International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsulindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

The Role of Community Learning Centers (PKBM) in Instilling Character Values

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Abstract

The Role of the Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Instilling Character Values in the Community of Jabon Village, Banyakan District, Kediri Regency. This study aims to identify: (1) the types of work programs organized by the PKBM in Jabon Village to instill character values in community members; (2) the PKBM's efforts to instill character values in the learners participating in the center; and (3) the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the PKBM in instilling character values among community members. To achieve these objectives, the study employed a qualitative approach, specifically descriptive qualitative research. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. The results indicate that: (1) the PKBM work programs in Jabon Village aimed at instilling character values include the Community Reading Garden (TBM), literacy education, equivalency education, life skills training, and women's empowerment; (2) the PKBM's efforts to instill character values involve (a) reciting prayers before and after learning sessions, (b) maintaining cleanliness, aesthetics, and orderliness within the PKBM environment, (c) upholding national traditions and culture, and (d) implementing programs beneficial to all segments of society; and (3) supporting factors include partners located in every village within Banyakan District and tutors who guide community members in understanding lessons aligned with the PKBM's work programs, whereas inhibiting factors include a lack of community interest in participating in PKBM activities or programs in Jabon Village and issues regarding inadequate facilities.

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Keyword: Character Values, Community Learning Centers

INTRODUCTION

Character refers to the nature, disposition, psychological traits, and moral qualities that distinguish one individual from another. A nation's character is deeply influenced by its foundational culture, which is reflected in its communication style—specifically, its language. The language possessed and used by a nation or community serves as a means to identify its true identity or character.

This explanation underscores the importance of character; fostering good character requires character education, wherein values are instilled in the Indonesian people to shape the nation's identity. Article 1 of the 2003 National Education System Law defines education as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and process that enables students to actively develop their potential—cultivating spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills necessary for themselves, their community, the nation, and the state.

The aforementioned law also states that "education pathways consist of formal, non-formal, and informal education, which complement and enrich one another." This provision reinforces the significance of these three educational elements, highlighting that they are fundamentally important and mutually complementary. Consequently, the common assumption that character values are cultivated solely within the scope of formal education is refuted by this article; non-formal education plays an equally vital role in instilling character values within society (Kadafi et al, 2022).

A discussion on non-formal education inevitably involves the Community Learning Center (PKBM). This educational institution emerged from the recognition of the community's vital role in the non-formal education development process. PKBM is expected to provide opportunities for community members to pursue learning tailored to their specific needs and to grant access to educational services for all citizens—regardless of social status, religion, culture, or other distinctions. Furthermore, it aims to accommodate diversity and enhance the quality of educational services provided to the community. As a partner in fostering an enlightened society (and nation) through non-formal education programs, PKBM is expected to cultivate a "learning society" and instill character education. This is crucial because, fundamentally, individuals lacking good character risk undermining the foundations of *Pancasila*—the ideology embraced by the Indonesian nation—and tarnishing the nation's reputation on the international stage.

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Ultimately, the presence of PKBM is expected to foster self-reliance, educational empowerment, and an innovative spirit in seeking new information to improve living standards.

The current state of the Indonesian national character is deeply concerning; the prevalence of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN), along with incidents of violence, theft, and similar offenses, serves as evidence of a declining national character or a lack of understanding regarding character values within society itself. This situation is further compounded by rapid technological advancements that have effectively removed boundaries from all forms of interaction. As widely reported in the media, many adolescents and minors are grappling with social issues—such as addiction to smoking and drugs, promiscuity, brawls, theft, and other criminal acts—that deviate from societal norms and even lead to legal trouble. This signals a moral crisis facing the nation; without the instilling of character values, individuals risk being exploited by technological advancements and are unable to ward off the negative impacts—such as those presented by social media—or avoid the looming threat of losing their competitive edge due to a lack of ingrained character values.

Acts of thuggery frequently appear on television screens, disharmony among religious groups fills newspaper pages, and anarchic demonstrations have reached alarming levels. It is as if the nation's multifaceted decline signals that its energy remains consumed by unresolved internal issues rooted in primordial sentiments.

The values inherent in character education should be effectively realized and applied within society. The character values to be internalized include: religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, patriotism, appreciation of achievement, friendliness or communicativeness, love of peace, a love for reading, environmental awareness, social awareness, and responsibility. Through the Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Jabon Village, continuity with the local community is fostered to implement and instill these character values among residents.

The importance of these 18 character values is reinforced by Government Regulation (PP) No. 87 of 2017 concerning Character Education Strengthening. Article 3 states that character education strengthening is carried out by applying Pancasila values—specifically religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, patriotism, appreciation of achievement, communicativeness, love of peace, a love for reading, environmental awareness, social awareness, and responsibility.

Instilling character values is crucial in Bonde Village; the local PKBM strives to preserve local culture and customs. By upholding these cultural values, the PKBM aims to guide the

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community to become not only intelligent, independent, and responsible but also individuals of strong character. These character education values will shape the people of Bonde Village into a community defined by strong character, competitiveness, and the ability to keep pace with the times. The presence of the Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Bonde village also makes it possible to address issues that formal education cannot resolve—namely, reducing the school dropout rate.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, as the researcher intends to directly observe field conditions related to the PKBM (Community Learning Activity Center). Another reason for using this method is that the data collected is considered highly valuable for addressing or resolving everyday issues. Specifically, the study utilizes a qualitative descriptive design, gathering detailed information through established data collection procedures. Descriptive research aims to provide a systematic and precise overview of actual facts and the characteristics of a specific population. The research was conducted in Jabon Village, Banyakan District, Kediri Regency. The research activities comprised the following stages: planning, implementation, writing, and reporting.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings previously discussed, the analysis regarding the role of the Community Learning Center (PKBM) in instilling character education within the community of Jabon Village is as follows: regarding the forms of work programs organized by PKBM Wilis in Jabon Village to instill character education, such programs are crucial for achieving targets and embedding character values among local residents.

PKBM Wilis Work Programs

The Community Reading Center (TBM) is a specialized service provided to the local community to improve reading habits and broaden horizons; reading expands knowledge and fosters individuals who are knowledgeable, competent, and creative—the challenge lies simply in attracting the community's interest to cultivate a love for reading.

Literacy Education

This work program was selected by PKBM Wilis in Jabon Village because it aims to educate

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community members (learners) so they can utilize basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, as well as functional skills, in their daily lives. This initiative is grounded in the understanding that a link exists between illiteracy and poverty. The goal is to bring about behavioral changes and foster a community that is self-reliant and free from ignorance. Regarding the instilling of character values, the aim is for individuals to become independent and socially adept, to prevent discrimination, to reduce social inequality, and to foster greater appreciation for the achievements of others.

PKBM Wilis pioneered literacy education in Jabon village, partnering with the Education Office and the village administration to implement the program. Aiming to eradicate illiteracy within the community, PKBM Wilis fights ignorance through a literacy program focused on older adults and those beyond the standard compulsory schooling age—demonstrating that it is never too late to learn.

Equivalency Education (Packages A, B, and C)

Equivalency education is an annual program organized by PKBM Wilis, comprising Package A (equivalent to Elementary School/MI), Package B (equivalent to Junior High School/MTs), and Package C (equivalent to Senior High School/MA). These packages are highly beneficial to the community, particularly in addressing the issue of school dropouts in Jabon village. They offer an alternative pathway—especially for the underprivileged and those who previously left school—to continue their education. Participants benefit from the program's accessibility, as the teaching schedules are flexible and the program is cost-effective. Through this initiative, community members can obtain an educational diploma.

Life Skills and Empowerment: The work programs for life skills and empowerment have been integrated into a unified whole. PKBM Wilis conducts a fishery business program to support its students' skill development. Regarding the instilling of character education values among participants in the compulsory education program at PKBM, the efforts undertaken by PKBM Wilis in Jabon Village include: 1) Reciting prayers before and after learning sessions—a practice applied to all activities organized by the PKBM. This aims to instill religious values—values crucial for society, especially for early childhood—reflecting the first principle of *Pancasila* (the national ideology), which signifies that we must not neglect God Almighty, the Creator. 2) Maintaining cleanliness, aesthetic appeal, and orderliness within the PKBM environment. As "cleanliness is part of faith," the values sought to be instilled include environmental and social awareness, a spirit of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and love for the homeland. 3)

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Upholding or preserving national traditions and culture. And 4) Implementing programs beneficial to all segments of society. These efforts aim not only to improve the community's standard of living but also to foster independence, achievement, a strong work ethic, mutual cooperation, discipline, and a sense of responsibility—not merely toward oneself, but toward the nation and state.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for PKBM in Instilling Character Education in the Community

A PKBM naturally faces various obstacles as well as factors that support successful implementation, particularly regarding the instilling of character values in the community. The supporting and inhibiting factors are as follows: A supporting factor is the partnership between the PKBM and the village government; this facilitates the continuity of PKBM work programs in Jabon Village, as the parties can assist one another. Another supporting factor is the role of the tutor, who teaches the compulsory education curriculum based on their area of expertise.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion presented, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1) The work programs implemented by the Community Learning Center (PKBM) in Jabon Village to instill character values in the community are crucial; the PKBM consistently strives to embed these values through initiatives such as Community Reading Gardens (TBM), literacy education, equivalency education, and life skills training. 2) The PKBM's efforts to instill character values among program participants involve practices such as reciting prayers before and after learning sessions; maintaining cleanliness, aesthetic appeal, and orderliness within the PKBM environment; upholding national traditions and culture; and executing programs that benefit all segments of society. And 3) The factors supporting and hindering the PKBM in fostering character education include: (1) supporting factors, namely partners located in every village within Banyakan District, and tutors who play a key role in guiding community members through the lessons outlined in the PKBM's work programs; and (2) hindering factors, specifically a lack of community interest and inadequate facilities.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The role of the PKBM (Community Learning Center) in instilling character values within the community involves upholding fairness and combating discrimination, fostering the intellectual development of the residents of Jabon village, and facilitating the fulfillment of

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community rights. Based on these findings, it is hoped that all segments of society—across formal, non-formal, and informal educational contexts—will cultivate the habit of applying character education values in their daily lives.

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