

Implementation of Adiwiyata Program to Build Environmental Awareness

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Instilling the Environmental Care Characters to the Elementary Schools Located on the River Banks

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ABSTRACT

School is one of the spearheads to achieve the function of shaping human character who cares about the environment. Schools can implement strategies to instill students' awareness of the environment as early as possible. The learning process in schools is very possible to form and instill the environmental care characters. This study aims to find the students' attitudes and behaviors toward the environmental care, the school strategy in instilling the environmental care, and the constraints faced in embedding environmental care characters. The approach used is a qualitative approach. The data were collected through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The data obtained were analyzed with the interactive model of analysis from Miles and Huberman. The results of the study indicated the students' character and behavior of the environmental care were on the very good category (50%) and good (33%), the remaining categories were fair (9%), less good (5%) and poor (3%). The efforts made by schools to enable students to be aware of the environment are: to integrate it to the learning, to model, to habituate, and to insert messages to care to the environment in every flag ceremony held on Mondays. The obstacles encountered in embedding the environmental care characteristics are customs in the family and less good model from the parents and people around about the environmental care.

Keywords: character, environmental care, strategy

INTRODUCTION

The environment is an integral part of human life. People and the environment have an inseparable relationship. People rely heavily on the environment that provides natural resources to survive. The environment was, is, and will always be one of the issues in the world both in developed and developing countries. Aziz (2013) explains that in developing countries the environmental issue is not a less important issue compared to developed countries, but the case and the cause are not the same. In developed countries, the main cause is industrial wastes whereas in developing countries such as

Indonesia the concerns are household wastes and human wastes.

Indonesia has experienced many natural disasters caused by humans' incorrect treatment to the environment. Therefore, there must be something to do even though, in fact, changing the pattern and behavior of the community to care about the environment is not an easy thing. Hamzah & Nurdin, (2011) claim that making people who do not understand the meaning of environmental quality to realize the sustainability of mankind is obviously hard to do. However, that does not mean impossible, and one of the ways is through the educational institutions/schools.

Yafie (2009) states that there are many ways that can be done to provide a good understanding of the environment to each individual; one of them is through formal and non-formal education from kindergarten to

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college. Hamzah (2013) asserts that environmental education is an inevitable necessity if we want to realize civil society as it is aspired to. Further, he (2013) explains that environmental concern is a form of individual mental attitude that is reflected in his/her behavior. According to Musfiroh in Al-Anwari (2014), the mental attitude and behavior can be called as a character. Character is synonymous with morality, so the characters are values of human behavior that are universal covering all human activities, both in order to relate with God, with ourselves, with our fellow human beings, as well as to the environment, embodied in mind, attitudes, feelings, words, and deeds based on religious norms, law, order karma, culture and customs (Marzuki, 2011). Douglas as quoted by Samani and Hariyanto (2012) states that character is not inherited, rather it is something which is built continuously day after day through thoughts and actions.

In regard to it, schools can be regarded as an institution to form human character. As stated by Suparno (2015), character education aims to help the students to experience, acquire, and have a strong character they want. This means that from an early age, children need to be equipped with a strong character so that positive attitudes that exist within them can be part of their life that affect the whole way of thinking and acting in their life. The process of learning in schools is very possible to form and instill the environmental character to children in schools. The instilling, understanding, and awareness of the importance of preserving the environmental quality are very good to be implemented through education (Hamzah & Nurdin, 2011). Environmental care attitude in the daily life of society is defined as a person's reaction to the environment, with no damage to the natural environment. With an attitude of environmental care, it will create a clean and beautiful environment. According to Sue in

Tamara (2016), "The environmental care expresses general attitudes toward the quality of the environment embodied in the willingness to express actions that can enhance and maintain the quality of the environment in every environment-related behavior". If the attitude of the environmental care can be expressed by actions, then learners who care about the environment will always keep the environment.

A school is a strategic place in forming the character of students so that students will have the solid and intended personality. As the first step, elementary school is a basic educational institution which its students are aged between 6 - 13 years. In this level, students possess high curiosity as they always want to know and need mentors who can be made as their idols. The appeared question whether the schools, especially those located on the river banks have been performing its function and role in instilling the environmental care character to the student sis certainly a very important thing to study. Therefore, this study aims to find (1) students' attitudes and behaviors toward the environmental care, (2) the school strategy in instilling the environmental care, and (3) the constraints faced in embedding environmental care characters.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study intends to uncover the strategy of the elementary schools located on the river banks in instilling the environmental care character. Therefore, the qualitative approach is the right approach for this study. Moleong in Herdiansyah (2010) defines qualitative research as a scientific research which aims to understand a phenomenon in a natural social context by emphasizing the process of a deep communication interaction between researchers with the phenomenon studied. Another definition proposed by Saryono (2010) is that the qualitative study is used to investigate, locate, describe, and explain the quality or

features of the influence of social that cannot be described, measured or portrayed through the quantitative approach. In other words, each finding obtained in the field is then presented with words and depicted from the schools' strategy in instilling the environmental care characters at elementary schools or Sekolah Dasar Negeri (SDN) located on the river banks in Banjarmasin.

The study was conducted in three schools in Banjarmasin Utara sub-district located on the river banks namely SDN Sungai Miai 5 Banjarmasin, SDN Alalak Utara 1 Banjarmasin, and SDN Alalak 2 Banjarmasin. The data were obtained from the principals, teachers, and students through interview techniques, observation, and questionnaires. The data were analyzed by interactive model analysis

technique from Miles and Huberman. In this interactive analysis models, the researchers are moving on three components, namely the reduction of the data (data reduction), presentation of data (data display) and conclusion (verification) (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

RESULTS

1. Students' Attitudes and Behaviors toward the Environment

One hundred and eighty questionnaires were distributed to the students in order to find their attitudes and behaviors toward the environment. From the shared questionnaires, students' attitudes and behaviors about the environmental care can be seen in the chart below.

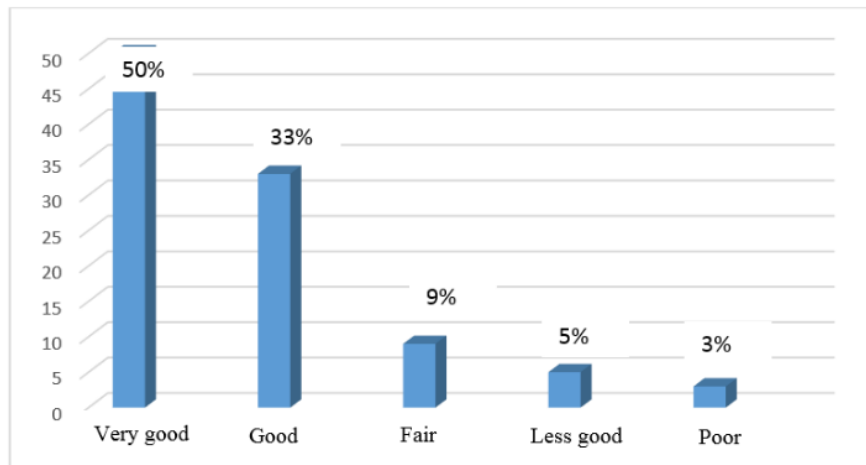


Chart 1. Students' attitudes and behaviors toward the environment

The chart above shows the attitudes and behaviors of students to the environment. It appears that students' attitudes and behaviors toward the environment are mostly in the very good category (50%) and good (33%) respectively. Meanwhile, the rest are categorized fair (9%), less good (5%) and poor (3%). The less good and poor students' attitudes are found in statements about responsibility for environmental stewardship, the need for

community self-help in cleaning up the environment, and the presence of latrines on the edge of the river.

2. School Strategy in Instilling the Environmental Care Character

To determine the strategy undertaken by the school in instilling the environmental care character, the researchers conducted interviews

both with the principals and teachers. As it is known, teachers are one important part to instill an environmental care character. Therefore, every teacher should try how to make the students for having the soul of self embedded environmental care. In relation to students' attitudes and behaviors related to the environmental care, one of the informants from the principal stated that in order for the students to care about the environment, the first thing to do is through the process of learning in the classroom. Each teacher is asked to always integrate the values of the character, including the caring character of the environment. One of the informants from sports teachers also stated that because the science taught related to health, then the environmental awareness is also given. Or in other words, the students are given materials related to environmental care.

Most of the students studying at the three schools located on the river banks. Therefore, in addition to giving explanations about the environment in general, also given explanations related to the aquatic environment mainly related to the importance of maintaining the cleanliness of the river because more than 50% of people around the schools still use river water for bathing and washing purposes.

In addition to integrating it through learning, it is no less important through the example of the teachers. Exemplary teachers are very influential in forming the character of students, including environmental care characters. Some informants explained that a teacher should be able to give an example and pass it on to children. If a teacher can only urge, but could not give an example, then it is an inhibitor. In addition, it is also explained that the teacher should not be bored to always remind the students to always keep the environment clean.

Another thing to do is always maintain cooperation and cohesiveness between teachers

and education personnel. Compactness, in this case, is none other than a shared commitment to instill the values of character to students. Although it is also cannot be denied that there are still teachers who show less commitment to instill the character of environmental care.

Another strategy undertaken by schools is through a Friday clean program. Once a week before the class starts all school members both teachers and students work together to clean up the school environment. This program is held considering there is not any school officer who cleans up the school environment. But now, even though there are already school officers, the Friday clean program is still being implemented.

Besides, there are some students who are assigned to be the duty students or in charge to clean up in turn to all classes, ranging from class I to class VI, and are supervised by the teacher. These students are given responsibility to take care the school environment. This turn is given to all students in schools. In addition, there are also students who specifically keep the cleanliness of each class. Those are in turns between students in the classroom. The goal is to make pickets in turns is none other than to familiarize students to get used to always keep the environment clean.

Apart from some of the strategies already outlined above, other efforts are done through the flag ceremony held every Monday. In the flag ceremony, all teachers take turns to be the leader of the ceremony. Through this ceremony, they always insert a message that students must always keep the environment clean, both at school and outside of school.

3. The Constraints Faced in Embedding the Environmental Care Character

In an effort to instill students' attitudes and behaviors to care about the environment is

certainly not an easy thing and certainly not free from various obstacles. In relation to the constraints faced by several informants, there are lack of parents and community participation. Parents do not set an exemplary example of keeping the environment clean. In other words, it can be said that the awareness of parents to maintain environmental cleanliness is very low. It is exemplified in terms of disposing of garbage. Since most of the houses are on the river banks, some of them are customary to throw the garbage into the river. In fact, they also use river water for bathing and washing purposes. In addition, the concern is that most of the houses on the banks of the river, they also make a toilet on the river. This situation is the main obstacle in instilling environmental caring character.

Described by some informants, the parents and the community must understand the importance of maintaining cleanliness of the environment, then the flag ceremony through the ceremony coach also inserted a message for parents and surrounding communities to participate in keeping the cleanliness of the environment. This is done because some of the parents of students sometimes wait for their children around the school. The hope is, of course, the parents can also listen to what is conveyed by the teacher who gives speech on the flag ceremony.

In addition to the lack of parental participation, another obstacle is the family's bad habit factor. In this case, of course, it is closely related to the lack of parental participation. Children usually imitate what their parents usually do. If their parents throw garbage into the river, there is a big tendency of children will also throw garbage into the river. This was stated by some informants because the children at home are accustomed to not keep the cleanliness of the environment, then in schools they also tend to do the things they do at home.

DISCUSSION

The current global environmental conditions are increasingly worse. This is triggered by human activities that exploit unlimited natural and environmental resources. In connection with human behavior on the condition of natural resources and the environment tend not to care, then changing the behavior is the top priority in addressing the environmental crisis (Mulyana, 2009). One of them is by instilling the environmental care characters.

The education of environmental care character is one of eighteen characters set by the Central Curriculum Ministry of National Education. Characters described as environmentally conscious attitudes and actions which seek to prevent damage to the surrounding natural environment and develop efforts to repair the environmental damage that has occurred. Environmental Education will ensure a harmonious relationship between human and nature so that there will be no worries about natural disasters. It is very strategic to introduce environmental education to young learners at schools systematically and continuously, so that eventually it will create humans who appreciate and care to preserve the nature (Mulyana, 2009).

The results of this study indicate that students' attitudes and behaviors toward the environment are generally very good (50%) and good (33%). While the rest are categorized fair (9%), less good (5%) and bad (3%). From these findings, one side is certainly quite encouraging because more than 80% of students show good attitudes and behaviors toward the environment. On the other hand, it must be taken into account especially by the schools that there are still many students (80%) who do not act or behave wisely to the nature. As stated by Mulyana (2009), the problem and crisis of the environment today and in the future cannot be solved by technical approach only, but also and more important by moral educational approach.

One approach to the moral education of good moral building will be an asset for people to behave ethically in arranging the relationship between themselves and the universe (Mulyana, 2009). The usual environmental cares are shown with attitudes and actions that always try to prevent damage to the natural environment that occurs around us. The environmental care character is of course also shown by the attitude and actions to develop efforts to repair environmental damage that has occurred (Azzet, 2011).

The school environment can be a good place of education for the character growth of the students. Any events that occur within the school should be integrated into character education programs. Thus, character education is a joint effort of all the members of the school to create a new culture in school namely the character education culture. For this condition, there are some environments in school education which can be a land where character education is applied directly or indirectly (Koesoema, 2010). Schools now play one of the major roles in the process of character formation as in the modern social world they are the counterweight that become the backbone of the character education (Lee, 2001). According to Wibowo (2013) the learning principles that is used in the development of character education in schools is to keep students recognize and accept the values of the characters as their own, and are responsible for the decisions taken through the stages of familiar options, assessing options, determine the establishment, and then become a value in accordance with self-belief. The existence of these principles, the students learn through the process of thinking, acting, and doing.

The results of this study indicate that the strategy developed by schools in instilling the environmental care is to integrate it through learning, model providing, and habituating. The

results are consistent with what is proposed by The Ministry of Education and Culture (2010) that the strategy is the implementation of character education applied in schools can be done in four ways, namely: teaching, modeling, reinforcing, and habituating. The effectiveness of character education is largely determined by the four ways that are done simultaneously and sustainably.

Sudrajat (2010) states that a strategic approach to the implementation of this involves three components interlinked with one another, namely: school, family, and community. In other words, successful cultivation of character values requires the cooperation between schools, families, and communities.

The results of this study revealed that the cooperation between schools, family, and society is still not maximized yet. What teachers tell and teach at school is still not fully supported by parents at home. For example, school students are forbidden to throw garbage into the river, yet at home, parents might show incorrect act by throwing the garbage into the river. Thus, parents cannot be an example for children in the care of the environment, whereas the example of parents is very important. As Sudrajat (2011) claimed, the strategy to implement character education by modeling (giving example) is very important. In the attitudes and behaviors of every child, many imitate the environment, including imitating from their parents. What children do at home is a habit. The habit of caring for the environment is very important to be invested in children both at home and at school. As noted by the Ministry of National Education (2011), the character education is not just to teach what is right and what is wrong, moreover, character education inculcate the habit (habituation) about what is good so that learners become familiar (cognitive) about what is right and wrong, able to feel (affective) good value and used to do it (psychomotor). In other words, a good character

education should involve not only a good knowledge aspect (moral knowing), but also to feel good or loving good (moral feeling), and behavior (moral action). Character education emphasizes the habit or habit that is constantly practiced and practiced.

According to The Ministry of Education and Culture (2010) that the development of culture and character education is very strategic for the sustainability and excellence of the nation in the future. The development must be done through a good planning, appropriate approaches, and methods of learning and effective learning. In accordance with the nature of a value, cultural education and the character of the nation are the joint efforts of the school; therefore, they must be made jointly by all teachers and school leaders, through all subjects, and become an integral part of the school culture, including the instilling of the environmental care character.

Mulyana (2009) states that the environmental care education in the schools is the basis for the establishment of environmental ethics across generations. Environmental education is required to be able to manage wisely the natural resources to foster a sense of responsibility towards the interests of future generations, the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills or behaviors that make natural resources can be used sustainably fixed or can be utilized in a sustainable manner.

Making students care about the environment certainly is not easy, especially students are accustomed to living in an environment that the community does not care about the environment. However, it does not mean to be impossible. It does not just take a moment. In other words, the character values instilling will not be seen in a short time. As the research findings establish, the students who already have a good attitude toward the environment are those who have been sitting in class V and VI. Meanwhile, the students who are now in class I to IV still have not shown a good attitude

and care for the environment. For that, of course, the role of teachers is required consistently and commitment in the effort to form the attitudes and behaviors of students. In connection with the role of the teacher, Megawangi (2008) revealed that the teacher or educator need to: (1) apply teaching methods that involve the participation of active students, (2) create a conducive learning environment, (3) provide character education explicitly, systematically, and sustainable by involving aspects of knowing the good, loving the good, and the good acting, and (4) pay attention to the uniqueness of each student in the teaching methods, the curriculum of which involves nine aspects of human intelligence.

Agustian (2007) adds that teachers/educators need to train and form the character of students through repetition resulting in internalizing the characters. As has been shown by the results of this study, the success of schools in forming the attitudes and behaviors of students who care about the environment, one of the needed thing is the commitment of the school to always remind students about the importance of keeping the environment either through learning in the classroom or during the flag ceremony held every Monday.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study indicate that the attitudes and behavior of students toward the environment, in general, are in very good category (50%) and good (33%), the rest is categorized fair (9%), less good (5%) and bad (3%). The strategies undertaken by the schools to make the students care about the environment are: integration through learning, provide exemplary, habituation, and always insert a message to protect the environment through the flag ceremony held every Monday. The obstacles that the schools face in instilling the environmental care character are family habits,

lack of exemplary by parents, and the surrounding community about environmental stewardship.

From these findings, it is suggested that (1) the schools should be programmed periodic environmental health counseling by bringing in outsiders, for example from the health department or other relevant agencies and (2) the schools should improve cooperation with parents and the local community to participate in the effort to establish the attitude of students who care about the environment.

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