

## The Decrease of the Students' Character during Covid 19 Pandemic: A Survey of Students in Binjai

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### Abstract

*The research in this article has purposes to describe and analyze the decrease of the students' character values during the Covid-19 pandemic. This qualitative method study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The data in this study are the students' answers from questionnaires that describe behavior during online learning. The source of data in this study was the students' questionnaires. The data collection techniques were carried out by using observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, literature, and field notes. The steps of data analysis were carried out are data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and the conclusion stage. The results of the study were grouped into 3 answers: positive, neutral, and negative. In QP1 (Discipline) the numbers show the negative value was 61.1%, the neutral value was 3.9%, and the positive value was 17.3%. In QP2 (Hard work), it shows the negative value was 57.6%, the neutral value was 23%, and the positive value was 22.7%. In QP3 (Honest), it shows the negative value was 70.7%, the neutral value was 10.9%, and the positive value was 19.6%. In QP4 (Responsibility), it shows the negative value was 75.1%, the neutral value was 13.1%, and the positive value was 11.7%. In QP5, it shows the negative value was 77.7%, the neutral value was 10.4%, and 11.7%. Then from the interview results, there were six decrease factors of character values, they are facilities, parents, motivation, mindset, interaction, and learning models as well as media. The conclusion shows that during the online learning of the covid-19 pandemic, the students' character decrease in a negative direction.*

### Keywords

decrease; character values;  
online learning; covid-19  
pandemic



## I. Introduction

Education is the basic capital for the development of a country (Peterson, 2020). Therefore, it must be placed on the main goal for every element in society. As it is known that the purpose of Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia is stated in the opening of the fourth paragraph of the 1945 Constitution which states "Educating the Life of the Nation" because education is the most important means to change human civilization and the nation.

Education is a very important human need because education has a duty to prepare Human Resources (HR) for the development of the nation and state (Pradana et al, 2020). According to Astuti et al (2019) Education is an obligation of every human being that must be pursued to hold responsibilities and try to produce progress in knowledge and experience for the lives of every individual. Education is one of the efforts to improve the ability of human intelligence, thus he is able to improve the quality of his life (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). The purpose of education is creating a complete generation of the nation. It means that education must be able to form students to have intellectual

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intelligence, skills, and attitudes as well as characters which are needed in living life in the society (Malaihollo, S., Fadilah, F., Asfar, M., Asyrah, A., & Wahyuningsih, S. R, 2021). For that reasons, the success in education is the responsibility of schools, the community, and the government so that the purpose of education in order to create a superior generation and have personality and character can be gained optimally.

The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum *et al*, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020). During the Covid-19 pandemic, activities in the education sector have made so many changes. The change in learning process from direct to online creates a decrease in various aspects either inside or outside of the learning process activities. In 2021, the government has implemented a policy called New Normal with the aim of restoring and reviving activities in various sectors that were previously stopped. However, until now the education sector cannot be conducted directly as it could before the pandemic. Therefore, online learning during the pandemic is a big challenge for stakeholders in the education sector in order to achieve learning goals, especially the effort in educating the students' character (Ariyanto, 2020).

Character education is an effort to create and develop the students' personalities in ethics through teaching methods or models of good character (Alfiannor, 2021). Character education during the pandemic is a tough challenge for teachers and students. This is because a teacher cannot see directly the development of the students' attitudes and character behavior during the online learning. Besides that, teachers faced many obstacles in implementing the online learning such as limited facilities and mastery of technology, network constraints, and the lack of integration of character education in the online learning.

The erosion of character education during the pandemic will certainly cause many bad possibilities in the years to come (Ni'mawati & Hasanah, 2020). Currently, there are many phenomena that can be seen, such as the juvenile delinquency and crime, boredom and stress, and dropping out of school have increased. Those will happened quicker if there is no assessment and efforts made by various parties who are responsible for the students' character values in schools.

Derived from the problems above, the authors tried to explore the problems faced by schools in an effort to create character education during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study reveals how the shape of the decrease in student character values during online learning, finds out the causes of the occurrence, and tries to provide solutions to the problems faced. This study focuses on the senior high school students as the research subjects. As it is known that children at high school age are in a phase of great potential in developing cognitive, emotional, and physical. High school age is a transition process from life that tends to be unstable. This affects the mindset and attitude of the student himself who is still not able to master and function optimally in his/her physical and psychological condition.

This study aims to explore, reveal, and analyze the problems related to the decrease of the students' character values during the Covid-19 pandemic as a form of evaluation for the education sector. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to see and analyze the decrease in the students' character values during the Covid-19 pandemic in public and private high schools in Binjai, North Sumatra. The ideas of the previous research such as (Eldaroini Yanuri, 2021), (Santoso, 2020), (Suhrawardi, 2020), (Sari, 2020), (Intania & Sutama, 2020) revealed various problems in online learning and these support for conducting any further research that related to the decrease in the students' character values during the Covid 19 pandemic.

## II. Research Methods

The qualitative method of this research used a qualitative descriptive approach. The data in this study are in the form of answers from the students' questionnaires and the interview results that describe the students' behavior during the online learning. The sources of data in this study were the student questionnaires and the interview guidelines. The data collection techniques were carried out by triangulating data with the data collection which was carried out by using observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, literature, and field notes. The steps of the data analysis were collecting, reducing, presenting, and inferring the data. Related to this research, a qualitative method was carried out with the purpose of revealing the decrease character values in the high school students in Binjai during the Covid-19 pandemic. The mechanism in the research process is as follows:

- a. Searching and collecting the literature related to the theory used in this research,
- b. Collecting the data and determining the research locations (10 high school schools in Binjai),
- c. Developing research instruments in the form of research questionnaires that were given to the students,
- d. Managing the research permits to the public and private high schools in Binjai,
- e. Creating a Whatsapp group as a medium for conducting the online research,
- f. Validating the data by testing the questionnaire,
- g. Collecting the data from research questionnaires on 21 July-15 August 2021 through the whatsapp group,
- h. Conducting in-depth interviews with the students and teachers to obtain direct data on August 14-15 2021 through virtual meetings.
- i. Analyzing the research data,
- j. Presenting the research data.

## III. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Analysis the Decrease of the Character Value

The analysis of the decrease in character values was carried out through observation and interviews. The observations were made by distributing questionnaires to the students in 10 public and private high schools in Binjai. The distribution of the questionnaire was conducted through the google form link. The following data is the distribution of the questionnaire in the schools in table 1.

**Table 1.** Questionnaire Distribution

No	Name of School	Distributed questionnaire	Feedback questionnaire
1	SMAN 1 BINJAI	40	30
2	SMAS Swakarya Binjai	32	24
3	SMAN 2 BINJAI	45	31
4	SMAS Al-Fityah Binjai	28	18
5	SMAN 5 Binjai	40	32
6	SMAS Satria Binjai	23	13
7	SMAS Al-Kaffah Binjai	26	15
8	SMAN 7 BINJAI	38	31

9	SMAS PABA Binjai	25	15
10	SMAS Tunas Pelita Biniai	24	20
Total		321	229
Difference		92 (did not fill the questionnaire)	

The distributed questionnaires showed five categories of the character values, they are QP1 (Discipline), QP2 (Hard Work), QP3 (Honesty), QP4 (Responsibility), QP5 (Creativity). The five categories of the character values were chosen for observing the students' character decrease during the online learning. The five character categories were very relevant and closely to the online learning process which were carried out by the school students. These five categories of character values become the starting point for changing the character values.

This section describes a description of the questionnaire results which were distributed to the school students. For data analysis, descriptive qualitative data analysis was used. The data were described by looking at the percentage of the students' answers in filling out the questionnaire which were divided by the total number of the students who filled out the questionnaire. The description of the data was grouped into three ranges of positive, neutral, and negative values. The results of the students' questionnaire can be seen in table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Description of Student Statement Data

Criteria		QP1 (Discipline)		QP2 (Work Hard)		QP3 (Honesty)		QP4 (Responsibility)		QP5 (Creativity)	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
		Positive Answer	Very Good	15	6,5	22	9,6	15	6,5	10	4,3
	Good	24	10,4	30	13,1	30	13,1	17	7,4	18	7,8
	subtotal	39	17,3	52	22,7	45	19,6	27	11,7	27	11,7
Neutral Answer	Netral Subtotal	9	3,9	45	23,5	25	10,9	30	13,1	24	10,4
		9	3,9	45	23,5	25	10,9	30	13,1	24	10,4
Negative Answer	Very Bad	90	39,3	60	26,2	32	13,9	50	21,8	70	30,5
	Bad	50	21,8	72	31,4	130	56,7	122	53,2	108	47,1
	subtotal	140	61,1	132	57,6	162	70,7	172	75,1	178	77,7

Derived from the data in the table above, QP1 shows the percentage of respondents' answers to the "discipline" value category. From the score obtained, it shows that 61.1% majority of the respondents chose a negative answer, while 3.9% was neutral, and 17.3% was positive.

In QP2, it shows the percentage of the respondents' answers to the category of "hard work". In QP3, it shows the percentage of the respondents' answers to the "honesty" value category. From the scores obtained, it shows that the majority of the respondents were 70.7% in negative answers, while 10.9% in neutral, and 19.6% in positive.

In QP4 it shows the percentage of the respondents' answers to the "Responsibility" value category. From the scores obtained, it shows that the majority of the respondents was 75.1%, while 13.1% in neutral, and 11.7% in positive. In QP5, it shows the percentage of the respondents' answers to the category of "creative" scores. From the scores obtained, it shows that majority of the respondents were 77.7%, while 10.4% in neutral, and 11.7% in positive.

Based on the percentage results of the students' statements, the negative score was the most dominant. Thus, it can be concluded that the students' character value during the online learning has a high negative value. This means that there was a decrease in the students' character values of the online learning during the pandemic in a negative direction.

#### **4.2 Factors of the Decrease in the Character Value**

Based on the research results through the interview method that was carried out together with 10 teachers and 10 public and private high school students in Binjai, there were several factors that caused changes and decreases in character values during online learning during the pandemic.

##### **a. Facility**

The online learning facility is a major factor in achieving learning process activities during the pandemic. The limitations and differences in access to technology that each student has made it difficult for some students to take part in the lesson smoothly (Morgan, 2020). This difficulty is especially felt for the students who live in the areas which do not have adequate internet networks and students who do not have smartphones as a means of online learning (Hastini et al., 2020).

##### **b. Parental Support**

The parents role during the online learning process must replace the position as a teacher at home (Jannah and Umam, 2021). However, this cannot be guaranteed because not all parents can accompany their children because they have the responsibility to earn a living as well. As a result, some students do not care about the online learning because of the lack of parental encouragement or attention.

##### **c. Learning Motivation**

The learning atmosphere which was created by online learning also affects the students' learning motivation. In offline learning the teacher is able to create a conducive classroom atmosphere to maintain the student learning motivation so that the learning can be achieved because the classroom atmosphere has a significant influence on learning motivation (Nasrah, 2020). Conversely, the online learning conditions make it difficult for the teachers to control and maintain the learning atmosphere because they are limited in virtual space. This condition causes the students' learning motivation to decrease and even affect their learning outcomes.

##### **d. Student Mindset**

According to the results of teacher interviews, during the online learning process many students had the wrong mindset. They thought that online learning is not very important or even considered it as a school holiday. So, the students ignored the online learning activities and did other activities that they felt were much better.

#### **e. Interaction between Students and Teachers**

During the online learning process, the interaction between the students and the teachers is very limited (Purwanti, 2021). Even in one semester, the students and teachers did not communicate face-to-face, they only communicated via WhatsApp messages to deliver the online assignments. This certainly greatly influences the development of the students' character during the online learning process. Teachers cannot directly control how the students' attitudes and behavior during the online learning process.

#### **f. Learning Models and Media**

The learning model and media owned by the teacher are the main things for creating of an active learning process (Rahmawati and Yulianti, 2020). However, in reality, the teachers have not been able to create and use appropriate learning models for the online learning activities. These made the students felt bored and could not consider the online learning with enthusiasm. So, it is necessary to create or use character-based learning models and media that can create online learning that activates students.

### **IV. Conclusion**

During the Covid-19 pandemic, activities in the education sector have made so many changes. The change in learning process from direct to online creates a decrease in various aspects either inside or outside of the learning process activities. High school students (public and private high school in Binjai) became the subject of this research by considering that high school-age children are in a phase with great potential in developing cognitive, emotional, and physical. The observations were made by distributing the questionnaires to the students in 10 public and private high schools in Binjai. Based on the percentage results of the students' statements, the negative scores was the most dominant where the negative values are 61.1%, in discipline, the Hard work was 57.6%, the Honesty was 70.7%, the Responsibility was 75.1%, and the Creativity was 77.7%. Thus, it can be concluded that the student's character value during the online learning had a high negative value. This means that there was a decrease in the students' character values in online learning during the pandemic. Then from the interview results there were six factors in the decrease of the character values, they are facilities, parents, motivation, mindset, interaction, and learning models and media.

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