

## The Role of Ethics in Character Building Learners

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### Abstract

*Globalization accompanied by extraordinary advances in science and technology has opened up the world completely. Man is inseparable from his daily life. In this situation, a person will discover and even experience firsthand every change that occurs in his life. This world that provides an open opportunity certainly provides an opportunity for many people to start something new. Things like this can have both positive and negative impacts, but this tendency tends to have a bad impact on young people. By observing the phenomena that occur a lot today, our country is experiencing a moral decline. This moral decline results from the loss of character of a person. The application of ethics is one of the solutions to shape the character of students. Ethics is a science of decency and goodness that governs how human beings should behave in society. The purpose of this scientific paper is to find out what are the roles of ethics in shaping the character of students and to find out how the application of ethics in shaping the character of students. The results of this study show that ethics plays an important role in the formation of the character of students. A student can have good character if he is taught ethics in his life. Ethics directs students to always do good to those around them, be it in the school environment or in the community.*

### Keywords

ethics; character building; learners



### I. Introduction

Globalization accompanied by extraordinary advances in science and technology has opened up the world completely. Only those who are ready are able to take a chance when there is an increase in cross-border activities and virtual (virtual) communication to all corners of the world in a short period of time and make good use of technological and communication developments. Due to its mobile, pluralistic, and competitive nature, globalization will lead to a shift in the order of providing basic needs. Furthermore, the information revolution, the scientific revolution, the interdependence between members/groups of society, human rights issues, and environmental difficulties will be the future challenges of mankind on this earth. This situation will cause the condition of society to change towards an open society (Raharjo, 2010).

Man is inseparable from his daily life. In this situation, a person will discover and even experience firsthand any changes that occur in life. We cannot deny that we are currently experiencing life trends that are driving changes in our behavior and lifestyle in response to what is happening. Things like this can have both positive and negative impacts, but this tendency tends to have a bad impact on young people. By observing the phenomena that

occur a lot today, our country is experiencing a moral decline. This phenomenon of moral decline is deeply rooted among the younger generation, who are designated as the successors of the nation, and society at large in the form of free sex, drugs, KKN, brawls, radicalism, and various other problems created by the loss of ethics from a person (Setiyaningsih, 2020).

Ethics is a science of decency and goodness that governs how human beings should behave in society. It consists of rules or principles that govern ethical behavior, such as good and bad or obligations and responsibilities. Ethics is also related to good and bad behavior where a person has moral rights and obligations in social life. Ethics is a value system used to determine what is right and what is consistent with the current value system in people and organizations in certain situations (Gunawan in Sultoni et al., 2018). In many ways, ethics is an important component of all human activities. Nowadays, there are many examples of teenagers who act harshly to parents, teachers at school, older people, and even their own friends. Many adolescents in the school environment have problems with unethical interactions with other people, especially with teachers. This happens due to the loss of ethical attitudes in a person's character.

Not only that, in today's world, learners' respect for instructors fades. Various horrific events involving pupils shouting or cursing at teachers are often reported. These many ethical violations are committed not only by children with higher levels of education (Nasution et al., 2021). Education is something important and cannot be separated from a person's life, both in the family, society and nation (Sari, 2021). Education has a very strategic role in determining the direction of the forthcoming of the nation's quality of community knowledge (Musdiani, 2019). This compulsory education program is expected to provide minimum education for Indonesian citizens to be able to develop their potential so that they can live independently in a community environment or continue their education to a higher level (Martono, 2020). Even recently it was discovered through the media that these ethical violations are mostly committed by children at the Elementary School level or the Junior High School level. There are seniors who abuse classmates, and there is a simple matter of dropping a friend's food and then hitting him. And what's worse, a learner dies as a result of getting indecent behavior from his peers (bullying). This shows that human culture has been lost as a result of this kind of reality. The children of this nation lack social skills, love, tolerance, and mutual help to each other (Tas'Adi, 2016).

Taking into account the current and future situation, the availability of human resources (HR) with character is a very, very vital demand. Character education is one type of education that can be learned starting from elementary school. The child who is in the Dasar School bench is a child who begins to learn many subjects and is at an ideal age to instill good character education at a young age. Elementary school children (6-12 years old) are the ideal age to introduce character education because at this age children begin to experience periods of physical and motor development, and begin to understand more complex emotional concepts such as jealousy, sadness, loss, fear, and so on. At this time, children need emotional regulating skills to control and direct the expression of their emotions (Afifah & Khamidi, 2022).

Character building of students is carried out in order to prepare students in facing global problems and increase the nation's competitiveness. It is difficult for a country to produce human resources of character. The problem is that Indonesia's human resources do not always reflect the ideals of the intended education. For example, in real circumstances, there are still many students who cheat during tests, are lazy, shake between fellow students, do promiscuity, engage in drugs, and so on. On the other hand, there are teachers and educators who set a bad example for their learners. This is a very sad and dangerous situation for the Indonesian state that has been independent since 1945. This situation is a

significant moral problem and demands action to be able to solve it immediately. The most advanced solution is to use ethics to shape moral character in human resources so that they can form strong and resilient individuals in the face of increasingly fierce competition in the future (Inanna, 2018). The cultivation and development of character through the use of ethics can be carried out in home and school environments. Parents are the support of a person's disposition and personality in the family environment. As a result, it is important to realize that childhood is a critical period in which each parent must instill positive character values in their children. This is done so that when children grow up, they will have a strong character and be ready to face the challenges of an increasingly complex era. In addition, teachers play an important role in shaping the character of learners in the school environment by offering examples of ethical behavior (Widiastuti, n.d.) .

Based on the explanation above, in this scientific article the author raised the title "The Role of Ethics in The Formation of Student Character", with several formulations of problems, namely: "Apa is the role of ethics in shaping the character of students?" and "Bagaimana application of ethics in shaping the character of students?". The purpose of this scientific paper is to find out what are the roles of ethics in shaping the character of students and to find out how the application of ethics in shaping the character of students.

## **II. Research Method**

In compiling this paper, the author used a literature review research. Literature review is research that uses literature review, where research topics are collected from various publications or library sources, including books, journals, articles, and others. The literature review aims to allow researchers to conduct a critical evaluation of information in the form of concepts, various academically oriented discoveries, and other items that may be found in library sources. The focus of this literature review research is on various theories, ideas, and concepts used to answer problem formulations.

The research method used is a qualitative-descriptive research method. Research with this qualitative approach is by describing and describing various solutions used in answering each formulation of the problem raised. In addition, Basrowi & Suwandi (in Moleong, 2014) said that descriptive analysis describes using pre-existing ideas, events related to what the subject of the study experienced were reviewed. In this study, the role of ethics in the formation of the character of students became the subject of study. The selection of this object is influenced by factors related to current issues, namely the many phenomena that show the loss of character of students both in the school environment and in the community. The secondary data sources used in this study came from literature analysis, including literature analysis books or literature evaluation from books, journals, articles, and others.

## **III. Discussion**

### **3.1 Ethical Concepts**

Etymologically, ethics comes from the Greek word "Ethos," which is closely related to moral concepts derived from Latin, especially "Mos" and in its plural version "Mores," which also means a person's custom or way of life through good actions (decency), and avoiding negative behavior. Ethics and morals have almost the same meaning, but there are variations or differences in daily activities, especially morality or morality for the assessment of the actions carried out, while ethics for studying the dominant value system. In practice, moral

education has a limited scope, focusing only on the development of cognitive science, while character education has a wider and comprehensive scope (Reksiana in Agung, n.d.)

Etiquette, another term synonymous with ethics, refers to the way (procedure) by which an action must be performed by people. "Susila" (Sanskrit), more clearly expresses the basis, principles, and norms of a better life (precept) (su). In Arabic, moral means moral, and ethics is the science of morals. Whereas terminologically in the Great Dictionary of Indonesian defines the term as follows: "The science of good and bad, about moral rights and obligations, is known as ethics. A set of moral principles/values maintained by society, including good and wrong values. According to Tanyid (Annur et al., 2021), explaining that "Ethics is more than just the study of good and bad or values; rather it is a good habit and an agreement based on what is good and right". Departing from the above statements, it can be said that ethics examines how humans act, while morals examine how humans should act.

Next, ethics can be defined as moral philosophy, which is a systematic study of the basic nature of concepts such as good, bad, supposed, right, wrong, and so on. Meanwhile, ethics is classified into two types, namely:

- 1) Ethics is the character of a person or individual.

These include the fact that ethical people are also good people. This is known as the understanding of man as an ethical individual. Ethics is one of the types of social law.

- 2) Ethics is a law.

Human behavior is governed, controlled, and limited by ethics.

In this connection Dr. H. Hamzah Ya'qub (Tas'Adi, 2016) concludes that ethics is a science that studies what is good and what is wrong by paying attention to human deeds as far as reason can know. As a result, ethics is essentially a spiritual, normative, theological science. Ethics is no longer a quantifiable science. So it is impossible to anticipate accurately. Ethics is more than just intelligence or *the art of good living*. From some of the definitions of ethics that have been mentioned above, it is clear that ethics is related to four things, including:

- 1) Viewed in terms of the object of discussion;

The purpose of ethics is to discuss human behavior.

- 2) In terms of the source;

Ethics is based on logic or philosophy. As a limited resource, it is prone to change, has advantages and disadvantages, and so on. Furthermore, he uses various fields related to human behavior, such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and so on.

- 3) In terms of function;

Ethics serves as the appraiser, setter, and determinant of a human deed, which determines whether the deed is good, evil, noble, honorable, despicable, and so on. As a result, morality serves as a conceptualizer for various human activities. The study of the current value system is referred to as ethics.

- 4) In terms of its nature;

Ethics is relative, meaning that it can change with the times.

With the characteristics that have been described above, ethics can be said to be more of a science that deals with attempts to determine what behaviors human beings do that are considered good and evil. Because it is the result of thought, the various views put forward by western philosophers addressing good and bad behavior can be gathered into ethical reasoning. As a result, ethics is humanistic and anthropocentric, focused and directed at human beings. In other terms, ethics is a rule or pattern of behavior established by the human mind (Tas'Adi, 2016).

Ethical values and also thus for all values, are the product of spiritual processes, in particular reason and feeling. Feeling provides a component, while reason analyzes the

information it obtains. The taste of this value can be reduced, developed, or eliminated. The more complicated the decisions faced by sentiment, the wider the field of activity of reason, but the smaller the role it plays. It is believed that the scope of work develops because the mind must evaluate, analyze, compare and organize problems associated with the first difficulties when faced with impossible decisions.

A goal is something that individuals and societies are looking for. In this case, the goal of ethics itself is the ultimate goal of all human activities in his life and life, that is, to achieve happiness. The main purpose of ethics is to discover, define, limit, and justify the obligations, rights, and moral ideals of individuals and societies, both society in general and the professional community in particular (Rahmaniyah, 2009).

In his work, I Gede A.B. Wiranata cites the opinions of some experts on the functioning of ethics, such as the Cleric Franz Magnis-Suseno, who claims that ethics serves to help mankind find a critical orientation in the face of confusing morality (Rahmaniyah, 2009). The point of this statement is, ethics plays a role in helping man to be able to have morals, so that he can carry out his daily life with a moral (good) attitude.

### 3.2 Character Building Concept

Character is the morals, truth, kindness, strength and attitude of a person shown through his actions (Yaumi, 2014). Morality reflects the good or bad character of a person. Similarly, truth is the personification of the character. A truth will not wake up without a character that supports all efforts to establish a truth.

Character can be defined as a fundamental value that forms a person's personality, which is generated both by inheritance and environmental circumstances, which distinguishes him from others and manifests himself in his attitudes and behaviors in everyday life. Sutarjo Adisusilo (in Choli, 2019) reveals that character is a collection of values that have become ingrained in a person's life, such as hard work, never giving up, honesty, simplicity, and others. The quality of a person can be measured by his character. According to some of the above understandings, what is meant by character is a disposition as well as a personality or behavior that manifests in everyday life both in attitudes and actions.

Characters cannot be formed instantly by giving advice, direction, or hints, but require more. Character development requires the use of example, patience, habituation, and repetition. Thus, the process of character building is an educational process that students go through as a form of experience of building a personality by experiencing life, religion, and moral ideals. According to Ratna Megawangi (in Afifah & Khamidi, 2022), founder of the *Indonesia Heritage Foundation*, there are three stages in character building, namely:

- 1) *Moral Knowing*: Children have a good understanding of the notion of kindness. Why should you act well? Why should you behave so well? And what are the advantages of good behavior?.
- 2) *Moral Feeling*: Instill in children a love of good behavior that will be a source of energy for them to behave well. The character is developed by growing it.
- 3) *Moral Action*: How to apply moral understanding. This moral action is the result of the previous two steps and must be repeated in order for moral behavior to appear.

By going through these three stages, the character building process will be more visible, and students will perform well because of internal support from within. Ratna Megawangi revealed that there are nine pillars of character that must be instilled in students including: love for God Almighty and all His creation; independence and responsibility; honesty and wisdom; respect and courtesy; generous, always helpful, and willing to cooperate; confident, creative, hardworking; leadership, justice; benevolence, humility; tolerance, peace, unity. The nine pillars of character must be taught through how to know the good, feel the good, and act well. Since knowledge is inherently cognitive, knowing the good



is simple to teach. After knowing the good, the ability to feel and love the good must be developed, specifically how to feel and love virtue in order to become a machine that always operates to make people want to always do something good.

People want to engage in good actions because they like them. After getting used to doing good deeds, it will become a habit. Making a learning implementation strategy can be the first step in shaping students with character during the learning process (RPP). The traits to be created can be expressly stated in the lesson plan. As a result, the teacher must choose the character to be created according to the learning resources, methods and strategies used in each learning activity. When a teacher wants to improve the character traits of teamwork, time management, courage and self-confidence, he must include activities in the daily learning process. Teachers should be aware that during the learning process, they should pay attention to the character they want to create. As we all know, learning is more than sekedar gaining knowledge; also about the application of knowledge in the form of works that show abilities and create good attitudes.

According to the *grand design* of the Ministry of National Education in 2010, character building in individuals is a function of the entire potential of the human individual (cognitive, emotional, conative, and psychomotor) in the context of socio-cultural interactions (in the family, school, and community environment) and will last a lifetime. In the context of the totality of psychological and sociocultural processes, character configurations can be classified as follows: Heart (Spiritual and emotional growth); Mind (intellectual development); Sports and Kinesthetics (Physical and kinesthetic development); and Olah Rasa dan Karsa (Affective and the growth of creativity), which can be described as follows.

<b>Thought-Provoking</b> Intelligent	<b>Exercise The Heart</b> Honest, Responsible
<b>Sports and Kinesthetic</b> Clean, Healthy, Attractive	<b>Process the Taste and Karsa</b> Caring and Creative

### 3.3 Learner Character

The National Education System is regulated by law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003. Students are members of society who develop their potential through learning activities offered at various levels, pathways, and types of education. Thus, learners are people who have a certain choice to acquire knowledge based on their future desires and aspirations (Raharjo, 2010). Learners are also referred to as learners, learners, learners, and so on. Some of these terms all indicate the same thing, and it is evident that the learner is an individual enrolled in an educational program at a particular school or level of education. Learners are the main focus of education. The main goal of learners is to learn and demand information, and they are expected to live independently, carrying out activities according to the capacity they have (Iis in Afifah & Khamidi, 2022).

In his book *"Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education"*, Thomas Lickona cites several education experts to discuss how to implement character education in schools. In summary, the following principles can influence the success of character education in schools (Agung, n.d.):

- 1) Character education that must contain values that can help participants sink in k in developing good character.

- 2) The character must be thoroughly defined, including traits from thoughts, feelings, and actions.
- 3) Effective character education requires a comprehensive and concentrated strategy that includes the teacher as an example, school discipline, curriculum, learning process, classroom and school management, as well as the incorporation of character material in all parts of classroom life. Schools should work closely with parents of learners and the local community.
- 4) The school should be an example of a "peaceful and harmonious community". School is a micro-cosmos of how life should be in society, where everyone can respect each other, be responsible, care for each other, and do justice. This can be done by various methods, such as applying directly to learners or exemplifying them indirectly.
- 5) In order for learners to build character, they must be given the opportunity to practice moral behavior. For example, when the school opens an Honesty Stall, students will pay for the snacks they take or eat, students will learn independently and be responsible for exams and not cheat, students will make donations to orphanages or natural disaster relief, students will clean up the environment, and so on.
- 6) Effective character education must include curriculum materials that are relevant to the lives of students or competency-based (*life skills*) so that students feel able to face and solve life challenges.
- 7) Character education must develop internal motivation in learners, for example by instilling a sense of remorse in learners who commit bad behavior or arousing learners' empathy to be sensitive to the difficulties of others.
- 8) Character education in schools should be periodically evaluated. Schools should have a benchmark of success based on the achievement of character education, which includes issues such as how teachers/staff develop as character educators and how learners build their character. Character education in schools requires a "*person of character*" paradigm, which is very important for teachers and staff.

Furthermore, according to Ekalawati (2013), the purpose of building the character of peerta didik is to carve morals through the process of knowing, loving, and doing good. This is an educational method that combines cognitive, emotive, and psychomotor aspects in order to instill noble morals in the head, heart, and hands. As a result, it is not true that character education is only limited to religious themes or Civic Education. Each subject belongs to character education. Indeed, it seems unfair that character education is solely charged and is the responsibility of the school institution. The character education of learners must be initiated and instilled in the context of the family, since the family is the main base of education. No matter how effective formal education in schools is, no matter how good it is supported by technologically advanced *gadgets*, the results will not be satisfactory if they are not accompanied by a good family environment.

The family is the main spear in shaping the character of the learner and is the smallest base of social life. A healthy environment and society, as well as a clean government, should all contribute to the education of the family. Even if clean government sometimes becomes a utopia. Otherwise, character building will be difficult to implement and will only be a matter of debate. Therefore, it is very important to develop the character of the learner from as early as possible. Character building applied as early as possible will be easier if it is only applied when it has grown up.

Character building in good learners, according to John Luther (in Inawati, 2015), is more commendable than extraordinary talent. Almost all skills come as gifts. We are not born with good character. We must build it piece by piece with thought, choice, courage, and hard work. Character is like a "muscle" that requires exercise and exercise to maintain and improve his health and strength. Therefore, character building requires a process of

understanding, instilling values, and habituation so that a learner can love good deeds based on his consciousness. In this regard, there were many errors and failures in the concepts and policies of national education that were too easy for learners to exclusively skillfully answer questions. Children who can answer exam questions are highly valued. By cramming as much knowledge as possible into learners, subjects are directed towards cognitive activity alone. The character development of learners is not a matter of learning test information and answering tactics. Character building requires habituation and must occur outside the mind of each individual. Because anything that departs from consciousness lasts longer than the motivation that comes from outside.

### **3.4 The Role of Ethics in the Formation of Student Character**

Learner ethics towards teachers has four objectives. This is seen in the field of education. Ethics it aims to provide direction. Although not every learner needs that orientation, especially in the absence of scientific ethics, most learners are naturally a little ethical, but a learner who relies not only on the moral outlook of his other environment.

In Tas'Adi (2016), at least four reasons for the ethical objectives of students towards teachers are:

- 1) The teacher guides the learners to become better at respecting the teacher.
- 2) The teacher guides the learners in order to increase their respect and appreciation for the teacher.
- 3) The teacher guides the souls of the learners to become true human beings, where man recognizes himself as a servant of God Almighty.
- 4) The teacher guides the soul of the learner through the path of truth.

Ethics plays a role in preventing a person from losing character and developing a personality that is difficult to follow. A person of good character is someone who seeks to do good for his environment by combining potential and self-motivation. Choosing how to adapt, as well as the quality of behavior of the individual acts in relation to the environment. The value of a good or bad deed is determined by ethics.

The personality is developed through genetic inheritance and environmental influences. But a good personality character, able to judge oneself for the actions taken and face real-life situations, can regulate and control his emotions. All of that is contained in the teachings of ethics. Ethical values can be used as character recommendations. Furthermore, having a character allows one to pay attention to ethical ideals, one's behavior in dealing with humans, the environment based on norms, laws, societies, and customs. Therefore, ethics plays an important role in shaping a person's character.

A student can have good character if he is taught ethics in his life. Ethics directs students to always do good to those around them, be it in the school environment or in the community. Learners can get ethics learning given by their teacher.

## **IV. Conclusion**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

Based on the above exposure, it can be concluded that moral philosophy, which is a systematic study of the basic nature of such concepts as good, bad, should, right, wrong, and and so on. Ethics is used as a science in directing a person to do good in everyday life. Ethical values can be used as character recommendations. A student can have good character if he is taught ethics in his life. Ethics directs students to always do good to those around them, be it in the school environment or in the community. Therefore, ethics is very important to apply to students to shape their character.



## 4.2 Suggestion

Each teacher is expected to not only focus on providing learning materials, but also focus on providing knowledge in the form of ethics to their students so that they always learn how to act in daily life. The ethics applied by the teacher every day will form a good character of students.

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