

# *Conference Proceedings*

*Seoul, Korea*

*January, 2014*

**APSSC**

*2014 Asia-Pacific Social Science Conference*

**ACCAWS**

*2014 Annual Conference on Children, Women, and Social Studies*

**APSSC**

**Asia-Pacific Social Science Conference**

ISBN:978-906-90052-5-8

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**Annual Conference on Children, Women, and Social Studies**

ISBN:978-906-90052-6-5

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**Islamic Perspective and Moral Perspective in Character Education for Early Child: An Experimental Approach**

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**Abstract**

Good character was basic of good behavior in society. Development of character needs a long period and parents involvement and also should be started from the beginning of age. Character, define as a reliable inner disposition to respond to situations in a morally good way (Jickura, 1991). It can teach through formal education and informal education that delivered in the life way. One of informal way was training for community. The aim of this research was developed a technique to teach good character for early child. 28 participants mother of Islamic preschool were involved in a four times character training. This research conducted by randomized two groups post test only design. An experiment group was given a character building training, meanwhile a control group was given a dialogic reading training. The purpose of manipulation is having knowledge, attitudes, motivations, and skills about three topics: praying, pro social behaviour, and polite behaviour. Observation check list was used as a post test. Observation check list constructed by considering HOME questionnaire and aspects of three topics. Manipulation check conducted by randomised observation at participation home to eight mothers for two groups. The result showed that there was distinction in mother behaviour when they teach their children, between experiment group ( $M = 13.27$ ,  $SD = 1.335$ ) and control group ( $M = 7.92$ ,  $SD = 0.760$ ),  $t(26) = 13.231$ ,  $p < .05$ . The result also indicated the important role of parent, especially mother as significant other for children.

**Keywords:** Islamic perspective, moral perspective, character education, early child, mother

**Introduction**

The changing face of national education increasingly shows the deep concern of various parties. Starting from the elimination of Pancasila and Citizenship subject and this becoming Citizenship Education only at all levels of education, it brought the abandonment consequences of the values of Pancasila as duty, deliberation, mutual cooperation, harmony, and religious tolerance. Whereas Pancasila contains values derived from noble values that are universally accepted and the values in Indonesia that are believed to protect the integrity of a pluralistic nation (Wibowo, 2011). This change in this curriculum also contributes towards the social problems that exist in

society. People towards a permissive situation, where life is much influenced by the birds of the bed values that undermine a child's development, such as hostility, violence, hypocrisy, fraud, deceit or dishonesty, injustice and disharmony, as well as the emergence of extremist-environments in the name of religion. Through the boundaries of age, education level, social class, status and position, most people tend not to feel shame for doing bad things which violate social norms and even religion. At that moment awareness of the importance of early character formation in childhood is seen as one of the most important things in the educational process.

Symptoms that occur in a social environment require the participation of all parties to be able to contribute to improving the situation. One alternative that can be raised is the education of character or manners of the family from an early start. The family is the smallest unit in society that has an important role in developing the character and personality of the individual.

The values of life first known by a child is by the family – especially parents. Behaviour patterns and habits that are applied in the family will be used as a reference in the child's attitude and behaviour. Family, particularly mother, plays an important role in the formation of this character, judging from the intensity of the interaction that occurs between mother and child.

Character or manners are the values of human behaviour, that will be measured or merit through the measure of religious norms, legal norms, manners, and decorum, as well as cultural norms. Character will identify positive behaviours that are expected to be realised in action, words, thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and the personality of a person. In developmental psychology, the term is closely related to moral character. Kohlberg (Santrock, 1999) divides moral development as follows: pre-conventional level, conventional level, and post conventional level. For early child, is pre-conventional level, consist of two stages: (a) punishment and obedience orientation. A person is well behaved in order to avoid punishment or receive a gift, without regard for others; (b) the orientation of the instrumental benefits. A person behaves in their own interests, but also let others do the same.

The character is a concrete form of moral behaviour. Characters can be manifested through three aspects of learning that is the moral character of knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Lidiana, 2004). Character education is education for shaping one's personality through the character education that fosters a sense of desire to always do good things.

Character education is also a continuous process through awareness and habituation. It is inevitable that the process of education (especially character) will not work when just teaching the cognitive (knowledge), but must arrive at the affective and conative (in the context of education from Ki Hajar Dewantara trilogy is thinking, sense, and intention). The process of "sense" that would form a person's sensitivity to not arbitrarily towards others or form a man with character). One of the important 'senses' to be processed is a sense of faith, feeling the presence of God as an all mighty entity with control over the entire universe. Why is this sense important? When someone has a sense that God is always watching what one's doing, then one will be careful in their action, so that words and the behaviour one realized are cultivated to conform to the truth.

The development of education needs to instill fundamental values as a basic feature of the child's personality formation. Education should be an integral process that accommodates the basic needs of physical and spiritual dimensions. None of the reasons are justified if the achievement of good character and personality of the child based on religious values occupy a subordinate position in charge of education. Moreover, if the system is of negligible value in the teaching process, it is not possible that an imbalance of intellectual and emotional-spiritual children will eventually give birth to individuals who are specialists but do not have a social conscience.

Family is first and foremost a social environment for the growth and development of children. Children will develop optimally when they get a good stimulation from their family. According to Hyscyanina (2010) family serves to develop the characters of children so they can adjust to society.

This is because parents and society assume that punitive action is a way to discipline and educate children. The characters that are socially constructed include accepting, preserving, taking, exchanging, and biophilous. In realizing character education, it can not be done without the cultivation of values (Azmi, 2002), because the value is the motivation in all man's works and in practice values are translated in the form of rules or norms.

Indonesian Heritage Foundation (IHF) was established in 2000 to develop a model of Character Based Holistic Education. The model has been implemented in over 700 schools Sema'i Deniz Bangsa (Non-formal kindergarten) and other formal kindergartens. Through the Sema'i Deniz Bangsa program, nine characters are taught to children: (1) Love God and the universe along with its contents; (2) responsibility, discipline, and self-reliance; (3) honesty; (4) respect and courtesy; (5) compassion, caring, and cooperation; (6) humility, creativity, work ethic, and resilience; (7) justice and leadership; (8) becoming good-hearted and humble; (9) tolerance, love peace and unity (Mugwangi, 2007). Based on the research results Dewi Hastuti (2005), shows that the model effectively increases the 15 aspects of child development, maths skills, verbal, spatial, and nine dimensions of human character. Built (2004) said that the characters need to be developed in the era of reform are: truth, honesty, integrity, individual responsibility, humility, wisdom, justice, and fitness.

#### Method

This research conducted by experiment approach, randomized two groups design, post test only. 28 participants mother of Islamic preschool were involved in a four times manipulation. An experiment group (13 participants) was given a character building training meanwhile a control group (15 participants) was given a dialogic reading training. The purpose of manipulation is setting knowledge, attitudes, motivations, and skills about three topics: praying, pro social behaviour, and polite behaviour. Observation check list was used as a pre test. Observation check list constructed by considering HOME questionnaire and aspects of three topics. Manipulation check conducted by agreement between observers during manipulation and randomized observation at participation home to eight mothers for two groups.

### Result

The result showed that there was distraction in mother behaviour when they teach their children, between experiment group ( $M = 13.27$ ,  $SD = 1.235$ ) and control group ( $M = 7.92$ ,  $SD = 0.750$ ),  $t(26) = 13.231$ ,  $p < .05$ . The result also indicated the important role of parent, especially mother as significant other for children.

### Discussion

The effectiveness of religious values and morals model-based learning is not only an intact character education but also a moral education. Moral education is more based on the moral development according to Kohlberg and its orientation is more cognitive, while the orientation of character education is broader and discusses values that are more universal (Aldhof & Berkowitz, 2009). Pro-social behaviour and respect towards other children, such as not grabbing objects or other children's toy is an example of a universal value. On the other hand learning models instill character through dialogic reading strategies and is more oriented to cognitive and making the subject focus on reading content compared to the transfer of positive values that exist in the story books. This condition is caused by using a variation of books, not only books that contains lessons of characters but also introduce books about science, colour, language, and the concept of intelligence. Though the contents of the book determines the success of character education (Lya, 2010).

Character education can be delivered in a manner that is in accordance with the prevailing culture. There is no accepted standards associated with the delivery of universal values to the learners. This condition is caused by the behaviour that is closely associated with the culture. Success or failure depends on the expertise of educators to define the challenges of characters in the surrounding culture (Christopher, Nelson, & Nelson, 2003).

Character is the basic need for a person to be able to adjust to the wider social environment, especially when the character can be used as part of a curriculum that takes place in formal educational institutions, so that when the character education can be delivered from an early age, then this character will be able to develop a strong character that can fortify the students from negative environmental influences. Berkowitz (in press) provides a model that shows the direct influence of character education as a way to keep a person from the bad influences of the environment and its relation to academic and social competence.

Positive results that have been obtained in this training can be maintained by observing the five following keys: instruction, application, teaching, support, planting the character over a long period of time among children as well as the involvement of various parties (Prida, 2011). Teachers, especially hold a critical role both as a transmitter of information as well as a role model for young children (Greenberg, 2010).

Teacher strategies in encouraging children to seek answers independently and responding to the answers given will affect the academic climate in the classroom so that the impact it has the children will develop the spirit to learn (Narasari & Tapdey, in press).

Limitations of the study was the researchers' efforts to maintain consistency regarding the location or space used. The researchers met the children four times for face-to-face meetings, these meetings were held in different places or situations so a child's attention may have been distracted or different between the different meetings. Therefore researchers conducted home visits as a manipulation check of the limitations of this study. Shadish, Cook, & Campbell (2002) stated that the observations can be used as an attempt to ensure the effect of the treatment given to extraneous factors.

There was a significant results of character training learning that focused on the behaviour of praying, courteous behaviour, and pro-social behaviour is a way to educate the character from an early age. These results can also be recommended at the same time that character education can take place in early childhood education with careful planning and debriefing of the teachers or educators involved, not only in early childhood education place is used as a study but also other early childhood education places.

Suggestion that can be given is related to the implementation of the next character education for other researchers who are interested, can be done in a bigger number of meetings, by starting with a family matter interactions in general. This material is considered important because it is based on the home visit that were conducted, when the significant other has no understanding of the interaction between mother and child, from pray habituation behaviour, courteous behaviour, and pro-social behaviour will not run as expected. When parent-child interaction material is submitted, it is expected that there will be conditioning by parents at home to convey the materials better. Another tip is parents are advised to provide tools or interacting learning media so that parents can develop their creativity when teaching children about characters.

#### Acknowledgment

This research conducted using research grant from DITI PTARMAS Ditjen Dikti. Thank you to "POS PAUD Permesta Bangsa" and students of Psychology faculty at Diponegoro University for cooperation and supporting during this research.

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