

Teachers' Competences to Implement the Character Education in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract: This research aims to get information about teacher's competences to implement the character education in state kindergarten using case study method. The research took place at TK Halimun, a state kindergarten in South Jakarta, Indonesia and the subject were eight female teachers. The data were collected by observation, interview and work documents. Analysis was by using descriptive Miles and Huberman method including data reduction, data display and conclusion. Based on the findings, almost all teachers have bachelor degree in early childhood education and 1 still in college. 85,7 % teachers already done a character training which administered by Minister of Education of East Jakarta, Indonesia but they were not continuously. Also, 85,7 percent of the teachers have taught at least for five years. All of them have fulfil personal character qualifications and implement them in the class during the classroom activities. All in all, the teachers have fulfilled basic skills and had good manners in teaching character education to solve children's character difficulties.

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the most important components in conducting a character education is the level of competence that is owned by educators. Based on the literature, teacher competences are the combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and personal characteristics (Koster and Dengerink, 2008) in action in the classroom, directly linked with the craft of teaching (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

Having a noble character is not automatically possessed by every human being as soon as he is born, but requires a long process through parenting (Berkowitz and Melinda, 2004; Althof and Berkowitz, 2006) and education. Building character strength can be done through a good character education in formal environments such as school and became the aim, or non-formal such as family and community (Chingos and Peterson, 2011; Kessler, 2000; Park and Peterson, 2006). Character education is a system of character values inculcation (Mulyasa, 2012) conducted by teachers who are able to influence learners which involves cognitive, social-emotional and physical aspects (Megawangi, 2007).

Building a character involving all elements and had a long way (Colgan, 2003). Therefore, each

element will have an effect on the process of forming each character. Many different strategies have been developed to continue to improve the design of the program (Chapman, 2011). Since teachers and parents spend the most time with the students, they are responsible for instilling good morals and values in them. Teachers implicitly impart values when they select and exclude topics; when they insist on correct answers; when they encourage students to seek the truth of the matter; when they set up classroom routines, form groups, enforce discipline, encourage excellence (Narvaez and Lapsley, 2004). Character formation is intrinsic to classrooms and schools an inescapable part of the teacher's craft (Hansen, 1993; Jackson et al, 1993).

According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 Year 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, there are four competencies that teachers should have, they are the competence of personality, social, professional and pedagogical. Building a caring classroom community takes some skill on the part of the teacher (Narvaez and Lapsley, 2004) therefore effective teaching promotes both moral and academic excellence (Solomon et al, 2001) to do it so. Moreover, teachers need content knowledge of presocial character, social and emotional skill development, the pedagogical skills to pull it off;

and the disposition to be committed to providing caring climates as a teaching practice (Narvaez and Lapsley, 2004).

Previous research on early childhood has been done by Chou et al (2014) and Kyoung and Jeon (2016). The research was focus on the importance of character education from early childhood education and how it started from family and how was parent-child relationship adopted it into multi-culture family and Kyoung and Jeon study figured the highest demanded teaching competencies for character education were using tools and instrument to check character education systematically. Another research was at secondary school about teacher's belief in character education (Ulger et al, 2014) and the result showed that character education competency and general education competency did not create a significant difference on teacher's beliefs. However, research on teacher's competence in implementing the character education in early childhood is still rare especially in Indonesian context. This research intends to looked at the extent to which ability of teachers in implementing the character education in early childhood.

1.1 Personality Competences

First, Personality competence is a competence related to the teacher's own personal behavior including attitudes, values of personality (Rychen & Salganik, 2003) which is as behavioral elements in relation to ideal performance according to field of work based on educational background, capacity building and training, and legality of teaching authority. As the matter of fact, the teacher should model a respectful behavior, warm, accepting, and supportive to the students (Solomon et al, 2001). Teachers also have interpersonal skill for learning in professional and school communities (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

Indeed, teachers with positive attitudes about students are more likely to foster student achievement and ethical behavior (Haberman, 1996). Teachers are also increasingly considered to need an understanding of how their values and teaching contexts effect their practice, an awareness of their moral impact (Beyer 1997; Hansen, 2001) as their role in relation at school.

1.2 Social Competences

The teacher's social competence is the ability of the teacher to understand himself as a part of society and

able to develop duties as a member of society and citizens (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Teacher's social competence is important in several aspects: Professional development, Teacher's role in teaching/learning process and the initiative to teach students to be together (Bequet et al, 2012). Social competence in learning activities is closely related to the ability of teachers in communicating with communities around the school and the community (Taylor and Nolen, 2004) where teachers live so that the role and the way teachers communicate in the community is expected to have its own characteristics are slightly different from other people who are not teachers. With the possession of social competence, automatically school relationships with the community will run smoothly so that if there is a need with parents or students of the community about the problem of learners who need to be completed will not be difficult to contact him.

1.3 Professional Competences

The third one is professional competences. Professional competences are one of the basic skills a teacher must have, its describes what teachers are expected to know and to be able to do (Ingvarson, 1998). The key features of teacher's professionalism can be summed up as follows: a) the daily routine of teaching activities; the ability to recognize of social demand of classroom and classroom dynamic; c) flexibility and improvisations; d) understanding problems and specific expertise in recognizing patterns in the complexity of classroom life.

1.4 Pedagogical Competences

The last one is Pedagogic Competencies. This competence involves a teacher's ability to understand the characteristics or abilities of the pupil in various ways. Teachers should link between the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge and student learning (Hill et al, 2005). Most studies seem to agree that the teachers must knowing how to transfer this to others (didactic knowledge); awareness of how people learn, feel and develop/pedagogical knowledge (Celik, 2011). The best teachers are proficient in technical competencies of teaching: instructional delivery, formative assessment and classroom management which lead students to a greater learning (Attakorn et al, 2014). Teachers are expected to understand the characteristics, character, level of thinking, physical and psychological development of students

deeply as a pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987). By understanding these things, the teacher will easily understand the difficulties and ease of students in learning and developing themselves.

2 METHODS

This research uses descriptive-analysis qualitative approach where interpretation of data is holistic, complex, dynamic and full of meaning. One of the data source in this study were principal, teachers and students as informants where they were selected based on characteristics of conformity with the required data. The informants were determined based on the consideration of the function and role of informants according to the limits of the research. The subject's categories of informants in this study were those who's directly involved in the learning process; principal who give teacher performance assessments, all the teachers and students representatives of each class. Other data sources were school documents, children's portfolios and pupils' development reports.

Data collection techniques were conducted through observation and interviews. The observation was conducted to see the informants' activities in preparing the media and/or when creating a model of learning with the use of learning media and at the time of the learning process by using the observation checklist. The interview was conducted to get information data from informants that have been determined by using the guide of questions.

The data analysis was done through several steps. The first step was to do data reduction, at this stage data were selected from the basic things that can be from the field. Afterward, the data were summarized, focused on the things that are important and sought the theme and the pattern. This reduction process was done gradually, during and after data collection until the results report. Second, the presentation of data in which the data were reconstituted by classification and topics, each topic then separated and stored in one place. Each place was marked, this was to facilitate the use of data in order to avoid mistakes. The third, the data from the second activity were clustered and carefully researched, to invest if it still requires additional data or not until the data is considered sufficient and has reached the point the saturation or has obtained conformity. Then, the next activity is to arrange reports until at the conclusion of the conclusion.

The main instrument in this study is the researcher itself assisted by the interview guidelines, a checklist of documents and observation sheets. Content and construct validation were done through experts and peers validation.

3 RESULTS

Based on the findings there are two types of teachers, permanent and non-permanent ones. Almost all of permanent teachers are civil servant. Teachers with civil servant status are not recruited directly by the school, but through the selection process of civil servants held by the Ministry of National Education with placement in State Kindergarten in Jakarta. Meanwhile the recruitment of non-permanent teachers based on the needs of teachers itself and it has obtained approval from the principal and other permanent teachers. It was known that almost of civil servant had several mutations. Their working experiences varies in state kindergarten in Jakarta, from three to 32 years.

Table 1: Teacher profile based on educational qualification and status of personnel.

Education	Permanent teacher		Nonpermanent teacher	
	M	F	M	F
High school	-	-	-	1
Diploma	-	-	-	-
Bachelor	-	6	-	1

Table 1 shows that there were eight teachers consisting of six permanent teachers with civil servant status and two non-permanent teachers (honorary teachers). It also describes that all teachers are female. Teacher qualification was almost entirely a graduate school, except for a high school graduate. From the interviews it was known that the teacher was currently studying undergraduate degrees majoring in early childhood through the Open University at the State University of Jakarta and taking six semesters.

The teacher's administrative requirements can be seen in table 2:

Table 2: Teacher’s Administrative Requirements

Requirements	Quantity	Percentage
At least a Bachelor degree	6	85,7%
Compatible to educational background	6	85,7%
At least 5 years in teaching experiences	6	85,7%
Accomplish character education trainings	6	85,7%
Has passed the teacher’s competency test	5	71,45%

Table 2 describes teacher’s administrative requirements. Interestingly, 85,7% of the teachers had fulfil four criteria which were already had bachelor degree, compatible educational background, experiences in teaching and accomplishment in character education trainings. It is only 71.45% from all teachers had follow the competency test and passed it. This implies that almost all teachers in state kindergarten in Jakarta have met the academic qualifications required by Regulation of Minister of Education and Culture Number 58 Year 2009 regarding the Standard of Early Childhood.

Teachers of Halimun kindergarten also had experiences in trainings to strengthen their competences. The trainings specifically on character education can be seen in the following figure:

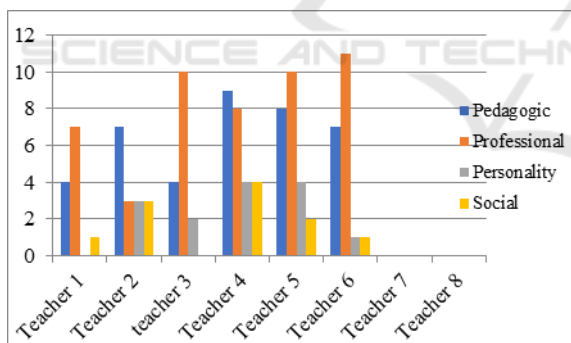


Figure 1: Teacher’s trainings experiences.

The table 3 gives information that the largest portion of the teacher trainings was attended training in developing the professional competence. Six teachers have attended 8 times professional development training, two teachers have never got it because they were still newbies and have less than two years teaching experience in kindergarten. Six (6) from 8 teachers have been trained in teacher pedagogic competence development with almost 7 in average, but the training themes are different and varied for each teacher. Six (6) teachers received personality development training 3 times since they served as

teachers. Based on the results of the study, this training period is also irregular and not all teachers get it. 6 teachers only had opportunity in average twice times to attended the social competence training. This training was rarely offered by the education office in Jakarta nor the kindergarten teachers organization of Jakarta. They were offered more often training for the development of pedagogic skills and teacher professionalism.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Personality Competences

In terms of personality competencies, only 12,3 percent of teacher are still on undergraduate while the others are graduate from early childhood education and Islamic education. Six out of eight teachers have been trained in character education. Each of them got different training based on the needs and also the basic skill they already have. Unfortunately, the trainings have not run continuously and there was still no mapping on individual teacher capacity.

Almost all of teachers of Halimun kindergarten have the properties among others; confidence, patience, true compassion for their students, understanding, the ability to look at life in a different way and to explain a topic in a different way, dedication to excellence, unwavering support, willingness to help student achieve, and pride in student's accomplishments.

4.2 Social Competences

Teachers in Halimun kindergarten already have the effective communication skills. Especially for students who have constraints with character education. If students need special treatments, parents could have discussed it with teachers in class after school every day based on need. If necessary, school could have asked for some help from psychologist or therapist to discuss about behavior difficulties to children. For formal meetings, which were scheduled once in a month, teachers communicated with parents through school committees as well as in person to optimize character learning on pupils, the achievement of character education, obstacles and disruptions in implementing it

In term of community relationship, teachers on behalf of school cooperate with communities in school neighbourhood and participated in a series of events Indonesia’s Independence Day which held at school. Not only as a participant but community also

have a memorandum of understanding to support school activities include in character education.

Teacher's social competences by attended trainings which were provided by The Education Office. Some of training which were attended by teachers were global warming training and trainee on trainer (ToT).

4.3 Professional Competences

Based on the findings, teachers have ability to relates guidance to knowledge of children's personalities and levels of developments; recognized dan respond to personal behavioral problems related to character development or emotional stress; could moderate interactions with each child based on child's specific characteristics; strength, interest and needs. They also used strategies to aid children in learning to express emotions in positive ways and developed and implemented written policies for effective interaction.

In terms of performance outlook, teachers look attractive, usually seen through a radiant face, always smiling in interacting with students. Each teacher encouraged others to develop proficiency in skills especially in formative assessment and classroom management by trainings which administered by Indonesian Minister of Education.

4.4 Pedagogical Competences

In terms of pedagogic competence, in order to carried out character education, teachers have mastered the educational material of the character itself, and understood that the character of the students did not develop in the same opportunity. On behalf of personal learn, teachers provided a variety of opportunities to communicate verbally and non-verbally in playful engagements with students and interacted responsively with children of different temperaments and levels of sociability. Teachers in Halimun kindergarten were always looking for ways to seek the involvement of students in the process of character education itself. Teachers also did all activities with a vengeance. Spiritually, the teacher involved a full self in doing his job.

Teachers have the ability to build a characterized learning program according to the learning group they were in. Each teacher developed character education into the semester's learning plan, monthly, weekly and daily learning plan and applied it in daily learning. In a characterized learning plan, the components include basic competencies, character set, standard materials, methods and techniques, media and learning resources, study time and other carrying capacity. The values of character education

are applied together with the core activities of the teaching and learning process by a) Selecting the character values that match the theme and title of the learning activity; b) Determining indicators of the development of character values according to the stages of child development; and c) Determine the types and stages of activities to be implemented. Teachers also use varied rules in making character appraisals and reports

Most of the teachers had attended curriculum training, assessments and instruments preparation; educative props workshops and other specific themes related to early childhood (science, creativity, arts etc).

5 CONCLUSIONS

A description of the competence of the teachers in the kindergarten overall was good enough, it can be seen from the result of research that all teachers already have the four of competence which is need to carried out the character of education in kindergarten. The four competences are personality, social, professional and pedagogic competencies. each teacher mastered them differently. Therefore, teacher competence in learning based on the character of education in children early aged needs to be improved through various forms of activities. It is important because teachers need to understand more comprehensively the implementation of character education in early childhood so that the character education integrated, ranging from conceptual level up to the level of practise.

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