# CHARACTER EDUCATION BASED ON THE REINFORCEMENT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON ISLAMIC UNIVERSITIES

**Sri Sumarni**
Islamic State University Yogyakarta
marniuinsuka@yahoo.com

## Abstract

Character Education is a never ending process, so it must be proceed continuously and cannot be stopped at just the high school level. In fact, some students have a variety of problems as a result of the influence of modernity which brings cultural and capitalist hedonist such as: vandalism, promiscuity, drugs, alcoholism, anarchism, campus friction and so on. One of the alternative models of Character Education applied to build students character of Islamic universities is "Character Education Based on the Reinforcement of Social Capital", considering the fact that radius of trust is still need the reinforcement of social capital to bridge it. The philosophy of this model is "the best of a man is useful for others". While the basic concept of the model consists of: trust, social glue, and reciprocity norm. The approaches used in this model are: a micro approach with the implementation of the module, meso approach to build a culture, and a macro approach to build a network. These models are very effective to build a care and cooperation character, effective to build a character of obedient worship and responsibilities, and less effective to build character of honesty.

Keywords: Character Education, Social Capital, and Higher Education.

## Introduction

These values are more seen as an element that denies an objectivity, rationality, and efficiency. As a result, the values of solidarity, mutual assistance, solidarity, harmony, hospitality do not get much attention proportionally in education, either in a family environment or school and college. In most people, the measure of a successful family is when their child can get a status symbol as a rich man, and educational institutions will be considered to be successful if they could make their students graduate with high cognitive values.

Waves of changes brought by the globalization of technology and information have also led the students affected by an instant lifestyle and self-serving. Some problems experienced by the students such as plagiarism, cheating, promiscuity, drugs, and alcoholism often happens. Students' ways of dressed which are far from common courtesy also contribute to increase the problems. A student becomes a figure that easily discouraged and easy "to be ignited" by the things that are "trivial". Anarchism is emphasized to solve the problems rather than dialogue and sharing.

To respond these problems, social capital has an important role as a "bridge" between the academic community to develop a sense of mutual trust, mutual caring, and mutual cooperation. In this context, it is necessary to develop a character education design based on the reinforcement of social capital that will be implemented to build students' character. This design is able to be a "bridge" in togetherness and superior civilization. "The bridge" here means an education that is able to overcome alienation, loneliness, and even frustration among students.

## The Essence of Character Education in University

Universities have a major responsibility and liability in generating characterized person that is expected to give a contribution in establishing national character (Supardi, 1997: 87). University graduates are expected to be able to perform their function as agents of change, including in understanding and open minded, intelligent, and characterless society in any field. College graduates are also expected to bring enlightenment and provide a positive influence for the improvement of living standard and welfare of society.

Ideally, the best time in giving a character education is since a child in kindergarten, primary and secondary education, up to higher education. The character education can actually be a general life skills education which becomes the main base material in kindergarten to secondary education. The higher the education level decreases the portion of character education. As in universities, ideally students' mental and character have been formed. But in fact, due to the influence of modernity which brings hedonist and capitalist culture, the character of the students even more eroded.

Therefore, it is not appropriate for an educator to stop giving character education at the high school level. Not a few students with a low confidence and want to find their identity, but instead simply fall on negative things. The high level of trust a lecturer given to a student to be able to take care of himself is often misused. Those two main reasons are appropriate for a lecturer to give intensive counseling to students. Character education urged to be applied to the higher education for the next generation to establish students' mental in order to have a good character as well as the spirit of patriotism and nationalism.

At a university level, character education is a system of cultivation of character values to the citizens of universities, which includes knowledge, awareness or willingness, and actions to implement these values, either towards the Almighty God, their selves, others, the environment, or nationality to become useful men for themselves and others. In building character education in universities, all the components (stakeholders) should be involved, including educational component itself, that are the content of the curriculum, learning and assessment, the quality of relationships, handling or management courses, university management, the implementation of the activity or co-curricular activities, empowerment infrastructure, financial, and work ethic of all citizens and the university environment. (Budimansyah, 2010).

According to Budimansyah (2010: 11), character education at university is a stage of character building which is no less important than the character building in schools. Character education in universities is a continuation of character education in schools. Therefore, each university should have a pattern of character building of students in accordance with the vision, mission, and the characteristics of each university. Thus, patterns of character education among the universities with others are probably not the same. In addition, character education in universities should be designed as a whole; it means that by the time a student enters new territory as a new student, in the faculty, in the program of study, in the campus organizations activities, until he graduated as an alumnus all should be well designed.

The implementation of character education in universities can be done through various channels, they are: (1) Tri Dharma University, (2) Cultural Campus / Cultural Organization, (3) Student Activities, (4) Daily Activities, and (5) Culture academic. In the implementation, a university may determine where the priorities to be implemented first, or in parallel. The prioritization can adjust vision and mission of a university or under the most urgent problems to be immediately treated (Ministry Of National Education, 2011: 2).

## Character Education Based on the Reinforcement of Social Capital

### Purpose and Target Values of Character Education

In modern context, education is always placed in the framework of activities and tasks intended for a generation who is existing in growth and transition periods. Therefore, education more orients itself on its efforts to establish a mature personality for each individual in overcoming the challenges of development of civilization. Such education according to Al-Ghazali referred to education that is able to form a complete personality (*kaffah*). A complete personality describes the overall personal human essence naturally, that are: as individual beings, social beings, moral beings, and godless beings (Wiyani, 2012: 33-34). Therefore, education desires human to establish a good relationship to God Almighty (*habluminallah*) and others (*habluminannas*). Maintaining a good relationship to God Almighty can be done by (a) conducting obligatory and sunnah worship with heartily, sincerely, and patiently; and (b) left what became prohibitions. While maintaining good relations with fellow human beings may do in a way to benefit kindness as much as possible to others.

In harmony with these, two core values of character must be achieved in character education should contain *hablumminallah* and *hablumminnas* element. Afterall these two elements may provide a clear direction for the true goal of life and may remind people of misguided of hypnotis goal of life. Fortified with true goal of life, the character values of the target character education may refer to two elements, namely the values that are able to place the position of human as servant and caliph of Allah SWT at once. Out of here, those character values can be formulated such as: (1) acts of worship, (2) honesty, (3) concern, (4) cooperation, and (5) responsibility, and so on. The process of embodying personality who is capable to actualize the values of characters may take place continuously within the framework of space and time which is changing constantly, even from early childhood to adulthood. Thereby, education should be designed to adjust development of the times that can form mature personality at every level of education. It is important due to the fact that many social problems and disorders occur as a result of a disregard for the values of these characters.

### The Importance of Social Capital in Character Education

#### The Essence of Social Capital

The dimensions of social capital are quite broad and complex. Social capital differs from other popular terms, namely Human Capital (Fukuyama, 1995). In human capital, everything refers to individual dimensions; power and expertise of an individual. Social capital more emphasis on the potential of the group and the patterns of relationships between individuals within a group and between groups within a community.

Putnam (1992) defines social capital as a part of social organizations, such as trust, norms, and networks, which may fix the efficiency of society by facilitating collective action. Network membership, trust, and a set of shared values is the core of the concept of social capital. So who owned the network is really important. However, by recognizing people is not enough, it needs a sense of belonging with each other that is bound by a norm. If you have the same value, they are more likely to work together to achieve goals. Here are presented the basic concepts of social capital consisting of trust, norms, and values.

Humans are interconnected through a trust, networks series of reciprocity and have the same value with the other members in the network. If the network be a source of power or strength continuously, it could be called as social capital. Thereby, social capital can facilitate the formation of trust and relationships with others, and keeping to continue the whole time based on the values of kindness, so that they can work together to achieve the various things they cannot do themselves, or they can achieve with difficulty.

Substance of social capital to establish, build, strengthen, and enrich human relationships can be a "bridge" for "ravine" that separates groups that feel different from each other. The groups themselves such as the rich - poor, urban - rural, slang - squirt, a trend - plebeian, cottage – outside cottage, and so on, including the differences in spirituality vision (such as NU, Muhammadiyah, Ahmadiyah, and so on). Social capital also strengthens the agreement on the importance of mutual trust and cooperation. Social capital is not just a set of institutions that support the community through social trust and social norm, but as a social glue that mobilize communities to work together to achieve common goals.

### Capital Social Attributed to Institution and Personal

There are two groups of definitions of social capital given by experts. The first group is more emphasis on the network of social relations which tied to each other by a sense of confidence (trust), ownership of information, mutual understanding, mutual support, and shared values, and the same commitment to the norm. The second group emphasizes on ownership properties (traits) of the members of the community which allows the establishment of cooperation between them (Ancok, 2003: 16).

First group opinion is represented by various theories of group dynamics which see social capital as a group or community characterized by high cohesiveness known as Social Capital Embedded to the Institution, while the second group is represented by a theory of personality (traits theorist) which see that the emergence of a cohesive group will only occur if the individual has a certain trait personality that support to interact with other people. In other words, the second definition is more emphasis on the personal characteristics embedded on human beings; it is involved in a social interaction, which consists of: the nature of mental abundance, positive thoughts to others, the ability to empathize, having an open attitude, transformational communication, win win solution oriented, serving nature, appreciative habits, and self-control. The definition of the second group is called as Social Capital Embedded to Personal Characteristic. (Ancok, 2003: 16).

In this context of the study the definition of the first group is the social capital embedded in institution used as a basis to build a network capable of culture and fosters social capital, while the second group definition embedded personal characteristics used to systematize module of character education based on social capital. It is based on the assumption that the development of character is influenced by many factors: heredity (nature) and environment (nurture) where the concerned person is growing and growing. So the efforts of the development of character can be done through: (1) the development of a personal characteristics, and (2) environmental factors engineering.

### The Approaches of Character Education Based on Social Capital

Generally, there are three main approaches used in the study of social capital, namely micro approach, meso approach, and macro approach. Micro approach which includes the study of the potential of each individual to cooperate, used to be the basis for assessing the social capital which embedded to individual characteristics. This parralels with the core values that underlie cognitive social capital of civic engagement, that is an "encounter between people based on a deep emotional engagement, warm relationship, sense of close psychologically, and the ties of solidarity built on the basis of empathy and universal brotherhood which do not distinguish each other "(Barliana 2011: 5-6). In designing Character Education model based on Reinforcement Social Capital, this approach is used to formulate Module of intended Character Education.

Meso approach emphasizes on the structures that are more instrumental (Barliana 2011: 6), which facilitates the collaboration by building a democratic culture, free from fear, free from discriminatory sense, the growing sense of awareness and increasing participation of citizens of the campus, and lack of conflict (Lickona, 1991).

While the macro approach focuses on the creation of conditions that are able to expand the network of cooperation through an open attitude towards external groups or having wide radius of trust. This condition can be created through a partnership with parents and the community around the campus.

### The implementation Foundation of Character Education Based on Reinforcement of Social Capital

Islamic University with a strong foundation of the Qur'an and Hadith, in which teach to do good things to human beings need to keep turning on and build social capital in order to create a culture that has high "inherent power" for students to adapt, socialize, solve the problem, so it makes the students "feel at home" on campus, feel cared for, valued, cherished just like an atmosphere in a family environment. It is based on the hadith of the Prophet SAW: "The best of a man is useful for

others" (HR. Ahmad, Thabrani, Daruqutni in http: //www.bersama dakwah.com, 2012)

Social capital embedded on the individual in the form of mental abundance, positive thoughts to others, the ability to empathize, having an open attitude, transformational communication, win-win oriented, serve nature, appreciative habits, and self-control has had a strong foundation of the teachings of Islam both as stated in the Qur'an and Hadith. The students' social capital in the Islamic University environments that far from their family need to be cultivated in order not to feel hopeless, alienated, isolated, which could make them desperate and do things that are out of his senses such as: anarchists demonstration, drug addicts, drinking hard, promiscuity, terrorism, and so forth.

**The results of Implementation Character Education Based on Reinforcement of Social Capital**

The model has proven its validity through the Expert Test Validation in Focus Group Discussion forum. The result of the implementation of this model is an increase in the actualization of student character values. It is characterized by the implementation of increased prayer, especially the frequency of completeness five daily prayers, the Sunnah prayers and night prayers. This increase is also followed by other dimensions, namely: sunna fasting and orderliness to read the Qur'an, especially students who live in boarding school.

Actualization value of honesty increased in the realm of individual, but it has not seen on collective and public service area. Actualization values of caring, cooperation and responsibility increased greatly, characterized by one's willingness to help others defeating his own benefit, to help ever hurt friends, and students' ability to handle of social activities independently (without the assistance of lecturers) in Sumbing with four activities at once : (1) giving food aid and wear decent clothing to Sumbing people, (2) quiz for elementary students, (3) educational games and outbound for elementary students, and (4) educational screenings for Sumbing citizens.

Actualization values of caring, cooperation, and responsibility also increases at boarding house environment, it is characterized by: (1) the handling of garbage problems by collecting and classifying the types of garbage: paper, plastic, and cans and then sold and saved the results to all residents of boarding house; (2) the handling of correspondence temporary residence problem, (3) the handling of ethical socializing problems of multicultural students, and (4) the increase in the handling of boarders' orderliness by re-establishing the rules of boarding house through the existing regulation and socialization.

Using a quantitative analysis, this model is very effective to build character of caring and cooperation, effective enough to build the character

of acts of worship and responsibilities, and less effective to build the character of honesty.

**Conclusions**

From the above discussions, it can be concluded that:

1. Character Education is a never ending process, so it cannot be stopped at just high school level. In fact, students have a various problems as a result of the influence of modernity which brings hedonist and capitalist culture, such as: vandalism, promiscuity, drugs, alcoholism, anarchism, campus friction and so on.

2. The best Character Education to be applied to students of Islamic University is "character education model based on the reinforcement social capital", considering the fact that radius of trust is still need the reinforcement of social capital to bridge it.

3. This model consists of the following elements: (a) the philosophy model: "A best man is a man with good relationship to God and to fellow human beings"; (b) Basic Concepts model consists of Trust, Social Glue, Reciprocity Norm; (c) The approaches used are: Micro approach with the implementation of the PKBPMS module, Meso approach to build a culture, and Macro approach to build a network (d) Measurement results of the implementation of the model using questionnaires, self-assessment (reflection and testimony sheets), and the observation of actualization value.

4. The implementation results of this model qualitatively can be seen from the increasing of students' actualization character value, either the value of acts of worship, caring, cooperation, responsibility, and honesty. Quantitatively, this model is very effective to build character of caring and cooperation, effective enough to build character of acts of worship and responsibilities, and the less effective to build character of honesty.

**REFERENCES**

Ancok, D. (2003). *Modal sosial dan kualitas masyarakat.* Presented at the Inauguration Speech of Professor Position at the Faculty of Psychology.

Barliana, Syaom. (2011). *Arsitektur, ruang publik, dan pendidikan: Relasi mutual untuk penguatan modal sosial.* Presented at the Inauguration Speech in the Field of Sociology Architecture In Technology and Vocational Education Faculty of Education University of Indonesia in June 2011. http://berita.upi.edu/2011/06/23/arsitektur-ruang-publik-dan-pendidikan-relasi-mutual-untuk-penguatan-modal-sosial/. Downloaded on 11th April, 2012.

Budimansyah, Dasim. (2010). *Model pendidikan karakter di perguruan tinggi:Penguatan PKn,*

layanan bimbingan konseling dan KKN tematik di universitas pendidikan Indonesia. Bandung: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.

Fukuyama, F. (1995). Trust: The social virtues and the creation of prosperity. London: Hamish Hamilton.

http://www.bersamadakwah.com /2012/05/ khutbah-jumat-menjadi-pribadi-yang.html HR Ahmad, Thabrani, Daruqutni

Kementrian Pendidikan Nasional. (2010). Pengembangan pendidikan budaya dan karakter bangsa: pedoman sekolah. Jakarta: Puskur Balitbang Kemendiknas.

Lickona, T. (1991). Educating for character: how our school can teach respect and responsibility. New York, Toronto, London, Sydney, Aucland: Bantam books.

Putnam, R.D. (1992). The prosperous community: social capital and public life. American prospect, 13, Spring, 35- 42. In Elinor Ostrom and T.K. Ahn.2003. Foundation of Social Capital. Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Wiyani, N.A. (2012). Pendidikan karakter berbasis imam dan taqwa. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Teras.