

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CARING ASPECT FOR STUDENTS' CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Vita Santa Kusuma Chrisantina

[Vitasanta17@gmail.com](mailto:Vitasanta17@gmail.com)

**Abstract** *character education is the most important thing to develop morality of Indonesian children. The phenomena that many Indonesian students become victims of bullying and teacher violence are the product of failure of character education in Indonesia. Moreover, the education system in Indonesia does not give the clear direction on developing character education although the concept of character supposed to include in every material lesson. Based on the background of study, this research was conducted with meta-analysis to summary and trace previous research on character education in Indonesia. Based on the tracing and analysis of previous research the finding of this paper is as follow: developing caring character among students by minimizing improper figure of sample, improper self-knowledge and improper communication. Teachers and parents should be cooperated to work together dealing with increasing children characteristic through dialogue. Dialogue is the important model to develop caring because dialogue can develop ability on communication among children, increase caring of other condition of life, ability of reasoning and develop mental consequentialist.*

**Key Word :** character education, caring, dialogue.

## INTRODUCTION

The ambitions that most parents have for their children naturally include the development of important moral dispositions. Most parents want to raise children to become persons of a certain kind, persons who possess traits that are desirable and praiseworthy, whose personalities are imbued with a strong ethical compass.

To develop those character parents take their children to follow several classes and education both formal and informal. Take an example, parents enroll their children to take toddler class. The objective of the parents to enroll their children in toddler class is to develop children ability in socialization and to increase the ability of communication. Then, inline with the age of children, parents enroll their children again to playgroup as a higher level of education. The effort of parents are not stop in developing children character and cognitive inline with the age of children.

Based on the experience of parents in managing education for children, it can be seen that the effort of parents is inline with the statement of Lapsley & Narvaez,; Turiel [1].

According to Lapsley & Narvaez [1] Turiel, the character and cognitive developmental options are associated with various educational strategies.

The strategies that have been conducted by parents are enrolling their children to several education institution both formal and informal; then the strategies that has been arranging by government is to upgrade the education system in each year.

Based on the importance of educational character for children, the Indonesian education system plays as the basis for the implementation of education

character. Unfortunately, there are many factors that contribute to character education failure in Indonesia, such as failure of education model, failure of environment, failure of method of teaching, etc. The failure of character education in Indonesia is proven from many cases of bullying and teacher's violence.

Moreover, The phenomenon of negative character of adolescents who often become a source of news in the media such as violence, riot, mischief, cheating on tests etc. Mazzola[2] conducted a survey on bullying (violence) in schools. The results of the survey to obtain the following findings: (1) every day around 160,000 students get bullying at school, one of three age respondents surveyed (students at the age of 18 years) never got violent, 75-80% of students ever observe violence, 15-35% of students are victims of violence of violence virtual (cyber-bullying).

In modern discussions about moral character most writers tend to cast the respective views of Plato and Aristotle as polar opposites. They argue that, in Plato's case, a truly good character will be one that understands the good and therefore does what is good. Plato held that a person who *knows* what is good will therefore *do* it. He did not think that anyone *willingly* acted immorally, and explained that if they did so act then it could only be through ignorance of the good. In contrast, Plato's pupil, Aristotle, took a different view. Where Plato had taught that a prior intellectual understanding of the good alone makes moral excellence attainable, Aristotle argued rather that a person *becomes* good by learning first what it is to *do* good. He also recognized, in contrast to Plato, that a person may have the ability to think about the good without having the disposition to implement it.[3]

Based on the above theory the the meaning of character education for students. This paper will discuss about the correct model of character education in Indonesia Education System.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Hill the definition of character is as follow[4]

*“Character determines someone’s private thoughts and someone’s actions done. Good character is the inward motivation to do what is right, according to the highest standard of behaviour, in every situation”*

Character education has long been a concern of government. In Law No. 20 of 2003 on National Education System in Article 1 (a) stated that education is a conscious and deliberate effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that learners are actively developing the potential for them to have the spiritual power of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed, society, nation and state. In addition to the Act, the positive character too much written in the vision and mission of the institution. In general, educational institutions develop a vision that not only charged for making smart graduates but also noble.

Character education is done by habituation to behave positively and avoid negative behaviors. The Character Education Partnership compose 11 principles of effective character education, namely: (1) promote the values of a code of ethics based on the positive character; (2) defines the character comprehensively for thinking, feeling and behaving; (3) using an effective

approach, comprehensive, intensive and proactive; (4) creating a caring school community; (5) provides the opportunity for students to perform and develop moral action; (6) develop a curriculum that is challenging and meaningful to help so that all students can achieve success; (7) raise students' intrinsic motivation to learn and be a good person in the environment; (8) encourages all teachers as professional and moral community in the learning process; (9) stimulates the growth of transformational leadership to develop the character of lifelong education; (10) involving family members and the community as partners in the education of character; (11) evaluated the character of the school community to get information and education efforts merancang next character [5].

Li Lanqing, a Chinese politician and bureaucrat who has understanding a comprehensive and in-depth education about the dangers of the education system emphasized that too much emphasis memorizing, drilling, and rigid ways of teaching, including the educational system oriented only to pass the test. As a result, China's relatively new wake of the economic, social, and culture run by the Cultural Revolution by Mao, can so quickly catch up and become a developed country. President Jiang Zemin himself never collect all special Politburo members to discuss how to reduce the burden of student learning through the adoption system education that is age appropriate and fun, and the development of all aspects of the human dimension; cognitive (intellectual), character, aestetika, and physical (athletic)[6].

On the other hand, John Dewey argued that ethic has an element of universality. It begins with the recognition that all people everywhere want to be cared for. Universality evaporates when we try to describe exactly what it means to care, for

manifestations of caring relations differ across times, cultures, and even individuals. In roughly similar settings and situations, one person may recognize a cool form of respect as caring, whereas another may feel uncared for without a warm hug. Because of its beginning in natural attributes and events, caring may properly be identified with pragmatic naturalism. John Dewey started his ethical thought with the observation that human beings are social animals and desire to communicate. The ethic of care begins with the universal desire to be cared for—to be in positive relation with at least some other beings. We note that human beings do in fact place a high value on such relations, and so our most fundamental “ought” arises as instrumental: If we value such relations, then we ought to act so as to create, maintain, and enhance them

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted with meta-analysis by summarizing, reviewing and analyzing the study data from several previous research. By using meta-analysis, a variety of questions can be traced along the logical questions and provided the data to answer. The study begins with the formulation of the problem and research objectives followed by tracing the latest research results relevant. The research data have been obtained from previous research, the researchers then analyze and report back in the form of new research. Thus, this research report is not duplication of research that has been done. Research data in the meta-analysis is a form of secondary data taken by the method of documentation. The results of the study were included in this meta-analysis include

1. Oci Melisa Depriyanti. Model Pendidikan Karakter di Islamic Full Day School (Study Deskriptif Pada SD Cendekia Leadership School, Bandung).

2. Endang Mulyatiningsih. Analisis Model-Model Pendidikan Karakter Untuk Usia Anak-Anak, Remaja dan Dewasa. FT UNY. Karang Malang Yogyakarta.
3. Sita Acetylena. Analisis Implementasi Kebijakan Pendidikan Karakter Di Perguruan Taman Siswa Kecamatan Turen kabupaten Malang. *Jurnal Kebijakan dan Pengembangan Pendidikan* Volume 1, Nomor 1 Januari 2013,55-61 ISSN: 2337-7623; EISSN: 2337-7615
4. Wanda Chrisiana. Upaya Penerapan Pendidikan Karakter Bagi Mahasiswa (Study Khusus di Jurusan Teknik Industri UK Petra). *Jurusan Teknik Industri, Fakultas Teknologi Industri, Universitas Kristen Petra*. <http://puslit.petra.ac.id/journals/industrial>

## RESULT

Based on the tracing for the previous research, the character education is based on the care concept of human. All of the concept of character education always has care value that should be implemented. Therefore, it can be seen that caring is the most important aspect for developing character education among students. This conclusion is inline with the statement of Aristotle that modeling, the first component of moral education in the care perspective, is important in almost every form of moral education. In the care perspective, teachers have to show in the modeling what it means to care. A person may have the ability to think about the good without having the disposition to implement it.

Teachers must show to students how to care to others, environment, education and to themselves. Therefore to develop the caring

aspect, teachers must train the students to increase dialogue as fundamental component of the care model. The function of dialogue is to develop moral reasoning of people to communicate and knowing the condition each other.

Unfortunately, the implementation of care among students, environment and society is very lack due to several reason:

1. **Improper figure of sample**  
Parents, teachers and public figures are the model for students. The basic education at home is the core value for children that should be developed to implement caring. Therefore, the parents should develop the function of family living.  
The minimum time to dealing with family; teachers only focus on academic score and cognitive development will lead to work under pressure; public figures are busy with the hedonic style and materialism.
2. **Improper communication**  
Parents, and teachers do not know the duty of human development age, therefore they use wrong model of communication with children. Then, the communication way become not effective because students can not accept the advise and critic from parents and teachers.
3. **Improper self knowledge**  
Self knowledge should be taught to students because it can make students realize about themselves and make correct decision for their life. This statement is in line with the statement of Kozol (1991), the question “Who am I?” must be encouraged, and as students explore

their own interests and capacities, they should be advised and supported. It is not enough to take a few aptitude tests (which are then ignored by the school placement process), browse through computerized descriptions of occupations, and have an annual talk with a career counselor—although some unlucky students do not get even this much help (Kozol, 1991). Someone has to care about the individual kid who is asking the question; someone has to be proud of the answer that is emerging. But, in addition to the personal connection, self-knowledge can be encouraged in academic classrooms.

## DISCUSSION

Indonesian education system is focusing on the result of education, especially in National Examination (Ujian Nasional). All of school components are concern with the process of drilling for material test and every aspect of school are prepared to meet all of the target plans in every new school admission always focus on the success of National Examination.

In the context of Indonesian Education System, the character education already include in every material lesson, but in the implementation of learning process, the aim to learn moral character in every material lesson is very difficult to be implemented if the teacher only concern with the success of National Examination.

Teachers in class only drill the students with many questions to prepare them for National Examination and get the target of study. Moreover, students in the classroom are ignore their morality and empathy to others because they are concern and focus

on their success on National Examination. Furthermore, in every year before National Examination all of school components do excessive preparation for the examination as if the school components and society do not believe with the honesty and transparency of National Examination in Indonesia.

The excessive preparation of National Examination will lead to the character of unbelieve of government to the school components and workers. The unbelieve of government due to many cases of cheating in National Examination. Therefore, it can be seen that the failure of character education is not only faced in education institution but also in society.

Moreover, based on the phenomena in Indonesian school behavior, it can be seen that the moral education is not fully implemented and often being ignored by teachers because teachers in school not concern about the process to make the real human who care about their knowledge, environment and others.

In the context of character education, teachers and all of school components should be focus on the process of study. The students in class should be taught value of life because value is the core education that can lead a human to move forward. As mentioned by Aristotle that a person *becomes* good by learning first what it is to *do* good.

Based on the statement of Aristotle, value can be taught by teachers and parents at home. Value is the basic of human as a foundation for human's life. Therefore, the process of education is should be started with the development of value of life not by drilling and mastering many material lesson to get high score. The learning to care is not become the heart of curriculum because all of the curriculum are already filled with many methods to mastering material lesson. Take an example, there are many methods

which offer the simple way to answer the National Examination questions, but there is very rare experimental finding for developing character education.

Based on the failure of education system, there are many violence cases happen to many students in Indonesia. Both teachers and students not care anymore about others filling and humanity because they already blinded with the emotional and bad temperamental to solve the problem.

Based on the failure of education system in Indonesia, the Indonesian people already broke the dream of Indonesian founding fathers which was mentioned in Preamble of Indonesia constitution namely Undang-Undang Dasar 1945. The statement of dreaming and motivation of Indonesian founding fathers was *...mencerdaskan kehidupan bangsa...* it means that the people in Indonesia should be smart on behavior, skill and knowledge as the key factors. If people in Indonesia always be drilled with lesson, it will increase the knowledge but not increase the skill and behavior; in the other hand, if people in Indonesia always be drilled with skill, the skill will not doing well without enough knowledge and behavior. Moreover, when the people of Indonesia is drilled with the learning of behavior concept, self-knowledge, caring and responsibility, it can be used as foundation when the people in Indonesia learning knowledge and skill.

Based on the experience of education system in Indonesia, it can be seen that the morality aspect of students need to be developed through communication or dialogue. The teacher have to teach students to care each other, the environment and humanity and to the nation.

Moreover, in the context of caring development, the teachers in class must have duty to develop again a tradition of care by reviewing the local value in society. The

tradition of people in Java is very good and noble. Caring aspect is become one of Javanese culture that should be implemented again in Indonesian education system.

According to Noddings (2002), In “Ethical Principles” and many later works, Dewey made two important contributions to moral thought: First, he reminded us that there is a moral aspect of almost everything we do, and second, he showed how the methods common to science could be used effectively in the moral domain. Based on the Dewey’s statement about morality or character education, the education system in Indonesia must add more topic about moral, ethical and Indonesian character in the curriculum. Moreover, modeling is the good option to promote students’ character in school.

Modeling is the way to do the similar things of someone. Normally, children learn about modeling when they reach 3 (three) years old. Therefore, the parents at home can be good model for their children especially in terms of behavior development. Then, parents should give doctrine to their children about caring aspect, empathy, morality and truth as noble character.

Moreover, one of characteristic that should be developed is care. Care is the ability to give attention to others. Inline with the situation on Indonesian Education System that already focus on score of National, it is very difficult to change the habit of students about caring. The habit of caring can be done with the dialogue or communication.

In line with the caring aspect, communication is conducted around students as horizontal communication and is conducted to teacher as vertical communication. The function of communication is to drill the socialization

and brain storming among students and teachers. Moreover, in terms of communication, students will be familiar with new things such as new friends, new situation, new conception and many things. Then, students will be trained to take and give information, so it will improve the behavior of students.

The caring aspect can be trained through communication because communication can increase human’s empathy, awareness, and ability to listening on others’ opinion.

The trace and conclusion on caring aspect as a way to develop students’ character education is also supported with another previous research that already talk about care. According to Spears [7] caring is not only used for non profit institution but used in many institution. The rapid shift in many businesses and not-for-profit organizations away from the more traditional autocratic and hierarchical models of leadership and toward servant leadership as a way of being in relationship with others. Servant leadership seeks to involve others in decision making, is strongly based in ethical and caring behavior, and enhances the growth of workers while improving the caring and quality of organizational life. This article examines a set of ten characteristics of the servant leader that are of critical importance. They are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

Moreover, another research who has concern and publication about care is Keeling, that at the heart of commitments to student success is a progressive concept of the relationship between students and institutions of higher education that embraces shared responsibility for the quality and

outcomes of learning-and, therefore, for students' ability, capacity, and readiness to learn. Since learning is a complex activity of the whole person, and well-being-broadly defined-is a major determinant of students' readiness to learn, advancing student success requires attention to students as whole people, and to their individual and collective well-being. Attention to students as whole people, a shared responsibility for learning, and responsiveness to students' well being, taken together, reflect the existence and influence of an underlying ethic of care[8]

Based on the previous research, it can be seen that caring aspect is the fundamental character that should be possessed by human. The function of caring is not only in education aspect but also as a foundation for human character.

### CONCLUSION

Caring is one aspect that can lead students to better character. Although caring method is not fully implemented by teacher, but caring aspect can be taught by parents in family life. Caring is not only used for education but also as a foundation of human life.

### REFERENCE

- [1] Lapsley, D. K., & Narvaez, D. 2006. Character education. In W. Damon & R. Lerner (Series Eds.), A Renniger & I. Siegel (Vol. Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Child psychology in practice* (6th ed. pp. 248–296). New York: Wiley.
- [2] Mazzola, J. W. 2003. *Bullying in school: a strategic solution*. Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership
- [3] Nucci, Larry P and Narvaez, Darcia. 2008. *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*. New York: Routledge

- [4] Hill, T.A., 2005. *Character First! Kimray Inc.*, <http://www.charactercities.org/downloads/publications/Whatischaracter.pdf>.
- [5] Lickona, T., Schaps, E., & Lewis, C. 2003. *CEP's Eleven principles of effective character education*. Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership.
- [6] Li, L., 2005. *Education for 1.3 Billion*. Pearson Education and China: Foreign Language Teaching & Research Press.
- [7] Spears, Larry C. 2010. Character and Servant Leadership: Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders. *The Journal of Virtues & Leadership*, Vol. 1 Iss. 1, 2010, 25-30. © 2010 School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship, Regent University
- [8] Keeling, Richard P. 2014. An Ethic Of Care In Higher Education: Well-Being And Learning. *Journal of college and character*. Volume 15, issue 3, pages 141–148, issn (online) 1940-1639, issn (print) 2194-587x,

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all I would like to thank to Allah SWT who give me idea, strength and confidence to do this paper. Then I would like to thank to my family, especially my husband, daughter and mom who always give me inspiration to develop myself. Then, I would like to thank to all of my lecturers who give me inspiration especially Prof. Dr. Joko Widodo, MPd, knowledge and motivation to prepare this paper. Last but not least, I would thank to all of my classmates who always support me and give me strength to move forward.