Character Education For Golden Generation 2045 (National Character Building for Indonesian Golden Years)

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Abstract

Education has been considered as the centre of excellence in preparing human’s excellent characters. This belief drives every single person to be ready to face the global challenges. This belief also becomes the basic foundation for the world to say that Indonesia will be a very strong nation in all sectors in 2045 or 100 years after its independence day. This is supported by Indonesia’s economy growth. Already the 16th-largest economy in the world, Indonesia has the potential to be 7th-biggest by 2030 (Oberman et al., 2012). Within this context, the government of Indonesia believe that preparing young generation is the only way to go to be a very strong nation in 2045. Education is considered to be the best place to prepare the agent of change of the nation that will bring prosperous to others. Education institution is no longer a place to transfer knowledge only, but it is also a place to form youth’s attitude, behaviour, character, and leadership. Thus, it is justifiable to reflect some basic value and character of Indonesia and cultivate them to all young generation in the form of national character building through education.

Indonesia Golden Generation

Indonesia is one of emerging countries which are predicted to have bright economic development. It is predicted that Indonesian economic development will dominate the world economic development in 2025. It is also predicted also that Indonesia will be a great industrial country in 2045. A book called Megachange 50 published by The Economist also predicted the similar notion; Indonesia will be a developed country with the total income around US $ 24.000 in 2050.

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Those world predictions are mostly based on some potential owned by Indonesia. Indonesian natural resources which are unlimited, fertile land, strategic locations of some potential areas, as well as other natural resources such as fossil and bio energy which are also unlimited are some reasons for that prediction. Indonesian human resources which are around 240 million people are considered to be supporting elements for this country to be great in the future.

In order to reach its dream to be a developed country in 2045, Indonesia needs to change its mind-set. This means that some development programs related to natural resources, human resources, sustainable production should be managed well to support its total needs and consumption. Until 2045 Indonesia will have great potential in terms of its human resources which is called as productive human resources. These human resources have to be managed well so that it can accelerate the country’s development. In contrast, if the human resources are not managed well, they will be the burden of the country. At this point, education plays an important role in preparing the human resources of Indonesia to be highly qualified human resources. It is proven by the fact that correlation coefficient of education toward human resource development index is 0.99. This means that education has a great contribution to the raise of prosperity index. Thus, Indonesian government has to be able to take the moment of 2045 as the moment for Indonesia to have great human resources.

As mentioned earlier, education is the best media to build the nation to be a great nation in all sectors. Thus, it is crucial for the government to open the gate of education access for all people of Indonesia start from education for kids or early childhood education up to higher education level. It is also important that the government has to be able to make sure that all things which may block people to access education must be unfold.

The government through its Ministry of Education and Culture has already issued policies to open education access as wide as possible. Some actions done by Indonesian government to give education access to everybody are free tuition fee, allowance for poor students, scholarship for students, building some schools. In addition, Indonesian government also establish Universal High School so that in 2020 it is expected that 97% of Indonesian possess at least high school diploma.

In line with the raise of education quality, The Minister of Education and Culture, Mr. Muhammad Nuh, in his speech during the 67th Indonesian Independent Day stated that the most important aspect to focus on in education and culture is the characters such as; 1. Strengthening the academic capability with logic and honesty; 2. Cultivating Nationalism; 3. Cultivating care, tolerance, and respect; 4. Cultivating democratic values; 5. Enforcing law. He added that by applying all of those elements of characters in education, the 2045 Indonesian dream is no longer a dream. It will come true.

CHARACTER EDUCATION PARADIGM

Character is considered as part of psycho-social element which is related to the context surrounding (Koesoema, 2007: 79). Character can also be considered as behavioural element which emphasizes somatopsikis elements possessed by human being. Character is usually seen from psychological perspective. This is related to the aspects of behaviour, attitude, manner and the quality following which differentiate one person to another or specific elements which may lead somebody to be more outstanding that others. Character is part of human specific element which covers their ability to face challenge and difficulties (Kemko Kesra 2010: 7). Hill says (2005), “character determines someone’s private thoughts and someone’s actions done. Good character is the inward motivation to do what is right, according to the highest standard of behaviour in every situation”. Character is related to the overall performance of somebody and their interaction in surrounding. Thus, character covers moral values, attitude, and behaviour. Someone is considered to have good character from their attitude and action done which reflect certain characters. Therefore, character is seen or reflected from human daily habits. Cronbach says (1977: 57):

“Character is not accumulation of separate habits and ideas. Character is an aspect of the personality. Beliefs, feelings, and action are linked; to change character is to reorganize the personality. Tiny lessons on principles of good conduct will not be effective if they cannot be integrated with the person’s system of beliefs about himself, about others, and about the good community”.

Character, as mentioned by Cronbach, is not an entity which separate habits and ideas. Character is the aspect of behaviour, believe, feeling, and action which are interrelated one another so that if someone wants to change certain characters, they need to reorganize their basic characters elements.

Different from Cronbach, Lickona (1992: 37) sees character in three related elements; moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Based on those three elements somebody is considered to have good character if they know about good things (moral knowing), possess interest toward good things (moral feeling) and do good
actions (moral action). Those three elements will lead somebody to have good habits in thinking, feeling, and action toward the God Almighty, their individual entity, others, environment, and nation. Visualisation from this logical thinking is shown in the picture below:

![Figure 1 Charter](image)

A great nation is not only seen from the strength of its military army or its numbers of war ships nor its wealthy. But, a great nation is seen from the character of the nation as mentioned by Morgenthau (1991): national character determines the national power. De Vos (1968) says that character is the enduring personality characteristics and unique life style found among the population of particular national states. De Vos states that nation character shows the unique and specific elements of characters of certain nations.

Individually, character can be inborn but it does not work for the nation character. Nation character is not inborn. Nation character will be strong if the individual character of the people is also strong (Koellhoffer 2009). As important elements which determine nation power, nation character must be implanted or cultivated to young generation. Young generation is the owner and the agent of change of the nation. They do not experience the process of growing the nation character from the beginning as the one did by some leaders in the past. Without any action to internalize and socialize the value of the nation character, it is considered that the young generation will have weak foundation in building the nation. Thus, character education is essential for them.

Character education is not a new program. It has been part of human life since centuries ago. Indeed, education itself is a media to reach knowledge and wisdom to live life and create excellent life for human being. Related to character education, education terminology is called as a process of accumulating good knowledge, attitude, and action. Education begins with building the awareness, feeling, caring, intension, knowledge, believes and habits formation.

Therefore, the concept of character education is 1. Character is not taught but it is a habitual formation for example internalizing values, choosing good choice, doing them as habits, and providing examples; 2. Educating character to youth has to involve the youth situation and condition. 3. In Education some issues should be considered are; learning situation, learning process, learning materials, and learning evaluation. 4. Character education is never ending process.

### EXPECTED MODEL FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

Some character education standards used to direct education are as follows;

1. Promoting the values of ethic as the foundation of character education.
2. Identifying character comprehensively, this covers idea, feeling, and action.
3. Using practice and effective approach to cultivate and build character.
5. Giving chances to students to express their ideas and behave.
6. Developing appropriate curriculum which support character education.
7. Cultivating students’ motivation.
8. Sharing the responsibility to all members of schools for the sake of education character.
10. Building cooperation and good relationship with family and people around the schools.
11. Evaluating the school character, academics.

Meanwhile, there are four principles used to develop education character stated by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2010: 11-14).

1. **Sustainable.** This means that character education is a long process of cultivating characters started from the beginning until the end of education process at schools. It starts from kindergarten up to senior high school level. In the higher education level, character education focuses more on the empowerment.

2. **Through all subjects, self-development, and education culture.** This means that the process of character development is done through every single subject at school, every extracurricular program, and co-curricular program based on the Curriculum Content Standard.

3. **Value is neither caught nor taught, it is learned (Hermann, 1972).** This means that the value of character is not teaching materials. But, this is something to learn by students. The students are the subject of learning. Therefore, teachers do not need to change the teaching materials but provide students with chances and possibilities to learn and to internalize character education.

4. **Active and interesting learning process.**
This means that character education process puts students as the subject of learning. The learning atmosphere should be lively, active, and interesting.

The success of education character can be influenced by the technique or approach used in the teaching and learning process. Suparno, Paul, Moerti, Titisari, and Kartono (2002: 42-44), there are four models of teaching and learning in character education. There are as follows:

1. **Monolithic Model**
In this model, character education is considered to be a special subject. So, character education subject is treated like other subjects. This means that the teacher of character education should develop curriculum, syllabus, lesson plan and teaching Medias to teach character education subject to students. The good point of this model is that the concept of character education is delivered to students clearly. However, this means that the value learned by students is dependent on the curriculum design which means artificial. In other words it does not really give chance to students to internalize the value of character education.

2. **Integrated Model**
In this model, educating character values to students is the responsibility of every teacher (Washington, Clark, and Dixon 2008). In this model, the teachers can choose some character values to be inserted in their subject. By this model, it is expected that students will internalize character values habitually during their learning time.

4. **Out of School Time Model**
Character education can also be done out of school hours. This usually focuses more on some activities out of school and then followed by discussion after the activities. This leads students to have a real experience in practicing some character values but since it is out of school time means that this is not part of the curriculum. Thus, it is considered to be less effective to cultivate character values to students within the limitation of time.

5. **Integrating Model**
Integrating model integrates the integrated and out of school time model. This can be done through cooperation between teachers and some other people out of schools. This model leads to a shared and cooperative activity among schools academics and people around the schools. In addition, the students will be overwhelmed by character education at school and then practice it out of school.

From those four models, the most ideal and perfect model is the integrative one. This means that character education is integrated in all subjects at school and then the students get the real experience to practice character education.

**SUMMARY**
Indonesian vision 2045 to be a developed and strong country is a strong intension which needs support from all people of Indonesia. Even though, the current situation is still far from excellent, but the motivation to move forward should always remain strong. Opening the gate of education for all is the only way to go to build the nation’s human resources. Some values that need to be focus of education are: 1. Strengthening the academic capability with logic and honesty; 2. Cultivating Nationalism; 3. Cultivating care, tolerance, and respect; 4.
Cultivating democratic values; 5. Enforcing law. He added that by applying all of those elements of characters in education, the 2045 Indonesian dream is no longer a dream. It is coming and the dream comes true.

References