The role of character education in learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract
Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) has an impact on all aspects of life, including education. Face-to-face education must be transferred to online learning. In learning, both face-to-face and online, character education must always be instilled in students. Character education is an important thing that students must have in order to grow their character, so they can have good personalities. In a pandemic such as now, character education is very necessary for students to continue to develop their potential, even though learning is carried out online. The purposes of this study are 1) Analyzing the role of character education in learning; 2) Describing the role of character education in learning in the pandemic era of COVID-19. This type of research is a reference research. The object of this research is the role of character education in learning in the COVID-19 pandemic era. Data validity is done by Triangulation of Sources and Triangulation of Extension. In this study, data analysis techniques used constant comparison. The results of the study are twofold, 1) Character education in learning has a role for students to foster good character that can be realized in their social life; 2) In the pandemic era COVID-19 character education can play a role so that students independently want to learn material and develop an attitude of responsibility towards the tasks given by the teacher in online learning.

Keywords: character building, learning, COVID-19

Peran pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran selama pandemi COVID-19

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: pendidikan karakter, pembelajaran, COVID-19

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INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus Disease-2019 or commonly known as COVID-19 is a new type of coronavirus that was first epidemic in Wuhan, China at the end of December 2019. The virus spread very quickly to various countries. WHO (World Health Organization) has established COVID-19 as a pandemic because it has spread to more than 200 countries in the world, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, the government confirmed the first two positive people of COVID-19 on March 2, 2020. The government established a policy of working from home and learning from home to minimize transmission of COVID-19. The community must also always implement health protocols such as social distancing, physical distancing, wearing masks when traveling, and must be diligent in washing their hands with soap.

Coronavirus Disease has a major influence on various aspects of life, whether trade, industry, economy, social, education, etc. Education is one of the aspects affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though it is a pandemic, the learning process must still be carried out so that students can still learn teaching material even independently at home. Learning is a process or activity that is systematic, and systemic that is interactive and communicative between the educator (teacher) with students, learning resources, and the environment to create a condition that allows students to learn, both in class or outside the classroom, whether the teacher is physically present or not, to master the competencies that have been determined (Arifin, 2012).

COVID-19 makes the whole community uneasy because the vaccine has not been found. The spread of this virus is so fast, it can be spread through duplet splashes from someone who has been infected. This virus is a virus that attacks the human respiratory system, the resulting symptoms ranging from mild symptoms to severe symptoms. As an emergency Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) effort, the Minister of Education issues Circular Letter Number 3 of 2020 on the Education Unit and Number 36962 / MPK.A / HK / 2020 concerning the Implementation of Education in the Coronavirus Disease Emergency Period (COVID-19) then learning activities conducted online in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Dewi, 2020). Online learning is learning that is carried out by utilizing technological and communication advancements. Learning can be carried out with applications that can be ask by students via cellphones or laptops, such as WhatsApp (WA) applications, schoology, google classroom, google meet, zoom, and so forth.

In learning, education must emphasize the formation of students' character and character. The character will influence the social life and humanitarian attitude. According to Poerwadarminta the word character means character, mental characteristics, character, or character which is the difference between one person and another person (Agung, 2018). School or learning is one of the right media in growing students’ character. In learning, character education is usually given in Islamic Religious Education subjects. Character is directly related to the religious attitude of students. The importance of the process of implementing character education in various districts to suit the needs and goals of each community, so that it effectively influences student behavior (Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006).

The school functions as a arena where students can practice virtue and transcend their school life (Milliren & Messer, 2009). Teachers as curriculum developers are required to be able to display a learning atmosphere that is oriented to the development of personality, character, and character. Character education has an important role as an effort to resolve the condition of education, especially in the current pandemic. Character education is a holistic educational process that connects the moral dimension with the social sphere in student life as a foundation for the formation of a quality generation that is able to live independently and has the principle of a truth that can be accounted for (Raharjo, 2010). Some examples of problems that are often experienced by students in learning include, such as lack of discipline, lack of responsibility for the tasks given by teachers, lack of curiosity about new things, and lack of student creativity in participating in learning.

Character education is a growing discipline with deliberate efforts to optimize students' ethical behavior (Agboola & Tsai, 2012). Character education is something that students must always grow in themselves both within the school environment, family, and in the community. Character education is defined as education that instills and develops the noble character of learners so that they have the noble character, apply and practice in their lives whether in the family, as members of the community and citizens (Wibowo, 2012). In the current pandemic condition, online learning must also emphasize the importance of character building and character of students through character education so that...
students can also independently be able to increase their knowledge and develop their potential, and be able to realize it in their social life.

In online learning is not always without obstacles, one of the big obstacles in online learning is the difficulty of the internet network. This indirectly requires students to understand the material independently, because. Students must have a high curiosity about the new material provided by the teacher and can have a greater sense of responsibility towards the learning carried out in order to be able to complete each task given according to a predetermined grace period. With character education, students are expected to have a greater sense of responsibility towards the learning that is carried out, especially in the current pandemic.

Based on the description above, the purposes of this study are twofold, 1) analyzing the role of character education in learning, 2) describing the role of character education in learning in the COVID-19 pandemic era.

**METHODS**

This type of research is a reference research study. Reference research is research in which data collection is oriented to several suitable references (Sutama, 2019). The object of research is a variable or what is the focus of research. The object of this research is the role of character education in learning in the Covid-19 pandemic era. Character can be interpreted as a person's character. Character education is something that has an important role in learning, especially during the pandemic that requires learning to take place online. Character education must be instilled in students from an early age. Character education is expected to make students more responsible for their obligations in online learning.

The validity of the data is obtained by using Triangulation of Source and Triangulation of Extension. Source Triangulation means that data is taken from various sources and obtained the same data (Sutama, 2019). For example, in addition to through interviews and observations, researchers can use participant observation, written documents, archives, historical documents, official records, personal notes or writings and pictures or photographs. While the Extension of Time Triangulation means that the data is obtained from a time that is repeated and different so that the same valid data is obtained (Sutama, 2019).

The data analysis technique used in this study is the Constant Comparison method. Data analysis techniques with Constant Comparison are data compared with theories which are then given meaning (Sutama, 2019). This data analysis process includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusions.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The role of character education in learning

Taking education is a right for all Indonesian citizens. Education is carried out from basic education to higher education. Based on Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, education is a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed by himself, society, nation and country. According Rahman Education is a conscious and systematic effort in developing the potential of students (Utama, Anriyani, & Hendrayana, 2019). Education can shape intelligence, not only intelligence about science, but also mental and spiritual intelligence of students. Education is a process that runs continuously. Education is important to help shape one's personality.

Education teaches about how to deal with various problems in life, so education is not only useful for obtaining a position or degree. Superior human formed through a systematic process in an educational container with all the tools which supports the realization of education quality (Rohman, 2013). Education is considered as the best place to prepare agents of national change that will bring prosperity to others. Educational institutions are no longer a place to transfer knowledge, but also a place to shape the attitudes, behavior, character, and leadership of young people (Rohman, Hum, Syaifulnudin, & Yuliati, 2014). Education is not only about funding science, but also about the values and norms of life and human behavior. According to Piaget education must lead to the development of physical potential according to its stages, as an effort to shape the nation's character to determine the nation's future existence (Harun, 2017).
The basic dimensions of humanity include the three most basic things, namely: 1) affective reflected in the quality of faith, piety, noble character, noble character, superior personality and aesthetic competence; 2) cognitive which is reflected in the capacity of thought and intellectual power to explore and develop and master science and technology; 3) psychomotor reflected in the ability to develop technical skills, practical skills, and kinesthetic competence (Muslich, 2013). The character of students is shaped by the social environment that is outside the scope of educational settings (Romanowski, 2005). Education cannot be separated from learning.

Learning is an interaction between the teacher (educator) with students, learning media, learning resources, and the environment. Based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, that learning is the process of interaction of educators with students and learning resources that take place in a learning environment. Meanwhile according to Wahyu & Indri learning is a process of interaction in learning and teaching in a condition that involves several elements, both intrinsic and extrinsic elements (Anugraheni, 2018). The learning that is carried out can be in the form of face-to-face learning in class, or online learning using electronic media as it is today.

In a learning character values must always be instilled in students, both face-to-face learning in the classroom, as well as in online learning. A person's character can be reflected in attitudes and behavior in daily life. Character is directly related to a person's social and human attitude. The characters come from Greek which means to mark (mark) and focus on how to apply the values of goodness in real actions or everyday behavior (Simaremare, 2013). The characters themselves include several values that were developed. The character values developed, according to the Character Count in American quoted by Heri Gunawan include 10 main characters, namely: Trustworthy, Respect and attention, Responsibility, Honest, Care, Nationality, Sincerity, Courageous, Diligent, and Integrity.

Character can be instilled and developed through character education. What is meant by character education is an umbrella term that explains various aspects of teaching and learning for personal development (Latif, 2009) The character of a student is certainly different from that of other students. There are several elements contained in character education, such as moral values and human values obtained from his experience both in the family, school, and community. According to Donie, character education consists of several elements, including the cultivation of character with an understanding of students about the structure of values and role models provided by teachers and the environment (Supranoto, 2015). Meanwhile according to (Marzuki, 2013), Character education contains three main elements, that is knowing the good, loving the good, doing the good.

Furthermore, the Ministry of National Education in the Character Education Guide identifies 80 items of character values grouped into five, namely: 1) The values of human behavior in relation to God; 2) The values of human behavior in relation to oneself, including (honest, responsible, healthy lifestyle, discipline, hard work, self-confidence, entrepreneurial spirit, logical thinking, critical, creative and innovative, independent, curious, love knowledge); 3) The values of human behavior in relation to fellow human beings, including (consciously will the rights and obligations of self and others, obey social rules, respect the work and achievements of others, polite, democratic); 4) The values of human behavior in relation to the environment, and 5) The values of human behavior in relation to nationalities are nationalists and respect for diversity (Julaicha, 2014).

Character education must be carried out according to principles so that it runs optimally, one of which is student activity. Active students will have high independence and curiosity to gain new knowledge and experience in various ways. Correspondingly, Sulistyowati stated that the principle of applying character education is that students must be active, the way a teacher must plan learning activities that cause students to actively formulate questions, look for sources of information, gather information, process information already possessed, reconstruct data, facts, or value, presents the results of reconstruction or value development process (Julaicha, 2014). Character education must be carried out with 3C that is consistent, continuous, and consistent, as a conscious and planned effort to grow and develop the characters in students (As‘ari, 2018).

A person’s personal character may be innate but does not rule out the possibility of a person's character growing from the environment in which he was raised. Character must always be grown and developed in someone. A person's character will follow where he grows. When learning face to face, the school will become a place for children to be able to grow and develop the character that is in him. According to Hamid, school (education) is one of the strategic places in the formation of character in addition to the family and community (Andriani, Arifin, & Nurabadi, 2018). In line with this opinion,
it is expected that in school, students can develop their characters optimally. Schools have an important role in fostering moral values, human values to shape the personality of learners with character.

Character education has a large role in the life of a participant, both in the school environment, family, and in the community, so character education must be instilled as early as possible. Students are expected to develop good habits to become someone with good character. In the implementation of the 2013 curriculum, character education must be given in overall learning, in this case the teacher becomes one of the most influential factors. Character education in essence seeks to realize education that can shape individuals into moral and religious individuals. The purpose of character education in general is to improve the quality of implementation and educational outcomes that lead to the achievement of the formation of character and noble character of students in full, integrated, and balanced (Muslich, 2013). A person's own character can change if it is not developed.

Lickona revealed that there are ten signs of the age to watch out for because if these signs already exist, it means that a nation is heading for the brink (Fauziyah & Jailani, 2014). The signs in question are: 1) increased violence among adolescents; 2) worsening use of language and words; 3) strong peer group influence in acts of violence; 4) increased self-destructive behavior, such as drugs, alcohol, and free sex; 5) increasingly blurring of good and bad moral guidelines; 6) decreased work ethic; 7) lower respect for parents and teachers; 8) lower individual and citizen responsibilities; 9) cultivating dishonesty; 10) there is mutual suspicion and hatred between people. In Indonesia, the signs have started to appear. To overcome these various problems, character education must always be instilled and nurtured in students.

In learning, there are some deviations that are common in students, such as the reduced discipline when in school and the less sense of responsibility for their obligations. According to Supriadi Dwi, reasonable if students have deviant behavior because education that runs tends to simply transfer of knowledge (transfer of knowledge) is not followed by an adequate transfer of value (Fauziyah & Jailani, 2014). Character will determine a person's personality, so character education must be given from the basic level or early because moral intelligence-based character education is actualized systematically and continuously. Character education will form a better social attitude, so the character is very influential on one's life.

Another example of the lack of development of character education is the reduction in creative feelings and curiosity for new things. This can be seen as when someone is given a math problem to be solved, there are some students who immediately consider themselves unable to solve the problem because it is determined that mathematics is difficult, when in fact if he wants to learn the material and try to work on the problem it can be easier to the solution is sought. In addition, the lack of growth of character education in students also makes students less disciplined. One example, when given a task from the teacher, students do not complete according to the time given or too late. If this continues, the students will not be able to fully develop their potential. To overcome these things, character education must always be instilled and grown in students.

Someone who has a strong character can be seen various characteristics. According to PP Muhammadiyah (2009), the characteristics of a strong HR character include 1) religious, which has a life attitude and personality that is religious, honest, trustworthy, generous, helping one another, and tolerant; 2) moderate, which is to have a life attitude that is not radical and is reflected in the middle personality between the individual and social, material and spiritual oriented and able to live and cooperate in diversity; 3) intelligent, which has a rational life attitude and personality, love of knowledge, open, and forward thinking; and 4) independent, which has an independent life attitude and personality, high discipline, saving, respecting time, resilient, entrepreneurial, hard work, and having high national love without losing the orientation of universal human values and relations between civilizations of nations (Inanna, 2018).

Lickona explained several reasons for the need for character education, including: there are still many young generations who injure each other because of their weak awareness of moral values so that giving moral values to the younger generation is one of the most important functions of civilization. The role of schools as a place to cultivate and develop character education becomes increasingly important when many children receive little moral instruction from parents, society, or religious institutions. There is no such thing as a value-free education, schools teach values every day through design or without design. Commitment to character education is important if we are willing
and continue to be good teachers. Effective character education makes schools more civilized, cares about the community, and refers to increased academic performance (Inanna, 2018).

From the various explanations mentioned, character education has a very important role for students. Character education will be very influential for the personal and social life of students. Character education will form good personalities that can be actualized in social, national, and state life.

The role of character education in learning during COVID-19 pandemic

Currently the world is in an uproar with the epidemic of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). COVID-19 spreads very quickly to various parts of the world, even WHO (World Health Organization) has established this virus as a pandemic because it has become epidemic to more than 200 countries in the world. This virus has a great impact on almost all aspects of life in the world. This is compounded by the discovery of a vaccine for COVID-19. In line with the increasingly uncontrolled spread of COVID-19, the government made policies for social distancing and physical distancing. With Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), all aspects of life are disrupted, many layoffs occur, the decision to work from home (WFH), policies to learn from home (SFH), and even some areas that enact PSBB (Large-scale Social Restrictions).

Education has become one of the aspects that is greatly affected by the presence of COVID-19. In the current pandemic, innovation must be made in learning. Because activities that do not involve many people are not permitted such as face-to-face learning in the classroom, each learning activity must be switched from face-to-face to online, to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Online learning is distance learning and does not need to present the teacher (educator) with students in one room (class). Online learning is carried out by all education units, from the tertiary level, secondary school, and even elementary school level. Online learning is carried out by utilizing advances in technology and information using the internet network in its implementation.

The media used in online learning are in accordance with the provisions of each subject and schoolteacher. Some schools implement learning using applications that are easy to reach by students can also be used in online learning, such as schoology, google classroom, google meet, zoom, WhatsApp (WA), there are also teachers who come to the homes of students to provide learning. With online learning students can have the freedom of learning because they can learn wherever and whenever. However, the success of online learning is also determined by how students participate in it. As Nakayama revealed that from all the literature in e-learning indicates that not all students will succeed in online learning. This is due to learning environment factors and student characteristics (Nakayama, Yamamoto, & S, 2007).

Online learning indirectly requires students to understand the material from the teacher independently. Students must have a curiosity about new things, have creativity in solving problems provided by the teacher (educator), and must remain disciplined in participating in learning, even though the implementation is not face-to-face in the classroom. Character education becomes a point in making it happen. According to (Supranoto, 2015) cultural education and national character are basically aimed at developing the character of each individual in order to be able to realize the noble values of Pancasila; develop the basic potential to be kind, think well, and behave well; strengthen and build multicultural national behavior; and promote competitive national civilization in the world.

Character education is expected to make students always disciplined in implementing learning in this pandemic. Although learning is carried out online, students must still be able to develop the potential that exists in themselves to be able to become a better person and move forward. Home study policies at educational institutions clearly cause major disruptions, such as student learning, disruptions in assessment, cancellation of assessment, opportunities to get a job after graduating from education, cancellation of public assessments for qualifications in job selection (Aji, 2020). In addition, not all regions have a smooth internet network, so there will be obstacles in obtaining materials and participating in online learning.

Character education has an important role for the progress of students. Although learning online with students with good character education, will always instill a disciplined attitude, creative, and responsible for all their obligations as a student. For example, if the teacher gives an assignment, students will do it seriously and not delay the task. In addition, students will also have a sense of discipline to send the assignment according to the time given. Students are also expected to always
want to know about new things, so they have new knowledge about various things and can always develop the good potential that exists in themselves.

CONCLUSION

Education is carried out as an effort to foster good personalities of students. In education, the implementation of learning can take place face-to-face in the classroom, or online by utilizing the internet network. Learning is a process of interaction between teachers and students, learning resources, and the environment, both carried out face-to-face in the classroom, as well as learning that is carried out online. Based on the results and discussion above, character education is an educational process to instill and develop good character and traits in students who can be practiced in their social life. Character education has a very important role especially during learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as it is today, so students have a sense of discipline, a sense of responsibility, and curiosity for something new. With character education, students are also more independent in learning new material provided by the teacher so that they can complete the given tasks well and according to the allotted time. So that character education must always be instilled in students, so that students can develop every potential that exists in them.

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