

Strengthening Character Education through PAI Subjects in the Independent Curriculum

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Abstract

School is one of the strategic places in character building, in addition to family and society. This is what underlies the need for a character education program in a school through a new curriculum, namely the independent curriculum. The purpose of this research is to find out what kind of character strengthening strategies can build student character based on the independent curriculum. This type of research is qualitative research. Data collection techniques using observation, interviews and documentation. The results of the study showed strengthening character education through the independent curriculum at SMPN 01 Pemalang including: class-based character education Strengthening in the form of a child psychological approach, school-based character education Strengthening in the form of voice democracy activities. In addition, character education is also carried out through guidance and counseling. From this implementation stage it can be said that the spirit of character education has been carried out properly and optimally so that it can have a good influence on the character of students.

Keywords: Strategy, strengthening, character education, and independent curriculum.

A. Introduction

Current technological developments have given birth to a generation of gadgets. Technological developments affect the character education of many students. According to Anwar and Salim (2018) in their research, they said that the role of education in Indonesia is only partial with an emphasis on developing cognitive aspects, so that educational results have no correlation with the attitudes or behavior of students. Education is considered not to make a significant contribution to the formation of national character in accordance with core values.

Based on data and facts as well as analysis by education experts, there are at least four main factors that need attention in the context of national education, namely: curriculum factors, funding factors, educator readiness factors and environmental factors and the surrounding atmosphere. conducive to the implementation of education. These four factors are interrelated to be able to produce human resources with national characteristics that are able to compete in the global era. Such character formation and education will not work if there is no continuity and harmony between educational environments.

Character is a characteristic that distinguishes one human being from another. Character is a fundamental thing that every human being has. Currently there are many cases of character decline that have occurred in Indonesia. One of

them is the crisis in the world of education. Many students often play truant, there is a culture of cheating, there are cases of brawls between students, and so on. This is due to the lack of instilling character from an early age which can be started from the family, school and community environment. (Revelation Suryanti and Dwi Widayanti 2018).

School is one of the strategic places in character building, in addition to family and society. This is what underlies the need for a character education program in a school through the Merdeka Curriculum. Character is not a stand-alone subject, but these character values are integrated in the curriculum, meaning that it strengthens the existing curriculum by implementing the existing curriculum by implementing it in subjects and in students' daily activities. (Taqiudin Zarkasi 2018).

The basic strategy of any business includes 4 issues, namely:

- 1) Identify and determine the specifications and qualifications that must be achieved and targeted by taking into account the aspirations of the people in need.
- 2) Consideration and determination of a strong key approach to achieve the goal.
- 3) Consideration and determination of the steps taken from start to finish.
- 4) Consideration and determination of benchmarks and book sizes that will be used to assess the success of the efforts made. (Abu Ahmadi: 1997)

The use of strategies in learning really needs to be used, because to expedite the learning process so that it can achieve optimal results. Without a clear strategy, the learning process will not be directed so that the learning objectives that have been set are difficult to achieve optimally, in other words learning cannot take place effectively and efficiently. Learning strategies are very useful for teachers more than students. For teachers, strategies can be used as guidelines and references for systematic action in the implementation of learning. For students, the use of learning strategies can expedite the learning process (facilitate and accelerate understanding of lesson content). Because each learning strategy is designed to facilitate the learning process for students.

The definition of character itself, as cited by Fadhilillah and Lilif in Doni Koesoema's book, namely etymologically the term character comes from the Greek word *karasso* which means blueprint, basic format, and fingerprints like fingerprints. Meanwhile, in the Complete Indonesian Dictionary, character is defined as a psychological trait, character, character, morals or ethics that distinguishes a person from others (Wiyani, N, 2013). Literally, character means mental or moral qualities, moral strength, names and duplications. Meanwhile, according to Kamisa quoted by Novan Ardi Wiyani, character means having character and personality. Character provides consistency, integrity and energy. People who have strong character will have the momentum to achieve their goals. Meanwhile, according to the Ministry of National Education, character is typical goodness values (knowing the value of kindness, willing to do good, live prosperously, and have a positive impact on the environment) which are ingrained in oneself and manifested in behavior. (National Policy for National Character Development, 2010) Based on some of the definitions of character above, it can

be concluded that character is a quality or mental or moral, moral or ethical strength of an individual who is a special personality, who is the driver and mover, and who distinguishes him from the individual. other.

Meanwhile, according to Fakhry Gaffar, character education is a process of transforming life values to be developed in a person's personality so that they become one in that person's life behavior. In this definition there are three important ideas of reason, namely: (1) the process of transforming values, (2) growing in personality, (3) becoming one in behavior (Hashim, 2015).

The basis for the implementation of character education is Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System in article 3 which states that "National Education functions to develop capabilities and form dignified national character and civilization in the context of educating the nation's life, aiming to develop the potential of students to become people who believe in and fear God Almighty; noble character; healthy; knowledgeable; competent; creative; independent; and become democratic and responsible citizens". Based on the national education goals made by the government, they have not been implemented properly. This was disclosed by Ali Rohmad quoted by Novan Ardy Wiyani (2013), namely "there are wrong practices in the world of education ranging from cheating on exams to plagiarism". The world of education is also responsible for producing graduates who are academically excellent, but still have problems in terms of character. Therefore, to prepare for the golden generation in 2045, the government created the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) program to further strengthen the quality character of Indonesian children in terms of knowledge and morals or character.

The policies that have been made by the government over time have undergone changes or improvements, one of which is the policy in the field of education. Education policies that have undergone refinement include the Ministry of Research and Technology policy number 371/M/2021 concerning the driving school program. In the ministerial decree, it was explained that the mobilization school program is a program that seeks to encourage educational units to carry out self-transformation to improve the quality of learning in schools, then carry out incentives to other schools to carry out similar quality improvements. The driving school program is implemented through an independent curriculum where the curriculum applied to driving schools is a refinement of the 2013 curriculum, namely the independent curriculum by prioritizing student learning outcomes based on the Pancasila student profile (Javanisa et al., 2022). The independent curriculum creates active and creative learning. This program is not a substitute for an already running program, but to provide improvements to an already running system (Achmad et al., 2022). In Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system, it is stated that in order to achieve a national education goal, education providers need a curriculum as a program that contains a set of lesson plans and is related to objectives, content, teaching materials and methods used in the learning process.

Changes and improvements to the curriculum in Indonesia have started since 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997 was a revision of the 1994 curriculum, 2004 was a Competency-Based Curriculum, and the 2006 curriculum

was called Curriculum. Education unit level, and in 2013 the government through the ministry of national education changed back to the 2013 curriculum (Kurtilas) and in 2018 there was a revision to become the Revised Kurtilas (Barlian & Iriantara, 2021). At present the curriculum being developed is an independent curriculum, especially for organizing drive schools. The structure of the independent curriculum for junior high school education units (SMP) has seen several changes in subjects including informatics as a compulsory subject, craft subjects and arts and culture subjects as elective subjects, the allocation of learning time has also changed based on divided yearly calculations on regular learning and project learning. Several changes related to the learning structure in junior high schools, data were obtained from the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Independent Teaching Program in 2021.

SMP Negeri 1 Pemalang is one of the schools that uses an independent curriculum system in the subject of Islamic Education as an education system. As seen in the teaching system in Islamic education which is directed not only at achieving increased intelligence (reason) for students but more essential in Islamic education. Based on previous research studies conducted by EnyWahyu Suryanti and Febi Dwi Widayanti with the title Strengthening Religious Based Character Education. In previous research it was stated that there have been many cases of character decline in the world of education, therefore it is necessary to instill character from an early age both in the family environment and in the school environment. Previous research is a type of qualitative research that aims to determine the application of religion-based character education. And the findings from previous research conducted by Siti Malukah, Winarti, Fitri Ayuningsih, Muh Rifki Nugroho, Sumardi, and Budi Murtiyasa regarding Management of Mathematics Learning in the Independent Curriculum, in previous research it was mentioned (1) Planning of mathematics learning at Jumo 1 Middle School, Temanggung compiled through deliberations for mathematics subject teachers (MGMPM) at the school level and guided by the education unit operational curriculum (KOSP). applied and (3) Evaluation of the implementation of mathematics learning at SMP Negeri 1 Jumo Temanggung, carried out by the principal at the end of each semester through documentation and observation.

B. Method

This research is qualitative research that aims to determine strategies to strengthen character education through PAI subjects in the independent curriculum. The place of this research was carried out at SMPN 01 Pemalang. In this study the researchers took informants using the purposive sampling technique, namely informants taken from subjects who knew, understood and had direct experience in the development and implementation of the implementation of character education using the independent curriculum at SMPN 01 Pemalang, namely PAI subject teachers, homeroom teachers, teachers BK and students. The next data collection tool is documenting the documentation used to collect school profile documents, lesson plans or teaching modules.

Furthermore, after the data is collected, the data is analyzed. Data analysis is an effort to systematically compile the records obtained and the results of

interviews, observations, and other related data in order to increase research understanding of the case under study, by selecting things that are important and will be studied, as well as what can be learned. communicated to others. The analysis begins by examining all available data and sources, including interviews, observations or field observations, recordings and other documents. (Moleong 2005).

C. Discussion

Based on the research that has been done, data is obtained which includes: 1) Observation results; 2) Results of interviews with PAI subject teachers; 3) Results of interviews with homeroom teachers; 4) Results of interviews with counseling teachers; 5) documentation during research. Some of the findings in the research are forms of strengthening character education through PAI subjects in the independent curriculum including programs to strengthen character education in every class, in the school environment, to activities at school.

Strengthening character education in each class is carried out by habituating students in their class by starting to pray, tadarus jus amma and asmaul husna, this has a good impact on students, namely students are able to recite jus amma accidentally so that students become the Qur'ani generation because they are able get used to even memorize the verses of the Qur'an.

then the teacher gives motivation to students about good and bad deeds and provides motivation when going to school, by asking when going to school whether you have asked permission from parents or asked for blessings and prayers from parents from this result will instill respect and responsibility in students so that this can strengthen character education in students. Thus, students always ask permission from their parents when they want to leave the house either for school or other things.

Strengthening Character Education in the school environment and activities in schools as well as religious activities carried out include tadarus at the mosque, listening to cults, distributing zakat fitrah and qurban meat. Taking a special approach to passive students by always inviting communication with good words, so as to be able to provide a sense of comfort to students, it is hoped that students can follow every good advice given to students. Intensively provide stories of the Prophet or other stories that are able to foster character education in students.

Other activities included in the Merdeka Curriculum Theme, one of which is the Voice of Democracy which was carried out at SMP N 1 Pematang, which in this case can also provide strengthening of character education through the Voice of Democracy activity. The democratic vote that was carried out at SMP N 1 Pematang was the Election of the Student Council Chair for the 2022-2023 period, this trained students in giving opinions or voting in democracy. Islamic Religious Education material that can be applied to this Independent Curriculum activity is to train Honesty and Fairness in selecting Candidate Leaders. Because in Islamic Religious Education it has been taught about how to be a student who conveys honesty and upholds justice in any condition.

All of the above activities are part of strengthening the character of students, namely actions that are carried out easily, deliberately, continuously and based on Islamic teachings. To strengthen human character, special ways are needed to achieve maximum results. (Hendi & Mawardi, 2021)

According to Abdur Rahman an Nahlawi, the methods used are the hiwar method (conversation), the story method, the amtsal method (parables), the exemplary method, the method of habituation and experience, the method of taking lessons and warnings, the method of targhib and tarhib (promises and threats). (Abdurahman: 1992). The method used at SMPN 1 Pemalang is based on research results using the hiwar (conversation) method, the story method, the exemplary method and the method of habituation and experience.

Another method that is also used by guidance counseling/BK teachers at SMPN 1 Pemalang is the way of promises and threats, where if there is non-compliance with the school environment, students will be given a punishment according to the level of violations committed by these students, then promise not to happen again. This method is also quite good at strengthening character where most students are deterred from repeating the same mistakes.

Another very important thing to do is to present materials that are seen as helping to strengthen character education in lesson plans or teaching modules in the independent curriculum, which explain honesty, trustworthiness, and istiqomah. From the results of the research, these materials have been included in the learning design in grade 7. By providing material based on good theories that every student should know, these students can implement them in everyday life, such as in the school environment and outside the school. Based on the testimony of several teachers, SMPN 1 Pemalang students when meeting teachers both within the school environment and outside the school environment always greet them with greetings and a handshake. This is a form of proof that the strategies carried out by the teacher to strengthen student character can be implemented properly so that they are able to have a good impact on the students themselves and society in general.

Based on the explanation above, it can be explained that the strategy for strengthening the character of students at SMPN 01 Pemalang starts from the class level to the environment around the school to the family environment, this can be seen from the habit of observing something by praying and asking for blessings from parents, providing intensive communication from the teacher to students to produce healthy communication so as to be able to provide advice that can strengthen student character, or it can also be called a strengthening strategy through a student psychological approach. This is a good step that an educator can take.

D. Conclusion

Strengthening character education at SMPN 1 Pemalang is carried out through Islamic religious education in the independent curriculum. Strengthening character education through Islamic religious education in the independent curriculum includes three paths and bases, namely class-based in PAI learning activities, both intra-curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular. Second, based

on school culture by cultivating practices that reinforce religious values. Pursue interaction socialization with parents of students. Learners are better able to appreciate the teacher and the themes around him. The method of application is very simple but the impact is extraordinary for the students themselves.

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