. One of the moments is the crisis in the world of education. Many students often play truant, the proliferation of cheating culture, cases of brawls between students, and so on (Spiteri & Chang Rundgren, 2017; Xu et al., 2019). This is due to the lack of instilling character from an early age which can be started from the family, school and community environment. The world of education, which is philosophically seen and expected as a tool or a place to educate and shape human character so that it is better (humanization), has begun to shift. This happened partly due to the unpreparedness of the world of education to keep up with the times that are so fast. Whereas education should be an alternative to overcoming and preventing a crisis of national character. Therefore, we need a way so that education can show its strength in its participation in fixing national identity. One way that has been carried out in recent years is by developing character education. The Ministry of Education and Culture has implemented character education at all levels of formal education in Indonesia. Character Education is an effort to educate children so that they can make decisions and practice wisely in everyday life, so that they can contribute positively to their environment which leads to achievement in the formation of character and noble character of students as a whole, integrated and balanced, in accordance with competency standards (Pairin, 2019; Yulianti et al., 2022).

School is one of the strategic places in character building, in addition to family and society. This is what underlies the need for a character education program in a school, both in intra-curricular, co-curricular and school extracurricular activities. Character is not a stand-alone subject, but these character values are integrated into the curriculum, meaning that it becomes a reinforcement of the existing curriculum, namely by implementing the existing curriculum, namely by implementing it in subjects and in the daily activities of students (Setyaningsih, 2017; Tsaniyatus Sa'diyah, 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to instill character education for each school with various activities that can support the cultivation of good character. It is hoped that through character education, junior high school students

can independently improve and use their knowledge, to learn and internalize and personalize noble character values and moral values so that they manifest in everyday behavior. Character education at the institutional level aims to shape a school culture that is practiced by all members of the school. As for what is meant by school culture are the characteristics, character, and image of the school as seen in the eyes of the wider community (Kildan & Incikabi, 2015; Musyarofah & Rizawati, 2021).

In formal education in the city of Bandung, the character education that is applied is more towards religious values, especially in the nine-year basic education, especially at the elementary and junior high school levels. This can be seen in many public and private schools, which instill religious values in the school environment. Such as the Dhuha Sunah prayer activities before studying, reading the Koran, female students are required to wear the headscarf and the implementation of other religious activities in the school environment (Mardiyati, 2015; McGarr & McDonagh, 2021). Likewise, three junior high schools in the Bandung area have implemented strengthening character education based on religious values. The majority of junior high school students in the Bandung area are Muslims, so school activities must prioritize Islamic religious values. Given the results of the study above, there is still a need to think deeply about school efforts to achieve character strengthening based on Islamic Education. Education movement in schools to strengthen character through the process of training, transforming, transmitting, and developing students' abilities by applying (1) religious values; (2) nationalist; (3) independent; (4) gotong royong; and (5) integrity is a way of strengthening character education in schools (Ahmad Junaedi, 2019; Xu et al., 2019). The Character Education Strengthening Program is a very important program to implement with the aim of strengthening the character education being implemented. In addition to the family and social environment, the school environment is the number two institution that plays an important role in the formation of a child's personality. Strengthening Character Education is a continuation and revitalization of the national character education movement which began in 2015 (Jerome & Kisby, 2022; Spiteri & Chang Rundgren, 2017). Strengthening character education or moral education at this time needs to be implemented to overcome the moral crisis that is currently engulfing this country. The crisis includes the increasing promiscuity, such as the abuse of illegal drugs (drugs) and pornography. In addition to these two cases, currently violence against children and adolescents, theft, cheating habits, and brawls have become a social problem which until now has not been completely resolved.

This prompted the author to conduct further research at other junior high schools in other areas to see how the strengthening of character education was carried out. The purpose of this research is to determine what type of character strengthening is given to students based on religious values. In this study, researchers focused more on Islamic Religious Education as a means of character building, because character education emphasizes religious values. Based on previous research studies conducted it was stated that there have been many cases of character decline in the world of education, therefore it is necessary to instill character from an early age both in the family environment and in the school environment (Mardiyati, 2015; Setyaningsih, 2017). The earlier research was a type of qualitative research which had the aim of knowing the application of religious-based character education. And the findings from previous research are that there are forms of implementing religious-based character education at LPI Kota Ciamis (Saputro, 2015; Yulianti et al., 2022). The difference between the author's research and previous research is that previous research focused on strengthening religious-based character education, while the focus of the author's research was to focus more on Islamic education as a character building effort, because character education emphasized religious values.

B. METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive study using data collection techniques of observation, interviews, group discussions (FGD) and documentation. In addition, in presenting the data using a descriptive approach, in the form of words, writing, to clarify the data collected and analyzed. In this study, the authors examined and analyzed the strengthening of character education through Islamic religious education at junior high school level public schools in Bandung. Primary data is data obtained by researchers and primary sources. Obtained through observing school activities and interviews with students, principals and other parties who live in schools and parents of students. Secondary data is supporting data which can be in the form of documents or interviews (Dobson & Dobson, 2021; Jerome & Kisby, 2022). Secondary data is in the form of documents, profiles of the three junior high schools in Bandung and their references, as well as the results of sources related to other supporting data.

The data collection tool used in this study was an interview technique with respondents, namely, Islamic Religious Education teachers, Guidance and Counseling teachers, school principals, student deputy heads, curriculum deputy heads, and library staff. The next data collection tool is the observation technique which involves observing the learning activities

of PAI teachers, educational activities from start to school, and spiritual extracurricular activities. The next data collection tool is documenting the documentation used to collect school profile documents, lesson plans and syllabus for PAI subjects. And finally, the method used in data collection is the FGD technique. FGD is used to collect data. Furthermore, after the data is collected, the data is analyzed. Data analysis is an effort to systematically organize the records obtained and the results of interviews, observations and other related data to increase research understanding of the case under study, by choosing what is important and what will be studied, and what can be communicated to others. The analysis begins by examining all available data and sources, including interviews, field observations or observations, records and other documents.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Strengthening character education through Islamic Religious Education there are three paths, the first is to strengthen class-based character education. Based on the data obtained at the three junior high schools in Bandung for Islamic Religious Education subjects using the Free Learning Curriculum program where this program is a requirement by incorporating character values. Likewise, Islamic Religious Education teachers make lesson plans using the Free Learning Curriculum. This strengthening consists of integrating the Free Learning Curriculum into Islamic Religious Education learning activities, both intra-curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular. The values and messages in the learning material are sorted and selected and the teacher analyzes the basic skills that can be included in the lesson plan (Baroud & Dharamshi, 2020; Zafirah et al., 2018). For example, lesson plans for class IX were prepared by PAI teachers with the theme of tolerance in PAI subjects. The study material is verse 13 of Sura Al-Hujurat about Tolerance and respect for Differences. In lesson plans, there are four main skills, namely K11, K12, K13 and K14. All competencies are based on the character values of the learning material.

Lesson plans developed by educators on topics such as tolerance and respect for diversity are a form of integration of the values of strengthening character education, namely religion with derived values including tolerance and faith and piety (Hart et al., 2020; Watson, 2019). There are two character values that are instilled by the teacher in an attitude of religious tolerance, namely tolerance towards the same religion and towards those of different religions. Students of different religions are taught not to insult and laugh at other religions (Eyo, 2016; Sufiani et al., 2022). Students are encouraged to love one another as children of an equal nation, as brothers and sisters in the same country. While the attitude of

tolerance among religions, students are taught to love one another because every Muslim is a brother. Like the hadith of the Prophet SAW that the Muslim brotherhood looks like a building when a member is sick, other Muslims feel the same feeling. Thus, the heart and body are moved to feel and help so that a sense of belonging and affection is created.

In addition, in the development of lesson plans with tolerance and respect for differences, the emphasis is on improving character by demonstrating choices of learning methods and learning resources. Here, the teacher chooses to use the cooperative learning model. Cooperative learning is group learning with 2-5 students with ideas to motivate themselves among its members so that they help each other to achieve maximum learning goals (Hatlevik, 2017; Lemon & Garvis, 2016; Lindfors et al., 2021). This model emphasizes a good cooperative attitude among students. With this collaboration, it will foster cooperation and mutual assistance, as well as the fact that humans cannot live alone and definitely need other people. To support the implementation of this model, the teacher chose to use the question and answer method, interviews, discussions, and role playing. The question and answer model consists of delivering educational messages by asking questions and students giving answers or vice versa, students have the opportunity to ask questions and the teacher answers questions. The interview model is a model for obtaining information by asking questions directly to students (Del-Moral-Pérez et al., 2019; Gràcia et al., 2022; Jerome & Kisby, 2022). The discussion model is a means of presenting subject matter when the teacher gives students (groups of students) the opportunity to hold scientific talks to gather opinions, draw conclusions or organize various solutions to solve a problem. The role play method is a form of learning model from an educational game that is used to explain feelings, attitudes, behaviors and values, in order to respect the feelings, views and ways of thinking of others (Ahmad Junaedi, 2019; Baroud & Dharamshi, 2020). Cooperation, solidarity, mutual cooperation and family are the values that strengthen the embodied character.

In addition, the lesson plans also explain basic learning activities that incorporate character building values. For example, literacy activities consist of seeing, watching, reading, and playing in lesson plans to foster students' independent attitudes. Students must become disciplined learners and students, which is also applied by the teacher so that they can think critically by asking questions and being creative in concluding important points that arise in learning activities (Farikhin & Muhid, 2022; Mufidah & Nurfadilah, 2021). Critical thinking has the advantage of being a student who doesn't have a careless mind to make decisions and find solutions to problems. They are also trained by working together

through discussions. During the discussion, students are also trained in independence and confidence to research and collect information and then present appropriate learning materials to increase their knowledge and courage by exchanging information between each group (Saputro, 2015; Yilmaz & Siğirtmaç, 2020). In evaluating, the teacher conducts it authentically based on the 2013 curriculum, namely evaluating spiritual attitudes, social attitudes, knowledge and skills possessed by students, resulting in an objective assessment. Authentic assessment is a measure that represents all the actual values attached to the object being evaluated in relation to the 2013 program, the object of evaluation is none other than students. Authentic assessment does not only measure what students know, but focuses more on what students can do. Curriculum13 focuses more on attitude assessment (Pairin, 2019; Yulianti et al., 2022). Attitude assessment is carried out because attitude assessment is an activity that aims to understand student behavior during external learning and learning, which aims to foster behavior that is consistent with characteristics in the context of student character training. Efforts to improve and cultivate the expected attitude according to KI-1 and KI-2 teachers must allow for habituation and continuous development in learning and external learning. To find out the progress of the teacher must carry out an assessment.

Second, school culture. Schools have developed good practices that reinforce religious values. Strengthening the value of character education in schools is related to habituation or culture in the teaching unit itself (Tsaniyatus Sa'diyah, 2022; Yilmaz & Siğirtmaç, 2020). According to the data obtained by the researchers, one of the cultures of Middle School in Bandung is the culture of shaking hands and greeting teachers, because 3S culture is cultivated with greetings, greetings, smiles. Fifteen minutes before entering class, you are required to read a letter in the Al-Quran and its translation. Then sing Indonesian songs and recite Pancasila. When entering the noon hour, it is obligatory to pray the midday prayer in congregation (Nugroho & Jambi, 2022; Sodik, 2019). And when they want to return home, they have to pray followed by singing obligatory songs and folk songs. Environmental cleanliness also applies to Junior High School in Bandung by holding clean Fridays so students can learn to work together. School programs are also organized, including social services and iftar together. What is highly implemented at SMP is the obligation to wear the headscarf for Muslim students. And third, strengthening community-based character education. In this case, schools do not collaborate much with other institutions (Palaiologou, 2016; Spiteri & Chang Rundgren, 2017). But with a culture of the main values of religiosity through Islamic religious education, the school works closely with the clerical community. This happened when the school held Isro' and Mi'roj, Mawlid Nabi SAW, Halal-bi Halal,

etc. The school invites Da'i from outside to give lectures in activities. Then, in Rohis' extra-curricular activities, the school also invited Koran teachers to train students to be fluent in reading the Al-Quran. Likewise, schools use competent teachers to train students to form marhaban groups.

D. CONCLUSION

Strengthening character education in three junior high schools in Bandung is carried out through Islamic religious education. Strengthening character education through Islamic religious education includes three paths and bases, namely class-based by integrating the Free Learning Curriculum into PAI learning activities, both intra-curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular. Second, based on school culture by cultivating practices that reinforce religious values. And third, community-based, in this case schools still don't involve religious institutions to work together in supporting character education. Interaction with parents of students is also still lacking. Likewise, the religious literacy movement in the school environment and outside of school is still lacking. The suggestions in this research are as follows: first, in learning Islamic Religious Education it must continue to develop and instill the main values, both in terms of religiosity, independence, nationalism, mutual cooperation and integrity, so that there is a strengthening in character education. Because with this character education, students are not only required to have in-depth knowledge, but are expected to have character that is in accordance with the values of everyday life. Especially for the three junior high schools in Bandung, to focus more on strengthening community-based character education. Second, schools must emphasize religious values to further enrich Islamic literature as well as improve and develop religious knowledge. And third, it is necessary to carry out more in-depth research on the management of strengthening character education.

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