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# Character Education, Student Mental Revolution, and Industry 4.0: The Case of State Islamic Senior High Schools in Indonesia

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*Abstract*— **This present study aims to investigate the strategy of character education in the teaching and learning process at state Islamic senior high schools (hereafter madrasah Aliyahs) in Indonesia in the Industry 4.0 era, the implication of character education towards mental revolution of madrasah aliyah students, and the obstacles in implementing character education at madrasah Aliyahs in the Industry 4.0 era. The study employed qualitative methods. The subjects of the study were the principals of madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia, selected by using purposive sampling. The collected data were then analyzed descriptively. Integrating character education, creating a conducive environment, enhancing madrasa culture, organizing extracurricular activities, implementing cooperative learning, and instilling moral values are strategies in implementing character education in Aliyah madrasas. The values of character education have also had an impact on the mental revolution of the students, as seen in the students' integrity, work ethics, and cooperation. In general, character education is well implemented in Aliyah madrasas in the Industrial 4.0 era. Nevertheless, madrasas still face several obstacles, such as the low involvement of family and community, during the application of character education.**

*Keywords: character education, Industrial Revolution 4.0, mental revolution, state Islamic senior high schools*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The application of character education in madrassas is to overcome increasing social problems such as corruption, juvenile delinquency, fighting, drug abuse, free sex, and other moral causes. A study by Wardani revealed that the character crisis experienced by the Indonesian people was at an alarming point [1]. The Indonesian National Drug Agency reported that drug users among secondary school students in 2007 reached 73,253 people, showing an increase of 55,233 people compared to 2004 [2]. In 2010, there were 6,859 narcotic and psychotropic drug users at the junior high school level, 14,986 at the senior high school level, and 975 at the university level [3].

Also, there have been many criminal cases involving the youth, including students. The Indonesian National Commission for Child Protection recorded that in 2010, there were 2,413 criminal cases related to students, which increased to 2,508 cases in 2011 and then reached 2,008 cases in the first quarter of 2012 [4]. Student moral decadence should not happen in Indonesia because the government is currently implementing a character curriculum and a mental revolution program which has been included in the development program priorities. In reality, however, the decline of student characters continues.

Budiastuti explains that the fulfillment of qualified human resources is expected to come from education [5]. Education has a pivotal role, not only to produce outstanding students but also to create a new generation with better characters and advantages for the future of the country. At present, the emphasis on learning is still on the mastery of the materials. The senior year students who are getting themselves ready for the National Examination are often given additional lessons in the hope of obtaining a high score on the Examination. Such a

way will, however, indirectly create the potential to produce graduates who have no proper intellectual nor conscience characteristics [6].

Madrasah Aliyahs (state Islamic senior high schools) is an Islamic-based education unit in Indonesia. Islamic education plays a significant role in character education, an attempt to trigger the student mental revolution. Nevertheless, the system and paradigm of the character education system in Madrasah Aliyah are often misperceived. The learning process is still predominantly focused on the cognitive domain, resulting in the students are forced to master the materials both in the learning process and in the National Examination. On the other hand, the affective domain is less of a concern during learning. And the factors underlying the ineffectiveness of character education in the mental revolution of students in Madrasah Aliyah because the right strategy related to internalizing character education and its implications have not been much studied. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the strategies and the obstacles in implementing character education in madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia.

## II. METHODS

This study used qualitative methods. The sample was selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Data were collected by employing the triangulation method, involving an interview, observation, and documentation [7]. The data were then analyzed inductively. The study took place in four state madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia: MAN 1 of Aceh Jaya District, Aceh Province; MAN 2 of Langsa Municipality, Aceh Province; MAN 1 of Mataram Municipality, West Nusa Tenggara Province; and MAN 2 Model of Mataram Municipality, West Nusa Tenggara Province.

Data collection techniques are done through interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted directly with the head of Madrasah and teachers at Madrasah AliyahNegeri, which were the object of this study. The information desired through interviews is the strategy for applying character education, mental revolution, and obstacles. Observations were made systematically to the symptoms that appear on the object of research related to the implementation of character education and mental revolution, while the documentation includes a variety of data in the form of writing and pictures that lead to the application of character education and mental revolution. Data analysis was carried out using a descriptive approach, including organizing, summarizing, and interpreting.
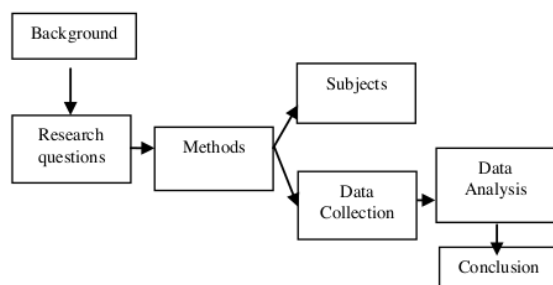


Fig. 1. Study Sequence

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. The Implications of Character Education Implementation on Mental Revolution of the Students in Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia

The implication of character education application in madrasahs in Indonesia is an embodiment of the Republic of Indonesia's Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning the strengthening of character education. In which Article 1 stipulates that the Strengthening of Character Education is the education movement under the responsibility of the educational unit to strengthen the learners' characters by harmonizing the development of the heart, the sense, the thought, and the body, with the involvement of and cooperation between the educational units, the family, and the society as part of the National Mental Revolution Movement. The mental revolution is part of the work program of President JokoWidodo and Vice President DjusufKalla for the 2014-2019 term as outlined in Nawacita (nine development priorities). The mental revolution in an educational unit is carried out through character education that aims to develop the students with noble characters and national values. The implementation of a mental revolution in madrasah Aliyahs in Indonesia refers to the three main values of mental revolution: integrity, work ethics, and cooperation (togetherness). The said values are further described below.

#### 1) Integrity

Our study found that all visited madrasahs tended to integrate integrity values, e.g., honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility, into their attitudes during the learning process and outside classes [8]. Also, the teacher also played an essential role in encouraging the students to practice integrity by showing exemplary attitudes. In cases where the students were involved in juvenile delinquency cases, such as truancy, theft, and fighting, the madrasahs would require the students to participate in the guidance and counseling program organized by the madrasahs [9].

#### 2) Works Ethics

Work ethics is a mental revolution value that the students must develop in the learning process. The development of work ethics aims to promote work spirit and hard work in the students. Hard-working and not giving up easily should be applied in the learning process to train the students to get used to doing and completing their duties. Our findings revealed that the students' strong mentality could be enhanced through peer competition [10]. The madrasahs have already allocated a regular competition between classes for the students to develop their mental and competitive streaks. The improved discipline was promoted through providing the students with some assignments that had to be submitted on time, whereas competitiveness was developed by asking the students some analytical questions [11]. Through these means, the students were expected to be able to deal with incidental or regular issues.

#### 3) Cooperation

The value of cooperation is part of the mental revolution built through the learning process. It aims at instilling the values of togetherness and nationalism in the students. The

development of cooperation and togetherness in the observed madrasahs was generally fostered through group work. Moreover, the teachers also applied the cooperative learning model in the classroom to develop solidarity among the students [9]. Through this model, the teachers could facilitate the students' learning and train them to work in groups as a manifestation of cooperation.

### B. The Obstacles in the Implementation of Character Education in Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia

There are two factors related to the obstacles in applying character education in the madrasahs. The first is the internal factors, which included the lack of facilities, e.g., classrooms, desks, and blackboards. The lack of facilities caused some issues during the teaching of character education in the madrasahs. Such as the students felt uncomfortable, out of focus during learning, and the students also made noises and commotion. Another internal factor was the teachers' lack of discipline, for instance, coming late to the classroom, leaving the class too often during the teaching and learning process, and being absent from the classroom [12]. The result of the interviews showed that some teachers claimed that they neglected their classes due to their spending too much time working on documents for teacher certification.

Further, the senior teachers often did not provide sufficient guidance for the new teachers, both part-timers or civil servants. As a result, those new teachers tended to focus their teaching only on the cognitive domain. According to some students, some teachers even blamed or mocked each other for various reasons. Presumably, such behaviors shown by the teachers might affect how the students would behave in the future. Also, some principals were reluctant to warn the misbehaved teachers due to seniority in age or experience, leading to the omission of ethical violations among teachers and principals. In terms of dressing code, some teachers were found to wear a non-proper (non-Sharia) dress (especially in the younger teachers) and put on overly striking makeup. Some students (especially male students) found the behaviors quite disturbing, and some even felt lust [13].

The second is the external factors that were related to the lack of parent and society involvement in character education. For example, society did not care when the students missed a class during study hours. This individualistic attitude will make the students bolder and freer to skip school. Besides, some parents rarely participated in the activities held by the madrasahs, suggesting that the parents felt indifferent towards their children's education [14].

### C. The Strategies in Implementing Character Education in Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia

#### 1) Integration into the Teaching-Learning Process
Integration into the teaching-learning process is one of the strategies of the application of character education. Responding to the problems of character and mental revolution of the Indonesian people, the implementation of character education can be carried out through integration in all subjects taught at school. Character education is not delivered in the form of a subject but is given by integrating into all subjects and learning activities at Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia. The goal of integration is to familiarize the students with good character values so that the values have implications for the students' mental revolution. Character education must be carried out modestly, the teachers should understand well how to make the students possess noble characters, and the teachers must also carefully design and plan which characters need to be developed for the students in each learning process.

#### 2) The Conducive Environment of Madrasah
A conducive madrasah environment is another important component in the implementation of character education. In his research, Ramdhani explains that the educational environment influences the implementation of character education [15]. In a similar vein, Yana and Nurjanah argue that school plays a role in improving the children's mindset since the children can learn any knowledge at school [16]. It indicates that the madrasah environment is highly influential in the success of character education. The implementation of character education will be hampered if the conducive environment does not support it at the madrasah. Therefore, any educational manager at Madrasah Aliyah is responsible for creating a conducive environment for character education to take place properly.

#### 3) The Culture of Madrasah
A madrasah is considered to have a good culture for the implementation of character education since the Islamic-based culture of the madrasah is highly encouraged to be practiced by all teachers and students in the madrasah. Part of the culture is greeting each other when meeting, a behavior that may implicate the characters of the students. Also, madrasas also set their own discipline policies that must be followed and maintained by everyone in the madrasa.

#### 4) Extracurricular Activities
Extracurricular activities are a set of a self-development program that each madrasah has and are also part of the character education and mental revolution program. The strategy of implementing character education is carried out with integration in the learning process. The implementation of these activities is conducted through a scouting program considering that scouting help develops honesty and discipline for the students. The aim of the extracurricular activities is basically to develop the characters and values of the mental revolution for the students to uphold the integrity and strong nationalism. The extracurricular activities usually practiced in the madrasah included scouting, Youth Red Cross, arts, and various types of sports.

#### 5) Cooperative Learning
Teachers are required to have good teaching skills and employ various learning models, including the cooperative learning model. This model has many benefits, one of which is improving the development of social characters and mental revolution values of the students. In the madrasah, the students' character development was also carried out using the cooperative learning model. As observed from the students' attitudes in learning, the cooperative learning model showed that it was an effective way to developing the students' critical and social characters.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Our study concludes that character education in the state Islamic senior high schools in Indonesia had several implications on the students' mental revolutions, including integrity, work ethics, and cooperation. Overall, the implementation of character education was well-carried out. The schools applied several strategies, including integrating character education into the learning process, creating a conducive environment, promoting madrasah culture (habits), organizing extracurricular activities, using a cooperative learning model, and applying character values in the education process. Still, the schools faced several obstacles in the implementation of character education, such as lack of facilities, lack of family support, and also lack of community involvement.

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