

Implementation of Culturally Based Character Education

Meigiriatty Erza Yuda¹, Alhadi Yan Putra², Heri Setiyo Nugroho²

¹SMK Handayani Utama Muara Enim, South Sumatra, Indonesia, ²Univeritas PGRI Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia

Corresponding author e-mail: meigiriatty22@gmail.com

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Abstract: This research aims to determine the implementation of culture-based character education in State Vocational Schools. This research uses descriptive qualitative methods with data collection techniques, such as interview methods, field observations, and documentation studies. The research results show that SMK Negeri 1, and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim have a good strategy for realizing culture-based character education for their students through routine activities. These routine activities include implementing a culture of greetings, smiles, politeness, manners, and friendship between school members, character education values are also provided during extracurricular activities as well as applying character values through habituation which is carried out every day at school. The obstacles are that teachers still have difficulty adjusting the character values that will be given to students, parental cooperation that does not support the implementation of character education, and students are quite varied so it is quite difficult for teachers to understand students' characters. Solutions implemented include conducting outreach between the school and parents of students, teachers making efforts to be more optimal and consistent in providing an understanding of character values to students, guidance and counseling teachers, and homeroom teachers continuing to work together in instilling character values in students, instill character values through extracurricular activities.

Keywords: Character Education, Culture, Extracurricular Activities

A. Introduction

The problem of education in Indonesia is very complex that is happening now so it makes the Indonesian people forget about the nation's character education. Character education is a very important foundation of the nation and needs to be instilled in children from an early age. Education in schools is expected to educate students to become intelligent, characterful, and noble people. Students are the young generation as the successors of the nation, they should have a good spirit of nationalism, which can uphold the dignity of the Indonesian nation (Retnaningsih, 2022). The manners, ethics, and creativity of students are currently suspected of

declining due to the weakening of cultural and national character education (Muslich, 2011). The moral decadence that has hit the teenage generation has occurred from year to year. In addition to economic and educational factors, the moral crisis is identical to the distance of the individual from religion (Nudin, 2020). Moral decadence is affecting the nation and state, causing social, legal, political, and cultural issues such as brawls, corruption, criminality, and hypocritical culture. This has led to economic collapse and rampant acts such as fights, vandalism, rape, alcohol consumption, and murder, which do not reflect the original Indonesian culture.

We can also feel the increasing negative behaviors carried out by the younger generation such as brawls between students, as well as other forms of juvenile delinquency especially in big cities, extortion/violence (bullying), the tendency for seniors to dominate juniors, drug use, and others. Bullying in schools can result in profound psychological impacts, such as anxiety, depression, and decreased academic achievement. Students involved in drug abuse are at high risk of experiencing physical and mental health disorders and difficulties in carrying out daily activities (Kartika et al., 2024). Abuse of narcotics and illegal drugs among the younger generation. The rampant deviation of the behavior of the younger generation can endanger the survival of this nation in the future. Because the youth as the generation that is expected to be the successors of the nation, are increasingly fragile being eroded by addictive substances that destroy nerves (Anam et al., 2024).

Such a situation, especially a moral crisis, occurs because of the mistakes of the world of education or the lack of success of the world of education in preparing its young generation. The position of morality in human life is very important, both as individuals and as a society in the nation and state. Morality is the scope of morality or good behavior in every individual in carrying out their activities to be safe in the world and in the hereafter (Isnaini, 2021). The tendency of seniors to dominate juniors, drug use, and others. Such conditions, especially the moral crisis, occur because of the mistakes of the world of education or the lack of success of the world of education in preparing its young generation. Therefore, religion can help shape good morals in modern humans through several ways, such as Islamic moral education, strengthening the family, and social awareness (Yatayukti et al., 2024).

Children (school age) are the successors and potential of the nation who need to be protected and their rights fulfilled so that they can live, grow, and develop in a decent environment. Character decline is one of the very serious problems in education, especially in Indonesia. Low character education makes students do things that are not normal, this can be seen from several facts in the mass media (Debora & Han, 2020). The many phenomena of behavioral deviations that occur in adolescents are dominated by students. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission in coordination with the Ministry of Health has conducted a survey in

various major cities in Indonesia, obtaining three cases that are still high in children, namely children who use drugs, children who are victims of violence and children who are perpetrators of violence at school.

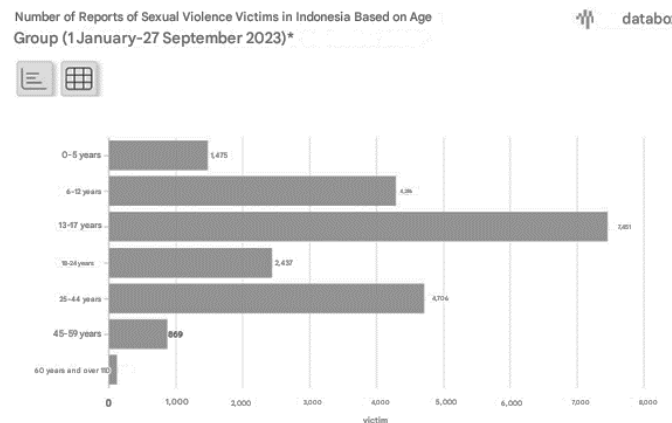


Figure 1. Number of Reports of Cases of Victims of Sexual Violence in Indonesia by Age Group

The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection reported 19,593 cases of violence in Indonesia from January to September 2023. The 13-17 year age group accounted for 38% of the victims. In South Sumatra, 408 cases of violence against children and women were reported in 2022, with physical violence being the most common, followed by sexual and psychological violence. Both cases highlight the need for increased protection and awareness.

Many people think that currently, the Indonesian nation is in a sick condition that requires proper handling and treatment through the provision of character education at all levels of education. The importance of character education can be seen in several previous studies. Marpaung and Nurdin stated in their research that a character curriculum has an influence on students' learning achievements (Marpaung & Siregar, 2020). From the various events that occur among teenagers/young generation of the Indonesian nation today, it is a big warning for us as citizens to immediately improve and optimize character education in all lines of life to determine the fate of the Indonesian nation in the future. Character is the main goal of education. Therefore, character building in the implementation of education is carried out through teaching, habituation, role models, coercion, and punishment that encourage and shape the character of students (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022). The basis of character education must be applied from childhood or what psychology experts usually call the golden age because early age is proven to be very decisive in determining a child's ability to develop their potential.

According to the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 1 paragraph 1, education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and

learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have spiritual religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation, and state. National education aims to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation to educate the life of the nation, aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Triana, 2021).

Law No. 20/2003 and other regulations emphasize character development in schools. Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 aims to strengthen character education, promoting religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, creativity, independence, democracy, and responsibility. Strengthening Character Education is an educational movement involving educational units, families, and communities. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 20 of 2018 Strengthening Character Education in Formal Education Units was stipulated on June 7, 2018. Vocational High Schools are educational institutions that produce graduates who are ready to work and are expected to be ready to compete in the world of work, so graduates are required to have not only hard skills but also soft skills. Hard skills themselves are a real form of knowledge that can be proven to everyone in the success of applying knowledge (Wulandari & Putri, 2024). Soft skills are skills and abilities, both for oneself and the people around you (Deswarta et al., 2023). This study aims to formulate a character education model that can be used in vocational schools.

According to Agustian, based on the analysis of Emotional Spiritual Quotient (ESQ), it is suspected that there are seven moral crises in the midst of Indonesian society, namely honesty crisis, responsibility crisis, not thinking far ahead, discipline crisis, togetherness crisis, justice crisis. Character education is moral education, which involves aspects of knowledge (cognitive), feelings, and actions. Character education in schools is expected to make students have polite attitudes, according to the hopes of the nation, state, and society (Johannes et al., 2020). In fact, these problems are not only experienced by Indonesia but also by other nations in the world. The United States, for example, has realized that there has been a moral decline since three decades ago and this has raised awareness of action to improve its citizens through character education in schools (Anggraini, 2017).

Education is very important for everyone because education can shape a person's character into the expected person. With education, a person will grow up and have a sense of responsibility for themselves in living their lives. Educating a person's character can be through character education both in formal and informal education. Character education in social interaction in society is very important, therefore it is necessary to instill character education from an early age. The process of developing

cultural values and national character is a long process starting from an early age (Fitrianiingtyas & Jumi atmoko, 2023). Meanwhile, according to the importance of character education, it is taught from an early age because it will influence one's future life (Ananda et al., 2022).

According to Berkowitz and Bier, Character Education is the creation of a school environment that helps students in the development of ethics, and responsibility through modeling and teaching good character through universal values. These character values should be instilled in students so that they can apply them in their lives both in the family, school, society, and country so that they can make a positive contribution to their environment (Maunah, 2015). There are several specific strategies for teachers in implementing character education, namely including it in all subjects at school, getting used to positive behavior among school residents, carrying out continuous monitoring, and giving rewards to students who always have good character (Fahira & Ramadan, 2021).

Character education is a very important part and can even be said to be the core of the education process. Character education is interpreted as the instillation of character values that include the formation of human personality towards a better direction. Character education begins to be instilled from childhood from the family environment which is the first and main education (Laksana, 2021). Indonesia has its timeline regarding the Efforts to Implement Character Education in the Education curriculum. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2018 Concerning Strengthening Character Education in Formal Units states that strengthening the character of students is through harmonization of heart, feeling, thinking, and sports with the involvement and cooperation between educational units, families, and the Community (Permendikbud, 2018).

Character education is a crucial aspect of educational institutions, focusing on developing students' morals, character, and personality through religious teachings. Elementary schools and Vocational High Schools are key in this process, as they produce skilled workers in the industrial world. Education not only makes humans smart but also cultured, aiming to produce educated and civilized individuals. The concept of organizational culture is the creation of conditions and situations in the work environment based on the perspective of HR management which provides opportunities for HR with superior work abilities to be able to demonstrate these competencies optimally (Rani & Suryawan, 2023). Tirtarahardja & Sulo (1994) provides a definition of organizational culture and characteristics of organizational culture. According to Jones, organizational culture is a set of values that control members of an organization in interacting with each other and with people outside the organization. The characteristics of organizational culture include values, coordination control and motivation, ethics, and organizational design processes.

The concept of culture in the world of education comes from workplace culture in the industrial world, namely a situation that provides a foundation and direction for a process to take place effectively and efficiently (Zamroni, 2000).

Culture is the foundation of education, encompassing values, norms, and behavior. School culture is the dominant values and philosophy that guide school policies and stakeholders. It is a distinctive feature and image of the school in the community. Implementing the right school culture significantly influences student learning activities and teacher performance. Building character involves carving or sculpting the soul to be unique, interesting, and different, allowing individuals to distinguish themselves from others. Character education in schools involves understanding, caring for, and implementing virtues. It shapes school culture and is crucial for creating conducive environments. Implementing character education based on culture helps instill character values in students, making it more effective when applied to individual students, as it forms a foundation for future character. Based on the importance of establishing school culture as a basis for character education, especially for adolescents as the young generation of the nation's hope, researchers found facts in temporary observations that SMK 1 and SMK 2 already have a school life order or school culture that is good enough to instill and strengthen character education for their students. Based on the results of initial observations, the values of Character Education in SMK in Muara Enim District have been stated in the school's vision and mission which prioritizes character education as a reflection of the school's efforts in instilling character education for students. Based on the background of the problem, research on the Implementation of character education based on culture is important to do, to find out how it is implemented in SMK Negeri in Muara Enim District in instilling character education based on culture.

B. Methods

This research was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 and SMK Negeri 2, Muara Enim District. The research method used in this research is curricular, namely a research method that aims to understand the phenomena of what is experienced by the research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, and actions that are then described in words and language in the context of natural courses and utilize various natural methods (Moleong, 2016).

C. Results and Discussion

1. Implementation of Cultural-Based Character Education in Vocational Schools in Muara Enim District

Character education is an important thing for all levels of education. Namely from elementary school to higher education. If a person's character has been damaged

since early age, then when they are adults, it will not be easy to change. Implementation of Character Education is the implementation of the process of transforming the values of life that are embedded and developed in a person's personality so that students become positive and moral individuals and become superior and dignified individuals with high character. Meanwhile, according to Character Education is a process of applying moral and religious values to students through science, the application of these values is good for oneself, family, fellow friends, educators, the surrounding environment, and God Almighty (Khoirroni et al., 2023). In line with the implementation of the steps of character education implementation, SMK Negeri 1 and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim have established three steps in the implementation of character education, namely planning, implementation, and supervision. Planning is an ongoing process that provides a framework that determines or decides parts of the implementation (Halim & Miswanto, 2023).

The planning of the implementation of Character Education at SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim is almost the same, namely both are stated in the vision and mission and school goals, but in the planning of SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim is more planned on routine activities, programmed activities and spontaneous activities, while at SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim it is more on self-habituating, giving examples of good manners to students. At SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim, character education begins with implementing the Habits of Greetings, Greetings, Greetings, Politeness, Santun and Silaturahmi. Then continued with other religious activities, namely praying together. In addition, for their big days, they commemorate by holding ceremonies on national big days, holding a flash seminar on the holy month of Ramadhan and the Election of the OSIS Head of Staff, scheduled activities for programmed activities, while for their spontaneous activities, they usually hold fundraising for victims of disasters and social services, holding health and drug abuse counseling and visiting students/teachers who are sick. At SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim Character Education begins with checking the completeness of clothing attributes, getting used to greeting teachers, carrying out the Berderra Ceremony every Monday, and reading the morning prayer to start learning in each class, carrying out exercises and cleaning the school environment, and on Fridays there are female activities carried out in the school prayer room. And for the school's rules and regulations, are carried out by giving awards and sanctions as a consequence of the efforts to obey the rules and regulations. Monitoring the implementation of student rules and regulations is carried out through control measures based on the types of violations and the form of action for resolving violations.

In addition to activities and various forms of habit and role models, one of the other important factors in instilling Character Education in students is through extracurricular activities. Through extracurricular activities, students are taught to be

able to socialize, develop themselves through the habit of friendly/communicative values with other participants, learn creatively, and practice having an attitude of social concern and tolerance. The values of honesty, discipline, and responsibility can also be instilled in various programmed activities in each extracurricular activity. This is supported Kurniawan et al. (2023) to implement it, a mentoring program is needed, and good extracurricular activities for character development. Extracurricular, because moral development (ethics, character) is something that can be used to instill discipline, then extracurricular activities such as scouts are most appropriate because they are carried out outside the classroom, are fun, and help students develop skills to understand the material better than before.

Thus, it can be said that extracurricular activities, can be used to instill character values such as religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, national spirit, love of the homeland, friendship/communication, environmental care, social care and responsibility to students. This is by (Fitriyani et al., 2023) which Furthermore, the development of student character through extracurricular activities aims to improve cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities. In addition, developing the talents and interests of students to develop personal development towards developing a whole person. Through education, a person can improve intelligence, and skills, develop self-potential, and form a responsible, intelligent, and creative person. In addition, during the research, the researcher also concluded that SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim carried out mentoring for students when carrying out character education activities. With this mentoring, it can help students better understand the character values that are given to support their respective personalities.

2. Obstacles and Solutions in the Implementation of Cultural-Based Character Education in Vocational Schools in Muara Enim District

The implementation of Character Education in its process is not always in line with expectations, of course, there are many obstacles to its implementation. Obstacles in the Implementation of Character Education in SMK Negeri 1 and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim are almost the same, including:

1. Students who have different characters the habits that have been carried out since students were small until now are influenced by the family environment, society, social circles, and even electronic media. The different characters of students of course provide extra work for educators to explain so that character education can be implemented optimally. This is based on research by Mustika et al. (2024), which states that obstacles in implementing the strengthening of character education of discipline and responsibility come from family and environmental factors. There needs to be harmony in educational habits between families and schools because this will be an obstacle in implementing character education. The obstacles to implementing the ongoing habituation method are the lack of

harmony in parenting patterns between parents and teachers at school and the lack of complete facilities and infrastructure (Amalia et al., 2024).

2. Family factors that are less than ideal

Character education should be carried out together both in the school environment, family and society, and even the government, but what is happening now is that students only implement character values in schools that are in line and after they return from school, they get character values.

3. Student Discipline

There are still students in schools who lack discipline, whether it is time discipline or study discipline. Sometimes children in class are busy with their own thoughts and prefer to play and chat with friends so that students are less able to concentrate on their lessons. In addition, there are still some students who skip school or come late because of being late, personal matters, or even laziness.

4. Teachers are not optimal in instilling character in students. Character instilled in schools is hard work for a teacher because students have different characters, teachers must also have their own method of providing lessons to students, especially in providing lessons about character values, sometimes only a few teachers emphasize character education to students.

As explained above, the implementation of character education in its process is not always to expectations, of course, there are many obstacles in its implementation. To overcome these obstacles, SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim have solutions to overcome these obstacles. The solutions carried out to overcome obstacles in the implementation of culture-based education in SMK, namely:

1. Teachers have tried to be more optimal and consistent in providing an understanding of character values to students by balancing material achievement with character values.
2. Schools have implemented socialization and complete communication with students in every meeting and teachers have implemented evaluation through observation and assessment of student attitudes.
3. Guidance and Counseling Teachers and Homeroom Teachers continue to work together in instilling character values in students who are not disciplined. This is done by providing sanctions that apply to school regulations to students who have problems. This is supported by (Simatupang & Sapri, 2023) In resolving these obstacles, what the school does is hold meetings between teachers and parents so that good communication can be established to resolve the problem of student discipline character.
4. The extracurricular guidance teacher has instilled character values through extracurricular activities and the school has implemented positive habits to empower students.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted on the Implementation of Character Education Based on Cultural Curriculum at SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Implementation of Character Education Based on Cultural Curriculum at SMK Negeri 1 is carried out through routine activities, programmed activities, and spontaneous activities. SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim is implemented by explaining the vision, mission, and objectives, and is implemented by implementing activities and habits of Character Education values. Values that represent 18 characters, namely the values of religion, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and integrity.
2. Obstacles and solutions to the implementation of character education based on cultural values at SMK Negeri 1 Muara Enim and SMK Negeri 2 Muara Enim, namely: The cooperation of students is not optimal because it is caused by a lack of understanding of school culture which is stated in the rules and student activities. The activity of habituating good values is applied entirely by students, and to anticipate this, the school held a meeting with students.

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