The Basic Concepts of Character Education

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Introduction

Education is considered to have an important role in shaping the character of students according to their potential and competence. Character education is intended to be one of the answers to various national problems. The problems that arise are identified as originating from the failure of education in internalizing moral values to students. Emi Budiastuti revealed that education is considered to have no character and has not been able to produce quality citizens, both learning achievements and good behavior. The emphasis on learning is still very dominant or focuses on mastering the material even (Budiastuti, 2010).

Another serious problem in the world of education is the widespread occurrence of deceitful practices ranging from cheating during exams to the practice of plagiarism (Ali, 2004). If as a student, you are used to cheating, aka manipulation of exams, what about when you graduate from college and work, won't that give birth to new corruptors? This is the reason why corruption seems to never die and has become a sustainable culture that has been passed down from generation to generation in Indonesia. Another crisis is the increase in promiscuity, rampant rates of violence against children and adolescents, crimes against friends, theft, cheating habits, drug abuse, pornography, and the destruction of other people's property. These things have become social problems that until now have not been completely resolved.

Strengthening moral education or character education in the current context is very relevant to overcome the moral crisis that is currently engulfing Indonesia as described above. The importance of character education is stated in the classic adage, if the wealth is lost, nothing is lost. If the health is lost, something is lost. If the character is lost, everything is lost (Wiyani, 2013).The world of education as one of the very important pillars in human development is also responsible for the phenomenon of the moral crisis that is happening today.

Discussion

Mohammad Nuh, Minister of National Education and Culture (Kemendiknas) explained the importance of anti-corruption education as an effort to build the character of students (Nurdin, 2014). The thought of the importance of including anti-corruption education materials in the curriculum should be done. Thus, education must be able to make itself an instrument of change capable of empowering and transforming the community through various programs that reflect social character improvement initiatives (Nurdin, 2014).Character is defined as the quality or mental or moral strength, character or character of an individual, which distinguishes him from other individuals. Thus, character is a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and work together, both within the family, community, nation and state. Individuals with good character mean individuals who can make decisions and are ready to take responsibility for any consequences of the decisions made. A person can be said to have a character if he has succeeded in absorbing the values and beliefs that society wants, and is used as a moral in his life.

Talking about character, it is necessary to pay attention to what is stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System in Article 3 which states "National education functions to develop capabilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in the context of educating the nation's life ..." Experts in value education (character) (Zuchdi, 2008) interpreting character (character) as a set of traits that are always admired as signs of one's goodness, wisdom and moral maturity. It is further said that the purpose of character education is to teach certain traditional values, values that are widely accepted as the basis for good and responsible behavior. It is intended to cultivate respect, responsibility, compassion, discipline, loyalty, courage, tolerance, openness, work ethic and love for God in a person.

The Big Indonesian Dictionary explains that character is a psychological, moral or character trait or characteristic that distinguishes one person from another, character, or character. This is in line with the opinion (Deni Damayanti, 2014). Character is a person's character, character, morals, etiquette, or personality traits that are formed from the internalization of various virtues that are believed and used as the basis for thinking, acting and acting. Virtue comes from a number of values, morals and norms that are believed to be true which are manifested in relationships that build interactions between humans and God, society, environment, nation and state as well as with oneself. It is these relationships that give rise to an assessment of the good and bad of a person's character.

Good character is about a good knowledge, compassion, good love and doing or acting well. Lickona explains that character consists of values in action. Character is composed of three interrelated parts, namely knowing, feeling and doing. Good character consists of knowing the good, wanting the good and doing the good, both in the habit of thinking, feeling and acting. Character refers to a set of behavior (behavior) motivation (motivations) and skills (skills) which includes the desire to do the best. Thus, character education can be said to be a deliberate and carried out effort to help people understand the behavior of others (Lickona, 1991).

There are three components in forming a good character as expressed by Lickona. The first component is moral knowing (moral knowledge) which consists of moral awareness (moral awareness), knowing moral values (knowledge about moral values), perspective taking (perspective in attitude), moral reasoning (moral reasoning), decision making (making decisions) and self-knowledge (self-knowledge). The second component is moral feeling which consists of conscience, self-esteem, empathy, loving the good, self-control, and humility. Meanwhile, the third component is moral action which consists of competence, will and habit.

What Lickona mentioned above can be explained that moral knowing is part of a person's cognitive realm and moral feeling is an emotional aspect that must be felt by a person to become a person of character. Meanwhile, moral action is an act or moral action of the other two components of character. Therefore, instilling character can be done through the knowledge stage which is followed by action and becomes a habit.

This is because character is not limited to knowledge alone, but there needs to be actions and habits to do so as to form good character. Therefore, character education is a process to shape, grow, develop and mature the child's personality to become a wise and responsible person through habituation of thoughts, hearts and actions on an ongoing basis whose results can be seen in real daily actions both at school and at school. public.

Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that character is a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and work together, both within the family, community, nation and state. Individuals of good character through an emphasis on universal, values that everyone believes in. Character education is character education plus, which involves aspects of knowledge (cognitive), feelings (feeling) and action (action). According to Thomas Lickona, without these three aspects, character education will not be effective.

The birth of character education is an attempt to revive the ideal-spiritual pedagogy which was lost by the wave of positivism pioneered by the French philosopher Auguste Comte. Character is a footbridge of knowledge and skills. Knowledge without the right personality foundation is misleading and skill without self-awareness is destructive. Character will shape motivation and at the same time be shaped by dignified methods and processes. Character is not just an outward appearance, but implicitly reveals hidden things. Therefore people define character as "who are you in the dark". Good character includes understanding, caring, and actions based on ethical values, covering cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of moral life.

The view of character education according to its first originator is German pedagogy named FW Foerster (1869-1996) as quoted by (Sutarjo Adisusilo, 2013). He rejected the views of naturalists such as Dewey and positivists such as Auguste Comte. According to Foerster, character is something that qualifies a person. Character becomes an identity, becomes a trait, becomes a fixed trait, which transcends the ever-changing contingent experience. So character is a set of values that have become a habit of life so that it becomes a permanent trait in a person, for example hard work, unyielding, honest, simple, and others. It is by this character that the quality of a person is measured. While the purpose of character education is the realization of the essential unity of students with their behavior and attitudes/life values. So, character education can be done with value education in a person.

According to Zuchdi, character education is to teach certain traditional values, values that are widely accepted as the basis for good and responsible behavior. These values are described as moral behavior, thus character education or value education aims to make students become good citizens. Meanwhile, Gross stated that value (character) education as social education aims to prepare a person to become a good citizen and high social ability. Therefore, value (character) education has an important role in the formation of a nation that has a high culture, both with noble dignity and noble behavior. Value (character) education as meant by Gross, indeed tends to be equated with character education, moral education, religious education, moral education or character education. The implementation of character education is an effort to promote and internalize the main values, or positive values to the community so that they become citizens who are confident, resistant to testing and have high morals, are democratic and responsible and can survive in social life (Deni Damayanti, 2014).

Character education that is built in education in Indonesia currently refers to Article 3 of the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 which states that "National education functions to develop and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in the context of educating the

nation's life, aiming to develop the potential of students. to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens. Character education is often referred to as value education. Because, character is value in action (value embodied in action). Characters are also often called operate values (the values that are operationalized in actions). Therefore, Character education is basically an effort in the process of internalizing, presenting, seeding and developing good values in students. By internalizing the virtues of the students above, it is hoped that good behavior can be realized (Akbar, 2011).

This is in line with Ratna Megawangi's opinion as quoted by (Kusuma, 2011) which states that character education is an effort to educate children so that they can make wise decisions and practice them in everyday life so that they can contribute to society. Another definition according to Fakry Gaffar, character education is a process of transforming life values to be developed in one's personality so that they become one in that person's life. In this definition, there are three important thoughts, namely the process of transformation, being developed in personality and becoming one in behavior.

Then Screnco, stated that character education can be interpreted as a serious effort in a way, positive personality traits are developed, encouraged, and empowered through example, studies, and emulation practices. Anne Lockword then defines character education as a school-based activity that systematically reveals the behavior of students. From Anne Lockword's definition, it turns out that character education is connected with every school plan designed with other community institutions, to directly and systematically shape student behavior (Samani & Hariyanto, 2011). Thus, ideally the implementation of character education is an integrated part of education management in schools.

Therefore, the character learning process in schools should be more directed at aspects of knowledge, skills and behavior. This is in accordance with what Barth said that there are three aspects of learning that must be achieved, namely knowledge, skills and attitudes. Knowledge as meant by Barth is a form of principles and facts. Meanwhile, skills are the acquisition of abilities through training or experience. Still according to Barth, attitude is defined as an opinion, feeling or mental someone shown by action.

In the context of the study, P3 defines character education in a school setting as learning that leads to strengthening and developing student behavior as a whole based on a certain value referred to by the school. This definition contains the following meaning (Wiyani, 2013).

1. Character education is education that is integrated with learning that occurs in all subjects.
2. Character education is directed at the development of children's behavior as a whole. The assumption put forward is that children are human beings who have the potential to be strengthened and developed.
3. Strengthening and developing behavior in character education is based on the values referred to by the school.

Furthermore, there are four basic characteristics of character education. First, the interior regularity in which each action is measured against a set of values. Values become the normative guidelines for every action. Second, coherence that gives courage, which makes a person firm in principle, not easily swayed by the situation. This coherence is the basis that builds trust in each other, without coherence, one's credibility will collapse. Third, autonomy means that someone internalizes values from outside so that they become personal values, become inherent traits, through free decisions without coercion from others. Fourth, firmness and loyalty. Persistence is a person's resistance to covet what is considered good, and loyalty is the basis for respect for the chosen commitment.

Character education contains values that need to be instilled, grown and developed for every student. The values developed cannot be separated from the nation's culture. National culture is a value system that is internalized, defined as the whole system of thinking about values, morals, norms, and human beliefs produced by society. The main values that are prioritized for planting in students include:

a. **Honesty Value** is behavior based on efforts to make himself a person who can always be trusted in words, actions, and work, both towards himself and others.
b. **Intelligence Value** is a person's ability to perform a task carefully, precisely and quickly.
c. **Toughness Value** is the attitude and behavior of never giving up or not easily giving up when facing various difficulties in carrying out activities or tasks so that they are able to overcome difficulties in achieving goals.
d. **Democratic Value** is a way of thinking, behaving and acting that evaluates the rights and obligations of himself and others equally.
e. **Value of Concern** are attitudes and actions that always try to prevent and correct deviations and damage to humans, nature and the order around themselves.

f. **Value of Independence** are attitudes and behaviors that are not easy to depend on others in completing tasks.
g. **Thinking Value** is thinking and doing something realistically or logically to produce new and up-to-date ways or results from what you already have. The value of thinking includes logical, critical, creative, and innovative thinking.
h. **The Value of Courage to Take Risks** is the readiness to accept the risks/consequences that may arise and the actions taken.
i. **Action Oriented Values**is the ability to turn ideas into action.
j. **Leadership Values** is the ability to direct and invite individuals or groups to achieve goals by adhering to the principles of cultured leadership.
k. **Hard Work Value** is a behavior that shows a genuine effort in overcoming various obstacles in order to complete tasks, both learning tasks and work assignments, as well as possible.
l. **Value of Responsibility** is the attitude and behavior of a person to carry out his duties and obligations as he should do, towards himself, God's country, society, environment, both natural, social and cultural.
m. **Lifestyle Value** is all efforts to apply good habits in creating a healthy life and avoiding new habits that can interfere with health.
n. **Discipline Value** is an action that shows orderly behavior and obeys various rules and regulations.
o. **Confident Value** is an attitude of confidence in one's own ability to fulfill every desire and hope.
p. **Curiosity Value** are attitudes and actions that always seek to know more deeply and widely from what they have learned, seen and heard.
q. **Value of Love of Science** is a way of thinking, behaving and acting that shows loyalty, care, and high appreciation for knowledge.
r. **Value of Awareness and Rights and Duties of Self and Others** is the attitude of knowing and understanding and carrying out what is the property/rights of oneself and others as well as the duties/obligations of oneself and others.
s. **Value of Compliance with Social Rules** is an attitude of obeying and obeying the rules regarding society and the public interest.
t. **Value of Appreciation on the Work and Achievements of Others** are attitudes and actions that encourage him to produce something useful for society, and recognize and respect the success of others.
u. **Politeness Value** is a subtle and kind nature from the point of view of grammar and behavior towards all people.
v. **Value Respect Diversity** is the attitude of giving respect/respect for various kinds of good things in the form of physical, nature, custom, culture, ethnicity and religion.

Furthermore, a group of ethicist teachers and students who held a meeting in Aspen put forward the idea of The Six Pillars of Character issued by the Character Counts Coalition (A Project of the Joseph Institute of Ethics) as follows.

1. *Trustworthiness*.A form of character that makes a person with integrity, honesty and loyalty.
2. *Fairness*. A form of character that makes a person have an open mind and does not like to take advantage of other people.
3. *Caring*. The form of character that makes a person have a caring attitude and concern for others and the social conditions of the surrounding environment.
4. *Respect*. A form of character that makes a person always respect and respect others.
5. *Citizenship*.A form of character that makes a person always respect and respect others.
6. *Responsibilities*.The form of character that makes a person responsible, disciplined and always doing things as well as possible.

The pillars of character education mentioned above should be applied from childhood or what psychologists call the golden age. The assumption is that at that age, it is proven that it will determine a child's ability to develop their potential. The results showed that about 50% of the variability of adult intelligence was awakened when the child was 4 years old. The next 30% increase occurs at age 8 years and the remaining 20% in the middle or end of the second decade. This means that the potential intelligence potential of children must begin to be developed from an early age because at the age of 4 years and under the intelligence development process develops significantly (Gutama, 2011). This is where character education should start from within the family, which is the first environment for the growth of a child's character.

Operationally, the objectives of character education in school settings are as follows (Wiyani, 2013).

1. **Strengthening and Developing Life Values That Are Considered Important and Necessary So That They Become Students' Unique Ownership Personalities As The Values Are Developed.**

The first goal of character education is to facilitate the strengthening and development of certain values so that they are manifested in children's behavior, both while still in school and after graduation. Strengthening and development means that education in a school setting is not a dogmatization of values, but a process that brings students to understand and reflect on the importance of realizing values in daily behavior. Reinforcement also directs the educational process to the habituation process carried out, both in classroom and school settings. Reinforcement also has the meaning of a relationship between strengthening behavior through habituation at school and at home.

Based on the framework of the results of character education in school settings at each level, school graduates will have a number of distinctive behaviors as the values used as references for the school. The assumption contained in the first objective is that academic mastery is positioned as a medium or means to achieve the goal of strengthening and developing character. In other words, as an intermediary goal and character development. In other words, as an intermediary goal for the realization of a character. This implies that the educational process must be carried out contextually.

2. **Correcting Student Behaviors that are Not Consistent with the Values Developed by the School.**

The second goal of character education in schools is to correct the behavior of students who are not in accordance with the values developed by the school. This goal has the meaning that the purpose of character education has a target to straighten various negative behaviors of children into positive ones. The tracing process, which is interpreted as correcting behavior, is understood as a pedagogical process, not a coercion or uneducational conditioning. The pedagogic process in correcting negative behavior is directed at the child's mindset. Then accompanied by exemplary school and home environment, then the process of habituation based on the level and level of the school.

3. **Building Harmonious Connections with Family and Society in Playing Shared Character Responsibilities**

The third goal in character education in school settings is to build a harmonious connection with family and society by playing the responsibility of character education together. This goal means that character in schools must be linked to the family education process. If education in schools only relies on interactions between students and teachers in classrooms and schools, the achievement of various expected characters will be difficult to achieve because behavioral reinforcement is a holistic thing, not a certain time span during the child's age. In every minute and second, the interaction of children and their environment can be ascertained that a process will affect the child's behavior (Doni Koesuma, 2011).

So character education is the process of giving guidance to students to become fully human, with character in the dimensions of the heart, mind, body, taste and intention. Character education can be interpreted as value education, character education, moral education, character education, which aims to make good/bad decisions, maintain what is good, and realize goodness in everyday life wholeheartedly. It can be concluded that there are two meanings of character education. First, character education can be interpreted as a planned effort to make students recognize, care and internalize values so that students behave as human beings. Second,

Instilling character in students means that not only students are involved, but also teachers, principals and education personnel in schools as well as parents of students must be involved in character education (Samani & Hariyanto, 2011). This is important so that students find examples and a conducive environment with good characters that are being built in their personalities. Teachers and school principals as well as other education personnel are responsible for the implementation of character education in their respective schools. The principal in this case must be responsible for activities called school culture. School culture can be in the form of keeping the environment clean, using the toilet properly, providing trash cans, getting children used to throwing garbage in its place, as well as getting used to a clean, neat, comfortable, disciplined and polite culture.

The concept of character is not enough to serve as a point in the syllabus and implementation plans for learning in schools. Schools must make character education a well-developed value order. The basic concept of character education integration is in the curriculum. Therefore, there are no additional subjects that specifically teach character education. Values in character education are integrated into subjects or habits in a variety of appropriate ways. Discipline values, for example, can be instilled by requiring children to do their homework, come on time, don't cheat, and so on.

The implementation of character education should not be assessed the same as other subjects. This is because character education involves the development of attitudes, values and habits. However, teachers can still observe the character development of students. The assessor may use different parameters from one student to another. The most important thing is that the school environment, both students, teachers and education staff, becomes better because of implementing

character education. The results of character education cannot be felt or seen immediately. The thought that intelligence in the form of report cards or high final exam scores is not enough for children's lives in the future. Children's intelligence must include intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence.

However, we cannot deny that the success of character education can only be achieved through the continuity of a comprehensive tri-center of education, namely informal education in the family, formal education in schools and non-formal education in the community. Therefore, it is necessary to rebuild partnerships and educational networks that were cut off between teachers, families and communities. The family as the first and foremost character education environment must be more empowered. The family is then supported by the community environment and learning at school which strengthens the formation cycle. Character education is the implementation of internalization of moral values that specifically aims to form quality students, both in terms of intelligence and moral attitude.

The success of character education can be supported by the implementation of education at the stages of education. Lickona stated that there are 11 principles so that character education can be carried out effectively 1) develop universal/basic values as the foundation; 2) define "character" comprehensively which includes thoughts, feelings and behaviors that include thoughts, feelings and behaviors; 3) use a comprehensive, deliberate and proactive approach; 4) create a caring school community; 5) give students the opportunity to take moral action; 6) create a meaningful academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops positive traits and helps learners to succeed; 7) encourage student motivation; 8) involving the entire school community as a learning and moral community; 9) grow togetherness in moral leadership; 10) involve family and community members as partners; 11) evaluation of school character, function of school staff as character educators, and the extent to which students manifest good character (Lickona, 1991).

According to Tjahjono, things that can be done to build superior character include (Tjahjono, 2019):

1. Make peace with the past. Inner wounds due to wrong treatment and upbringing in the past often result in people being less wise in acting and making decisions in the present. Make the past a valuable lesson to build a better future (forgive but never forget).
2. Thankful and Sincere. Every good deed must be based on sincerity and does not demand a return for that kindness.
3. Humility and Courtesy. Arrogance will only catch you off guard, so keep on improving yourself and learning from others and new skills. Arrogance will only make other people stay away and even conspire to bring down.
4. *Be Kind*, Understanding & Helpful. Be kind to others, but not too nice. So that they will not take advantage of our kindness and ignore your interests and the interests of many people. A good attitude will make other people open and positive, so friendships will be easier to build. Understand each person's difficulties and weaknesses, but set the standard as high as possible. Kindness is an investment or a savings. So that one day people will try to repay our kindness, when we are hit by a disaster or make a mistake, other people will help and protect us.
5. *Be Positive*, But Prepare for the Negatives. Try to understand the difficulties and inadequacies of others. Do not be easy to criticize without a solution and a helpful attitude. Positive thoughts, attitudes and people will attract positive things. These people are often called Fortune Magnets. On the other hand, negative thoughts and attitudes will attract negative things as well. A positive and optimistic leader will make people have hope and are willing to follow it.
6. Passion. Passion breeds a strong commitment and will then give you the strength to keep going at times that are critical, very difficult and discourage you.
7. *Be Brave* & Persistent. The only factor that a person must possess to maximize his potential is courage. Dare to explore to add insight, dare to try new things, not afraid of criticism, not afraid of humiliation, not afraid of failure, dare to defend people who have been treated unfairly, dare to pressure others to bring out their best abilities. Courage must be supported by careful calculations by considering all aspects and risks are great strengths. Set ambitions and targets to match your capacities and abilities.
8. Integrity. Give more than what we promise. Trust is part of integrity. Integrity is an intact building that needs to be maintained for a lifetime.
9. Giving is Better than Receiving. Set aside at least 10% of our income or profits to help those around us who are experiencing difficulties. Be a channel of blessing that is worthy of trust, so that the gate of fortune gets wider and our blessings flow more smoothly.

Closing

Through learning carried out with the application of character education, intelligent and conscientious people will be produced. In other terms, through positive character education, it is expected to produce students who are devoted to God Almighty, have faith, have achievements, are disciplined, responsible, polite, have noble character, are creative and independent. Thus, character education has a very large role and is very important to be proclaimed as part of forming morals for Indonesian students.

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