

Principal's Strategy in Shaping Students' Good Characters: A Study at a Private Elementary School

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Abstract. Character is reflection of students' personality that will form students' daily behavior. Students who have the potential and quality as superior generations are reflected in their good characters. Therefore, character education is considered important to be improved by schools. This study aims to analyze the Principal's strategy in forming good characters in students of SDIT Lantai Batu, Batusangkar Indonesia. The method used in this research was a qualitative method in the form of a case study. Data collection techniques used in this research were in-depth interview, participant observation, and documentary study. The technique of data analysis was data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing and verification. The result of this study indicated that the principal applies several strategies in forming good characters in students, namely strategy of strengthening character education, implementing integrated curriculum, conducting extracurricular activities, teaching the students faith and morality, having visionary and transformational leadership styles of the Principal and implementing story telling method.

Keywords: Characters; principals; principal's strategy

1 Introduction

The formation of good characters in students is the most important part of the curriculum in current education. Without good characters, it is impossible for the quality of education to be achieved because the development of the nation and state depends on the formation of good character in oneself his students. Rahmawati (2020) states that education, teaching and curriculum are the main things needed in realizing a good quality. Education aims to explore the potential of each individual to develop and improve according to expectations. It is through this education that the characters of a human being is formed. These characters will, later, determine the quality of a human being, both as a person and as a social being.

Character education is something that is very important as evidenced by the many previous research that has discussed the formation of character in students, as stated by Ardi et al., (2019). The results of this study shows that management is carried out by the school in moral development activities in character education. The management process in the form of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. There are several factors that affect the implementation of management namely students, parents, the surrounding environment and

educational facilities. Second, research from Maisaro, et al., (2018). The results of the study indicate that in carrying out management, the principal is assisted by the school development team and the school coordinator. Management activities consist of three main stages, namely planning, implementation and evaluation. The planning stage consists of several steps, namely observation, coordination meetings, preparation of work programs, program implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Stages Implementation consists of steps of integration, culture, exemplary and cooperation with parents. The next stage is an evaluation which consists of the preparation steps monitoring evaluation plan, data processing and improvement meeting. The three studies from Alifiyah et al., (2019) prove that the formulation of the vision carried out by the principal with the help of all teachers and staff in the school with the SWOT analysis of schools. implementation of the vision is done through polite behavior, smile, greetings, greetings, responsibility, discipline, order and prioritizing good cooperation the school and outside the school. The characters of the students developed are: Islamic principles, discipline, responsibilities that are implemented in congregational prayer activities, and other activities.

Thus, previous research has discussed reinforcement management of student character education, and the principal's visionary leadership in developing student character. Some of the studies above show the importance of establishing, improvement and strengthening of good character in students. In shaping the character of students In a good way, the role of the principal as a school leader is very influential. Then the difference. This research is more emphasis on the strategies used by school principals in forming good character in students. This is based on one of the The principal functions and duties of the principal are as a manager, namely the manager of the institution school. Irhami et al., (2018) stated that the principal has the main task complex, such as as a manager, educator, supervisor, leader, administrator, motivator, innovator and other leadership functions. Implementation of main tasks and functions The principal will have an impact on the educational institutions he manages. Then whatever the existing program of activities at the school must be fully supported by the principal and well run by the whole school. The well-known Integrated Islamic Elementary School with the term SDIT is a basic educational institution based on Islamic education.

Ainurrosidah et al., (2018) explained that this Islamic education-based school model can make students and the next generation knowledgeable in general and also knowledgeable about religion simultaneously. Thus, this elementary school student learns general science like other elementary school students, but also deepen their knowledge of religion, such as faith and morality, morals, character and character of an Islamic person. In supporting the implementation of this character education, the school especially school principals have made various efforts. One of the efforts made by the head school is to apply strategies in forming good character in students. Based on the description above, the purpose of this research is to analyze the strategy of the head of schools in forming good character in the students of SDIT Batu Floor, Lima District Kaum, Tanah Datar Regency.

2 Method

This research used a qualitative approach, with a case study research method whose aims are to reveal a case that occurred somewhere at a certain time. This case study research was chosen because the authors aim to to reveal the strategies used by the school Principal in shaping the character good for students. The informants of this research were the Principal and the two Vice Principals of the student affairs department and the curriculum at the school. The

informants of the research was chosen purposively. The school Principal was chosen as the key informant. The main objective in this research is to provide information about the strategy carried out to form good character in students. Deputy Principals for Student Affairs and Curriculum were also chosen because they knew the principal's strategy in forming good character in students because they were close to principals and students. In a case study research, a non-random method (*non-probability sampling*) was used because the data of the research were obtained to answer the researched case clearly, in detail and in-depth, not for the purpose of making a generalization of research informants.

In this study, the data collection techniques used were participant observation, in-depth interviews and documentary studies. Observations were carried out on the school activities, student characters, school and classroom environment, facilities and infrastructure and other things. In-depth interviews were conducted with the research informants so that the information or the data could be obtained naturally, clearly and in detail. In this type of interview, there was a predetermined set of questions by researchers to anticipate incomplete, unclear and detailed data. The questions were allowed to flow spontaneously in a direct contact or interaction. The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with the Principal and two Vice Principals of Student Affairs and of Curriculum at the school. The in-depth interviews were conducted to explore the principal's strategy in forming good characters in the students at the school. The Principal and Deputy Principals were chosen because they know much about the data needed in this study. Documents got from documentary studies in the form of a checklist, file format, and writings about the principal's strategy in forming good characters in students were included as supporting sources in this study.

3 Results and Discussion

The results of the study show several strategies that have been implemented in improving the good characters of students at the school can be described as follows:

a. Implementation of Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Education Character. In implementing character education at the school, there are five main values that are improved in the daily characters of students. The first one is the religious value which includes faith and devotion to Allah SWT. The second one is the value of nationalism and love for the homeland towards the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. The third one is mutual cooperation, and democratic attitude towards fellow human beings. The fourth one value is independence as a responsible individual. The fifth value is integrity and enthusiasm in realizing national unity and integrity. The programs aim to form good and positive characters in students.

b. Doing several efforts. This student character improvement is carried out in a good way through heart to heart communication between the school with the students, the school with the parents of the students, the parents with the students, and between students and students. There are several examples of how to improve student character from heart to heart. First, if students make mistakes, both words and actions, the teacher will call the student and advise him individually so that the student does not feel ashamed and judged. Second, if there is a fight between students and their friends, they will be asked to meet their classroom teacher or teacher counselor to find a solution and discuss it a good way out so as not to spread to the house or to the parents of students.

This is supported by Maisaro et al., (2018) stating that one of the strategies that schools can do in the formation of good character in students is to socialize and implementing Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Education Character (PPK). In the Presidential Regulation, it is stated which good character should be owned by students, the factors that play a role in the formation of good character and implementation program of character building in students.

- c. Implementation of an integrated curriculum. Steps taken include:
 - 1) Identifying character problems experienced by students
 - 2) Setting the goals, vision and mission of character education
 - 3) Formulating indicators of student character to be assessed
 - 4) Creating relevant syllabus and lesson plans
 - 5) Integrating character education in all student subjects
 - 6) Making student character assessment instruments
 - 7) Building communication with all teachers, especially homeroom teachers and field teachers studies
 - 8) Building communication with parents
 - 9) Conducting an evaluation of student character education and providing feedback and making a revised plan

This finding is in line with the results of research from Muhaimin (2017), which argued that the strategy used in the application of character education includes spiritual strategies (*batiniyah*) and non-spiritual strategies (outward). Non-Spirituality strategy (*lahiriyah*) is divided into three types, namely the exemplary model method (*uswah hasanah*), curriculum integration and internalization strategies and discipline enforcement strategies and training. Similarities between the results of this research and previous research are: good character building strategies for students implemented by the principal one of the schools with a strategy of integration and internalization of the curriculum.

d. Extracurricular activities, namely through the development of students' interests and talents. Since a character is a habit, so training, developing and increasing it must also be with habituation. Through extracurricular activities implemented in schools, the characters of students were increasingly formed in a positive direction. Several extracurricular activities held at the school a *tahfiz Qur'an* activity held from Monday to Thursday after school. This activity was attended by all students interested in participating in this activity. Apart from that, other extracurricular activities namely: Annisa and Arrahman activities held every Friday after school. This is a student association activity in accordance with the group to gain religious knowledge and discuss the Qur'an and Hadith. This Annisa activities were attended by female students, while the ar-Rahman activities were attended by male students.

e. Learning faith and morality. The improvement of student character is carried out in line with the regular learning program which is done every day in each subject matter. However, character enhancement is also carried out through faith learning and morals which are local content in the school. This is in line with Muhaimin (2017) who suggests that character education strategies are related to models or figures. Second, the character education strategy is related to the learning curriculum. Third, strategy for improving character education is related to the methodology or method guiding provision. Fourth, the character enhancement strategy is related to cooperative learning and affective learning strategies.

f. Visionary and transformational leadership style. The principal's leadership skill is another effort in forming good characters in students. The visionary Principal with his transformational leadership can bring about changes towards positive characters at that school. As a result, the students are more disciplined in school activities. This is because the principal

exemplifies the need for discipline in all activities undertaken. This disciplinary activity For example, by implementing no more teachers who are late to school. Teachers' late arrival is tolerated until 07.30 a.m. every day. With this, no more students who arrive late for fear of being penalized and imitate the teacher and the principal had come before them. Besides, there is no teacher sitting or doing other activities during learning hours. The teacher is in the classroom during the teaching and learning process. Teacher without clock learning on that day, or at certain learning hours, it must be in the teacher's assembly room to carry out learning administrative activities that worth doing.

These findings are in line with Santoso (2018) which stating that the impact of the principal's transformational leadership on student characters is the harmony between students and school members, the better the condition of the school environment which is clean, beautiful and comfortable, and the school quality improves. Thus, there are many parents who want to send their children to this school. Furthermore, Alifiyah et al., (2019) added that the principal's visionary leadership develops students' good character which includes Islamic characters, discipline and good responsibility. This is reflected in the daily activities of students both inside and outside the classrooms.

g. Using story-telling method. Results of interviews show several strategies that have been carried out in improving the students' characters, one of which is using storytelling method. Storytelling is an activity tell a story, story or lesson that can be taken from the message and his mandate for learning for students. Who can give this storytelling method? only, both the principal, teachers, and the school appointed to provide learning and strengthening student character through this method. The Principal of the school usually does this storytelling method every Monday and Friday, during the Flag Ceremony and at the *Muhadharah*. The teachers usually use lecture method to form good characters in students in every subject taught to students. This is done by conducting public lectures at least once a month by gathering all students in one place, both in the prayer room and in the mosque open room. In addition, for students with problems, a summons is made student space and fostered by using the lecture and giving motivation method for improving the students' character. This finding is supported by Puldri (2017) pointing out that the implementation of the storytelling method in instilling character values in students is carried out by the teachers without using image media, and only done by emphasizing language style, intonation and facial mimics in telling stories to students. Besides, the story that delivered to students adapted to the subject matter, so that in addition to naming character values, another goal is to strengthen students towards the material of the lessons being learned.

4 Conclusion

Based on the description and results of the research above, it can be concluded that the school applies several strategies for the improvement of the students' characters: by implementing Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education, by implementing an integrated curriculum, conducting extracurricular activities for the development of the students' interests and talents, implementing the strategy of learning faith and morality, the Principal's exemplifying a visionary and transformational leadership, and by implementing the storytelling method for generate student motivation.

The contribution of this research is to provide solution strategies that can carried be out by school principals, teachers and employees in shaping good characters for the students as the

next generation of the nation. In addition, this research provides an overview of the good character values that students must have. Furthermore, This research provides information about government regulations that support the formation and strengthening of student characters.

The limitation of this research is that it only discusses the principal's strategy in form good character in students. Suggestions for further researchers to be more explained about the obstacles or inhibiting factors for the formation of good character in students, supporting factors for the formation of good character in students, implementation steps to build good characters through building programs on students and other relevant topics.

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