

Educational Quality Policy and National Competitiveness through Scouting Character Education

Moh. Uyub Universitas Negeri Semarang

Fathur Rokhman Universitas Negeri Semarang

Eko Handoyo Universitas Negeri Semarang

Nina Oktarina Universitas Negeri Semarang

Abstract

The enhancement of educational quality signifies a deliberate initiative to bolster national competitiveness amid progressively intricate global dynamics. This essay seeks to examine the function of character education within the context of national education quality policies, positioning scouting activities as a strategic tool at the junior secondary school level. The research utilizes an analytical and reflective methodology grounded in theoretical frameworks, educational practices, and policy evaluation. The findings demonstrate that the efficacy of character education via scouting is affected by multiple aspects, such as school leadership, the caliber of scout unit administration, parental engagement, and a conducive school culture. Scouting offers educational benefits via experiential learning that facilitates genuine integration of character traits including responsibility, cooperation, discipline, and leadership. This article presents the conceptual framework of a Collaborative Scouting Ecosystem as a comprehensive paradigm that enhances collaboration among schools, families, and communities in fostering character education. This methodology enhances educational quality and fosters the development of proficient graduates capable of competing in the global landscape.

Keywords

character education; scouting; scouting collaboration system.

INTRODUCTION

The world is changing quickly, with new technologies, changes in the economy, and more complicated social situations. Because of this, schools need to educate people who are not only academically smart but also strong, honest, and adaptable. People don't just regard education as a way to share information; they also see it as a way to help people grow in all areas of their lives, including their physical, emotional, and mental health. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) says that modern

education systems need to teach students how to deal with global problems by helping them develop cognitive and socio-emotional skills and the ability to adapt and work well with people from different backgrounds (OECD, 2019)

So, making education better has become a strategic priority for generating highly competitive human resources. In the framework of national education development, quality human resources are defined by strong moral integrity rather than solely academic capability. Research indicates that the quality of human resource character substantially

impacts economic productivity, innovative capability, and social stability (Sudarma, 2022). Consequently, character education is a fundamental component of the educational system, designed to cultivate persons with virtuous character, a sense of duty, and the capacity for active engagement in societal affairs. Character education stresses the importance of combining moral information, moral feelings, and moral behaviors in the classroom so that students not only learn about moral ideals but also show them in their actions (Lickona, 2012); (Susanti, 2021)).

Character education has received strong normative legitimacy within the context of national education policy. (Undang-Undang RI Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, 2003) The goal of national education, according to the National Education Act, is to develop students' potential to become people of faith, good morals, noble character, and responsible citizens. This policy is supported by (Peraturan Presiden RI No. 87, 2017) concerning Strengthening Character Education, which considers character education an essential part of the national education system.

Nevertheless, numerous conceptual and operational obstacles persist that hinder educational institutions from executing character education. In practice, character education is frequently regarded as an ancillary or symbolic endeavor that has yet to be incorporated into holistic school quality initiatives. Research indicates that school leadership, organizational culture, and the integration of character values into educational practices and overall school activities significantly affect the quality

of character education (Berkowitz et al., 2017). Moreover, supplementary research demonstrates that the execution of character education necessitates backing from the overarching school ecosystem, encompassing school culture, extracurricular activities, and the incorporation of values within the curriculum. (Gustiranda & Purnama, 2022)

Scouting activities are a deliberate way to enhance character education. Scouting is a type of non-formal education that aims to build character through activities that emphasize experience, cooperation, leadership, and social responsibility. The cycle of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation is the key to effective learning, according to (Kolb, 1984)

Students in scouting education can learn firsthand through a variety of activities, including camping, exploring, group games, and leadership training. These activities help kids learn important character traits including discipline, responsibility, teamwork, and the ability to make tough choices. Multiple empirical research have demonstrated that scouting activities favorably influence pupils' character development. (Hakim1 et al., 2024) Found that scouting activities help students become more disciplined, pious, and responsible through experience learning. Also, scouting activities have been demonstrated to help students get better at working with others, being a leader, and making friends. .(Kepramukaan et al., 2024)

But many schools still don't use scouting enough. Many people think of

scouting as just another extracurricular activity that hasn't been well planned into school regulations to make learning better. Research indicates that scouting activities frequently serve administrative purposes and have not been adequately leveraged as a systematic instrument for character education (Hasibuan, 2025; Khoirun Nisa et al., 2023). Moreover, school administrators and principals lack a unified comprehension of the strategic efficacy of scouting as a means to improve character education. There is a disconnect between how scouting could be used strategically to improve character education and how it is actually used in schools. Consequently, a conceptual study is necessary to incorporate scouting into the framework.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, a qualitative approach and conceptual research were used to theoretically analyze various concepts related to strengthening character education through scouting activities within the context of education quality policy. The purpose of this conceptual research is to develop a conceptual framework that explains the relationship between character education, school leadership, scouting activities, and improving educational quality in schools (Aprilianti et al., 2023).

Secondary data gathered via desk research comprised diverse pertinent scientific sources, including scholarly books, national and international journal articles, education policy documents, and institutional reports on character education and scouting initiatives. This literature evaluation was selected for its

capacity to furnish a comprehensive overview of the development of character education concepts and their implementation across diverse educational settings (Susanti, 2021). To assure the accuracy of the references utilized, the data collection procedure entailed the examination of pertinent scientific papers from the preceding decade. The procedure of choosing literature took into account how relevant the topic was, how good the publications were, and how they helped build the research's conceptual framework. This strategy is commonly employed in educational research to create a thorough conceptual synthesis of diverse prior studies.

The data were analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach. The analysis included an introduction to key ideas, a division of theoretical themes related to character education and scouting, and an explanation of how relevant conceptual variables interact with each other. This research yielded a conceptual analysis of the role of scouting activities as a strategy for strengthening character education and its contribution to improving the quality of education and developing competitive human resources. (Ratna Sari & Fathurrahman, 2023).

The non-formal education process known as scouting aims to shape the character, morals, and ethics of students through engaging, enjoyable, and experiential activities in the outdoors. In scouting activities, students not only learn moral values but also experience and practice them directly through group

activities, leadership training, and social activities. (Hakim1 et al., 2024).

Scouting methods are used to organize scouting activities. These methods include outdoor learning, challenging activities, group cooperation, a reward system, and coaching based on the Scout Code of Honor. This method often exposes students to various challenges, which helps them learn to make decisions, solve problems, and interact with others in groups. Because students experience meaningful learning situations directly during this process, internalizing character values becomes easier. This paradigm aligns with the concept of character education, which states that character formation requires actual social experiences, a process of habituation, and role models. (Lickona, 2012). Therefore, scouting can be considered a useful tool for teaching people the difference between moral knowledge and the moral practices they carry out in their daily lives.

Analysis of Educational Practices and Policies: In the national school system, scouting is very important for shaping students' character. However, in fact, scouting activities are often not strategically included in strategies to increase the quality of education, and many schools still see them as extra administrative responsibilities. Consequently, scouting activities fail to serve successfully as a mechanism for character development. (Hasibuan, 2025). As a result, quantitative academic success is often more important than the qualitative aspects of character education. But studies suggest that scouting can help students get better at

working with others, becoming a leader, and being a team player. These talents are very important for living in today's world. (Ratna Sari & Fathurrahman, 2023)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using scouting as a strategic tool for teaching character Scouting is a way to learn that happens outside of school and home. There are activities that are meant to be fun, interesting, planned, guided, and useful. The purpose of these outdoor activities is to promote character, values, and a sense of honor. They use the basic ideas and methods of Scouting. Most programs and projects have good character traits that are important for building a strong workforce. Scouting is a part of the curriculum that helps students learn new things and enhance their character through activities outside of school. Scouting is an informal way of teaching that could help children develop their character in a planned way. Compared to learning in a classroom, which usually focuses on Scouting activities, which emphasize an experiential learning approach—the process of learning via direct experience.

Students not only gain an understanding of moral principles through activities such as camping, group games, social activities, and leadership training; they also experience and apply these principles directly. The Scouting method draws on outdoor learning, engaging and challenging practical lessons, group learning, awards, collaboration, separate units, and a code of honor. Students often face challenges, which enhance their courage, decision-making, problem-solving, and group interaction skills. Therefore, the

internalization of character values becomes more efficient.(SK KWARNAS NO.231, 2007). This method contradicts the paradigm of character education, which states that character formation requires a process of habituation, role models, and significant social experiences, not just talking or instilling values. Therefore, scouting can be considered an educational method that serves to correct the difference between moral application and moral knowledge in everyday life.

Analysis of Educational Policy and Practice: In the national school system, scouting is very important for building students' character. But when it is put into practice in schools, it is often not done in a way that is part of policies that are meant to make education better. In many schools, scouting is still seen as a minor part of administration. Academic success is seen as the most important sign of the quality of education. This is evident in the focus of school rules on academic success, success in academic contests, and performance metrics that can be measured. As a result, the qualitative aspects of character education frequently do not get enough attention.

Most people view Scouting as a supplementary activity or simply fulfilling administrative duties related to implementing the curriculum. This situation demonstrates the difference between the paradigm of educational quality that focuses on academic performance and the paradigm of education that focuses on holistic human development. (SK KWARNAS NO.231, 2007). (Tohir & Al Islam Tunas Bangsa, 2020), This contradicts the principles of

the modern educational curriculum, where educational quality is measured not only by academic achievement but also by how well schools instill morality, values, and social skills in students. Consequently, schools must incorporate scouting into institutional policies and make it part of plans to build a culture of character within the educational environment.

Critical Discussion:
Implementation Barriers Character education must be integrated into the learning process conceptually and practically. A regular process supported by effective evaluation ensures the continuity of learning integrated with character values. However, reinforcement policies only appear in the form of appeals, ceremonial activities, or administrative reasons in the field when issues of character degradation arise. This situation demonstrates that the idea of character education is often misused in the educational process. Normative slogans, ceremonial programs, or administrative activities that pay little attention to important pedagogical aspects often serve only as a disguise for character values that should be an essential part of the learning process. This condition results in character education being unable to fully transform student behavior.

Various structural and cultural factors influence the use of character education in the context of scouting. One problem is the lack of integration of scouting activities into school quality improvement plans. Scouting activities are typically conducted separately from the core learning program, thus

deviating from the school's character education vision. Scouting activities also require support from school leadership.

Scouting is often viewed as an additional extracurricular activity. As a result, it does not receive adequate support in terms of program planning, resource provision, and scout leader training. Furthermore, there are issues with synergy between educational institutions and scouting organizations. This is particularly true at the scouting headquarters and scout troop levels. Without effective communication and collaboration, the sustainability of scouting development programs can be hampered. How students view scouting activities can also influence their engagement and involvement in them. If scouting activities are not designed to be engaging and tailored to students' needs, they are unlikely to be interested in participating.

The principal's leadership is a key influence in how well character education is integrated. The principal sets the school's strategic direction, uses scouting activities to strengthen character education, and makes sure that character values are part of the school's vision, culture, and learning methods. (Leithwood, 2012) says that the principal's leadership is very important for setting the direction and priorities for the growth of schools. Principals are in charge of creating a school atmosphere that helps students flourish academically and as people. Principals have a strategic duty to include scouting activities as a key part of their efforts to improve the quality of education in the context of character education. Principals with

imaginative leadership can incorporate character

According to (Leithwood, 2012), the principal's leadership is crucial for determining the direction and priorities for the development of educational institutions. Therefore, the integration of scouting into character education depends not only on program activities; the principal's leadership also needs to be committed to creating an educational culture focused on holistic human development. The concept of a strong scouting group reflects a situation where the management of the scouting organization in schools is structured, sustainable, and systematic. By producing Garuda Scouts as a manifestation of the achievement of developing character values, a strong scouting group is characterized by the continuity of structured scouting activities, quality program planning, the expertise of instructors, and a consistent coaching system. According to pedagogy, a strong scouting group has activities that are organized, planned, and have clear objectives. These activities must be implemented and students must be guided.

Character values are transferred through general competency requirements (SKU) and specific competency requirements (SKK) during activities. In addition to gaining an understanding of various abilities and skills, students have the opportunity to apply these skills in competitions at various levels. This helps them grow into more disciplined, confident, cooperative, decision-making, and competitive individuals. Furthermore, a strong scouting group helps connect school

scouting activities with the national, regional, and sub-district scouting organizational structures. This correlation is crucial for establishing training standards, gaining institutional support, and ensuring the sustainability of scouting programs.

Parental participation contributes to a consistent value environment, strengthening the effectiveness of character internalization (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019). Character education requires consistent social support because it is ecological. Character education is essentially an ecological process influenced by the student's various social environments. Therefore, the success of character education is determined not only by the educational institution but also by support from the student's family and community. Parental participation in character education activities can strengthen the values students embrace across various aspects of their lives. The process of character internalization will be stronger and more sustainable when the principles taught in school are supported and implemented within the family.

(Epstein & Sheldon, 2019) argue that school-family collaboration is crucial for improving the quality of education. Parental involvement in Scouting can be achieved by supporting Scouting

activities, participating in specific activities, and reinforcing the character principles children learn in their daily lives at home. Consequently, character education through Scouting will be more effective if supported by synergy between schools, families, and Scouting organizations as part of a complementary educational ecosystem. To improve character education, this article suggests a collaborative Scouting ecosystem model.



Gambar 1. Model Ekosistem Kepramukaan Kolaboratif

Figure 1. Collaborative Scout Ecosystem Model

School Leadership → Strong Scouting Group → Scouting Program → Parent Synergy → Character Internalization → Graduate Quality → National Competitiveness

Table 1. Collaborative Scouting Ecosystem Model

Role/Function	Components	Interaction / Support
School	Providing support, programs, and facilities for scouting activities	Partnerships with parents, the community, and the Scout Movement

Parents	Student participation, coaching, and motivation	Supporting schools and contributing to Scout activities as a motivator for children.
Community	Partnerships, resources, and program support	Providing support/partnerships with schools and the Scout Movement
Scouting Movement	Student coaching, training, and character development	Interacting with schools, parents, and the community by building partnerships.
Scouting Activities	Character development activity centers	Connecting with all components to build collaboration
Value & Character	Student behavior and character development outcomes	Emerging from interactions between all parties in the ecosystem
Communiatin & Collaboration	Coordination mechanisms between stakeholders	Supporting all elements to interact effectively
Sustainabe & Development	Ensuring the sustainability of scouting programs	Strengthening all components to ensure program continuity

School: Provides support, programs, and facilities for Scouting activities in partnership with parents, the community, and the Scout Movement. This includes the role and interaction that schools play in supporting Scouting activities, such as providing facilities, programming, and assistance, and working with parents, the community, and the Scout Movement. Parents: Students need to be involved, grow, and be encouraged. They also need to support the school and take part in Scouting events. The community, connections, resources, and program support help schools and Scout groups. The Scout Movement: They help students learn, grow, and become better people. They also work with parents, the community, and schools. To foster cooperation, Scouts work together with all parts as a central hub for character growth. Interactions in the environment

have an effect on how students act and who they are. Working together and talking to each other: Coordination tools that assist all parts of a system work together well. If their scouting programs are sustainable, they can be.

Scouting, as a venue for experience learning and the internalization of genuine values through parental collaboration, contributes to the establishment of a stable and coherent character environment. The internalization of character and the evolution of personal values affect the overall quality of graduates. Character education is established as a strategic cornerstone for the quality of contemporary education, as evidenced by theoretical implications that illustrate the multifaceted nature of education. Scouting promotes the absorption of principles via experiential pedagogy. This research created a conceptual

framework suggesting that educational quality ought to be regarded as a multidimensional phenomenon, rather than being confined to the evaluation of academic accomplishment. In the contemporary educational paradigm, cognitive, emotive, social, and moral dimensions converge to influence students' comprehensive skills. From this point of view, teaching character is a strategic

Scouting is an educational platform where students can directly understand values through participating in activities, working together in groups, and interacting with others. Therefore, Scouting can be defined as a pedagogical tool that incorporates cognitive, social, and moral elements into the learning process. The results of this study theoretically help develop a perspective on character education by emphasizing that character formation requires a supportive educational ecosystem. Continuous social experiences in various educational contexts are part of character formation, not just the official classroom curriculum.

In these circumstances, Scouting activities serve as educational environments that enhance children's learning experiences beyond traditional schooling. This study also supports the idea that the success of character education is greatly affected by school leadership and the culture of the organization. Scouting activities can be included in plans to make education better thanks to the forward-thinking vision of a principle. This will not just be an extra activity outside of school; it will be a key part of the school's educational

system. As a result, Scouting can be seen as an institutional way to build a culture of character in schools. This study indicates that the reorganization of scouting activities inside the formal school system, encompassing both educational policy and practice, is essential to enhance the quality of character education through improved.

Scouting is often considered a less important extracurricular activity and not a top priority in schools. However, if implemented strategically, scouting has significant potential to enhance character education, one of the main goals of national education. Therefore, schools must incorporate scouting as a key part of their strategy to improve the quality of character education. This can be achieved by integrating it into the school's vision, mission, and policies, which focus on student character development. Thus, scouting is no longer considered an additional activity; instead, it is seen as a pedagogical tool that helps educators achieve their goals.

To improve scouting in schools, the principal needs to be a strong and imaginative leader who can put institutional procedures in place. The principle is in charge of making rules that help scouting, giving out resources, and making the organization a friendly place to work. Also important for increasing the quality of scouting instruction is better management of school scouting organizations. An effective scout organization has systematic program planning, on going development, and the involvement of scout leaders. With the right supervision, scouting activities can be done in a concentrated and long-

lasting way. This can have a big effect on how students grow as people. Another result of this practice is that it is important for families, scouting groups, and schools to work together.

Essentially, character education involves students' various social environments. Therefore, parents who participate in scouting activities can reinforce the values students acquire both at school and at home. Scouting activities become a sustainable character education strategy and have a significant impact on improving educational quality when combined with effective scouting group management, parental and community support, and school leadership.

CONCLUSION

Character education is necessary as a strategic foundation for enhancing educational quality within the framework of national competitiveness. Experiential learning for character development is important for scouting. School leadership, robust scouting organizations, and parental involvement all impact results. The Collaborative Scouting Ecosystem Model's conceptual framework can enhance conversations about the quality of character education within national education policy.

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