

LONG DISTANCE LEARNING - BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AT INDONESIAN OPEN UNIVERSITY

Sri wahyuni¹, Riza agustina², Mambaul hikmah³

Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia University, Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia University,
UIN Walisongo
sriwahyu@unusia.ac.id

ABSTRAK

Pada umumnya peserta didik diajarkan pendidikan karakter melalui pembiasaan dengan kegiatan belajar di kelas dan pendidik sebagai role modelnya, berbeda dengan Universitas Terbuka yang menyelenggarakan kegiatan pembelajaran jarak jauh tentunya mempunyai strategi sendiri untuk mengembangkan pendidikan karakter bagi peserta didiknya. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana strategi Universitas Terbuka untuk mengembangkan pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran jarak jauh. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*), semua data yang digunakan diperoleh dari website resmi Universitas Terbuka yaitu www.ut.ac.id, buku modul yang digunakan dalam pembelajaran serta dari dokumen tertulis lainnya. Temuan yang dihasilkan dari penelitian di Universitas Terbuka, Pendidikan karakter dikembangkan melalui kegiatan belajar (*teaching*) pada mata kuliah wajib umum Pendidikan Agama Islam dan peran tutor sebagai model dan pemberi penguatan dengan menerapkan pembiasaan pada setiap kegiatan pembelajaran.

Kata kunci : Strategi pendidikan, Pendidikan karakter, pembelajaran jarak jauh

ABSTRACT

In general, students are taught character education through habituation with learning activities in the classroom and educators as role models. This is in contrast to the Indonesian Open University, which organizes distance learning activities. Of course, it has its own strategy to develop character education for its students. The purpose of this study was to find out how the Indonesian Open University strategy to develop character education in distance learning works. The method used is library research, and all data used is obtained from the Indonesian Open University's official website, www.ut.ac.id, module books used in learning, and other written documents. The findings resulting from research at the Indonesian Open University show that character education is developed through learning activities (teaching) in the general compulsory subject of Islamic Religious Education and the role of tutors as models and providers of reinforcement by applying refraction to each learning activity.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process to shape humans for the better and there is a change in capacity building, both from the mastery of knowledge and attitudes, skills, spiritual, moral, and social. It should be clarified that education is not only an effort to hone intellectual abilities but rather to build the character of students. In fact, students learn to look for provisions to navigate their lives, so having knowledge alone is not enough. Character education needs to be given so that students can live their lives and carry out their roles in accordance with the norms that apply in society without harming others. This is emphasized by (Sajadi, 2019) who argues that acts of crime and fraud that occur in the general public are a sign of the low character of the community. So, it can be concluded that character education is very important for students considering they are the next generation of the nation who will later be responsible for advancing this nation.

Ratna Megawangi, who is quoted by Munjiatun as an effort to provide training to children so that they have an attitude of responsibility for what has been done, and can make wise decisions and can implement them in everyday life, so that they can provide benefits to their environment. (Fadilah et al., 2021).

Character education is an educational effort that focuses on instilling moral values in students so that they can act in accordance with societal norms. Yeni Wulandari & Kristiawan (2017) argue that education is the basic foundation for the growth and development of the nation's children, so that character education is absolutely held at any

level of education without exception. Each school seeks to produce graduates who have character and can be accepted in the wider community, both through internalizing character values into subjects and through the role of teachers as role models for their students. Through example, teachers develop character values for students, such as being caring, honest, fair, tolerant, diligent, and having a high work ethic (Widiastuti, 2012).

The Indonesian Open University is one of the institutions that develops character education based on the distance learning model. All learning activities and activities are carried out using internet technology. Distance learning, or more familiarly known as e-learning, is a learning activity that cannot be done in a classroom and can be done through any medium (Arifin et al., 2020; Fatimah&Mahmudah, 2021).

On the one hand, distance learning organized by the Indonesian Open University makes it easy for people to get a decent education without the hassle of going to campus and to cities for people who live in remote villages. On the other hand, there is one question related to the effectiveness of learning, especially the inculcation of moral values in students. Naturally, learning activities are carried out in the classroom, and educators (lecturers/tutors) are an important part of being responsible for achieving the completeness of the educational goals.

To measure the completeness of character education, of course, educators must determine an indicator as a benchmark for

determining the assessment. As well as research by Wulandari & Kristiawan (2017) which states that the results of implementing the character development program at SD N 62 Palembang are that students are accustomed to greeting, being tolerant and able to respect others, behaving honestly, politely, and caring about their environment.

To support the effectiveness of the implementation of character education, it is necessary to support strategies that are considered appropriate to the needs and character of students, as Zurqoni et al., (2018) in their research which discusses the strategy and implementation of character education in senior high schools and vocational high schools, came to the conclusion that the strategy that is applied in developing character education is to set a good example, intervene, habituate, and strengthen, and in its application, obtain good results.

Santika (2020) in his literature study on character education in online learning that focuses on the high school level, he concludes that to implement character education in students, a portfolio-based multiple intelligence strategy is used.

In previous research, character education was developed and taught directly in the classroom, in contrast to character education developed by the Indonesian Open University. So, in this study, we will explore how the strategy developed by the Indonesian Open University as a provider of distance education programs to instill character values without the direct involvement of educators (lecturers/tutors) in learning activities in the classroom.

The research conducted by the researcher is called library research or library research. The source of the data used comes from Pustaka data, both in the form of textbooks, articles, papers, and other written sources (Noeng Muhadjir dalam Sa'diyah & Nurhayati, 2019). This information can be obtained from printed materials as well as through computer technology (Zed, 2014). source is obtained from e-learning at the Indonesian Open University, namely the website learning.ut.ac.id, as well as module books used in learning. Then the data is analyzed using content analysis techniques by describing the data qualitatively.

DISCUSSION

In the education system in Indonesia, character education is summarized in the goal of education itself, namely developing the potential possessed by students to become human beings who have faith and piety in God Almighty, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible.

Character education is an effort to develop the overall dynamics of interpersonal relationships with various dimensions so that individuals are able to take responsibility for themselves and become individuals who are able to practice moral values that apply in society (Doni Koesoema, 2015). The Indonesian Open University, as the first distance learning provider in Indonesia, tries to provide the possibility for all people from remote parts of the country and abroad to be able to access learning activities without any barriers of space and time.

According to Majid (2017) distance learning like this is classified as learning based on the teacher-student relationship.

During the process of learning activities, students are accompanied by an online tutor whose job is to guide discussions, provide direction for learning activities, and provide an assessment of student learning activities. Even though learning is carried out remotely, it is certain that all student learning activities can be monitored and measured because the tutor always monitors and guides student discussion activities, so that two-way communication can be well established, even if only through electronic media.

The self-study system designed at the Indonesian Open University requires students to take more initiative in learning to take advantage of the time and teaching materials provided. Learning ability depends on the speed of reading and understanding of the content of the reading material. So that independent learning activities can run effectively, students are required to have self-discipline, initiative, and strong motivation (*Www.Ut.Ac.Id*).

Character education developed by the Indonesian Open University in distance learning based on data obtained through elarning.ut.ac.id refers to eighteen character values from the Ministry of National Education. The character values from the Ministry of National Education include; 1) religion, namely obedience to God Almighty; 2) honesty, namely the attitude to maintain the trust of others with the harmony of words and actions; Tolerance, specifically mutual respect for differences; 4) discipline, which is to submit and obey the

applicable rules; 5) hard work, i.e. being serious about the work; 6) creativity, i.e. producing something with new ideas; 7) independently, namely a form of attitude that does not depend on others; 8) democratic, the belief that every human being has the same rights and obligations; 9) curiosity, which is an effort to explore knowledge as widely as possible; 10) the spirit of nationalism and nationalism, namely an attitude that puts the nation above itself; 11) patriotism, which is a loyal and caring attitude toward one's nation and country; 12) appreciate achievements, namely the attitude to be a productive person who is dedicated to the benefit of society; 13) communicative, namely the attitude shown by being sociable and cooperating; 14) peace-loving, an attitude that always makes others comfortable in its existence; 15) fond of reading, namely the habit of reading to be used as a basis for virtue; 16) care for the environment, namely an attitude that always preserves the environment and prevents it from being damaged; 17) social care, namely the attitude of caring for others and always providing assistance to people in need; 18) and responsibility, namely the attitude shown by the effort to do the tasks assigned to him (Suyadi, 2013). These character values are developed through courses, one of which is Islamic Religious Education. As stated by Narwanti (2013), the implementation of character education must involve educational components such as curriculum content, learning and assessment processes, quality of relationships, subject management, school management, co-curricular activities, empowerment of facilities

and infrastructure, and empowerment and work ethic of all citizens in the school environment.

Based on the Islamic Religious Education module used as teaching material at the Indonesian Open University developed by Nurdin et al., (2017), there are nine themes, including the following:

1. Almighty God and Divinity. This theme discusses faith, piety, and divine philosophy. The character values developed in this theme are religious or religious values.
2. Human nature, dignity, and responsibility Here is discussed the nature and dignity of humans who occupy positions as noble beings who are equipped with reason so that they can be used to help their lives. Apart from that, it also discusses the role of humans as caliphs on earth who are given the mandate by God to be leaders for themselves, others, and also the environment. The character values developed in this theme are respect for achievement, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility.
3. Civilized society, the role of religious communities, human rights, and democracy. The character values developed in this theme are honesty, tolerance, love for peace, care for the environment, care for society, and love for peace.
4. The law referred to in this theme is sharia law, which regulates what humans can and cannot do based on Islamic teachings, so that in this theme the character values of responsibility, environmental care, social care, and discipline have been developed.
5. Religion as a source of morals and noble character in life The character values in this theme are religious values; honesty; tolerance; discipline; hard work; creativity; independence; democracy; the spirit of nationalism and nationalism; love for the homeland; love for peace; environmental and social care; and responsibility.
6. Science, technology, and art. The character values developed in this theme are religious values, creativity, respect for achievement, communicative, fond of reading, curiosity, and responsibility.
7. Academic culture and work culture (ethos) in Islam The character values developed in this theme are religious, honest, communicative, creative, curious, independent, disciplined, the spirit of nationalism and nationalism, love for the homeland, love of reading, and responsibility.
8. The character values developed in this theme are honesty, responsibility, care for the environment, love of peace, social care, the spirit of nationalism, and democracy.
9. In inter-religious harmony, the character values developed are religious, tolerance, love of peace, care for the environment, and social care.

Apart from the Islamic Religious Education module, character education is also developed through the role of tutors. In online tutorials, the role of the tutor is to actively interact with students, including by making greeting videos at each learning session. In the greeting video, the tutor greets

students by briefly explaining the theme to be studied, providing instruction and learning directions, and providing an assessment. The presence of tutors aims to motivate students to participate in all learning activities, especially in discussion and assignment activities. As stated by Yustiani et al., (2015), in the world of education, the role of the tutor also contributes to the formation of attitudes, mentality, intelligence, and personality of students and raises student motivation. The character education strategy developed by the Open University, which is implemented through learning activities with tutor assistance, is in line with the character education strategy developed by the University, which states that there are four methods used, namely: 1) through learning activities; 2) role models (exemplary); 3) reinforcement; and habituation.

In general, Sudrajat (2011) expressed his opinion that character education can be carried out well by using a comprehensive and holistic approach. A comprehensive approach is an approach that involves the dimensions of knowledge, emotional intelligence, and behavior. Things that need to be done are to develop a caring attitude, apply discipline, create democratic classes, ensure character education is taught through the curriculum, apply cooperative learning, encourage moral reflection, teach how to resolve conflicts, have parents act as partners, and create a culture of character in learning activities. To obtain good results, the use of a comprehensive approach must be integrated with all aspects of school life, including:

1. Organizing all school members, starting from the principal, teachers, students, employees, and the community.
2. It shows the inner relationship between school principals, educators, students, education staff, and institutions.
3. Learning emphasizes more on the social and emotional aspects of learning.
4. Establish cooperation among school residents.
5. Instilling moral values in daily activities
6. Allow students to practice moral behavior.
7. The application of rewards and punishments to discipline the class.
8. application of a democratic model to build kinship in carrying out the norms that have been set as well as solving problems.

The Open University refers to the assessment of learning outcomes as a learning evaluation material. Learning outcomes are measured from discussion responses at each meeting session as well as from mandatory assignments. Completeness of character education is based on predetermined indicators. Based on the data obtained from the discussion and assignment column on the elearning.ut.ac.id website for compulsory general Islamic Education courses, several examples that can be taken in inculcating character values that are emphasized at the Open University are tolerance, honesty, discipline, and responsibility. To find out the degree to which students are able to implement tolerant behavior is to present case study questions in discussion and students are asked to

respond by taking the right attitude towards the problem of tolerance. The value of honesty is measured by the language and sentences used by students, whether there is an element of plagiarism or if it is from their own thoughts. The value of discipline and responsibility is measured by the effort made by students in completing their tasks, which are determined by the time limit. It can be said that one learning activity contains several character values. In discussion activities, for example, from this activity, the values of responsibility, independence, democracy, love of reading, discipline, and mutual respect for each other's opinions are embedded.

From everything that has been presented by the author, which is based on the findings of the assessment results from the Open University website system, the distance learning model is not a problem for teaching character education to students. That is, with a note that the curriculum must be able to contain all aspects of character values, then the approaches and strategies used are adapted to the needs and character of the students. Learning activities also contribute to the implementation of character education.

CONCLUSION

The formation of the character of students is an important goal that must be completed, so in the process, a special strategy is needed that must be adapted to the character of students and the learning model applied in an educational institution. To develop character education with a distance-based learning system, the Indonesian

Open University optimizes its learning activities by designing Islamic Religious Education modules with nine themes. The theme chosen refers to the eighteen character values proclaimed by the Ministry of National Education, as well as mentoring by one tutor in each course.

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