

Strengthening Character Education in Adiwiyata Schools

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ABSTRACT

The young generation's low concern for the environment and rampant anti-social behavior were reasons for implementing character education, especially in Adiwiyata schools. Strengthening character education in schools was very important. This study aimed to analyze the strengthening of character education at Adiwiyata schools, especially at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal. The research method was qualitative, a type of case study. The subjects were students of class 4 Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal. Researchers collected data through interviews, observation, and documentation; he tested the validity of the data using technique and source triangulation. Data analysis included collecting data, sorting data, categorizing the data, and concluding. Based on research results, strengthening character education at Adiwiyata schools was developed based on the environment. Character education was carried out by implementing the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. Teachers became facilitators in character education in schools, while students were trained and accustomed to thinking and behaving following Pancasila values and caring for the environment. These activities were carried out through learning activities and habituation activities at school. Based on this, the conclusion was that strengthening character education in schools had been going well. Students and teachers could overcome the obstacles.

Keywords: Adiwiyata School, Students, Character Education.

INTRODUCTION

Character education has been gaining momentum as an approach to address moral and ethical issues in the society [1]. Since time immemorial, societies in different parts of the world have established some form of systems to educate their members about the values of character. Classic thinkers of the past such as Aristotle and Confucius have dedicated their work on promoting acceptable behaviours in the society [2]. Good character is conceptualised by 'knowing good, embracing good and doing well' [3]. Character building is a developmental process that comprises moral cognition, social emotional skills and critical social engagement which can change as a result of context and relationship [4]. Therefore, character is dynamic, context-specific and relationally-developed [5]. Through the psychology and philosophy perspectives, good characters can be acquired by learning using the right pedagogy [6]. Specifically, character education is described as adjusting the behaviours of students so that they may become good members of a society [7]. Through education, students can be instructed and guided to a set of prescribed behaviours [8]. Students are also nurtured to examine issues in different perspectives and to practice maturity in challenging situations [9].

Rampant behavioural problems can be traced to students' defiance to relevant authorities and prescribed interventions [10]. Rising social ills such as teenage pregnancies and drug use among teenagers have been observed and can be attributed to lack of character education during childhood [11]. Consequently, religious groups and community-based organisations have to adopt shifts in their efforts to improve social behaviours among the younger generation. There is a general consensus that what a child may become in the future depends on how the child is inculcated with the virtues of character. It is critical to instill societal acceptable characters among children at a young age to promote harmonious social interactions [12]. Children should be instilled with values, norms and traditions of their societies during the formative developmental stage to produce long-lasting effect on characters.

Character education can be carried out in the school, family, and community environment. These components must synergize so that educational goals can run well. One of the characters that must be developed is the character of caring for the environment. It is because people's awareness of the environment is starting to fade. The younger generation does not maintain the environment properly. Environmental damage is an issue that must be resolved through awareness of caring for the environment through formal education. This effort is made to avoid environmental damage. The government must make laws that regulate environmental protection so that people obey and pay attention to the environment [13]. The law is binding and binding. Firm rules are usually effectively enforced in society. All elements of society must be involved because environmental damage is a common problem. The government can also make schools effective as a means of strengthening educational character, one of which is the character of caring for the environment.

Strengthening Pancasila Student Profiles at Adiwiyata Schools

In the Kurikulum Merdeka (the current revised national curriculum), character education is developed in the six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. School movers become pioneers in implementing these dimensions. Keturen 01 State Elementary School is also a school mover. School movers prioritize the evaluation process and results by realizing the Pancasila student profile [14]. This school was early in implementing the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile through school activities. The school's activities include learning activities and extracurricular activities as well as habituation activities. The teacher carries out learning in the classroom as well as learning values originating from the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. The dimensions of the Pancasila student profile were adapted to the material being studied in class at that time; not all dimensions were directly conveyed as a whole in learning activities. The teacher chooses the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile that are relevant to the material being studied at that time.

The issue of anti-social behavior by elementary school-aged children is the reason for strengthening character education in schools. Anti-social behavior is behavior that deviates from social values and norms in society, for example, drinking, smoking at elementary school age, and having free sex. Deviant behavior can be influenced by friends and the surrounding environment [15]. Students hanging out with the wrong friends without adult

supervision is a trigger factor for this deviant behavior. It is a problem that must be resolved immediately because it involves the future of the nation. If this problem is not immediately resolved, then it is likely that deviant habits among adolescents will occur. They become immoral people. It is very dangerous for maintaining the life of the nation and state.

Character development is the principal aim of Adiwiyata schools [16]. These characters are based on the six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile, for example, having faith and piety to God Almighty, reasoning critically, being creative, working together, having global diversity, and being independent. These values are very important to be developed through school activities because they can become provisions for students in facing global challenges. These values are related to one another. Strengthening character education at Adiwiyata schools, especially at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal has been carried out based on the environment and has been going well. Teachers also use innovative strategies in implementing character education in schools. This is very important to study and analyze so that it can be used as a model for other schools.

Adiwiyata schools also aim to promote a caring attitude for the environment and to overcome environmental damage [17]. Keturen 01 State Elementary School is one of the Adiwiyata schools in Tegal that has developed environment-based learning. Adiwiyata is one of the programs of the Ministry of Education. This program aims to encourage the creation of knowledge and awareness among school members in efforts to preserve the environment. The Keturen 01 State Elementary School teachers in Tegal teach students to protect and care for the environment through the school environment. In addition to students, teachers and all school members are also accustomed to having concern for the environment. Adiwiyata schools are developed based on the environment [18]. Students are accustomed to caring for the environment through various activities at school. They learn from the environment to understand the subject matter. Caring for the environment must be accustomed from elementary school age so that they become accustomed to it. This habit is strengthened by the teacher as a role model for students. They can learn the teacher's behavior.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research method is qualitative with a case study type. In qualitative research, the data obtained is in the form of words and sentences. The phenomenon studied is casuistic in nature because it is different from phenomena elsewhere. The research location is The reason for choosing the research location is because the school is one of the Adiwiyata schools as well as a school mover in Tegal which has implemented character education in the form of implementing the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. Character education in this school is developed based on the environment. This elementary school is also a school mover and an Adiwiyata school in Tegal. The research subjects were 25 fourth-grade students of Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal. Grade 4 students are high-grade students who have implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka and environment-based character education. The main informants were grade 4 students while additional informants were teachers and school principals. The main information comes from students because they are subjects in this study. If the information is not enough, the researcher obtained it from additional informants. The data obtained complement each other. The focus of this research is on strengthening character education at Adiwiyata schools in Tegal. Character education is the

cultivation of values originating from the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile.

Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and documentation. The researcher conducted interviews with grade 4 students. Selection of interview respondents was based on purposive sampling based on criteria prescribed by Rubin & Rubin [19]. The interviews were conducted at school. Researchers looked for students' free time. This is done so as not to interfere with their activities at school. Interviews were conducted during breaks and after school hours for students. Researchers also make observations or observations inside and outside the classroom. This is done to observe student activities at school. This observation requires a long time so that the data obtained is valid. Researchers made observations when students were carrying out learning in the classroom, class pickets, and other activities outside the classroom. The last data collection technique is documentation. The documents that the researchers used were school documents in the form of data on the number of students, student backgrounds, and teaching modules used by the teacher in learning. In the teaching module, the teacher makes a learning plan which includes the environmental-based dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. The teacher also uses various learning methods and media written in the teaching module. Researchers use these documents to match whether the learning design is in accordance with the implementation of learning.

Data validity uses source and method triangulation. In the source triangulation technique, the researcher cross-checks data from different sources. For example, the researcher gets data from student A, then the researcher cross-checks the truth with data from students B, C, D, and so on. Data obtained from one source is not immediately said to be valid, because the data may be subjective. In technical triangulation, the researcher cross-checked the data using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The data obtained from indirect interviews can't be concluded directly but needs to be verified or checked for truth through observation techniques. During an interview, some students do not know the answers to the questions; others give good answers to all questions. They have the assumption that if they answer with good answers, they will also get marks in each subject. In fact, the interview is not related to their mark on the subject matter. Though this has nothing to do with their value. Based on this, the researcher really needs to do technical triangulation. Data obtained from interviews cannot be used as the only source of truth. Based on this, the researcher needs to check the data using observation and documentation techniques.

The data analysis technique consists of several stages, including the data collection stage, the data sorting stage, the data category stage, and the conclusion drawing stage. All these steps are carried out so that the data can be analyzed properly. The first step is to collect data. Data were collected by interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The research data are then selected according to the focus of the problem. The next step is to categorize the data so that the data can be interpreted. After the data is categorized, the next step is to conclude the research results. The conclusion of the research results is the answer to the research problem. This data can be said to be valid because it has passed a series of data validity and analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

(Based on the observation results, Keturen 01 State Elementary School is an Adiwiyata school and one of the school movers in Tegal. In 2021, the school has adopted The Kurikulum Merdeka for grades one and four. In this research, grade 4 was studied. This was because grade 4 was the high grade at the elementary school which had developed the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile well.

Learning in the classroom relates to the student profile of Pancasila. Learning always prioritizes student character values. This school uses the living environment as learning material and this school is also a school that applies a new paradigm of learning, namely by implementing technology in learning. The implementation is learning using laptops, projectors, and so on. The following is an implementation of the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal.

Dimension 1: Faith, Piety to God Almighty, and noble character

Learning at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal is carried out not only in the classroom, but the teacher varies learning outside the classroom. The teacher invites students to study in the school garden, in the library, or in other open places. This is done so that students do not get bored. In learning, the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile are developed by the teacher. Students are accustomed to practicing it in everyday life. One dimension of the Pancasila student profile that can be applied through learning is Faith, piety to God Almighty, and noble character. The following is an example of implementing the dimensions of faith and piety to God Almighty in learning.



Figure 1. The teacher leads the class to start learning by praying

Figure 1 shows the teacher doing habituation before learning, namely praying together. It is a good habit for a religious person. According to Errohman & Wahyudi, praying can become a culture in schools [20]. This process should run continuously; the continuous process makes students accustomed. Figure 1 shows the teacher and students participating Natural and Social Sciences learning process. Students are introduced to God through various subjects, for example, in learning Natural and Social Sciences. In this lesson, there is material about the earth and its inhabitants. Earth is one of the signs that God exists. God is the One who created the earth and everything in it. Humans, as God's creatures, must take care of

the earth, in this case, the surrounding environment. The environment needs to be maintained, cared for, and preserved in order to be comfortable for human habitation. Students strive to be able to understand the concept.

Schools can also develop this dimension through religious education learning. This learning has a broad scope. The scope of the lesson is given in stages according to the class level of the students at school. This learning is given to students with the method. Elementary students are in a period of developing thinking power toward concrete, rational and objective thinking [21]. They learn the concept of God through concrete examples through objects that can be seen around them. Students are accustomed to understanding something with events or objects in the school environment.

Strengthening the dimensions of Faith, piety to God Almighty, and noble character at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal is also carried out through habituation activities. Habituation is a process of forming behavior through activities that are repeated and carried out outside of class hours [22]. Habituation activities in grade 4 are carried out before learning. The teacher allocates about 15 minutes to read short letters in the Al-Quran and makes it a habit to read prayers before and after learning. Grade 4 students are all Muslim, so religious-based habituation activities are not differentiated according to their religion and belief.

Teachers also get used to students giving infaq every Friday. Infaq is an activity of setting aside student allowances to be given to less fortunate people. The results of the infaq are distributed to their friends who need it. They are trained to share with other fellow humans. It reflects that students understand the teachings of religion and their beliefs and can apply this understanding in everyday life. Understanding the concept is not enough, it should be in real action.

Dimension 2: Global Diversity

Global diversity is one dimension in the profile of Pancasila students. This dimension teaches students to have a spirit of nationalism and tolerance for others. One of the problems today is that they do not respect other people's cultures [23]. Mocking each other's culture is a sensitive subject in schools. Students also do not know their own culture. Usually, local wisdom originating from rural area cannot be preserved by students. According to Shufa, local wisdom must be learned at school. Students should know the local culture through various activities [24]. Students who belong to this extracurricular should be able to understand the local culture and preserve it so that it is not eroded by the times. They should be able to keep up with the times and stick to their national identity. The purpose of this profile dimension is for Indonesian students to maintain their noble culture, locality, and identity, and remain open-minded in interacting with different cultures students, so as to foster a sense of mutual respect and the possibility of forming a noble culture that is positive and does not conflict with the nation's noble culture. Interaction with outside cultures is the key to success in socialization in the modern era.

Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal develops a global dimension of diversity through extracurricular activities. This activity is in the form of dance and macapat arts. Students are introduced to local wisdom so they can preserve it. Macapat song is one of

Indonesian traditional arts which must be maintained by the younger generation [25]. Students are directed by the teacher to take part in this extracurricular activity in order to understand the culture of ancestral heritage. Students taking part in this activity are trained by practitioners who are specially brought to school. The principal brings in teachers from outside the school to train students. The teacher is a humanist in Tegal. In carrying out this extracurricular activities, at first, students found it difficult because they were not used to learning culture. The humanist uses an innovative strategy to attract students' attention. Students are also asked to sing the song or macapat song and understand the meaning of the song. Macapat songs can be used as entertainment as well as education in a social context. The macapat songs that students learn are those with environmental themes. Through this song, there is an implied call to preserve the environment. It is in accordance with the vision and mission of Adiwiyata School.

Studying local culture can foster a spirit of nationalism in a person. They understand the importance of culture. Culture must be preserved and appreciated by all groups because it is a wealth that belongs to the nation. The global diversity dimension at Keturen 01 State Elementary School is also developed through ceremonial activities every Monday.

Dimension 3: Cooperation

Cooperation is carried out by several people in order to achieve a common goal [26]. The dimension of mutual cooperation at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal can be seen from the habits of students when they picket classes together. Every day students clean the classroom in turn according to schedule. Students divide the task of cleaning the classroom; there are those who sweep, clean the teacher's desk, clean the window glass, and clean other classroom facilities. It trains students to be able to care for the environment together. Cleanliness of the classroom and school environment is a shared responsibility. The teacher supervises the implementation of class pickets so that they can carry them out properly and seriously. The following is a picture of students working together to clean the classroom.



Figure 2. Students doing class pickets

Figure 2 shows grade 4 students carrying out the class picket. The teacher supervises the picket implementation. In addition to supervising, the teacher also helps students clean the classroom. The supervision carried out by the teacher is intended so that students are not

joking in carrying out class pickets. The teacher also ensures that they don't have disagreements over the division of tasks to clean the classroom. Keturen 01 State Elementary School students are aware of caring for and keeping the environment clean. Attention to the environment can solve problems related to the environment [27]. Implementation of class pickets by students can make the environment clean and comfortable for learning. The habit of mutual cooperation is very beneficial for students. Through this habituation, students should have the habit of completing everything together. The end result of applying this dimension is that students can collaborate inside and outside the classroom. According to Sari, students can collaborate by imitating the teacher's example. Students imitate their teachers in behaving and behaving at school [28].

In carrying out class pickets, students are also tasked with disposing of trash. Garbage that comes from the classroom is thrown into the trash can in front of each class. Plastic waste must be treated properly so that it does not pollute the environment [29]. Students separate organic and organic waste so that it is easy to manage. Separation of waste is done to reduce odors and air pollution. Organic waste can be disposed of on vacant land so that it is easily decomposed on the ground. Organic waste, such as plastic is separated for recycling. Drink bottle waste can be used to make crafts and wall hangings.

In addition to these activities, students work together to fill water and provide nutrition for hydroponic vegetables grown in the school environment. This school is one of the Adiwiyata schools, so planting hydroponic vegetables is used as a school project. Nutrition for hydroponic vegetables is carried out in rotation between classes. Based on the results of interviews conducted with the homeroom teacher of grade 4, it was explained that Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal has a family medicinal plant garden. This garden is planted with traditional medicinal plants that are beneficial to life. These plants include ginger, turmeric, temu buffoonery, betel nut, and so on. The plant is efficacious for treating minor ailments, such as colds. It is very good for adding to students' insight about how to make a simple garden that is useful for growing plants useful for survival. The hope is that this garden can also inspire students to create their own gardens at home.

The availability of plants that can be used for medicine can familiarize students with the principles of natural use. They don't need to use chemicals as medicine. It can accustom students to a healthy life. School activities can train the younger generation to be healthier and more environmentally conscious [30]. The environment can be managed and utilized for everyday life. In essence, everything that humans need has been provided by nature.

Dimension 4: Creativity

Creativity is one dimension of the Pancasila student profile. Students are expected to have a creative mindset. In instilling creative values in students, teachers must also use creative learning strategies. Character values are integrated into subjects, the learning process is carried out with active and fun learning principles [31]. Fun learning will create a comfortable learning atmosphere for students. Teachers can hold learning outside the classroom, for example in the school garden. This is done so that students can study while enjoying the beautiful school environment. The environment has been well cared for by all school members. Environmental awareness has an influence on the quality of the

surrounding environment [32]. Students at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal have a high concern for the environment so that the school environment can be well maintained. Students and teachers are very creative in managing the surrounding environment. The development of student creativity is very important because elementary school-age children have a high curiosity. The teacher acts as a facilitator so that their abilities are well-honed. In learning, the teacher associates material with involving the environment [33]. Teachers at Keturen 01 State Elementary School also use the natural environment as learning objects, for example in arts and crafts subjects. The following is an example of implementing the creative dimension in schools, especially in arts and crafts subjects.



Figure 3. Students carrying out learning Arts and Crafts in the environment around the school

Figure 3 explains that schools develop creative dimensions through learning Arts and Crafts. Students are trained to be creative through drawing activities outside the classroom. They were directed by the teacher to draw in the school environment with objects around the school. Students are asked to look for image objects to increase creativity. Drawing objects, for example, draw a school garden, a trash can in front of the classroom, and a clean schoolyard. The main element of the creative dimension is creating original ideas and making original works and actions. Original work is part of the creative thinking of students. They can produce works that are different from each other, according to their respective ideas. According to Juliani & Bastian, creativity is a character that teachers must develop at school. Teachers can develop this character in various ways, including in learning [34].

Dimension 5: Critical Reasoning

Critical reasoning is a dimension that trains students' ability to think at a higher level in learning. Students are faced with certain problems, then asked to find solutions to these problems. Learning in this modern era must be carried out in an innovative way. Teachers must be able to invite students to think critically. Students not only understand the subject matter but should be able to provide analysis. According to Ismail et al., critical reasoning can be implemented by children in everyday life [35]. Elementary-aged students need direction and assistance from the teacher to be able to reason critically, including in learning. Learning conducted at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal is environment-based. It is intended that students can be closer to nature. One of the habits carried out by students before learning begins is reading a nature-themed storybook for 10 minutes. They gain

knowledge about how to preserve the environment and keep the environment clean. Teachers can also provide questions and trigger statements about the environment to start learning. Someone who has high environmental knowledge has high environmental awareness [36]. By reading nature-themed story books, students' knowledge increases. They can also explore knowledge through learning. The following is a picture of the teacher teaching in the classroom.



Figure 4. The learning process in the classroom

Figure 4 shows the teacher delivering material using innovative learning media. It is intended that students are interested in learning. The teacher gives questions to students to direct the material to be studied. The teacher does not directly convey the material, but students are asked to think in advance, about what the material learned is about. Students with critical reasoning can understand the material to be studied. Based on this, it can be concluded that students are encouraged to think at a higher level in learning.

Dimension 6: Independence

Independence is an attitude that does not depend on other people, a person can stand on his own feet to achieve dreams and goals [37]. Independence in students needs to be accustomed from an early age. They should be able to do everything without depending on others. It is done to prepare them to be able to adapt to society. They will later become part of a society that has responsibility. Training students' independence at school can be done by giving them the opportunity to solve the problems they face with their own ideas. The following is the teacher's effort to train students to be independent.



Figure 5. Students are tidying up their seats

Figure 5 shows female students being trained to be able to do the work themselves. Even though they are women, they should be able to do heavy work by themselves. Students should tidy up the classroom before and after learning. Students are not distinguished between boys and girls; they get the same treatment. It is so those female students can also do the assignments or work of male students.

Another habit of being independent at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal is that students submit assignments on time as a form of personal responsibility. The inculcation of independent character values is visible when students clean up messy classrooms before learning. Independent students are students who have responsibility for themselves and their environment. He wants to carry out his duties with full awareness without any pressure or coercion from anyone.

The implementation of character values based on the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile is inseparable from suggestions for school infrastructure and motivation from teachers. The facilities and infrastructure in this Elementary School are complete. The principal tries to provide what students need in order to strengthen character education in schools. The most important thing is the motivation of the teacher. Motivation from teachers can make students more enthusiastic about carrying out school activities.

The character education initiatives carried out at Keturen 01 State Elementary School in this study resonates with the need for collective efforts to support the purpose of character education through formal means which is not limited to controlling student behaviour, but also to raise children in a healthy and caring environment for the benefits of the community and nation [38][39]. As school environment is vital to nourish good characters [40], the initiatives carried out in this elementary school demonstrates the proactive role of the Indonesian Ministry of Education to strengthen character building among elementary school students through the Adiwiyata school programme based on the Kurikulum Merdeka and the six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile.

Although this study is not longitudinal, the authors expect long term character education in Adiwiyata schools to yield positive student outcomes as reported in other studies. A longitudinal study in Latin America involving nearly 1900 students aged seven to 15 from 60 schools found that character strengths can be associated with student-student relationship and teacher-student relationship [5]. Another longitudinal study in the Middle

East, comprising 417 secondary school students supports association between character strengths, subjective well-being and school adjustment [41]. Students with character strengths are less likely to suffer from depressive symptoms [42],[43]. Positive character is one's psychological capital and serves to optimised youth development [4],[44],[45]. Expectedly, students with good characters also exhibit positive peer engagement, classroom behaviour, as well as higher academic achievement [46-48].

CONCLUSION

Strengthening character education at Adiwiyata schools, especially at Keturen 01 State Elementary School Tegal, is carried out based on the environment. The school is an Adiwiyata school and a School Mover, so strengthening character education refers to the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile. These dimensions are implemented well at school; some obstacles can be overcome by teachers and students supported by parents at home. The suggestions are that teachers should pay more attention to the students' characteristics in choosing character education models at school; teachers also have to be more able to manage the environment in an effort to be a model for students.

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