



## The Revitalization of Character Education in the Pandemic Covid-19 Era

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### Abstract

**Keywords:**

Revitalization;  
Character  
education;  
Covid-19  
pandemic

The character education during the Covid-19 pandemic has found significance. A survey conducted by Balitbang of East Java Province on community compliance with the use of masks and physical distance in the prevention of Covid-19 in Surabaya shows that 10.8% of the level of community compliance with the use of masks is very low, and 25.45% of the level of community compliance with physical distances is also very low. The survey above indicates that so far the character education taught in educational institutions has not made an impact and remains in people's behavior. Therefore the revitalization of character education during the Covid-19 pandemic is a must. This article aims to explore three main issues: 1) Covid-19 and online learning; 2) character education problems in online learning; 3) and revitalizing character education during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study used a library research with qualitative-exploratory approach. The data sources used are survey data, government policy circulars related to the Covid-19 pandemic and character-related laws and regulations. Data analysis used content analysis and continued with drawing conclusions. The findings of this article reveal that among the forms of revitalization are institutionalizing a holistic and character-based learning model, moral, value, religion and citizenship education, synergy of family, school and community education, and revitalizing the role of social media and mass media.

### Abstrak:

**Kata Kunci:**

Revitalisasi;  
Pendidikan Karakter;  
Pandemi Covid-19

*Pendidikan karakter pada masa pandemi Covid-19 telah menemukan titik signifikansinya. Survei yang dilakukan oleh Balitbang Propinsi Jawa Timur terhadap kepatuhan masyarakat terhadap penggunaan masker dan physical distancing dalam pencegahan Covid-19 di Surabaya menunjukkan bahwa 10,8% tingkat kepatuhan masyarakat menggunakan masker sangat rendah, dan 25,45% tingkat kepatuhan masyarakat akan physical distancing juga sangat rendah pula. Survei di atas mengindikasikan bahwa selama ini pendidikan karakter yang diajarkan di lembaga pendidikan belum cukup membekas dan mengendap dalam perilaku masyarakat. Oleh karenanya, revitalisasi pendidikan karakter di masa pandemi Covid-19 adalah suatu keniscayaan. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi tiga hal yang menjadi bahasan inti, 1) Covid-19 dan pembelajaran*

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daring; 2) problematika pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran daring; 3) dan revitalisasi pendidikan karakter masa pandemi Covid-19. Artikel ini merupakan studi pustaka (*library research*) menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-eksploratif. Sumber data yang digunakan adalah data survei, surat edaran kebijakan pemerintah terkait pandemi Covid-19 dan peraturan perundangan terkait karakter. Analisis data menggunakan *content analysis* dan dilanjutkan dengan penarikan kesimpulan. Di antara bentuk revitalisasi tersebut adalah melembagakan model pembelajaran yang holistik dan berbasis karakter, pendidikan moral, nilai, agama dan kewarganegaraan, sinergi pendidikan keluarga, sekolah dan masyarakat, serta revitalisasi peran media sosial dan media massa

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Received : 14 April 2021; Revised: 11 Mei 2021; Accepted: 14 Juni 2021

<https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi.v16i1.4029>

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Institut Agama Islam Negeri Madura, Indonesia



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## 1. Introduction

Character education discovered its relevance during the pandemic of Covid-19. Public enforcement is mandated by PSBB (large-scale social restrictions), social and physical distancing, and new uniform policies. The dream of breaking the Covid-19 dissemination is only utopian without being accompanied by public compliance. This is the efficacy of character education measured in schools, boarding school and tertiary institutions is tested and how much impact it has on people's behavior.

The research on the community regarding the use of masks and physical distance in the prevention of Covid-19 in Surabaya conducted by Balitbang of East Java Province showed that 10.8 percent of the level of community scouting using masks was very low, and 25.45 percent of the level of the community would also maintain physical distance.<sup>1</sup> The Faculty of Public Health, Airlangga University (FKM Unair) Surabaya, also conveyed the same thing, demonstrating that only 30 percent of people use masks while they are in places of worship, while the remaining 70 percent lack health protocols. Although this accounts for a high percentage of conventional markets, 84 percent of people do not use masks and are unaware of health procedures. Likewise, as many as 88 percent neglect health procedures in the hangout areas.<sup>2</sup>

The survey above shows that the character of education taught in educational institutions has not made any impact and remains in people's behaviour. Worse still some elected officials and public figures-not to say the majority, not even the majority-who should be positive role models (*uswah hasanah*) are behaving in the opposite direction. It is therefore inevitable that the revitalization of character education in the new normal era must be carried out in a holistic way, depending not only on the role of teachers and schools, but also on the involvement of families and community leaders, all of which are synergized in such a way that character education is genuinely grounded and embodied in the lifeblood of

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<sup>1</sup> 'Rekomendasi Hasil Diskusi Online (Zoom Meeting) IKA FKM Unair "Menyikapi Kebijakan PSBB Surabaya Raya sebagai Strategi Pencegahan dan Penanggulangan Covid-19"', *FKM UNAIR* (blog), 27 April 2020, <https://fkm.unair.ac.id/rekomendasi-hasil-diskusi-online-zoom-meeting-ika-fkm-unair-menyikapi-kebijakan-psbb-surabaya-raya-sebagai-strategi-pencegahan-dan-penanggulangan-covid-19/>.

<sup>2</sup> 'Survei Covid-19 Jatim: Bukan Untuk Polemik, Utamakan Warga', 19, accessed 4 September 2020, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20200629082200-20-518463/survei-covid-19-jatim-bukan-untuk-polemik-utamakan-warga>.

Indonesian society. The aim of this article is to further discuss three main issues: 1) Covid-19 and online learning; 2) character education problems in online learning; 3) and revitalization of character education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 2. Methods

This study used a library research with qualitative-exploratory approach. Library research is a technique of collecting data by learning and understanding data which has close relation with the problems from books, theories, notes, journal, etc.<sup>3</sup> This article used a qualitative research approach involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences.<sup>4</sup> This method is not only about "what" people think but also "why" they think so. It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research. Qualitative research is commonly used in the humanities and social sciences, in subjects such as anthropology, sociology, education, health sciences, history, etc.

In this context, the research data were taken through a library study in the form of primary data, namely East Java provincial government data related to the Covid-19 case, scientific research from campuses, and survey respondents taken from authoritative survey agencies and secondary data that include journal articles, newspapers, magazines, and books of related topics. Thus, no research participants/ respondents were involved here because the researcher is the one to locate, identify, and interpret the data. Furthermore, data analysis used content analysis and continued with drawing conclusions.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### a. Covid-19 and Online Learning

Responding to Covid-19, the Government took a tactical move on 15 June 2020 by signing a Joint Decree (SKB) of four Ministers consisting of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Religion, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Home Affairs on the Guidelines for the Introduction of Learning in the Current Academic and Academic Year 2020/2021. The strategy of introducing online learning or learning from home (BDR) is an alternative approach for the sake of preserving the educational process in Indonesia. The values of health and safety for children, educators, education workers, families and communities are a top priority in the concept of learning policies.

"New Normal" is predicted to be a new pattern of behavior in culture. New normal can be a trigger that marks the beginning of the transition to an era, and may even have latent implications for the transfer of knowledge and value to their students by schools, colleges and higher education. In the context of a pandemic, new normal is defined as a change in behavior to carry out normal activities while still paying attention to health protocols such as social and physical distancing, washing hands, wearing masks and diligently exercising.

Looking at the current reality, learning that is very possible to happen is distance learning or online learning. The Covid-19 pandemic has "forced" the

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<sup>3</sup> Mary W George, *The Elements of Library Research: What Every Student Needs to Know* (Princeton University Press, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (SAGE Publications, 2013).

values of education that are held face-to-face now to switch online. The implementation of distance learning has introduced online and offline learning.<sup>5</sup> Offline learning is carried out by utilizing various services provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, including learning from home programs through TVRI or Educational TV, radio, self-study modules and worksheets, hard books and teaching aids and learning media from objects and the surrounding environment or conventional face-to-face learning, but this is limited to areas of the green zone (areas that Covid-19 does not contaminate). While online is learning carried out through the use of technology platforms such as e-learning, virtual conference, zoom, ruang guru, school, quipper, google classroom, etc. Online learning can work well only in areas where there is an adequate internet network.

The discourse on online learning has many pros and cons. Some said the wisdom was due to the accelerated adaptation in the use of communication technology in the learning process. The positive implication is that educators and lecturers no longer depend on physical meetings because they will get used to undergoing distance learning. The Ministry of Education and Culture is in fact, reportedly planning and finalizing a permanent distance learning curriculum. Another view is that certain educators and students are not adequately prepared to deal with online learning. Even though you have to adapt, it will take a long time to ensure that learning runs optimally. Some educators in the "colonial" category must have experienced culture shock and complained of difficulties, not to mention the problem of internet quota fees, which further complicates their teaching load. Ultimately, learning is pragmatically carried out, limited to aborting responsibilities and not tailored to learning results. This is not a significant issue for "millennial" educators. They will easily adapt. Students have witnessed the same thing.

A study conducted by the Gadjah Mada University Center for Innovation and Academic Studies (PIKA UGM) on students to obtain an answer to the experience of taking online lectures found that 52.35 percent of students thought lectures were close to classroom lectures, the remaining 375 felt different and 10.7 percent felt quite different.<sup>6</sup> The survey also concluded that students do not need thorough preparation to come to campus, have more courage to ask questions, are flexible and relaxed, have new experiences, documented material, can be re-studied, are more efficient in time and cost. In the meantime, there are no distinct online lectures, such as unsystematic lectures, overloaded course assignments, changing schedules, lecturers who need to be more interactive and communicative again, internet networks fluctuating and other issues.

The description of the survey results above helps us capture the effectiveness of lectures during the pandemic. Online learning, of course, is neither as perfect as face-to-face nor worth comparing. However, among these deficiencies, creative breakthroughs and accelerations are required to ensure that the standard of learning remains optimum. Rashty (1999), as cited

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<sup>5</sup> Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan Lampung, *Laporan Evaluasi Pelaksanaan Belajar dari Rumah* (Tidak diterbitkan).

<sup>6</sup> Pusat Inovasi dan Kajian Akademik, *Infografis Pembelajaran Daring* (Yogyakarta: PIKA UGM, 2020).

by Noirid, divided the quantum model of online learning or e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic into three categories.<sup>7</sup>

The three diagrams above show the continuum of learning models starting from adjunct, mixed/ blended, and complete online.

#### 1. Adjunct

The conventional learning process plus. In this context, conventional learning is enabled by the online distribution system as an enrichment. The nature of this method of distribution is complementary. For example, to support classroom learning, an educator or lecturer assigns students or students to search for information on the Internet.

#### 2. Mixed/ blended

A process of learning that incorporates face-to-face and online learning. In addition, blended learning is an important part of a comprehensive learning approach. This means that both face-to-face and online processes form a whole. Blended learning provides an adaptive and sensitive approach to the production of contextual learning.<sup>8</sup> Expanding scope as a result of technical advances, generating learning environments, increasing accessibility and versatility becomes a distinctive characteristic of blended learning.<sup>9</sup>

At least blended learning requires the following four dimensions of learning space.<sup>10</sup>

- a. Live synchronous, face-to-face learning at the same time real time and at the same time. Classroom learning, typically performed in schools with face-to-face interactions between educators and students, takes place in direct synchronization.
- b. Virtual synchronous, direct virtual real-time learning, but in a different location. Using different types of technology, such as video conferencing, zoom, Google meet.
- c. Self-paced asynchronous, learning is done independently at any time and anywhere. Students should take the initiative themselves to identify learning needs and goals, to identify learning opportunities, to choose and apply learning strategies and to assess learning outcomes. This learning can be done by seeing, reading, listening and paying attention to different kinds of learning objects. The media used may be via video, television, radio, or podcast.
- d. Collaborative asynchronous learning is performed with other people at anytime and anywhere. This learning is achieved by criticizing, assessing, contrasting, and studying collaborative technology. For example, to discuss or work together in online discussion groups, journals, lark, and so on.

<sup>7</sup> Surachet Noirid and Boonchom Srisa-ard, 'E-Learning Models: A Review of Literature', in *The 1st International Conference on Educational Reform*, 2007, 9–11.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Dziuban et al., 'Blended Learning: The New Normal and Emerging Technologies', *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 15, no. 1 (2018): 3.

<sup>9</sup> A Bryan and KN Volchenkova, 'Blended Learning: Definition, Models, Implications for Higher Education', *Вестник Южно-Уральского Государственного Университета. Серия: Образование. Педагогические Науки* 8, no. 2 (2016).

<sup>10</sup> Uwes Anis Chaeruman and Santi Maudiarti, 'Quadrant of Blended Learning: A Proposed Conceptual Model for Designing Effective Blended Learning', *Jurnal Pembelajaran Inovatif* 1, no. 1 (2018): 1–5.

this pandemic atmosphere, direct synchronization is difficult to enforce. In the meantime the three lessons above can still be used. These three lessons are a new color in the world of education. The relevance of learning materials to goals and learning materials, as well as student characteristics and current circumstances, is an important part of the blended learning process.

- e. Full online, all learning activities are full online. Examples of study materials in the form of videos uploaded via the internet or linked learning through other relevant sources. The characteristic of this model is that online collaborative learning occurs, there is no face to face at all.<sup>11</sup>

Basically, both offline and online, every lesson has its own strengths and weaknesses. Weaknesses in online learning, for example, can be solved by face-to-face learning advantages (offline). Vice versa, the drawbacks of offline can be complemented by the benefits of online (e-learning). The introduction of blended learning is therefore very possible and successful, particularly in universities, given that the completion of face-to-face lectures and the Semester Credit System (SKS) is an obligation.

#### **b. Character Education Problems in Online Learning**

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit in all areas of life, including character education. Covid-19 has succeeded in opening our eyes by displaying various characters and behavior of society. The phenomenon of people who disobey or themselves health protocols is evidence for this. In addition, character education is a type of response to moral decadence in the framework of social reality that has consequences for the depravity of the nation on various fronts.<sup>12</sup> Even moral degradation has "forced" this nation to bow to its knees to pragmatic and dehumanizing values in the structural and cultural vortex.

Abuddin Nata identified that the symptoms of moral decay had now reached stage four. The ideals of integrity, reality, fairness, support and compassion have been lost in fraud, deceit, injustice, abuse, and the use of one another for the hidden agenda. There's a lot of fighting and slander, licking, stealing, taking other people's rights at will, and so on.<sup>13</sup> Presidential Decree No. 87 of 2017 on the Strengthening of Character Education (PPK) appears to be inadequate to resolve this issue.<sup>14</sup> PPK is, as is well known, an educational movement under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) to improve the character of students by harmonizing-to quote Ki Hadjar Dewantara's statement-heart (ethics), thinking (literacy), initiative (aesthetics) and sport (kinesthetics)<sup>15</sup> with participation and synergy between educational units, families and communities as equals (GNRM). However, implementation during this pandemic is far from being burnt. Even though schools are taught religious education, ethnicity, character and moral

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<sup>11</sup> Uwes Anis Chaeruman, 'Merancang Model Blended Learning Designing Blended Learning Model', *Jurnal Teknodik* 17, no. 4 (2019): 053–063.

<sup>12</sup> Johansyah Johansyah, 'Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Islam; Kajian Dari Aspek Metodologis', *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 11, no. 1 (2017): 85–103.

<sup>13</sup> H Abuddin Nata, *Manajemen Pendidikan: Mengatasi Kelemahan Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia* (Kencana, 2012).

<sup>14</sup> Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor, 'Tahun 2017 Tentang Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter', *Jakarta: Kemdikbud*, 87.

<sup>15</sup> Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, *Ki Hadjar Dewantara; Pemikiran, Konsep, Keteladanan, Sikap Merdeka* (Yogyakarta: UST Press, 2013), 55.

education (in Islamic education institutions) which are the embodiment of character education, it seems that it is not yet sufficiently successful.

Character education has encountered difficulties, particularly in the current online learning age.<sup>16</sup> Current reality is the difficulty of online learning, ranging from human resources (HR) to instructors, technology aspects, internet quotas to a decrease in the length of learning. There are some issues with the application of character education as follows during the pandemic.

**First**, the government policy is in this case, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion seem "strong" and slow to respond to the effect of Covid-19 on the world of education. As a result, educators and students are walking alone without specific instructions, communication and guidance from the government. Currently, the Ministry of Education and Culture has launched a number of policies and disbursed a subsidized internet quota budget for teachers, educators, students and lecturers 9 trillion and an additional BOS (School Organizational Assistance) worth 3.2 trillion IDR as one of the solutions to the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>17</sup> Presidential Regulation (Perpres) RI Number 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education (PPK) as a means of revitalizing character education in the midst of rapid globalization trends also appears to be inadequate during the pandemic.

Less significant attention has been given to Islamic boarding schools and educational institutions within the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag), which are in reality the primary breeders of the education of Indonesian human character. One of the things that can be seen is that it is just Rp in terms of the budget for the pesantren and madrasah 2.6 trillion, also without incentives for the procurement of internet quotas.<sup>18</sup> Although the number of Islamic boarding schools and educational institutions is very high, there are 28,194 pesantren with 18 million students, 9,2 million madrasah students, 780 thousand madrasah teachers, and hundreds of thousands of PTKIN students who have also felt the impact of Covid-19.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, the Ministry of Religion's alignments with PTKIN through KMA 515 of 2020 concerning Single Tuition Relief (UKT) have not been implemented properly in the field. Students screamed, the chancellors and all PTKIN leaders were confused about how to pay tuition fees get around student waivers because the central budget allocation was not sufficient to accommodate the needs of PTKIN, the PTKIN business center was stagnant due to Covid-19, and several other complexities. Thus, character education during online learning is less than optimal.

The government must also understand that online learning is temporary. What is worrying, however, is that if the pandemic continues for a long time,

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<sup>16</sup> Mochammad Zaka Ardiansyah, 'Pesantren Hybrid Worldview: Moderatisasi Paradigma Penalaran Keislaman Dan Pemenangan Kontestasi Wacana Daring', *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 7, no. 1 (5 July 2019): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.15642/jpai.2019.7.1.1-18>.

<sup>17</sup> 'Kemendikbud Alokasikan Rp 8,9 Triliun Untuk Subsidi Kuota Internet Dan Tunjangan Profesi Pendidik', Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 29 August 2020, <https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2020/08/kemendikbud-alokasikan-rp89-triliun-untuk-subsidi-kuota-internet-dan-tunjangan-profesi-pendidik>.

<sup>18</sup> 'Kemenag Tambahkan Anggaran Rp 2,6 T Untuk Pesantren Dan Lembaga Keagamaan Islam', accessed 4 September 2020, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5085669/kemenag-tambahkan-anggaran-rp-26-t-untuk-pesantren-dan-lembaga-keagamaan-islam>.

<sup>19</sup> 'Pangkalan Data Pondok Pesantren', accessed 4 September 2020, <https://ditpdpontren.kemenag.go.id/pdpp/statistik>.

the government will be slow, the disbursement of funds will be slow, and the strategy remains uncertain. Thus, it does not cover the possibility for prospective learners to lose good character qualities as a result of being used to facilities that do not "educate" online learning. In the short term, the victims are learners, while in the long run they are the country itself. Reported until 5 May 2020, KPAI received 258 PJJ-related complaints, of which 97% came from learners and 3% from parents of learners.<sup>20</sup> The results of the survey also showed that learning from home policy (BDR) suddenly did not respond quickly by policy makers at the regional and central levels, including the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religion. The PJJ works without contact, teamwork and facilitation, so that students and educators become victims.<sup>21</sup>

Do not let the neglect of character education during the pandemic and online learning result in a decline in the standard of character education for students across Indonesia. And it will become a new habit (new normal), which will then become a new bad habit (new bad normal) from the age of new habits" itself. Therefore it is time for the government to devise the best formula for the implementation of character education during online learning and this pandemic.

**Second**, Infrastructure. The results of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2020) suggest that the Covid-19 pandemic has impaired access to education. About 1.5 billion students do not attend school and about 500 million students are unable to participate in distance learning (PJJ). The Ministry of Education and Culture also reported that 42,159 or 19 per cent of primary and secondary schools do not have internet access, and that as many as 8,552 or 4 per cent of schools do not have electricity.<sup>22</sup>

The 2018 Central Statistics Agency (BPS) also announced that there were 61.8% of the population in Papua, 58.2% in Maluku, 39.8% in West Sulawesi, 49.4% in North Kalimantan and several more villages on the island. The others who are unable to do distance learning (PJJ) in reality, it is sad that in large cities where Internet access is required, such as Bogor, 11 per cent of students are unable to do PJJ due to lack of resources (gadgets, gadgets) and internet quotas.<sup>23</sup> If the problem in the 3T area is that internet access has not been reached and there are no learning tools available, then in "big cities" for the majority of students who come from lower-class families especially those in remote areas, the internet quota is still a luxury item that is difficult to reach. Infrastructure constraints still surround our world of education and have an impact on the application of character education.

**Third**, the curriculum implementation. The United Nations through UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization) has introduced four pillars of education, namely: 1) learning to know (learning to

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<sup>20</sup> 'KPAI: Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh Minim Interaksi', Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI), 28 April 2020, <https://www.kpai.go.id/berita/kpai-pembelajaran-jarak-jauh-minim-interaksi>.

<sup>21</sup> 'Federasi Serikat Guru: 55 Persen Sekolah Belum Siap Kenormalan Baru Pembelajaran Halaman All - Kompas.Com', accessed 4 September 2020, <https://edukasi.kompas.com/read/2020/06/26/105820171/federasi-serikat-guru-55-persen-sekolah-belum-siap-kenormalan-baru?page=all>.

<sup>22</sup> 'Kemendikbud: 8.522 Sekolah Belum Berlistrik, 42.159 Tak Ada Akses Internet', accessed 4 September 2020, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5108489/kemendikbud-8522-sekolah-belum-berlistrik-42159-tak-ada-akses-internet>.

<sup>23</sup> 'Menanti Ke(Tidak)Pastian Pendidikan', accessed 4 September 2020, <https://news.detik.com/kolom/d-5039804/menanti-ketidakpastian-pendidikan>.



know or to learn); 2) learning to do (learning to develop skills); 3) learning to be (learning to be innovative and to be a useful person); 4) learning to live together; (learning to live together and in society).<sup>24</sup> The four pillars are synergistically shaping and constructing the thinking of the educational curriculum in Indonesia. Unfortunately, the implementation of our curriculum, admittedly or not, in the field is still focused on points 1 and 2, with very few points 3 and 4, except for Islamic boarding schools and Islamic education institutions, which provide more parts on points 3 and 4, apart from 1 and 2. Whereas the 3rd and 4th are pillars demonstrate the development of characters.

**Fourth**, the position of educators and parents has not been maximized. Research conducted by Takhroji Aji, an English teacher at MTsN 7 Model Jakarta, reported that as many as 164 respondents or 92.1 per cent of a total of 178 respondents stated that parents cannot develop children's character in the best possible way without the involvement of educators.<sup>25</sup> A total of 157 or 88.2 per cent of respondents suggested that the child's character cannot be established in the home and atmosphere of the child without the participation of the school. Furthermore, 175 respondents or 98.3% stated that as long as children learn from home (BDR) the role of educators in building character is still very much needed. Meanwhile, 104 respondents or 59.4% stated that educators provided a smaller portion of character education material than other subject matter, even 8% or 14 respondents stated that educators did not provide character education. Only 57 respondents or 32.6% stated that character education was given in the same portion as the subject matter.

This research shows that parent respondents from kindergarten to high school level agree to say that they cannot fully implement character education for their children without the help of educators. Parents believe that educators really help them shape, instill and build the character of their children. Without the maximum synergistic role of educators and parents, it is only a figment to cultivate character education in children. This research also shows that the role of educators and parents in instilling and accumulating character education for students and their children is still not optimal.

**Fifth**, poor exemplary. No less important in implementing character education is exemplary. This example becomes - to quote KH's statement. Abdullah Sahal - keys rather than keys of all formation and education efforts. Without it, it is nonsense and rarely works. Examples in our country are still expensive. No matter how good a program, no good education system, study is in some way resurrected, but without being followed by exemplary, it is unlikely to succeed. The momentum of this pandemic, an example, must be seen and animated, beginning from the upstream and downstream stages, so that our students and children really find good figures that can be emulated by them.

### c. Revitalization of Character Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic

As described in the 2013 curriculum, character education embodied in core spiritual (KI 1) and social (KI 2) competencies includes indirect instruction, i.e. exemplary, habituation and school culture, through paying attention to the

<sup>24</sup> Sigit Dwi Laksana, 'Integrasi Empat Pilar Pendidikan (UNESCO) Dan Tiga Pilar Pendidikan Islam', *Al-Idarah: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (2016).

<sup>25</sup> 'Pendidikan Karakter Di Masa Pandemi, Menjadi Tanggung Jawab Siapa?', accessed 4 September 2020, <https://bdkjakarta.kemenag.go.id/berita/pendidikan-karakter-di-masa-pandemi-menjadi-tanggung-jawab-siapa>.

characteristics and relevance of subjects to the needs and conditions of learners. The current situation in which students have to learn from home (BDR) makes it difficult for teachers to build the character of students directly (direct teaching) as they do in school.

Unfortunately, character education is in the form of religion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, enthusiasm, nationality, love for the country, respect for achievement, friendly, communicative, peace-loving, fond of reading, care for the environment, caring

social, responsibility, mutual cooperation, which later crystallized into five main values, namely religious, nationalist, independent, mutual cooperation and integrity through distance learning (PJJ) currently considered minimal by parents even though PJJ is facilitated by technology that is adequate and various assistance from the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture in the form of pulses and internet quotas have been rolled out. This information suggests that education in Indonesia is currently not adequately empowered-not to say no-to create superior human beings and characters. Character education as a catalyst for change during a pandemic must therefore be revitalized on all fronts so that the future of the Indonesian nation does not encounter lost education and generation. Several steps need to be taken, as follows.

1. Institutionalization of a holistic and character-based learning model

Holistic education is characterized in different ways by educational experts. John P. Miller, et al., for example, defines education that seeks to develop human beings as a whole, including intellectual, emotional, physical, social, esthetic and spiritual development.<sup>26</sup> Meanwhile the Indonesian Heritage Foundation explains that character-based holistic education is an educational model that applies to social, emotional, cognitive, physical, moral and spiritual theories. This model is expected to aim for students to develop as individuals who follow KH's statemen Mustofa Bisri-a pious ritual and social piety

Character-based holistic education aims to construct all human potential with a learning approach that is fun, conducive and inspiring for students.<sup>27</sup> In this context, educators are equipped with a set of theoretical and practical knowledge related to it, such as nine explicit characters (knowing, feeling and doing), multiple intelligence, cooperative learning, contextual and question-based, effective classroom management, whole language, application of holistic education modules. character-based, project telling, and so on.<sup>28</sup> The concept of holistic character-based education is seen by experts as an alternative that can be used to shape the positive character of students. This is attributed to the following features, 1) accentuating the implicit content of comprehensive character-

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<sup>26</sup> John P Miller et al., *Holistic Learning and Spirituality in Education: Breaking New Ground* (SUNY Press, 2005).

<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Kosim, 'Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Di Era Industri 4.0: Optimalisasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah', *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 15, no. 1 (2020): 88–107.

<sup>28</sup> Guntur Suprianto, Nurdyansyah Nurdyansyah, and ETIS Nyong, 'Analysis of Character Education in Curriculum 13 to Build Moral Awareness in Education at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sidoarjo', *Proceeding of The ICECRS* 5 (2020).

based education. Placement is incorporated into all subjects. 2) engaging students in the learning process (student-centered) instead of putting educators at the forefront of learning or teaching. 3) to encourage enjoyable participatory learning. 4) stressing knowledge and learning to do so that everything becomes part of his life experience that would be useful as a provision for the continuity of his life.

The measures for its implementation are reflected as follows: 1) training educators to display a polite, fun and caring personality in order to attract the interest of students. 2) provide teaching aids according to the stage of development of students. 3) begin the learning process with reflection and inspiration or gratitude, for example, every morning they are asked to reflect for 10 minutes in order to verbally communicate their awareness, emotions and whether they have applied nine positive character values. 4) Curriculum incorporation, i.e. curriculum experimentation designed to build and increase the interest of students to learn with full self-awareness, without being "forced" 5) discuss the values of character education in the areas of religion, citizenship, physical education, social science, and so on.

## 2. Revitalization of moral, value, religion and citizenship education

First, moral of education. Moral education is related to conscience education. Experts include moral values such as empathy, kindness, conscience, self-control, tolerance and justice.<sup>29</sup> This is in line with one of the objectives of character education, namely to develop moral intelligence in students. This moral education is carried out not by cramming theories of good and bad, but by means of a test case for a problem related to moral values.

Second, value of education. This value education is found in religion and ethics, such as manners, manners, ethics and culture. Its application is similar to a character-based holistic education. Exemplary and habituation are key factors that must be realized by educators so that these values become living values.

Third, religious education. Religious education provides the most solid, deep and transcendental foundation, because it is rooted in God's values as contained in the holy book. Islamic education in this case plays an important role in shaping the character of Indonesian people. Islam as the majority religion in Indonesia holds the existence of national unity. The material or learning modules and teaching methods given to students greatly affect the character and personality of the students. Therefore, educators should present good role models (*Uswah Hasanah*) so that students are not "poor" in figures or role models.

Fourth, civil education. No less significant, the revitalization of character education by civic education (PKN) is something that cannot be left behind. The goal of civic education is to raise awareness of state protection based on an understanding of national politics and sensitivity to the development of national identity and morality in the life of the country. Character education must be the focus of our national principles, Pancasila. In fact, the values of Pancasila are the value of character

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<sup>29</sup> Abuddin Nata, 'Revitalisasi Pendidikan Karakter Untuk Mencetak Generasi Unggul', *Didaktika Religia* 1, no. 1 (2013).

education for our country, which we must uphold and influence in every practice of everyday life.

### 3. Revitalizing family, school and community education

The three centre education structure introduced by the Indonesian educational figure, Ki Hadjar Dewantara, deserves to be realized in the sense of a revitalizing education of character, namely in the lives of children, there are three social centers that are very important centers of education, namely the family realm (family education), the university realm (school) and the realm of education (society).<sup>30</sup>

Lickona (1991) formulates a three-dimensional formation of character, namely moral knowledge, moral feeling and moral action. In character development, habit is the key to achieving this, involving the synergy of family roles and group roles.<sup>31</sup> Children's education starts with the home, and is called informal education in the world of education. Learning that takes place every day without a typical curriculum formulation, and that process lasts a lifetime (long life education). So the role of parents really needs to be a role model for their children. In the family, parents have central control in shaping and developing the character and personality of children. The higher the standard of the family, the more likely it is that the child will grow and develop a quality of personality and character.

Schools are formal education units that carry out formal teaching and learning processes. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the momentum to promote student-centered education and character promotion is very appropriate. Simplification of the learning curriculum and the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) is a momentum that must be used to revitalize character education as a whole. The Covid-19 pandemic is like a barometer, a measure of the extent to which the development of character education can become the pattern and lifestyle of the Indonesian people.

No less significant, the revitalization of the role of the community in the realization of character education involves engaging in the development of a clean environment from SARA, KKN, narcotics, prostitution and the like in accordance with all relevant health protocols. Participate in the creation of a religious, cultural and civilized environment, mutual tolerance, live in harmony and peace between neighbors and the surrounding community, and monitor various criminal acts and other violations of the law.

### 4. Revitalizing the role of social media and mass media

In Indonesia, media penetration, both mass media and social media, is very huge. The results of research conducted by We are social Hootsuite in January 2019 showed that social media users in Indonesia had reached 150 million or 56 percent of the total population. This figure is up 20% from the previous survey. The same was also mentioned by

<sup>30</sup> Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, *Ki Hadjar Dewantara; Pemikiran, Konsepsi, Keteladanan, Sikap Merdeka* (Yogyakarta: UST Press, 2013), 70.

<sup>31</sup> Dalmeri Dalmeri, 'Pendidikan Untuk Pengembangan Karakter (Telaah Terhadap Gagasan Thomas Lickona Dalam Educating For Character)', *Al-Ulum* 14, no. 1 (2014): 269–88.

the Director General of Informatics Applications (APTIKA) Kominfo, who said that Internet users in Indonesia had reached 150 million people or 56% spread across the country. The largest percentage of users of the Internet is concentrated on the islands of Java and Sumatra.<sup>32</sup> The size of the population, the exponential growth of Internet users, have increasingly indicated that we are in an age of revolution, an era in which disclosure of knowledge is increasingly wild, without being constrained by space and time. Not to mention the addition of mass media that gradually colored the age of colonial and millennial people.

This is both an opportunity and a challenge for us together, especially the government in ground-breaking character education in a "modern way. But, unfortunately, there is still mass media exposure or social media buzz tinged with interest and profit-based conflict. The content will continue to be produced as long as it is profitable and according to the owner's "will" Certain accents that are in line with their importance are inserts that cannot be removed.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, this condition mutilates, fools, and misleads people's understanding. It's as if the community is led to accept the irrationality of shows or posts that are full of hidden agendas.

Hypodermic Needle Theory-which has become a classic-based on the Stimulus Response theory explains that media content is analogous to a drug that is injected into the veins of the audience so that it reacts as expected.<sup>34</sup> This classical theory suggests that mass media have a significant effect on people's views and viewpoints.

Therefore in order to revitalize character education, it is important to revitalize the role of mass media and social media so that media content is tailored to the needs and character of the audience as students and packaged in an appealing and competitive format. The content of this media is called upon to be able to promote and establish a learning society, to be an inspiration, to educate and to set an example in building the character of the country.

#### 4. Conclusion

Character education plays a central role in producing citizens of Indonesia with honesty and character. Some people consider the Covid-19 pandemic to be a tragedy, others to be knowledge, but whether we know it or not, Covid-19 has become a barometer and an appraisal sheet about how much character education that has been taught in educational institutions permeates and incorporates people's thought and actions. Together, we will see how high the degree of group compliance with health protocols is. Especially in the current online learning period, character education has encountered a difficulty. Current reality is the complexity of online learning, ranging from human resources (HR) to educators, infrastructure aspects, and internet quotas to reducing the duration of learning. The issue of character education in online learning is reflected in at

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<sup>32</sup> Leski Rizkinaswara, 'Penggunaan Internet Di Indonesia', *Ditjen Aptika* (blog), 14 August 2019, <https://aptika.kominfo.go.id/2019/08/penggunaan-internet-di-indonesia/>.

<sup>33</sup> Oos M Anwas, 'Membangun Media Massa Publik Dalam Menanamkan Pendidikan Karakter', *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan* 17, no. 6 (2011): 680–90.

<sup>34</sup> Eugene F Shaw, 'Agenda-Setting and Mass Communication Theory', *Gazette (Leiden, Netherlands)* 25, no. 2 (1979): 96–105.

least five things: government policies that are "stuttering" and "slow" in responding to the pandemic, inadequate infrastructure (internet networks, internet quotas, fees), the implementation of a pragmatic curriculum, and the role of educators. Parents are not maximum and bad role models by upstream to downstream estimates.

Character education as a catalyst for change during a pandemic must therefore be revitalized on all fronts, so that the future of the Indonesian nation does not experience lost education and generation. Forms of revitalization include the institutionalization of a holistic and character-based learning model, moral education, values, religion and citizenship, family synergy, school and community education, and the revitalization of the role of social media and mass media. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided many lessons for all of us, particularly in the field of education. Support from various parties, governments, schools, educators, parents and the community is needed to overcome the increasingly eroded problems of character education, so that character education is more grounded and our nation becomes a nation that is superior, characterized and independent in all walks of life.

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