CHARACTER EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION
(A Multisite Study in MA Hubulo, SMAN 3 Gorontalo, and Wira Bhakti Gorontalo)

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ABSTRACT : Character education implementation is manifested by a means of three aspects, i.e., school visions and missions, values and beliefs pertaining to the character education being developed, and achievement reward system applied. Character values implemented refer to school visions and missions and then, assisted by school stakeholders, are designed and deemed as a habituation process in implementing character education at schools/madrasas. In the attempt to describe their visions and missions, values, and achievement reward system implemented, schools transform character values into three education management substances, namely (a) the planning model of character education, (b) the implementation model using habituation, the precedent model of someone's behavior (role model), extracurricular, intercurricular, and co-curricular program activities being integrated, and conducive environment establishment, and (c) supervising model using internal control management through monitoring and orders by engaging all relevant elements.

KEYWORDS: *Implementation, education, character*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial to building national characters and cultures. It functions to elevate human abilities. Law Number 20 of 2004 on National Education System Article 3 explains the function of national education, i.e., to develop and build dignified national characters and civilization to educate the nation's life. To build the national characters, as mentioned in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Law on National Education System 2003, the government, in one of its work programs in *NAWA CITA*, is planning to conduct a national character revolution through the policy on rearranging national education curriculum by prioritizing the civic education aspect, in which education aspects, e.g., a history of state establishment, patriotic values, nationality, the spirit of state defense, and character education included in the Indonesian language curriculum, will be proportionally implemented.

The Ministry of National Education has formulated 18 values of character to be developed and instilled in children and the young generation in Indonesia. Those values of character are religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard-working, creative, democratically independent, curious, nationally encouraged, respectful, friendly, peaceful, literate, environmentally aware, socially caring, and responsible. As the products of government, the 18 characters are expected to create strong positive characters in students, granting them social intelligence they can use when interacting with the community and encouraging them to be good citizens for their government and nation.

Those values should be implemented in schools to create successful students. The necessity of the implementation has been attested by research conducted at Harvard University, US. The research confirms that knowledge and technical abilities (hard skills) are not only the factors of success but there is also another factor which is the ability to manage self and others (soft skill). Additionally, the research reveals that hard skills only contribute to success by 20%, while the rest is largely determined by soft skills (80%). It is believed that the most successful figures in the world could become what they were now were mostly supported by soft skills and hard skills (Muslich, 2011:84).

Notable attempts made by schools to build student characters are to create a school environment, in which those characters will presumably be able to be well implemented through school visions and missions, programs, exemplary behaviors, slogans placed at some strategic posts in schools, and diverse extracurricular activities, which are scouts, student organization, Red Cross, scientific journal writing, sports, arts, and others.

As instructed in the 2013 Curriculum (*Bahan Uji PublikKurikulum*, 2013:26), assessments performed comprised not only test assessment (measuring the knowledge competency based on the results only) but also

authentic one (measuring all competencies, including attitudes, skills, and knowledge based on both process and results). The implementation of education at each education level should be systematic, accordingly. Senior high schools (SMA) and Islamic senior high schools (MA) are one of the secondary education levels which play an important role to create capable students renowned for their good soft and hard skills. The quality is especially required when they are about to start working as characters constitute special attributes an individual has and which distinguish him/her from others. As such, character education was considered as one of the pillars which sustained the enhancement of soft skills in students (Koesoema, 2010:8).

A school is a place where we seek knowledge and develop our potencies, and most importantly, build our characters. However, what we see in schools contradict our expectation, in which we do not want character education at schools is indoctrinating or theoretical only. We are expecting a real application of those characters in students' daily lives. Zuhcdi argues that indoctrinating moral education was indeed adequate to inhibit deviant behaviors but could not build independence and moral decision in students (Zuhcdi, 2012:5). Similarly, Muslich believes that character education was about both introducing norms or values and internalizing and implementing them in daily lives (Muslich, 2011:85). When schools have successfully implemented norms or values by, e.g., delivering knowledge regarding norms or values, students will perceive a positive impact which then encourages them to internalize those norms or values through real action.

Lickona, in Koesoema (2010:13), clarifies that the manifestation of schools' success in building students' characters was reflected by how well students internalized the characters in their daily lives. There are two indicators of successful character education. The first indicator is for schools and classes, whereas the second is for subjects studied. Those indicators were used to mark schools' success in an implementation process (Kemendiknas, 2010:24).

In relation to our preliminary field observation, we found a character education process in Madrasah Aliyah (hereinafter referred to as MA) Hubulo Bone Bolango, SekolahMenengah Atas (hereinafter referred to as SMA) Negeri 3 Kota Gorontalo, and SekolahMenengah Atas Terpadu (hereinafter referred to as SMAT) Wira Bhakti Gorontalo. Several characters built in SMAN 3 Kota Gorontalo were discipline, responsibility, honesty, creativity, and hygiene and social caring, which were testified by the following acts, such as throwing garbage at its place, smiling and greeting people, and respecting teachers. Besides, social caring was also instructed to students so they helped each other, visited friends who were in an unwell condition, lent stationery to friends who accidentally forgot to bring any, and donating some money on Fridays.

Similarly, MA Hubulo Bone Bolango put its best efforts to teach IMTAQ and science and technology. Various efforts were made to create quality graduates with characters and abilities to respond to global challenges. The school had instilled its students with characters, e.g., sincerity, *tawadhu'*, *ta'zhim*, honesty, discipline, *istiqamah*, responsibility, and regularity in praying together, performing *dhuha*prayer during a break time, and weekly donating on Fridays.

Furthermore, in regards to its academic achievements, in the last seven years, MA Hubulo Bone Bolango was one of the preeminent, exemplary, and notable madrasas. It made a consistent escalation in graduate's quality, making it a favorite madrasa in Gorontalo. MA Hubulo Bone Bolango reportedly had a pass rate of 100%. We were thus interested in the fact that MA Hubulo Bone Bolango was attempting to create graduates with good characters.

Character education in SMAT Wira Bhakti Gorontalo was reflected in its vision and mission, i.e., "creating a generation with *akhlakulkarimah*, achievements, and nationality insights". We could the value of character education explicitly therein, especially in the phrase "a generation with *akhlakulkarimah*" and "achievements". We also identified another appealing fact in SMAT Wira Bhakti, namely, it implementing a semi-military system to build students' characters. A large portion of character education was built upon dormitory activities, e.g., reciting Koran, listening to sermons, reinforcing morality, memorizing Koran, and studying assisted by dormitory managers, despite intercullicular activities in which we could also find character education, such as reciting a prayer before eating and after studying, working in a group, learning independently, and others. Findings from the preliminary observation with respect to character education in MA Hubulo Bone Bolango, SMAN 3 Gorontalo, and SMAT Wira Bhakti Gorontalo prompted us to proceed with this research.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Based on the research focus and objectives conveyed in Introduction, a qualitative approach and multisite design were used (Yin, 1984 Bogdan and Biklen, 1998). This research described the implementation of character education in MA Hubulo, SMAN 3 Kota Gorontalo, and SMAT Wira Bhakti Gorontalo in a comprehensive manner. Through this research, we could build a theory inductively and used it to acquire substantive findings in correspondence to the research focus and abstract them as formal findings. Therefore, this was qualitative research. We used a qualitative method to gain an understanding of the phenomenon or event researched, by emphasizing a complete description of it and consequently generate a theory (Mudija Rahardjo, 2010:35). In general, using a qualitative research method, we analyzed a phenomenon or event which was taking place in a selected research site instead of on that which had been finished (*ex-post-facto*).

This was a multisite study which aimed to describe character education in three research sites, namely MA Hubulo, SMAN 3 Kota Gorontalo, and SMAT Wira Bhakti Gorontalo. The three subjects shared different characteristics, in terms of either intuition, vision, mission, geographical location, extracurricular activities, the number of students and teachers, and programs developed.

Due to those different characteristics, we used a multisite research design. We then used a constant comparative method.

III.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Manifestation of Character education

1.   Vision and Mission of the School/madrasa

Referring to our findings with respect to the vision and mission, we could infer that 1) The vision and mission of a school constituted principles on which a school relied to establish preeminence and contained several values, 2) The vision and mission of a school were a shared principle and objective and a formulation and consensus which in the making of them, all stakeholders were engaged, 3) The vision and mission which had been stipulated and agreed by all school citizens were socialized to all stakeholders, and 4) The vision and mission of a school promoted character education.

2.   Values Implemented

Referring to our findings with respect to the values implemented by the schools, we could infer that 1) The values implemented were an elaborative description of schools' vision and mission, 2) The essential values implemented by schools/madrasa were religiosity, discipline, environmental caring, social caring, honesty, togetherness, commitment, modesty, self-independence, and nationality, 3) The cultural values determined by schools were socialized to all school citizens who, in return, internalized them in their school lives, and 4) The values regularly implemented built positive characters in students.

3.   Achievement Reward System

Referring to our findings with respect to the schools' achievement reward system, we could infer that 1) Schools gave a high appreciation to those with excellent achievements which promoted schools' reputation, 2) Awards given to them could be in the form of materials and non-materials, 3) Awards were given in a special occasion in front of all school citizens, and 4) Awards were given to motivate other students to make the same great achievements.

The Transformation of Character education

1.   Planning Model

Referring to our findings with respect to the model of character education planning, we could infer that 1) Planning begun with the determination of the madrasa's vision-mission, 2) Planning included some character education programs in schools' vision and mission, 3) Planning also began with an initial annual meeting and a determination of systemic, explicit, and integrative character education programs, 4) In the planning model, schools socialized character education programs to all school citizens, and 5) When planning, schools were also designing a conducive environment which allowed teachers to build students' characters.

2.   Implementation Model

Referring to our findings with respect to the implementation model for character education, we could infer that 1) Character education in schools/madrasas was a program whose policy had been implemented by the government in the Constitution, 2) In the implementation model, schools' vision and mission were included and implemented among schools' and madrasa's policies, 3) The common character education implementation models at schools and madrasas were habituation, personification, role modelling, integration of extracurricular, intracurricular, and co-curricular activities and programs, and conducive environmental building (*bi'ah*).
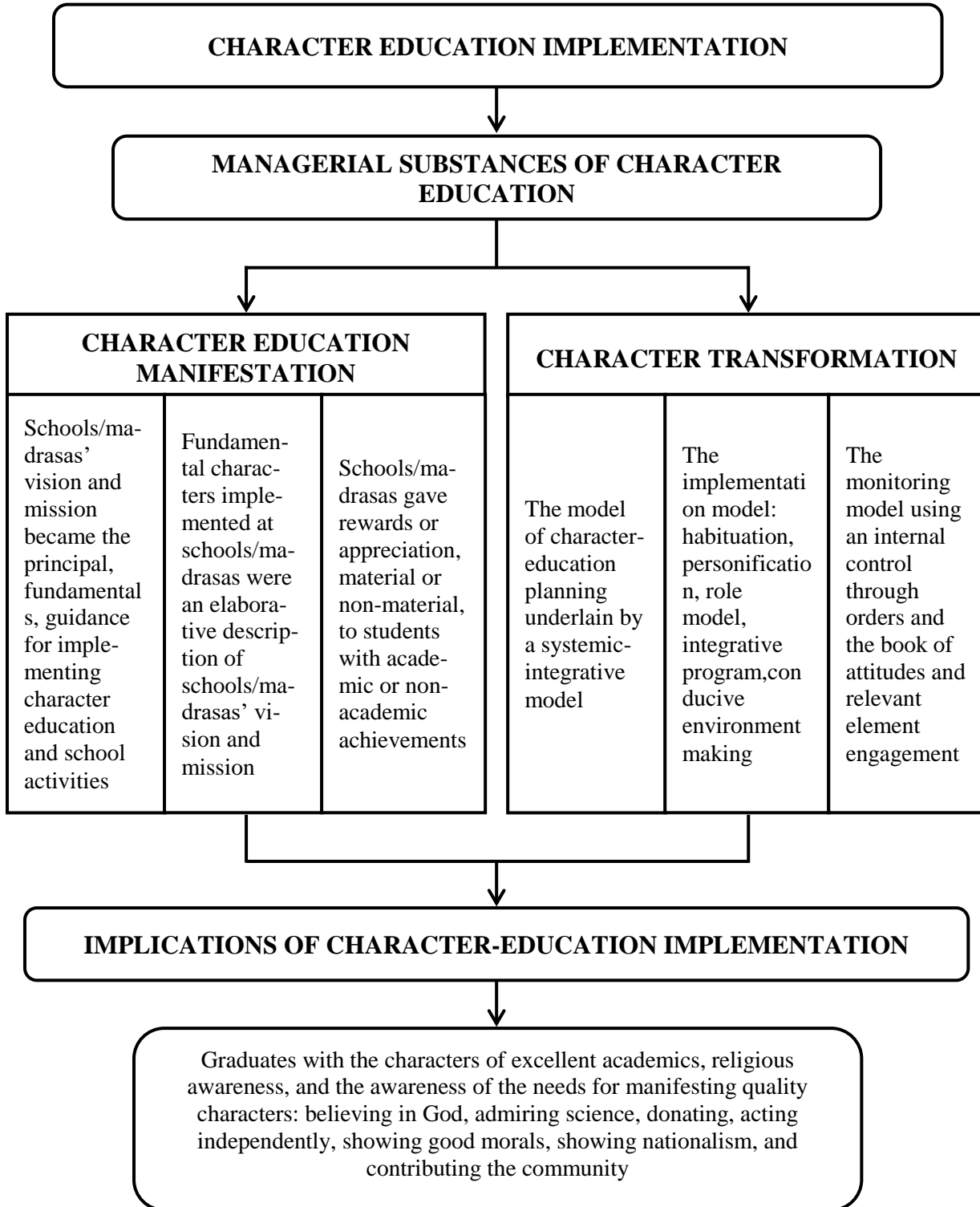
3.   Monitoring System

Referring to our findings with respect to the monitoring system, we could infer that 1) The monitoring priority in regard to the character education implementation referred to the vision and mission beheld by schools and madrasas, 2) Monitoring was regularly or continuously performed in all activities participated by students at a class, madrasa, or dormitory, 3) Monitoring was partaken by all dormitory managers to improve students' characters, and 4) Monitoring was conducted through attitudinal and behavioral observation on students and the enactment of some regulations written in the book of attitudes.

4.   Implications and Implementation of Character education to Create Graduates with Quality Characters

Referring to our findings with respect to the implications of character education implementation, we could infer that character education had a positive implication on creating graduates with the characters of excellent

academics and religious awareness. Graduates were aware of the need for manifesting quality characters: believing in God, admiring science, donating, acting independently, showing good morals, showing nationalism, and contributing to the community in accordance with the expectation, satisfaction, pride, and belief of the community.

CONCEPTUAL SCHEME OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

CHARACTER EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION

MANAGERIAL SUBSTANCES OF CHARACTER EDUCATION

CHARACTER EDUCATION MANIFESTATION

Schools/madrasas' vision and mission became the principal, fundamentals, guidance for implementing character education and school activities	Fundamental characters implemented at schools/madrasas were an elaborative description of schools/madrasas' vision and mission	Schools/madrasas gave rewards or appreciation, material or non-material, to students with academic or non-academic achievements

CHARACTER TRANSFORMATION

The model of character-education planning underlain by a systemic-integrative model	The implementation model: habituation, personification, role model, integrative program,conducive environment making	The monitoring model using an internal control through orders and the book of attitudes and relevant element engagement

IMPLICATIONS OF CHARACTER-EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION

Graduates with the characters of excellent academics, religious awareness, and the awareness of the needs for manifesting quality characters: believing in God, admiring science, donating, acting independently, showing good morals, showing nationalism, and contributing the community

IV.   CONCLUSION

This research revealed that firstly, character education implementation was manifested through three aspects, namely schools' vision and mission, values and beliefs related to character education developed, and achievement reward system for students. Character values implemented refer to school visions and missions and then, assisted by school stakeholders, are designed and deemed as a habituation process in implementing character education at schools/madrasas.

Secondly, in the attempt to describe their visions and missions, values, and achievement reward system implemented, schools transform character values into three education management substances, namely (a) the planning model of character education, (b) the implementation model using habituation, the precedent model of someone's behavior (role model), extracurricular, intracurricular, and co-curricular program activities being integrated, and conducive circle formation, and (c) supervising model using internal control management through monitoring and orders by engaging all relevant elements.

Thirdly, character education implementation had a positive implication on quality characters: believing in God, admiring science, donating, acting independently, showing good morals, showing nationalism, and contributing to the community in accordance with the expectation, satisfaction, prid, and belief of the community.

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