

Implementation of Character Education through Distance Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The Covid-19 emergency has caused a shift in learning. Learning activities that were previously carried out in classroom now have to be done at home or study from home. The Covid-19 Emergency Period makes students often interact with gadgets. It is predicted in the future that Gen A students have less socialization problems, less creativity and more individualistic attitude. Continuous use of gadgets also has the potential to make them socially isolated. Character education must continue during the distance learning period. The purpose of this study was to analyze the character values that can be developed in Distance Learning (PJJ) at State Islamic Elementary School Four of Boyolali Regency by implementing learning media. The research method used is field research with a qualitative approach through field observations, interviews and documentation. Data collection techniques are using observation methods, interview methods and documentation. The principals, teachers, parents, and students were involved in this research. Data data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing/verification were employed to gain the goals. The results of the research on the implementation of character education in the online learning by integrating them in the thematic learning. Planning, implementation, and evaluation approach were conducted by the teachers in distance learning model. Character values that can be developed in distance learning are religious values, nationalist values, independent values, mutual cooperation values and integrity values. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that online learning media plays an important role in developing character education through learning activities by utilizing learning media during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is significantly different from the world of the 20th. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2016), one of the signs in the macro-scale world of the 21st century is marked by the increasingly intensive integration of parts of the world due to internationalization, globalization, multilateral relations, communication technology, and transportation technology. The decline in morals and national character has become a serious discourse in the world of education. Bali and Susilowati (2019) mention that almost every time, both online media, as well as print and electronic media, report various deviations from moral decline, including drug trafficking, brawls, murders, distribution of pornographic videos, rape, and various other criminal acts.

According to Law no. 20 of 2003, it is known that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation, and country. Therefore, the success of a learning process is determined by the factors of the teacher, infrastructure, environment and of course the students themselves, have the will or motivation to be able to actively develop their own potential. Dianti (2014) said that character has an important role, which will then be in charge oversee controlling the life of a nation so that it does not turn to sway. If the community has good character, then the future of the country will be better. Conversely, if the people of a country are bad, then the life of the country will most likely be bad. We can find this in the situation in Indonesia. Andriyanto (2020) stated that education in Latin is *educāre* which means to lead out, namely the effort of glorification, glorification of a human being or character formation. Untari (2012) explained that education has a very important role in filtering out foreign cultures in society. Education also seeks to develop academic skills and the

formation of positive character. Citra (2009) mentioned that character education is a system of inculcating character values to the entire school community.

New challenges arise when the Covid-19 virus outbreak conditions make the learning system carried out remotely. Purwanto (2020) said that in March 2020 the spread of the corona virus in Indonesia had an impact on various fields and tied the death rate of people who were positive for the corona virus. Nurkholis (2020) also said that the emergence of the COVID-19 virus had an impact on the world of education. One of the efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 for the world of education, the government has issued a policy, namely implementing the learning process from home through distance learning in online and offline. The closure of schools resulted in students not being able to interact with their friends and teachers. According to Dewi (2020), on March 24, 2020, the minister of education and culture (Mendikbud) is required to immediately take a standby issuing Circular Letter number 4 of 2020 that learning is carried out at home with online learning in order to provide a meaningful learning experience. Teachers are required to transfer knowledge through distance learning with online media. The shift in education, both in schools and madrasas, which was originally carried out classically in the classroom, to distance education (PJJ) in a network (online) with an online (direct) or offline (delayed) system.

The distance learning method is in accordance with the Secretariat General Circular No. 15 of 2020, namely distance learning in the network/online and distance learning outside the network/offline. Distance learning in network/online using gadgets or laptops through several portals and online learning applications. Distance learning/offline using television, radio, self-study modules and worksheets, printed teaching materials, teaching aids and learning media from objects in the surrounding environment. Putri (2020) said that tutoring services can be done online by telephone, email, chat, instant messaging, social networking, and

video conferencing. Mustikaningrum et al. (2021) explained that the application of character education must be accompanied by monitoring of students through counseling guidance that teachers can do.

Sabaniah et al (2021) stated that we should keep in mind that educators have several roles in distance education includes (1) as a learning resource, namely providing several learning resources including textbooks, and programs that the government has made through television, (2) as a demonstrator, namely helping students understand a material from the facilities that have been provided, (3) as a motivator, namely motivating students even though they run online learning, (4) as managers, namely managing learning to be more focused, and (5) as an evaluation, namely providing an evaluation in order to know the development and student understanding.

Darmayanti (2014) said that teachers must be able to integrate character education into daily activities. In addition, the teacher must also be able to choose the appropriate method in instilling character values. Character education must be a serious effort in every school or madrasa. Azhary (2018) explained that schools' serious efforts in implementing character education are evidenced by the design of policy planning that must be in line with the values of character education. According to Chumdari (2018), the application of character education can be carried out with thematic learning. The problem with the thematic learning model is that student learning activities are less than optimal. This is due to the conventional teacher-centered method which emphasizes the active role of the teacher rather than the students. It needs to be improved by promoting innovative learning models that provide flexibility for students to carry out learning activities, such as through object/environment manipulation, or discussion activities and group activities with fellow students. Challenges in Distance Education (PJJ) teachers must use a variety of methods and methods to create effective learning.

Barriers to distance education arise caused by educators and students who must be able to adapt to learning habits using new methods, distance learning or online (Novianto et al., 2020). Other obstacles in distance education, such as the lack of gadget facilities (laptops and or gadgets), limited internet connections and difficult signals, low digital literacy possessed by educators and students, educators' readiness to face distance education, and parents who must spend more time. to help their students learn. The Covid-19 emergency has caused in a very short time, the whole world has changed the face-to-face conventional learning pattern in schools (classical learning) to distance learning (PJJ) which relies heavily on technology. UNICEF, WHO and IFRC in the COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools (March 2020) stated that when the situation of the virus spreads faster, schools must be closed, and the education process must continue through online learning activities using various media. UNESCO data (2020) mentions 1.5 billion students and 63 million teachers at the primary to secondary school levels in 191 countries affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, something that has never happened before.

The results of the pre-research observations that the researchers did, the advantages of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 4 Boyolali are that students can take distance learning well. This can be seen by the participation of students in the evaluation of learning at the end of the even semester. Final Semester Assessment (PTS) is conducted online and can be followed by all students. As stated by Zhang & Zhu (2017) comfortable online learning is learning that has the latest technology-based model that has a positive impact on students.

Various conditions that are not commonly experienced by teachers in learning at this time, cause researchers to be interested in knowing how teachers can implement character education for students who do online learning at home. Researchers are also interested in knowing what character values can be developed through distance learning from home.

This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of character education for students of State Islamic Elementary School Number Four of Boyolali Regency (MIN 4 Boyolali) through distance learning and character values that can be developed in distance learning. The benefits of this research are expected to contribute to the development of character education theory through distance learning.

METHODS

This research uses field research with a naturalistic qualitative approach. The study describes and analyzes the implementation of character education programs through distance learning (PJJ) and character values that can be developed in distance learning (PJJ) at State Islamic Elementary School Number Four of Boyolali Regency.

Preliminary study is done to get the results to do this research. From the results of the preliminary study, the researcher received information that learning at State Islamic Elementary School 4 of Boyolali Regency was carried out remotely in a network. Students of State Islamic Elementary School 4 of Boyolali Regency have a tendency to lack character, and during their learning activities the teacher more often prioritizes cognitive values such as giving assignments.

Informant data sources in this study were selected by purposive sampling with data collection using snowball sampling technique. The documents used in this study include: Syllabus, plans for implementing online learning/online lesson plans, photos, videos, voice messages for learning activities, self data and student attitude values, as well as teacher data and phenomena/events that occur. Observation data is carried out directly in the distance learning process (PJJ).

The technique of validating the research data is triangulation. The data analysis techniques of this research are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distance education requires educators and students to be able to adapt to new and different conditions, such as in delivering subject matter, determining, and using new learning strategies and methods in accordance with pandemic conditions. Teachers must provide student material by means of online delivered via WhatsApp media.

It is not uncommon for students to feel bored and bored with the learning activities carried out. Online learning and the lack of interaction between students and students as well as students and educators make the motivation and motivation of students in learning go down. The reduced motivation and motivation of students to learn has an impact on the learning outcomes they do. When they lack motivation, both verbally and gesturally, it will also have an impact on the motives that occur in students. Teachers do various ways to be able to provide enthusiasm and motivation to learn and continue to implement character education in the online distance learning process.

In line with what was conveyed by Widodo (2018) in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum revision of the first teacher's role, teachers have an obligation to teach characters in a hidden curriculum. This means that teachers have a moral role in guiding the character of students, even though they do not carry out direct and structured assessments. Second, teachers must make developments in learning, especially in terms of making learning plans that are effective, practical, and creative. Third, teachers must have up-to-date learning strategy references so that they are able to create learning and develop themes and sub-themes independently. Fourth, teachers must be able to develop students' thinking skills based on 21st century skills by creating learning that leads to these skills, this also answers the third challenge in terms of literacy and digital technology.

Implementation of Character Education in the Distance Learning Process through Integration with Thematics and Lesson Content

Distance learning has long been known in Indonesia in 2012 the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia regulates this in accordance with the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 24 of 2012 concerning the Implementation of Distance Education (PJJ). Meanwhile, primary, and secondary schools are regulated based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 119 of 2014 concerning the Implementation of Distance Education for Elementary and Secondary Education.

The distance learning method is in accordance with the Secretariat General Circular No. 15 of 2020, namely distance learning in the network/online and distance learning outside the network/offline. Distance learning in network/online using gadgets or laptops through several portals and online learning applications. Distance learning/offline using television, radio, self-study modules and worksheets, printed teaching materials, teaching aids, and learning media from objects in the surrounding environment

The results showed that State Islamic Elementary School Number Four of Boyolali Regency carried out distance learning in two ways, namely distance learning on the network (online), namely by using the zoom application, quiz application, videocall via WhatsApp and distance learning outside the network (offline), namely by television media, books handle student worksheet the surrounding environment, taking assignments. Distance learning in the network that teachers do, one of which is through the zoom application, is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Distance Learning Process Online Via the Zoom Meeting

Based on the results of observations in the distance learning process through integration with thematics and lesson content, it shows the implementation of character education. Character education that teachers do in the learning process is divided into three activities, namely opening, core activities and closing. This is in accordance with the results of Julkifli's research (2020) that the implementation of character education strategies carried out by teachers in the classroom through the learning process in the opening, core and closing processes with strategies that are continuously used through habituation, communication, and example. In addition, the results of the study also show the use of information technology in the form of the WhatsApp group application. The results of the same study show Akhwani (2021) There are various methods used by teachers during the covid pandemic. Online forms are widely used in learning in various forms. For example, sending material via WhatsApp group, sending videos, sending digital questions such as google forms and so on. The results were evaluated by the teacher and carried out in the same way every day. There are also those who use web meetings (zoom) but not all students can attend.

The results of interviews, observations, and documentation show character education through thematic learning and the teacher's lesson content conveys to the learning process that the teacher has designed in an online learning lesson plan. The opening activity of the researcher's learning found that the teacher had implemented the values of religious character, it was seen that the researcher presented the



process of the teacher opening the lesson with greetings, the teacher reminded the students to pray before studying, the teacher reminded the students to read *Asmaul Husna*, perform the *dhuha* prayer and give *infaq*. The results of the study show that teachers instill religious character values by habituation, which is often reminding students at the beginning of learning. The teacher reminds students through WhatsApp communication media through private messages and WhatsApp Group messages, the teacher also occasionally calls students or via video calls to see the implementation of religious character values at home. The teacher also asks students or their guardians to send evidence of the implementation of religious activities that the teacher asks for as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Activities of Habituation of *Dhuha* Prayer Carried Out at Home.

In the opening of learning activities, researchers found the application of the value of integrity, namely the teacher reminded students to fulfill every task that the teacher had given. In online learning the teacher conveys material through learning videos that are shared through class groups, in addition to videos the teacher also conveys in the form of text, images, infographics or through virtual face-to-face through the zoom application. The application of independent values is seen during the learning process. Students independently participate in

learning activities that the teacher conveys remotely. In addition, independent scores are also seen when students are actively working on the tasks that the teacher gives. The teacher's learning activities are in accordance with the needs of students, namely more on life skills.

The results of the analysis of character education through distance learning show that the value of the national character of the teacher is applied to the learning process, namely through the teacher giving assignments related to Pancasila values, linking learning to national holidays such as the commemoration of Kartini Day, the commemoration of Hero's Day and the commemoration of the Republic of Indonesia's Independence Day. Indonesian Independence Day activities, teachers provide activities for students to take part in the RI independence ceremony virtually by following through television broadcasts or YouTube as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Virtual RI Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony.

The teacher's integrity value is conveyed in the learning evaluation process. At the end of each theme or chapter the teacher conducts daily assessment activities. The teacher conducts daily assessments with Google Form. The teacher reminds students to do daily assessments honestly and responsibly. The teacher asks the guardian of the students to provide supervision to the child in doing the daily assessment, he

hopes that the child will work on his own and be honest.

Character values that can be developed in Distance Learning (PJJ)

Based on the results of research from observations interviews, and documentation, it was found that the values of good character can be seen in the learning process that the teacher does. Teachers can find out the planting of character values that the teacher provides through reports provided by students or guardians of students. This is in line with what was conveyed by Mamluah et al. (2021) usually activities that refer to the behavior, attitudes and morals of students must be reported by parents every day through videos or photos. Parents or guardians of students use the WhatsApp application in providing reports to teachers. In line with Mustikaningrum's (2021) research, character education empowerment can be integrated with student monitoring through guidance and counseling.

Implementation of character education implementation through distance education at State Islamic Elementary School 4 of Boyolali Regency through learning by compiling online lesson plans containing characters contained in the COVID-19 emergency curriculum. In line with the results of research by Restiyanti et al (2017) the implementation of character education is carried out through three activities, namely Pre-Semester work meetings, preparation of character education implementation plans, and implementation of character education carried out regularly and continuously.

Kemendikbud (2013) the value of religious character reflects belief in God Almighty which is manifested in the behavior of carrying out religious teachings and beliefs, respecting religious differences, upholding a tolerant attitude towards the implementation of religious worship and other beliefs, living in

harmony and peace with followers of other religions. This is in accordance with the results of research conducted by researchers in the distance education process. In line with what Laoly (2017) who said, that in the presidential regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 87 indicators of religious character are formulated into three main indicators, namely, First, obedient attitudes and behavior in carrying out worship based on the religion adopted, carrying out religious teachings, and tolerance. The results of research in the field regarding the implementation of character education in distance learning have been carried out by teachers with various strategies, methods, and methods in instilling character education in students. Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation it was found that the character education that teachers do during distance learning is by providing habituation activities to students.

The results of this study are in line with Hasanah (2012) that character education, habituation is a very important aspect as part of the process of forming attitudes and behaviors that are relatively stable and automatic through a repetitive learning process. Character education through distance education can be seen in the habituation process of praying, reading Asmaul Husna, praying dhuha, giving infaq, reading the Al Quran, habituation to live clean and tidy and love the environment. Akhwani (2019) stated that character education is an integral part of the education system, especially education at the elementary level. Elementary school students or Islamic Elementary School really need character education for their development needs. Preparing a good generation is the same as instilling prosperity for the future.

The results of the development of religious character values in the learning process of researchers are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of the results of the analysis of religious character values

| Visible character value _ | Description |
|---|--|
| Activity prays before and after learning | Activity prays before and after learning done by the teacher via chat/ message voice through the WA group of each class. If the teacher uses Zoom Meeting the teacher shortens it prayer with request participant educate read <i>basmallah</i> and closed with reading <i>hamdalah</i> |
| rehab religious (reading <i>Asmaul Husna</i> , pray <i>dhuha</i> , prayer congregation, giving <i>infaq</i> , reciting <i>Al Qur'an</i>) | habituation that the teacher does usually convey before learning started. Via chat or message, the teacher 's voice asks child for read <i>Asmaul husna</i> , carry out prayer <i>dhuha</i> and donate to the box <i>infaq</i> that has been students for by stand up. |
| habituation life clean and tidy | Teacher monitoring participant educate with always remind and ask in class group about always guard cleanliness and tidiness. Teacher asks is participant educate have a shower in the morning, always wash hand before eating, tidy up the place study after used. |
| Love Environment | Activity love teacher environment convey with activity help parent activity this in the form of activity clean environment home, activities plant and care plant decorate home environment, and activities pick up and throw trash in its place. Process waste plastic Becomes useful craft. |

The Guidebook for the Implementation of Strengthening Character Education (PPK) of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2013) the value of nationalist character is a way of thinking, acting, and acting that shows loyalty, concern, and high appreciation for the language, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political environment of the nation, placing the interests of the nation and state above the interests of themselves and their groups. The results of observations, interviews, and documentation show that nationalist character education is seen

when students give appreciation to their own nation's culture by providing support to health workers, participating in virtual ceremonies, and commemorating national days. In accordance with the results of research by Sihobing & Lukiyoyo (2021), teachers can optimize nationalist character education and love for the homeland through learning Pancasila and citizenship education.

The results of the development of nationalist character values in the learning process of researchers are described in Table 2.

Table 2. Description of the results of the analysis of nationalist character values

| Visible character value _ | Description |
|---|---|
| Appreciation to culture nation alone (give endorsement to power health in against the corona virus) | Teacher asks students to make a support poster to power health in facing the corona virus as shape appreciation and support that can participant educate give. |
| Love homeland (follow activity ceremony flag virtually and commemorate Kartini day) | Teacher asks students to follow ceremony flag commemoration of the Republic of Indonesia's anniversary and teachers make posters for the Kartini day and sent to group as invitation for remember and imitate Kartini 's struggle |

The value of nationalist character can be optimized by teachers through thematic learning of Pancasila and civics education content, the teacher also relates it to the atmosphere in the environment where students live, such as providing support to health workers, participating in virtual flag ceremonies, and giving national day warnings.

The value of independent character is the attitude and behavior of not depending on others and using all energy, thought, time to realize hopes, dreams, and ideals. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), independent students have a good work ethic, are tough, have fighting power, are professional, creative, courageous, and become lifelong learners. This can be seen in the response of students when the teacher gives assignments during online learning and students work hard, the assignments that students do show creative results and students dare to convey ideas through videos that students send, or students' parents send. The teacher can also observe the nature of the child's independence by observing the information conveyed by the student's

guardian. The nature of student independence can be seen in daily activities while at home. In accordance with the research results of Purandina & Winaya (2020) that during learning activities at home, parents of students stated that their students were accustomed to pursuing simple things independently, starting from the child waking up to making the bed, bathing himself and taking food. At the beginning of the implementation of distance learning, the tasks given by the teacher at home have not been able to be carried out completely independently by the child, and often require the help of their parents.

The results of developing the value of the independent character of the teacher are done by always providing encouragement to students through communication media, besides that the teacher also works with the guardians of students to always remind students in every learning activity so that they can follow well. The results of developing independent character values in the learning process of researchers are described in Table 3.

Table 3. Description of the results of the analysis of independent character values

| Visible character value _ | Description |
|----------------------------|--|
| Work hard in complete Duty | Teacher always gives spirit to students for complete the task by them self. |
| Creative | Teacher gives encouraging activities creativity students to make a project craft from used goods, to create a poster, to make map mind, to make a simple mask etc. |
| Bravery | Teacher gives opportunity students for conveying the idea via video calls. Besides, the teacher also gives activity to students through students' performance activity and send the task through videos. |

The value of the cooperation character can be developed by teachers through cooperative activities, mutual help, and anti-discrimination empathy. The teacher provides learning activities by involving parents or guardians of students to practice the value of cooperation and cooperation. Ratmingsih (2019) also explained that positive activities carried out

at home together will form a good emotional bond between students and parents. A chemistry that will emerge during activities together, fostering love which will later become a habit. The results of developing the value of the cooperation character in the researcher's learning process is described in Table 4.

Table 4. Description of the results of the analysis of the value of the cooperation character

| Visible character value _ | Description |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Teamwork | Teacher provides learning activity which involves parents as learning guide |
| Collaboration | Teacher gives task that guide parents to help their students learn from home |
| Empathy anti-discrimination | The teacher provides task activities to students regardless of gender, for example, activities to help mother cook in the kitchen for both male and female students |

Integrity character values are values that underlie behavior based on efforts to make himself a person who can always be trusted in words, actions, and work, has commitment and loyalty to human and moral values (moral integrity). The results of interviews, observations, and documentation in developing the value of teacher integrity often remind students to carry out learning assessments honestly. Teachers also work together with students' parents to provide supervision. Khaironi (2017) said that an honest attitude

needs to be instilled in students from an early age, through words and actions that are exemplified by adults, both teachers and parents, which are carried out consistently and continuously. The results of inculcating an attitude of honesty do not appear in a short time, but it requires a fairly long process so that it can produce students with an honest character. The results of interviews, observations and documentation of researchers are described in Table 5.

Table 5. Description of the results of the analysis of the character values of integrity

| Visible character value _ | Description |
|---|--|
| Honesty in the evaluation of doing the test | The teacher encourages and reminds students to be honest in doing evaluation tests |
| Responsibilities in doing tasks | The teacher gives enthusiasm and encouragement to students so that they can complete assignments on time |

Haqqi (2019) said that in distance learning the teacher also directs to remain disciplined, starting from being disciplined in doing assignments, being disciplined in participating in learning. Discipline is an attitude that must be applied to elementary school students in the process of learning activities. Students who are accustomed to discipline will be useful in life in the future. In addition, students are also directed to maintain cleanliness while at home, following health protocols correctly. Teachers always motivate students that what students learn and what students do when learning online will be useful for life. The character values that the teacher develops in the online learning process, the teacher implements in the learning process. It is line with the results of Gunawan's research (2020) that the implementation of character education for students is carried out in an integrated manner in learning and character education for students is carried out through school culture. Mustikaningrum (2021) also said that the optimization of character education can be carried out by teachers through thematic empowerment activities through the learning process.

The key to success in instilling character education by teachers is that the teacher always reprimands and reminds online via personal WhatsApp or WhatsApp Group. In addition, the teacher must also establish a good relationship with the parents. Good communication between teachers and parents makes it easier for teachers to monitor the implementation of character education that teachers do.

CONCLUSION

Analysis result show shape implementation education character through education distance far be delivered through integration with thematic and content lesson. The teacher implements character education through the learning process by providing activities that are in accordance with the character values to be developed. Teachers also adjust learning activities to the needs of students who practice life skills. The results of the analysis show that the character values developed in distance learning include: religious character values seen in the process of praying before and after learning, religious habituation includes reading *Asmaul Husna*, praying *Dhuha*, praying in congregation, giving *infaq* and reciting the *Al Quran*. The value of nationalist character is seen in the appreciation of the nation's own culture, namely by providing support to health workers in fighting the corona virus, loving the homeland by participating in virtual ceremonies and commemorating national days The value of independent character is seen in the process of students' hard work in completing the assigned tasks, students' creativity in completing assignments, and courage. The value of gotong royong is seen in the process of cooperation, mutual assistance, and anti-discrimination empathy. The value of the character of integrity is seen in the honesty of students in working on assessment questions, responsibility in completing assignments

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