Progressive Character-Based Education

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Abstract

Progressive Character-Based Education is an innovative approach aimed at building a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also moral and virtuous. The background, problem formulation, and research objectives regarding progressive character-based education in Indonesia are discussed in this article. This article contributes significantly to the implementation of character education in schools, based on data from the National Education Standards Agency (BSNP) and the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to explore insights into progressive character-based education, examine how it is applied, and provide recommendations for improving education in a better and more sustainable way. Progressive character-based education is expected to shape individuals who possess not only knowledge but also positive behavior and attitudes in daily life. This will be achieved through a comprehensive and innovative approach.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of a nation. In the context of education in Indonesia, there are complex challenges related to character formation among students. Character-based education is becoming increasingly relevant amid ever-changing social dynamics, where moral and ethical values are often neglected. The 2022 Annual Report of the National Education Standards Agency (BSNP) noted that character education in Indonesia still faces various obstacles, such as a lack of understanding and inconsistent implementation across different levels of education (BSNP, 2022). Therefore, it is essential to explore the concept of progressive character-based education, which focuses not only on academic achievement but also on developing strong character and moral integrity among students.

The problem formulation in this article centers around the question: "How can character-based education be effectively implemented in Indonesian schools to produce a generation that is both qualified and possesses integrity?" This question is important to address considering the growing need for individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also have good character in facing life's challenges. According to Berkowitz and Bier (2020), character education is a shared responsibility involving schools, families, and communities. Therefore, collaboration among various stakeholders is essential to create an environment that supports character education.

The purpose of this article is to analyze and discuss various aspects of progressive character-based education and to provide implementation recommendations that can be adopted by schools in Indonesia. Referring to the character education guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemdikbud, 2021), this article aims to provide a clear overview of how character-based education can be integrated into the curriculum and daily activities at school. In addition, this article will examine relevant case studies, such as the one

presented by Sari (2023) on character-based education at Sekolah Alam Indonesia, which demonstrates that this approach can have a positive impact on students' character development.

Therefore, this article is expected to contribute to the development of education in Indonesia, particularly in the context of character-based education. Through a better understanding of this concept, it is hoped that educators, policymakers, and the wider community can work together to create a generation that excels not only in academics but also possesses strong character and is able to contribute positively to society.

METHODS

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze ideas related to progressive character-based education and its implementation in educational institutions. First, the study will review the literature and best practices in various schools to uncover concepts of progressive character-based education. Second, it will analyze the implementation of character-based education within educational institutions, focusing on the most effective approaches and techniques for its application. Third, the study will provide recommendations for the development of progressive character-based education. These recommendations are expected to assist educators, school administrators, and policymakers in designing more efficient and sustainable educational programs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Concept of Character Education

Character education is an educational approach aimed at developing students' character and morality. According to Berkowitz and Bier (2020), character education is not solely the responsibility of schools, but also involves parents, local communities, and other forums. This indicates that character education must be collaborative and integrated into everyday life. It is expected to shape individuals who are not only academically competent but also possess strong moral values.

Data from the National Education Standards Agency (BSNP) show that the implementation of character education in Indonesian schools has significantly increased in recent years. In 2022, approximately 75% of elementary schools in Indonesia had incorporated character education programs into their curricula (BSNP, 2022). This indicates a growing awareness among educators and policymakers of the importance of character education.

A concrete example of character education implementation can be seen at Sekolah Alam Indonesia, which applies an environmental-based learning method infused with core character values. In her study, Sari (2023) found that students at Sekolah Alam Indonesia not only learn academic knowledge but are also taught about social responsibility and environmental awareness. The implication of this approach is that students become more empathetic and develop a strong sense of responsibility toward their communities.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2021) has formulated character education guidelines that emphasize six core values: religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, and creativity. These guidelines aim to provide clear direction for schools in integrating character education into their curricula. With these guidelines in place, it is expected that each school can design programs tailored to the context and needs of their students.

Overall, the concept of character education serves as a crucial foundation for shaping a generation that is not only intelligent but also morally upright. With support from various

stakeholders—including the government, schools, and communities—character education is expected to continue evolving and making a positive impact on society.

B. Progressive Education

Progressive education is an educational concept that emphasizes the importance of innovation and adaptability in the learning process. In this context, education is not solely focused on the transfer of knowledge but also on the development of skills and attitudes relevant to contemporary challenges. This concept aligns with the views of Lickona (2020), who stated that education must prepare students to face the complexities of life in the era of globalization.

Statistics show that today's workforce increasingly demands individuals who possess not only technical knowledge but also interpersonal skills and critical thinking abilities. According to data from the World Economic Forum (2020), 85% of the jobs that will exist in 2030 do not yet exist today, which means education must adapt to the demands of globalization. Therefore, progressive education becomes highly relevant in this context.

The implementation of progressive education in Indonesia can be observed through various innovative approaches adopted in schools. For example, several schools have begun to implement project-based learning methods, allowing students to learn through real-world experiences. This not only enhances students' academic understanding but also develops essential teamwork and communication skills needed in the modern workplace.

Furthermore, progressive education emphasizes the use of technology in the learning process. With the integration of technology, students can access a wider range of information and learning resources. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2021) reported that the use of online learning platforms grew rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating that both students and teachers have become increasingly accustomed to utilizing technology in teaching and learning.

In the context of character-based education, progressive education must also integrate character values into all aspects of learning. As such, students are not only shaped into academically competent individuals but also into people of strong character who can contribute positively to society. Through this approach, progressive education is expected to cultivate a generation that is not only intelligent but also morally grounded and ready to face future challenges.

C. Examples of Character-Based Education

Character-based education can be implemented through various approaches that focus seriously on the development of students' character. One widely applied method is values-based learning, in which character values are integrated into every subject. This approach enables students to better understand and internalize these values in ways that are relevant to their daily lives.

For example, in social studies, students can be taught values such as tolerance and collaboration through discussions on Indonesia's cultural diversity. In this way, students not only learn historical facts but also understand the importance of respecting differences and cooperating within a diverse society. This aligns with the findings of Sari (2023), which showed that the integration of character values into lessons can enhance students' social awareness.

Another effective example is project-based learning, where students engage in projects related to social or environmental issues in their communities. Through these projects, students learn to collaborate in teams, take initiative, and provide solutions to real-world problems. The Ministry of

Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2021) recommends this approach as a means to support the holistic development of students' character.

The importance of evaluation in character-based education should also not be overlooked. Assessment should not be limited to academic outcomes, but also include the evaluation of students' character development. Schools can use evaluation rubrics that assess traits such as leadership, empathy, and responsibility. This approach motivates students to develop their character alongside their academic achievements.

In summary, character-based education must be systematically designed and integrated into the curriculum. With the right approach, this model can produce individuals who not only excel academically but also possess strong character and the ability to contribute positively to society. Through the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders, character education can achieve its goals and bring about significant positive change for future generations.

D. Challenges and Solutions

1. Challenges in Implementing Character-Based Education

Character-based education in Indonesia faces several challenges that hinder its effective implementation. One of the main challenges is the lack of understanding regarding the concept of character education itself. Many educators, parents, and members of the public have not fully understood what character education entails. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2021), character education is not merely about teaching ethical or moral values, but also about shaping positive attitudes and behaviors in everyday life. This misunderstanding can lead to inconsistency in applying character values in schools and social environments. For example, if an educator does not understand the importance of instilling values such as honesty and responsibility, they may fail to integrate these values into the teaching process.

Additionally, the lack of support from various stakeholders presents a significant challenge. Character-based education requires collaboration between schools, parents, and the community. However, such support is often not realized. According to the BSNP annual report (2022), many schools struggle to implement character education programs due to insufficient resources and inadequate facilities. For example, in some cases, schools lack proper training programs for teachers to understand and implement character education. Without strong support from all involved parties, efforts to implement character-based education are likely to be futile.

Another challenge is resistance to change in the curriculum and teaching methods. Many educators are comfortable with traditional teaching approaches and are reluctant to adapt to newer methods that focus more on character development. This aligns with findings by Sari (2023), which indicate that some educators still view character education as an addition rather than an integral part of the curriculum. This resistance can obstruct efforts to integrate character education into every aspect of learning.

On the other hand, challenges also arise from social environments that do not support character development. A family environment that does not uphold character values can affect a child's development. Lickona (2020) emphasizes the importance of a positive environment to support character education. For example, if a child grows up in an environment that does not value honesty, it will be difficult for them to internalize that value, even if it is taught at school. Therefore, challenges in implementing character-based education are not limited to formal education issues but also stem from broader social conditions.

Finally, challenges in measuring and evaluating character education must also be addressed. Many schools struggle to assess students' character development objectively. This is due to the lack of clear indicators and appropriate evaluation methods. Berkowitz and Bier (2020) argue that without an effective evaluation system, it is difficult to determine the extent to which character education has been successfully implemented. Therefore, developing effective evaluation tools could be a key part of the challenge in implementing character-based education.

2. Solutions to Overcome Challenges

To overcome the challenges in implementing character-based education, one solution that can be applied is to create training programs for educators. The goal is to enhance educators' understanding of character education frameworks and how to integrate them into the teaching process. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2021), structured training can help teachers better understand the importance of character education and how to instill these values in students. With a deeper understanding, it is expected that teachers can become role models for students and create a learning environment that supports character development.

In addition to training, it is also important to raise public awareness about the need for character education. The community needs to be encouraged to actively support character education in schools. One way to increase this awareness is through public campaigns and socialization programs that involve parents, community leaders, and relevant institutions. Sari (2023) noted that the role of parents in character education is crucial because they are the first role models for children. Therefore, parental involvement in character education initiatives at school can enhance the effectiveness of implementing character-based education.

Furthermore, collaboration between schools and the community also needs to be strengthened. Schools can collaborate with various organizations, such as non-governmental organizations, to develop programs that support character education. For example, community service programs involving students can be a medium for applying character norms in real-life situations. Lickona (2020) stated that direct experiences in social contexts can strengthen students' understanding of character values. Thus, this collaboration can not only deepen students' learning but also create a more supportive environment for character education.

Additionally, the development of effective evaluation tools is also an important step in addressing the challenges. Schools need to have clear indicators to assess students' character development. Berkowitz and Bier (2020) suggest that schools develop an evaluation system that includes both formative and summative assessments. With a good evaluation system in place, schools can determine the extent to which character education has been successfully implemented and make improvements as needed. Proper evaluation also provides feedback to both educators and students about their character development.

Finally, it is essential to create a school culture that supports character education. Schools need to be places where character norms are valued and implemented in everyday life. This can be achieved by establishing rules and policies that support character education and by creating a positive and inclusive environment. By creating a culture that supports character education, it is expected that character-based education can be implemented more effectively and sustainably.

CONCLUSION

Progressive Character-Based Education is an approach that not only emphasizes academic mastery but also the enhancement of moral values and student character. This article has outlined several key aspects of character education, including the importance of collaboration between the education system, family environment, and community to build strong character. According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (2021), the implementation of character education in schools has shown a significant improvement in student behavior, reflected in a decrease in disciplinary violations and an increase in student participation in social activities.

Furthermore, research conducted by Berkowitz and Bier (2020) underscores that character education is a shared responsibility involving various parties. By involving parents and the community, character education can be more holistically integrated into the daily lives of students. This proves that character education is not an exclusive task for schools but a collective effort to shape individuals with integrity, accountability, and responsibility.

A case study from Sari (2023) shows that the implementation of character-based education at Sekolah Alam Indonesia successfully created a positive learning environment. Students not only learn academically but also about values such as cooperation, empathy, and environmental care. As a result, students showed improvements in their social and emotional skills, which are crucial in facing challenges in an increasingly complex world.

Character-based education also has long-term impacts on society. By shaping a generation with good character, it is hoped that a more harmonious and productive society will emerge. Data from the BSNP Annual Report (2022) proves that schools that consistently implement character education show improvement in students' academic achievements, demonstrating that good character contributes to academic success.

Overall, progressive character-based education is a necessity in today's education system. By integrating character values into the curriculum and daily life, we can create individuals who are not only academically capable but also possess honesty, integrity, and social responsibility. This results in a positive impact, not only on individuals but also on society as a whole.

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