

# Family as the Key of Children Character Building

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**Abstract:- Nevertheless, it is not that easy to accomplish such a thing; an awareness of the importance of immediately-done character building should be first taken into account. Not to mention the fact that today's condition of Indonesian characters is very worrying as well as the people that do not spontaneously grow becoming good b Methods that can be empowered by parents in shaping children's personalities include: 1) providing skills in taking care of themselves, 2) allowing children to offer their own assignments without help from others, 3) make positive habituations, 4) be responsible for their own choices, 5) give freedom to children to choose their own activities not to depend on others, 6) make children aware that the companion is not always on his side. Supporting factors and inhibiting factors in the formation of a child's personality in the Negara Tulang Bawang Village Bunga Mayang District, North Lampung Regency are as follows: supporting factors include: a) children's mood, b) children's intelligence, c) living environment, d) educational institutions, e) peers or games, f) motivation and advice from parents and inhibiting factors include: a) Miss communication, b) free time or opportunity, c) supervision and guidance are still lacking; instead, it is the result of a lifetime's effort.**

**Keywords:- Family, Character Building, Children.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

### ➤ *The Significance of Character Building for Children*

Thomas Lickona, the professor of education from Cortland University, states that there are ten signs of human behavior leading to the destruction of a nation, including (1) increasing violence among teenagers, (2) deteriorating language use, (3) strong influence of peer-group in violence, (4) increasing self-destructive behavior such as using drugs, drinking alcohols, and having free sex, (5) loss of moral guidance, (6) decreasing work ethic, (7) being disrespectful to parents and teachers, (8) lacking of responsibility as an individual and citizen, (9) dishonesty, (10) being hateful and preconceived.

Indonesia has experienced those signs besides other apprehensive issues, i.e., left brain-oriented (cognitive skill) education system and paying less attention to the development of the right brain (behavior, empathy, and feeling); whereas, character building is more likely related to the optimization of right brain functions. The fact that character building is integrated into some subjects, such as Religious Education, has come to the reality that it more emphasizes the aspect of the left brain (memorizing).

Shaping one's character should be done systematically and continuously by involving the elements of knowledge, feeling, love, and action. Character building is described as someone who struggles to be a bodybuilder that requires muscle training.

Character building should be carried out from an early age as it defines the quality of a child towards his adulthood; Montessori called it a sensitive period. The use of this term is based on the idea that all aspects of early childhood development enter a very sensitive stage of life, indicating that children's development in the future will be productive if such a sensitive stage is optimally given productive stimulus.

Freud argues that the failure of good personality instilment to children will shape their poor characters later in the adulthood stages. The success of parents in guiding their children to deal with personality conflicts in childhood strongly determines children's success in their social life (Erikson, 1968).

### ➤ *The Role of Family in Building Children's Character*

Children's development had been started before they were born in which unborn babies are responding to what their mothers do. Thus, a family significantly determines children's growth and development as human beings.

Children will grow to good individuals if they are also surrounded by a friendly and stable environment, meaning that they will be optimally matured. According to Megawangi (2004), family and school members, mass media, the business community, and others take part in children character building. In other words, all individuals are responsible for improving high-quality generations.

Nevertheless, it is not that easy to accomplish such a thing; an awareness of the importance of immediately-done character building should be first taken into account. Not to mention the fact that today's condition of Indonesian characters is very worrying as well as the people that do not spontaneously grow becoming good beings; instead, it is the result of a lifetime's effort.

### ➤ *Family as the First Place for Children Character Building*

Family is the first and main source of children's growth and development. United Nations General Assembly resolution (in Megawangi, 2004) explains that the key function of family is "a place to educate, take care of, socialize and satisfy children, develop all members' abilities to perform the function in a proper way to the community, and create a healthy environment to reach a prosperous family".

As the first and main source of character building, the failure of instilling noble characters to children will complicate any institutions, including school, to fix it. Such a failure affect children's characters in social life. For this reason, every family should be aware of the matter that the nation's characters depend on children character building at home (Latifah; 2011). This is in line with William Bennett (in Megawangi, 2004) claiming that family is the first and effective source to perform the functions of health, education, and welfare to the children. If the family fails to teach children to be honest, passionate, and encouraged individuals who have basic skills, it will be difficult for other institutions to fix this failure.

Although a lot of people have been educated in schools, many of them act negatively by not showing well-behaved doings. Donald Kengkel in *Journal of Political Economy* proves that an educated person is not always having good habits as expected (split personality) where humans' acts and behaviors are far from the applicable positive norm. The more people act meanly, the less they see good actions. Poor actions done by educated people encompass violence, dishonesty, corruption, bad work struggle and discipline, lack of integrity, less positive towards the country, being easily satisfied and egoistic, and other split personalities that often upset their surrounding community.

Humans were born having positive characters that distinguish them from other creatures. They have common sense and culture; however, humans sometimes do not act like one. They feel unembarrassed behaving defectively in public.

Humans with quality characters are those who can integrate spiritual and emotional aspects into their lives. When these aspects are not integrated, there will be a Split Personality as previously termed by Danial Goleman.

*Indonesian Kompas News* on 21 June 2011 created a headline of Nation's Characters with the Theme: Moral Improvement is Urgent in All Lines "moral depravity that was widespread in the government bureaucracy and community required quick handling; otherwise, the country's bankruptcy was just a matter of time".

Parents will instill perfect characters to the children, balanced between being close to God and their social life along with their personalities, in the sense of building a generation or called "human governance".

#### ➤ *Parenting in Children Character Building in the Family Environment*

The success of a family in instilling good characters in children depends on the types of parenting styles. Parenting is defined as an interaction pattern between children and their parents that encompasses physical needs (foods, drinks), psychological needs (safety, love), and the socialization of applicable norms in the society, so that the children can live harmoniously with their environment (Latifah; 2011). In other words, parenting also includes an

interaction pattern between parents and their children in terms of children character building. This signifies that types of parenting styles (authoritarian, democratic, permissive) applied by parents in building their children's characters are very crucial. It defines the success of character building for children, and errors in parenting will result in failure in shaping noble characters.

## II. METHODS

The method used in this article is to collect a variety of references related to problems that exist then poured in the thoughts of the author.

## III. DISCUSSION

### ➤ *Must-Instilled Characters in a Family*

According to Ratna Megawangi, a family should build the following characters in children:

1. Loving God and His creatures
2. Responsibility, Discipline, and Independence
3. Honesty
4. Respect and Politeness
5. Being Kind, Helpful, and Cooperative
6. Being Confident, Creative, and Hard Worker
7. Leadership and Justice
8. Being Humble
9. Tolerance, Peace, and Unity
10. Cleanliness, Health, Neatness, and Safety

### The Significance of Character Building for Human Beings

God created humans in an unfinished form; they are unspecialized creatures. Although they are considered the perfect creature among others, it does not make them real human beings in the process of their development. They were born well, yet they can be less humane (cruel) in their development process. Consequently, humans still need helps throughout their life through education.

Education is intended to help people grow and develop to become real humans, those who are humane and having good characters. Character education known as character building is the attempt of education to build or shape ones' characters. The problem is that character building is lately becoming a strategic program. Humans should have been humane. The phenomenon that appears in everyday life is the tendency of human traits loss.

There is one thing ignored in Bloom taxonomy which is a willingness from students. Therefore, it is reasonable if many people "know good deeds", yet they "do not want to do those good deeds". Their willingness is less developed in the educational process they experience.

The practice of education that tends to be over-cognitive makes our education system more oriented to "owning" than "becoming"; meanwhile, it should be the other way around. When it comes to owning-oriented education, it will be more directed to the concept that "students have a lot of knowledge". Knowledge from teachers, books, and other sources is transferred to the

students so that they are fully knowledgeable. However, “ownership” is temporary as in money and knowledge that is different from “becoming” as in making students be themselves. Everything they learn will be a part of their personalities. The educational process is intended to present noble values, internalize, instill, and developing those values in children.

Furthermore, there is a lack of balance between the aspects of mind and heart in education. As humans have mind and heart strengths, today’s education tends to strengthen the mind rather than the heart. Education should have educated the mind and strengthened the heart at the same time. Humans’ mind can be educated or sharpened through different types of empirical sciences that the mind is able to receive the truth of sciences that tend to be rational. On the other hand, humans’ heart can be improved by religion; it accepts the existence of God and rational and irrational religious teachings. Thus, people should

constantly remember God in order that the heart (religion) can control the mind, and good behaviors will be shaped. Although the word “sense” is often put together with “mind”, they are totally different (Akbar, 2000). Humans with common sense can distinguish the right and wrong thing; humans whose behavior has been carefully shaped and embedded with religious teachings. Education that does not concern the balance between these two elements will result in poor personalities. Munir (2010) argues that character building aims to grow a person’s positive characters (strengthening good characters and weakening the bad ones). Q-Anees (2008) also notes that character building is to develop a mature human. Character building, in its process, should be able to practice education that advances self-awareness; to employ comprehensive and holistic approaches with the principles of *ing ngarso sung tulodo, ing madyo mangun karso, and tut wuri handayani* (provide a model, create a goal, and provide constructive support).

Kahlil Gibran wrote a poem entitled *On Children*:

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for itself. They come through you, but not from you. Though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts. For they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls. For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the archer’s hand be for gladness; For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In addition, the Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of National Education states that moral values in character building that should be performed in a family environment are as follows:

➤ *Being religious*

Being obedient to religious teachings they are adhered to, being tolerant to and live harmoniously with the believers of other religions.

➤ *Honesty*

Ensuring children trustworthy in a statement, action, and work.

➤ *Tolerance*

Respecting the differences in religion, tribe, ethnicity, opinion, attitude, and action.

➤ *Discipline*

Obeying rules.

➤ *Hard Work*

Having an earnest effort in coping with various obstacles of work.

➤ *Being Creative*

Thinking and doing something to produce new ways or results from anything that is already owned.

➤ *Independence*

Finishing tasks independently without needing to depend on others.

➤ *Being Democratic*

Ways of thinking, behaving, and acting that humans are equal in terms of their rights and responsibilities.

➤ *Curiosity*

Attempting to find more information about the things ones have learned, seen, and heard.

➤ *Spirit of Nationality*

Ways of thinking, acting, and having insights to place the country interest before self and group-interests.

➤ *Patriotism*

Ways of thinking, behaving, and acting on loyalty, concern, and appreciation to the language as well as physical, social, cultural, economic, and political environments of the nation.

➤ *Appreciation*

Producing useful things for the community, acknowledging and appreciating other people's achievements.

➤ *Being Friendly/Communicative*

Showing pleasure in talking, associating, and working with others.

➤ *Peace*

Ways of thinking, behaving, and acting on making the surroundings feel glad and safe for their presence.

➤ *Being Reading-Loving*

Freeing time to read various useful readings.

➤ *Environmental Care*

Doing continuous efforts to prevent environmental damage and to improve the damaged environment.

➤ *Social Care*

Helping those who are in needs.

➤ *Responsibility*

Carrying out duties towards oneself, community, environment (natural, social, and cultural aspects), country, and The One Almighty God. (Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of National Education. 2010: 8).

The issue of character building is not a new thing. The term "character building" has been existed together with the presence of the term "education" since it is basically to build good characters.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank you to my colleagues who helped in completing this article and the friends who contributed.

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