

Models of children character building at Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal kindergarten

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ABSTRACT

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The recent moral degradation in public has been troubling for various circles. The younger generation's bad morals have become a severe concern for parents, educators, and community members. Several things have allegedly been the cause of the unsuccessful building of children's character, starting from kindergarten to university. The building of children's character will be successful if it is started from the right model, which becomes the basic framework in fostering children's character. The right character-building model becomes urgent for the success of effective and efficient children's character building. The research aimed to identify and analyze the character-building model of Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Kindergarten (TK ABA) in Kembaran subdistrict, Banyumas Regency. This study was a qualitative descriptive with the headmaster and teachers as the subjects. The data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, while data analysis was done by data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawing. The results indicated that the character-building model for TK ABA children in Kembaran Banyumas District was conducted by; first, the teacher explained the foundation of worship the intention. Second, the building integration to the theme of learning by the following steps: a) planning by making RPPH, b) implementation of building in the classroom, c) the teacher showed stories and converses about certain characters, d) children obtained the opportunity to express their experiences about specific behaviors, e) teachers appreciated children's achievements, f) teachers provided character strengthening. The third is character-building outside the classroom: a) monitoring children's activities, b) directing children's behavior. Fourth, teachers evaluated building activities. The five teachers then worked together with parents. The character-building methods were telling stories, questions and answers, role-playing/socio drama, modeling, and habituation.

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Introduction

Recently, children tended to show deviant behavior and violate religiosity, law, social and moral norms. It is indicated by frequent brawls between students, consuming illegal drugs, murder, robbery, free sex, truancy, fighting parents, etc. These behaviors are a long-term effect of

the unsuccessful character building of parents, teachers, and community leaders; in other words, moral degradation has become common among students. It is even pointed out that the lack of success in character building is due to the lack of success in education and character building for children previously, especially in kindergarten.

According to Furqon (2016), the phenomenon of moral degradation that becomes endemic in society lately is very concerning, the bad morals of the younger generation today, and why the younger generation's religious morals are being eroded. According to him, the principle of pedagogy (teaching system) in education plays a significant role in producing superior generations. Therefore, incorporating spirituality is an essential part of overcoming problems related to the nation's moral crisis. This condition indicates the importance of fostering children's character, which is the core of education to overcome the chaos and moral turmoil of a nation which is on the edge of destruction. It is ideal for giving the children a character-building from kindergarten that hopes that children's character building will be more deeply embedded in their hearts. The age of kindergarten is the golden age, which is easily formed and guided. In this case, it takes a long time and serious educational and building efforts to overcome this condition from various parties, parents, teachers, and community leaders.

Kindergarten is the age which determines the character and personality of the children. The building at an early age, namely the early years of infancy and childhood, is a crucial building period for a person because early childhood is a golden phase in individual development (the golden age) which will determine the character, attitude, values, behavior, and personality of the individual in the future. At this time, the formation of children's character becomes very urgent and will affect the child's personality building in the later stages of the child's life. The development of children's character is an effort to prepare children to have noble personalities and special characters as assets in facing their future. According to Salahuddin (2013), educated people are an asset for Indonesia's future; preparing them with exemplary character and leadership spirit means preparing human figures with strong characters who can give an example and become role models for the people they lead. Aqib (2011) states that in the dimensions of national and state life, children are the determinants of life in the future; they bring the nation's building and state in their hands. The formation of national character and human resources reliability is determined by how to provide appropriate treatment to children as early as possible. Thus, preparing children with noble personalities, ethics, and special character is essential when that nation wants to maintain its existence.

Meanwhile, the building model is an essential thing in developing activity because the model is a conceptual and operational framework as well as framing a building activity. The right building model will be able to realize the building goals effectively and efficiently. The model is defined as a systematic procedure in organizing experiences in building to achieve a goal. The model can also

be interpreted as an approach used in activities. The building model has the same meaning as the approach, strategy, or method used in the developing process. Adityasari (2014) stated, "children aged 4-5 years (group A children) are at the fairy tale stage, where their fantasies and emotions still influence them in living up to religious values." Learning strategies for Islamic values in KB-TK Siti Sulaechah 04 Semarang include lesson planning, organizing strategies, delivery strategies, and management strategies. Delivery strategies were the teachers occupied and implemented engaging learning media for the children. Furthermore, they also carried out classical and individual learning activities. Magta's research (2013), entitled "The Concept of Ki Hajar Dewantara Education on Early Childhood Education" Ki Hajar Dewantara, is a national education figure who states that early childhood education is a sensitive period or an important period for children's lives. At this time, the opening of the child's heart so that the child receives all experiences at the age of under seven years will become the basis for a permanent heart, so the importance of education in sensitive periods which aimed at adding to the contents of the heart, not changing the basis of the heart.

Muthoifin and Jinan's (2015) research on the character education of Ki Hajar Dewantara concluded that Ki Hadjar's attention to the importance of character education was emphasized on character building, behavior, and personality through habituation to committing good deed actions from childhood to adulthood. The character education meant by Ki Hajar Dewantara is not teaching theories about good and bad with its complicated arguments. What he wants with character education is doing good to children in everyday life and becoming ingrained. Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Kindergarten (ABA) is one of Aisyiyah's organizations' charities in the education sector from other charities in Aisyiyah's organization. Aisyiyah realizes that education is the key to changing a person and nation's fate simultaneously, so Aisyiyah is committed to developing TK ABA by promoting progressive Islamic values. The building of TK ABA shows a significant increase along with the development of Aisyiyah's organization throughout Indonesia, including the building of TK ABA in Kembaran, Banyumas District. The building of TK Aisyiyah continues to expand along with the building of Aisyiyah's organization throughout Indonesia. The Aisyiyah movement began to be massive after the 11th Congress in 1922 through a propaganda policy for the establishment of Muhammadiyah outside Yogyakarta which should be available with the formation of Aisyiyah's management. Frobel School Aisyiyah began to spread outside the Yogyakarta area. Along with expanding Aisyiyah's education to outside Java, the name Frobel Aisyiyah changed to Bustanul Athfal Aisyiyah.

Along with the development of PAUD (Early Childhood Education) in Indonesia, many innovations have been developed and achievements based on faith, knowledge, and charity values. TK ABA continues to advance to become a pioneer and obtains awards at the National level (Tanwir II, 2019). Gradually, the education sector also faces significant challenges which are

fundamental to the learning development of kindergarten children. Therefore, Aisyiyah must continue to carry out evaluations, strategic steps, and thoughts to respond to developments and challenges faced. These various challenges include the decline in children's character and moral degradation that have recently become common in society. Children involved in brawls, drugs, free sex, etc cannot be separated from the character-building of children from Kindergarten age. However, the character-building of children from Kindergarten age becomes necessary when we want children with a superior character for the next period in the child's life. It is where the importance of a character-building model for Kindergarten age children is in accordance with the characteristics and psychology of kindergarten-aged children so that the character-building of children is successful and efficient.

Method

This study was a qualitative descriptive which obtained comprehensive information and data on teacher-student interactions to the implementation of character building for Kindergarten-aged children conducted at Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Kindergarten Kembaran Subdistrict Banyumas Regency. The data sources were primary data and secondary data. The primary data sources were key informants; the head of kindergarten and teachers at TK ABA in Kembaran subdistrict Banyumas Regency. Secondary data were obtained from a review of documents related to the implementation of children's character building in the form of anecdotes, children's behavior diaries, children's achievement reports books, and other documents related to the research focus. The data were validated by the triangulation of data sources. Data collection techniques were observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques covered; 1) data reduction, 2) data presentation, and 3) conclusion drawing.

Discussion

The research results discovered that the background of character building for children in Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal Kindergarten (TK ABA) was because of the vision of TK Aisyiyah in Indonesia, namely to prepare children with Islamic characters based on the result of Tanwir II Aisyiyah in 2019. Entering the age of the second century, Aisyiyah strengthened the character of TK ABA education which is based on faith, knowledge, and charity, to educate an independent spirit, full of tolerance, peace in diversity which was based on progressive Islamic values. Strong character children also owned strong Islamic values, loved their environment, and loved peace. Besides, the background of character building for children in TK ABA in Kembaran was due to the institution's concerns, managers, and teachers to the decline in children's morale lately which cannot be separated from the role of kindergartens in shaping children's character.

The curriculum implemented in TK ABA in Kembaran Banyumas was the 2013 curriculum embedded with the Al Islam Kemuhammadiyah curriculum as a special feature of TK Aisyiyah. The curriculum is a framework that contains the planning and implementation of a program to develop all aspects of child building in preparing children to achieve success in school and the next stage. The character-building curriculum implemented was also following the needs of kindergarten children to shape children's character. According to one of the teachers, *Inshaallah*, the curriculum used to build children's character in kindergarten was following the needs of the children; al-Islam curriculum which includes *aqidah*, worship, morality, *muamalah*, and the Qur'an and prayers, which developed in learning materials for *wudlu* movements, prayer movements, Friday prayers, Eid al-Fitr prayers, Eid al-Adha prayers, dhikr (reciting *tasbih*, *tahmid*, *istighfar*, *takbir*, and *tahlil*), various kinds of prayers (prayer before traveling, prayer before learning, prayer after studying, prayer for parents, prayer before going to sleep, and prayer when waking up), various Islamic holidays (Mawlid Prophet, *Isra' Mi'raj*, and Islamic New Year), reading *hijaiyah* letters, introduction to short Arabic script, recite and memorize short surah.

Practically, models or steps to develop children's character implemented in Aisyiyah Kindergarten in Kembaran sub-district were; first, the teacher educated children with sincere intentions of worship. Second, the teachers made an integrated building plan with the learning theme at that time, and the third was the implementation of development by following the steps; a) the teacher illustrated certain characters (Examples of characters which share toys with friends), b) the teacher asked children to share their experiences in sharing toys with friends, c) the teacher appreciated children's achievement in storytelling, d) the teacher reinforced the importance of sharing with friends. Third, the teacher evaluated the building of children's characters both inside and outside the classroom with anecdotal notes and checklists. Fourth, the teacher worked together by communicating with the parents to foster children's character. This model was also able to attract children's attention and activeness to shape children's character; it was proven by children's better character.

Kindergarten age determines the character and personality of children in the next period and is even the most crucial age range in human life. Kindergarten age is also called the golden age because it is the age of the rapid building to all physical and spiritual aspects of the children. Children's spiritual, emotional, brain, and social intelligence occurs very quickly at that age. Kindergarten children are able to respond to what is around, even though they are not able to record abstract things yet. Children do not know good and bad; only what they often see and hear will greatly influence the building of their character and psyche. Parents and childcare centers, playgroups, kindergartens, and environments, are places where children get experience and have practice according to their abilities, which will shape their character in the future.

From the Islamic perspective, they are genetically equipped with Allah SWT's various potential to equip themselves in navigating their future lives. The children's various potentials have already become the obligation of adults (parents, educators, and community leaders) to develop and maximize this potential through the educational process. Mulyasa (2012) states that one of the provisions God gives to humans is nature, namely good qualities that are bestowed on a child's conscience from pre-birth. Astuti (2011) defines *fitrah* as the basic human potential associated with beliefs which include values, attitudes to life and the need to interact with their environment. *Fitrah* is also defined as human nature in God's form of belief and the desire to worship to God. In the study of the Qur'an, when it is correlated with other sentences, it has many meanings. According to al-Qurthubi (tt, 1) *fitrah* means holy (*al-thuhr*). According to al-Awzai, *fitrah* means holiness (*al-thuhr*). The sacred meaning does not mean empty or neutral (not having good and bad tendencies) as theorized by John Locke or psych behaviorism but psychic who is free from inherited sin and spiritual disease, 2) *fitrah* means potential - Islam (*al-din al-Islamy*), This was stated by Abu Hurairah which states that *fitrah* means being Muslim.

Character-building for kindergarten children is an effort to prepare children to have noble personalities and special characters to face their future. According to Salahuddin (2013), educated people are the asset for Indonesia's future; preparing them with exemplary character and spirit means preparing human figures with strong characters who can be examples and role models for the people they lead. Meanwhile, the character-building of kindergarten children is an urgent matter to equip the child to face his life later. The building of the child's character in the kindergarten is the building of moral principles that must be mastered by the child as Ulwan (1981), moral education such as education on moral principles and behavioral virtues are habits that should be possessed and the children get used to until they become a *mukallaf*. Building aimed at providing the children's basic moral values, which will become a habit of his life. Meanwhile, according to Lickona (2013), character education emphasizes the importance of three components of good character; moral knowing, moral feelings or feelings about morals, and moral action.

TK ABA is one of the kindergartens established to provide children with special character, which becomes a corn or serious attention to Kindergarten ABA as the vision of TK ABA is "The Building pious, noble, independent, creative and caring students" (Tanwir II Aisyiyah, 2019). In other words, TK ABA provides education to children on the basics of personality, morals and character of students by providing knowledge and skills which suit the needs, characteristics and psychology of students as well as prepare students to enter the next level of education or elementary school (SD).

The model of children character building in TK Aisyiyah se Kecamatan Kembaran Banyumas is inseparable from the background of character building itself, which is based on the recent moral

degradation, which is the impact of less successful character building since childhood. Besides, it has been the vision of Aisyiyah Kindergarten since its inception and also based on the verses of the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet related to the organization of education, among others; QS. An-Nisa': 9, QS. Luqman: 12-16, QS. At-Tahrim: 6, QS. Al-Kahfi: 46 and QS. Al-Nahl: 78 and the Hadith of the Prophet "Every child is born in a state of nature, so the parents of the child are the ones who make the child a Jew, a Christian and a Majusi (HR. Bukhori)". Children character-building models implemented in TK Aisyiyah in Kembaran sub-district Banyumas regency were 1) teacher educated children with the sincere intention of worship, 2) teacher made building plan integrated with learning theme, 3) the teacher implemented the building with steps as follow; a) the teacher described a particular character, b) the teacher asked the children to tell his/her experience about a particular character, c) the teacher appreciated the children's achievement in storytelling, d) the teacher provided reinforcement of a particular character, e) the teacher evaluated by monitoring the child's character building in and out of the classroom with anecdotal notes and checklists and 4) teachers collaborate by communicating with the parents for the success of developing the children character.

Conclusion

A conceptional and operational framework as well as the framework of a character-building project is the character-building model. The concept is a framework or systematic measures to organize building interactions to accomplish a construction project. The character-building model for childcare children is namely, the steps taken by the education department in shaping the child 'character, which includes elements, methods, processes and strategies such as a variety of formal descriptions comprised of pre-, median and aftermath content, direct or indirect resources. The model for the development of children's character used in the Aisyiyah Kindergarten in the Kembaran subdistrict of Banyumas was as follows: 1) the teacher educates children with sincere intentions of worship; 2) the teacher prepares a building plan integrated with the learning theme; 3) the implementation of the steps as follows; (a) the teacher illustrates a specific character; (b) the teacher asks; Such a model is also capable of drawing children's attention and activity to shape the child's character; it is proven by a better child's character.

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