

## **STRENGTHENING STUDENT CHARACTER EDUCATION THROUGH INVESTING MULTICULTURAL VALUES IN MADRASAH**

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### **Abstract**

Strengthening character education through planting multicultural values into the basic values of culture and national character. The culture and character education of this nation can be developed from the religious values and ideology of the Indonesian nation which are formulated in the goals of national education. Character is the main key to developing quality resources. That way the character must be formed as early as possible.

**Keywords:** Character, Multicultural Values, Character, National Education

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Multicultural education is a progressive approach to transforming education that as a whole criticizes and shows deficiencies, failures, and discriminatory practices in education. It is based on ideals of social justice, educational equality, and a dedication to facilitating educational experiences in which every student can reach his / her potential as a student and as an active and socially conscious being at the local, national and global levels. Multicultural education recognizes that schools are important to lay the foundation for societal change and eliminate pressures and injustices. The main purpose of multicultural education is to influence social change. The path to achieve this goal combines three changes: change in self, change in schools and education received, and change in society.

Every child comes to school with an ethnic identity, whether consciously or not. The teacher must recognize and understand this identification. This should be the basis for classroom learning activities. The point is to acknowledge differences, not ignore them.

Curriculum and learning must advance with the introduction of ethnic identities first, then national identities, and finally global identities. Further development of identity depends on development of the previous one. It is equally important that individual identities are not

static but develop continuously and it is very important for the curriculum to emphasize the three kinds of identities (ethnic identity, national identity, and global identity) as learning progress.

Multicultural education is not only the responsibility of schools or formal educational institutions, but is the responsibility of the government, society, families and other institutions. Multicultural education is a progressive approach to transforming education that completely exposes deficiencies, failures and discriminatory practices in the educational process.

Multicultural education is based on the notion of social justice and equal rights in education. Multicultural education should facilitate a teaching and learning process that changes an essential, prejudiced and discriminatory monocultural perspective to a multiculturalist perspective that respects diversity and diversity, is tolerant and open-minded.

The cultivation of multicultural values must be implanted at every level of education and must involve various social structures in shaping the character of students, especially in understanding and mutual respect between ethnic groups, so that they contribute to the effort to transform the values and character of local culture with a nationalist outlook.

The implementation of character education is the responsibility of the family, school, community, nation and state. Character education is an effort to foster children's mental development, from their birth characteristics to a better civilization. Because basically the child is born in a fitrah state, due to the influence of various factors that make him change from his nature. This is in line with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad:

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ

Meaning: Every child born is born above nature. Both his parents made him Jewish, Magi, or Christian. (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim).

Character education is a continuous and never ending process, resulting in continuous quality improvement, to create a future human figure, rooted in the cultural values of the nation. This character education will develop philosophical values and practice the entire character of the nation as a whole and comprehensively.

Thomas Lickona states that character education is education to shape one's personality through character education, the results of which can be seen in one's real actions, namely good behavior, honesty, responsibility, respect for the rights of others, work hard and so on (Lickona, 2013 : 23).

Character is the main key to developing quality resources. That way the character must be formed as early as possible. The failure to cultivate character from an early age creates problematic personal formation in the future. Thus character building from an early age must be carried out both within the family, school, and play environment (peers) of children (Fitri, 2012).

The government has inserted character education in the curriculum. Character education in the 2013 curriculum is included in core competencies parts 1 and 2. Competencies relating to religious and social attitudes are developed indirectly (indirect teaching), namely when students learn about knowledge (Core Competency 3) and the application of knowledge (Core Competency 4) (Depdiknas, 2003). In accordance with the 2013 curriculum design, namely focusing great attention on character in elementary schools before children enter junior high school education and beyond (Ramadhanti et al., 2019).

## **B. METHOD**

The method used in this research is a qualitative method with a variety of case studies. The problems that will be studied in this study use qualitative methods, which aim to find, analyze and manage direct events in the field by understanding social interactions with interviews and observations.

According to Sugiyono qualitative research methods are research methods based on philosophy, which are used to examine scientific conditions (experiments) where researchers as instruments, data collection techniques and in qualitative analysis emphasize more on meaning (Sugiyono, 2010 : 213)

## **C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Islamic Education and the Concept of Multicultural Values**

Choirul Mahfud said education must be able to create an educated and educated society, not a society that only glorifies social achievements as a result of the wealth and prosperity it experiences (Mahfud, 2009 : 177-178). Namely; First; integrating various cultures and groups to illustrate fundamental concepts, generalizations and theories in subjects / disciplines. Second; bring students to understand the cultural implications of a subject (discipline). Third: adapting teaching methods to student learning in order to facilitate student academic achievement that varies from racial, cultural, or social perspectives. Fourth; identify racial characteristics of students and determine their teaching methods. Then, train the group to participate in sports activities, interact with all staff and students of different ethnicities and races in an effort to create a tolerant and inclusive academic culture (Mahfud, 2009 : 177-178).

In Prof. concept. HAR Tilaar, focuses on multicultural education, namely; revealed that in multicultural education programs can be used at both descriptive and normative levels, describing educational issues and problems related to society (Tilaar, 2004 : 180).

Based on the above concept, multicultural education is a process of cultivating a way of life to respect, be sincere, and tolerant of cultural diversity that lives in the midst of a plural society. With multicultural education, it is hoped that there will be national cohesiveness in facing social conflicts, so that national unity will not be easily broken and fractured.

This multiculturalism-based education will be able to instill the values of pluralism, humanism and democracy directly in madrasahs to students. Especially for educators to be able to design learning based on the diversity of abilities, social backgrounds of students, religion, culture and others.

This must be considered in the application of multicultural education strategies and concepts. The most important thing in this strategy is not only to make it easy for students

to understand the lessons learned, but also to increase their awareness to always behave humanist, pluralist and democratic.

Ainul Yaqin likewise, a teacher must not only master the material professionally but must also be able to instill the core values of multicultural education such as: humanism, democracy and pluralism (Yaqin, 2005 : xviii).

The cultivation of multicultural values in schools is the cultivation of trust (cognitive component), and it is hoped that it can influence emotional (affective) and behavioral (cognitive) problems which will foster positive initial attitudes in students towards various cultural conditions. It is hoped that individuals will feel love, peace, and peace in a pluralistic society.

Indicators of someone who has a pluralist attitude are: Living in differences (tolerance / *tasamuh*), mutual respect, building mutual trust (*husnudzan*), interdependence (mutual need / interdependence), appreciation of cultural plurality.

According to Zakiyuddin Baidhawiy there are several characteristics to understand the standard of multicultural values in the context of religious education. These characteristics are: learning to live in differences, building mutual trust (mutual trust). Maintaining mutual understanding, upholding mutual respect, open thinking, appreciation and intervention, conflict resolution and reconciliation of violence (Baidhawiy, 2005 : 78-84).

All multicultural values that exist in the standard content of Islamic religious education subjects are in collaboration with indicators of multicultural values that have been mentioned in the previous discussion, namely: learning to live in differences, building mutual trust, maintaining mutual understanding), uphold mutual respect, open thinking, appreciation and interdependence, conflict resolution and reconciliation. And also with the four core values of multicultural values that have been mentioned in the previous discussion, namely: First, appreciation of the reality of cultural plurality in society. Second, recognition of human dignity and human rights. Third, the development of the responsibility of the world community. Fourth, the development of human responsibility for planet earth.

The indicators of the implementation of multicultural values in madrasas are as follows:

a. Inclusive Value (Open)

This value views that the truth that is embraced by one group is also embraced by other groups. This value recognizes pluralism in a community or social group, promising to prioritize the principle of inclusiveness which leads to growing sensitivity to the unique possibilities that exist.

b. Value First Dialog (Active)

With dialogue, different understandings about things that are owned by different groups can be deepened mutually without harming each party. The result of putting dialogue first is a close relationship, mutual understanding, respect, trust, and help.

c. Humanity Value (Humanist)

Humanity is basically an acknowledgment of plurality, heterogeneity and diversity of humans themselves, in the form of ideology, paradigm, ethnicity, mindset, needs, economic level, and so on.

d. Tolerance Value

In social life, tolerance is understood as a manifestation of recognizing and respecting human rights. Freedom of belief in the sense of the absence of compulsion in matters of religion, freedom of thought or opinion, freedom of association, and so on.

e. Value Please Help

As social beings, humans cannot live alone even though they have everything. Property is abundant so that at any time what he wants can easily be fulfilled, but he cannot live alone without the help of others and he may never feel happiness.

f. Value of Justice (Democratic)

Justice is a comprehensive term in all forms, be it cultural, political, or social justice. Justice itself is a form that every human being gets what he needs, not what he wants.

g. The value of equality and brotherhood between nations and between nations

In Islam, the terms equality and brotherhood are known as ukhuwah. There are three types of ukhuwah in human life, namely: Ukhuwah Islamiah (brotherhood of religion), ukhuwah wathaniyyah (brotherhood of the nation), ukhuwah bashariyah (brotherhood of fellow humans). It can be concluded that every human being from different ethnicities, religions, nations, and beliefs is a brother. Therefore, every human being has the same rights.

### **Basic Concepts of Strengthening Character Education**

Strengthening moral education (moral education) or character education in the current context is very relevant in overcoming the moral crisis that is currently hitting our country. These crises include increasing promiscuity, rampant rates of violence against children and adolescents, crime against friends, theft of youth, cheating habits, drug abuse, pornography, and the destruction of other people's property which have become social problems that have yet to be achieved. addressed completely, therefore how important character education is.

Thomas Lickona said character building is also inseparable from the role of the teacher, because everything that is done by the teacher is able to influence the character of students. Character is formed from three interrelated parts, namely moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral behavior (Lickona, 2013 ; 72).

Donie Koesoema states that character education is an effort made individually and socially in creating an environment that is conducive to the growth of individual freedom itself (Koesoema, 2010 : 194).

Zubaedi In line with that, character education is also defined as an effort to cultivate intelligence in thinking, appreciation in the form of attitudes, and practice in the form of

behavior that is in accordance with the noble values that become his identity, manifested in interaction with God, self, itself, the community and the environment (Zubaedi, 2011 : 17).

Based on the above opinion it can be concluded that character education is education that is not only oriented to the cognitive aspects, but is more oriented to the process of fostering the potential that is in students, developed through habituation of good qualities, namely in the form of teaching good character values.

The importance of character education to be immediately developed and internalized, both in the world of formal education and in non-formal education is certainly reasonable, because it has a noble purpose for the life of students so that they are always ready to respond to all the dynamics of life with full responsibility.

Character education is not only the responsibility of teachers, but also all education stakeholders must be involved in developing this character education, even policy makers must be leading role models. As a teacher, he must work professionally, provide optimal service to his students, and work patiently in bringing students towards their educational goals. By placing character education in the context of the dynamics of the individual formation process, educators such as teachers, parents, school staff, the community and others, are expected to increasingly realize the importance of character education as a means of forming behavior guidelines, enrichment of individual values by providing space for exemplary figures for students and create an environment that is conducive to the growth process in the form of comfort and safety that helps the atmosphere of self-development one another in all its dimensions.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Character is very important and basic. Character is a living ingredient that distinguishes humans from animals. People with strong character and both individually and socially are those who have good morals, morals and character. Therefore, strengthening character education must begin with early childhood education (TK / PAUD).

It is not easy to produce children who excel logically, but creating moral children is much more difficult to do, especially with the development of sophisticated technology that is getting faster and faster, which of course has an impact on children's development. Character education has become the concern of many parties, the government, for example, the government has scheduled the importance of character education to be implemented in schools and has become a national policy as outlined in legislation. Almost all agreed that the moral crisis that hit this nation's generation was caused by the weakening of the nation's moral values in people's lives. This is thought to be caused by the lack of success in building character education in schools. Today's formal education is more dominant in developing cognitive aspects than moral or character.

Character education and the cultivation of multicultural values must be instilled at every level of education and must involve various social structures in shaping the character of students, especially in understanding and mutual respect between ethnic groups, so that they become a contribution in efforts to transform the values and character of local culture with a nationalist perspective.

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