

The Character Education Concept for Prospective Parents: Societal View

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Abstract

Having a strong concept of character education for prospective parents will make it easier for them to instill character education in their children later. This study aims to determine how the concept of character education that is owned by prospective parents. This study uses a survey method, which is to collect data by distributing questionnaires to prospective parents, both single and married but have no children, a total of 38 respondents are scattered in various regions in Indonesia. The results showed that (1) most prospective parents assume that character education is a family responsibility; (2) almost all prospective parents state that character education should begin at an early age; (3) most prospective parents do not yet know how to instill character education in children; (4) in general, the character values that are considered necessary are religious, honest, responsibility, and discipline; and (5) character values that are considered essential to be instilled in families in early childhood are honest, religious, and disciplined. The conclusion of this study is that prospective parents do not have a strong concept of character education. The character education model is needed by prospective parents to instill the character of children later in their family.

Keywords: Education, character education, prospective parents.

Introduction

Character education is essential to highlight the answers to the moral crisis problems that have occurred lately, especially in Indonesia, such as acts of intolerance, corruption, drug abuse, immorality, and other violence¹. Moreover, Indonesia is predicted to experience a demographic bonus period in 2030-2040, namely the number of productive age population (aged 15-64 years) is higher than the population of unproductive age (under the age of 15 years and above 64 years)².

The character can be defined as the values of life. There are two kinds of values in life, namely moral and non-moral³. Moral values that are required in life are categorized as universal moral values. Based on these explanations, the character can be said to be the value or moral of life

Character education is an effective way to enhance students' social/moral/emotional development and academic achievement⁴. Also, the results showed that there was a relationship between character education and Student Achievement and Behavioral Outcomes⁵. Character children have good tendencies for Student Achievement and Behavioral Outcomes. The importance of character education can also be seen from various studies that have been conducted, including that character education can improve social competence⁶ and academic independence⁷.

A study of effective character education programs shows that full parent involvement is a must⁸. Other studies have shown that parenting and parenting styles have more influence than the nonphysical environment of the school⁹. These findings reinforce the role of the family as a key to the development of children's character. Instilling character values in the family is very dependent on the ability of parents to teach these values to their children. Failure of the family in shaping the character of children will result in the growth of society that is not characterized. Thus a mature concept is needed for parents and prospective parents.

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Various studies have been conducted highlighting how the efforts of parents, teachers, and schools instill character education to their children¹⁰⁻¹⁴, but there are no studies that examine character education from the point of view of prospective parents, both those who are not married or those who have been married but have not been given offspring. The concept of character education for prospective parents is fundamental as capital to build character education in the family. This study provides an overview of the concept of character education for prospective parents today.

Research Method

This research uses survey method. This research was conducted in August 2019. The population of this study was prospective parents in Indonesia, while the sample used was 100 prospective parents residing on the islands of Java and Sumatra because they were considered to have represented prospective parents in Indonesia. The sampling technique used is random sampling.

To answer this research question, the data needed include (a) character education responsibilities, (b) when character education begins, (c) how to instill character education in the family, and (d) what character values are considered important to be instilled in family. The data collection technique used is by distributing questionnaires. The respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire provided using the google form. The data received is then processed and analyzed using simple statistics, which are looking for an average of each item or indicator and described in a descriptive qualitative to interpret the data obtained.

Result and Discussion

Whose responsibility the character education?:

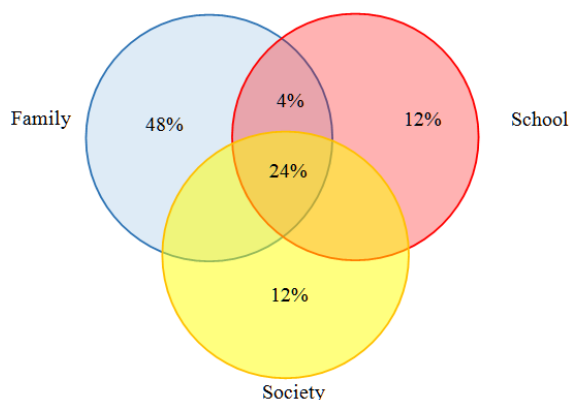


Figure 1. Diagram of the character education responsibility

Respondents were asked the question: “Whose responsibility of the character education?” Which was then given a choice of family, school, and/or community answers. The results showed that the majority (76%) of prospective parents consider that character education is a family responsibility, which is then followed by choice of character education answers are the responsibility of the school, family, and society (24%).

Which is interesting, some prospective parents state that character education is the responsibility of the school or community. Although the school has a central role in developing students’ character, the most profound impact on students’ development comes from their families⁸. Furthermore, the children’s acquisition of literacy depends on a variety of strategies for working with families that are appropriate for the home environment¹⁵.

When should the character education begin?:

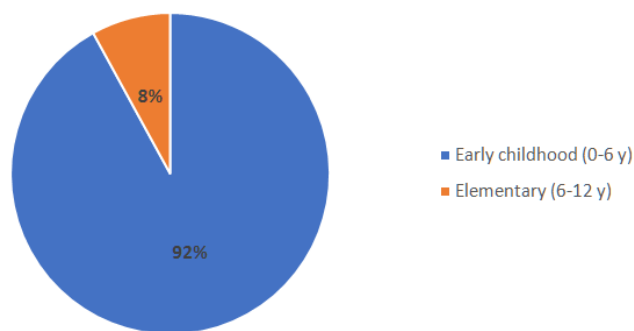


Figure 2: Diagram of the character education begin

Based on the diagram above, the results of the study showed that almost all (92%) of prospective parents stated that character education should begin at an early age, only a small proportion (8%) stated that character education should be carried out at elementary school age (6-12 years), and none of the prospective parents who stated the age of teenagers or teenagers.

These results contradict the results of a survey conducted by Primrose School, saying that nearly 50 percent of parents surveyed did not know when they could and should start helping their children develop positive character traits. Children’s moral development begins in their first year of life, and brain development research shows that the first five years are a critical period to build a foundation for children’s social-emotional well-being¹⁶. Character education indeed needs to be started as early as possible and starts from the immediate environment, namely the family. Prospective parents

in Indonesia have realized the importance of character education starting as early as possible.

How will prospective parents instill character education in children?: Although most prospective parents realize that character education is essential as early as possible, the results of the study show that most prospective parents do not yet know how to instill character education in their children later. This may be due to some prospective parents who are not married and have not thought about the concept of the family that will be built. This can also be related to the answer to the previous question which considers that character education is the responsibility of the school and/or community.

There are at least two strategies that can be done in building character education, namely: more emphasis on “stealthy” practices and more emphasis on master virtues like self-control and humility¹⁷. Furthermore, storybooks useful and effective in terms of character education, believe that teachers should be a role model in character education, and method like drama, play, question-answer, and brainstorming are much preferred for a compelling character education¹⁸. In addition, the provision of various learning resources that are in accordance with the conditions, styles and patterns of learning of children are needed to improve the quality of the learning process, in this case helping parents instill character in children¹⁹

What character values are considered essential to be instilled in the family?:

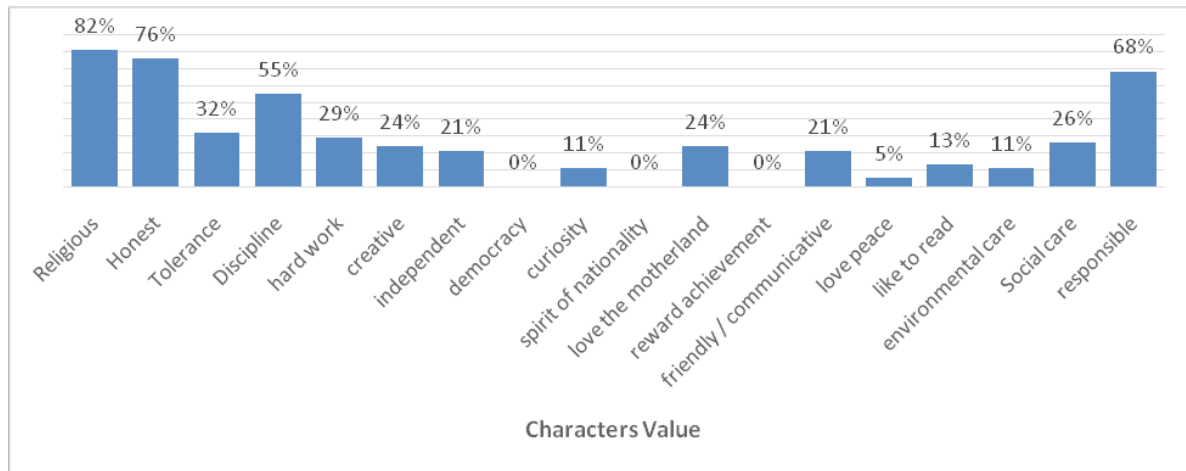


Figure 3. Characters value are considered essential to be instilled in general

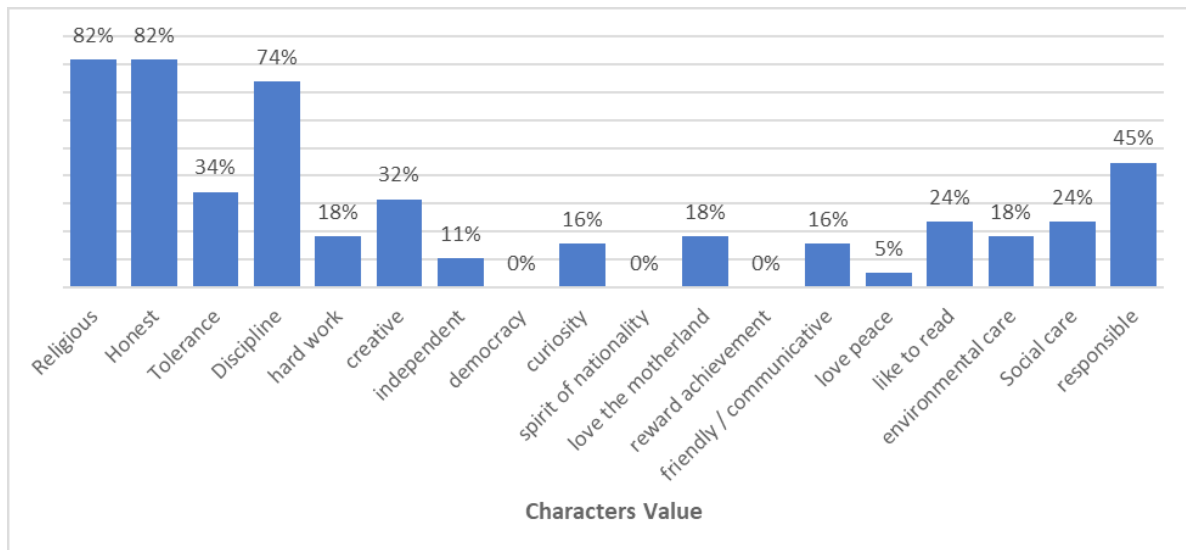


Figure 4. Characters value are considered essential to be instilled in the family

In general, the results of the study indicate that the character values that are considered necessary by prospective parents are religious, honest, responsibility, and discipline (see Figure 3). If referring to the character values that are considered essential to instill early childhood in the family are honest, religious, and disciplined (see Figure 4). Nevertheless, that does not mean that the character values other than those mentioned are not necessary, but are seen from the majority chosen. These results are in line with research conducted by Wati & Sundawa (2008) that character values that can be instilled by parents in the family are religious, honest, independent, responsible, and disciplined²⁰.

Conclusion

Most prospective parents state that character education is the responsibility of the family, school, and community. However, there are still a small number of prospective parents who claim character education is the responsibility of the school or community. Most prospective parents have realized that character education is essential to do from an early age, but what and how to instill character education in the family is still unclear. All of these things indicate that most prospective parents do not have a strong concept of character education. Thus, to facilitate prospective parents, an appropriate character education model is needed in the family.

Conflict of Interest: Nil

Source of Funding: Self Source

Ethical Clearance: Done Research Committee

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