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Character Education Strategy for Visually Impaired Students of SLB Surakarta Based on Local Wisdom Values

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Febian Akbar Al Husaini¹; Danang Purwanto²; Saifudin Zuhri³
Universitas Sebelas Maret¹²³
e-mail: huseinakbar63@student.uns.ac.id

Abstract

The nature of education as a shaper of the next generation of the nation requires commitment from the actors of the system. Students with visual impairments also have the same rights in receiving education including character education in Indonesia. The need for appropriate methods and media in providing material to blind students with limited vision is a challenge for educators. This study aims to find the right strategy in educating the character of blind students by using braille books that contain content about local wisdom-based character values in the city of Surakarta. The research method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews with 5 blind students, 4 SLB teachers or educators, the Solo Bersimfoni community as the creator of the grapyak semanak and Lembah manah values. The data analysis used in this study used Miles & Huberman's data analysis technique. By adapting the concept of theory from Thomas Lickona who divides the character education process into 3 stages, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The result is a change in the behavior pattern of blind students that has been implemented previously.

Keyword: *Blind Students, Character Education, Grapyak Semanak, Lembah Manah*

Abstrak

Hakikat Pendidikan sebagai pembentuk generasi penerus bangsa, memerlukan komitmen dari para pelaku sistemnya. Siswa penyandang tunanetra juga memiliki hak yang sama dalam menerima Pendidikan termasuk Pendidikan karakter di Indonesia. Perlunya metode dan media yang tepat dalam memberikan materi kepada siswa tunanetra dengan keterbatasannya dalam hal penglihatan menjadi sebuah tantangan bagi para tenaga pendidik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan strategi yang tepat dalam mendidik karakter siswa tunanetra dengan menggunakan buku braille yang berisi konten mengenai nilai karakter berbasis kearifan lokal di kota Surakarta. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu kualitatif deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilaksanakan melalui wawancara dengan 5 siswa tunanetra, 4 guru atau tenaga pendidik SLB, komunitas Solo Bersimfoni sebagai pencipta nilai grapyak semanak dan Lembah manah. Analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini menggunakan Teknik analisis data dari Miles & Huberman. Dengan mengadaptasi konsep teori dari Thomas Lickona yang membagi proses Pendidikan karakter menjadi 3 tahap yaitu moral knowing, moral feeling, dan moral action. Hasilnya terdapat perubahan pola perilaku dari siswa tunanetra yang sudah di implementasikan sebelumnya.

Kata Kunci: Grapyak Semanak, Lembah Manah, Pendidikan Karakter, Siswa Tunanetra

Introduction

Education is a system that is useful for a country in shaping and creating its next generation. Likewise in Indonesia, which is based on Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the education system in Indonesia which states that the function of national education is to improve the ability and create a dignified character and civilization of the nation for the purpose of educating the nation's life, and to develop the potential of students to become individuals who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

The law signifies the commitment of the Indonesian people regarding the importance of character education for students in schools. With this commitment, schools as educational institutions in Indonesia must fulfill all the supporting needs in the character education process. Schools as educational institutions have an obligation to shape the character of students as the next generation of the nation (Ariah, 2015). Schools, which in this case include the entire network in the education system in Indonesia, which includes special schools (SLB) which are a place to take education for students who have deficiencies in terms of physical and psychological. A special school is a school that has been specially designed for children with special needs or deficiencies (Putra Dwiana Galih, 2017).

There are 17 special schools in Surakarta City, consisting of 1 state special school and 16 private special schools (*Data Sekolah Kota Surakarta - Dapodikdasmn*, n.d.). Each SLB has a specialization again in terms of the condition of the student's deficiency. The specialization is distinguished by the form or letter code, code A for the blind, code B for the deaf, code C for the disabled, code D for the disabled, code E for the disabled, and code G for the disabled. The specialization is due to each deficiency owned by students, different services in terms of teaching and learning activities at school. One of the special schools in Surakarta City is SLB YKAB A Surakarta. SLB is one of the SLBs that focuses on students with visual impairments, which in this case also requires character education so that in the future it will become part of the surrounding community environment.

Visually impaired is created through two words: tuna which means lacking, damaged or injured while netra means vision (Kurniawan, 2015). The blind themselves are divided into two, namely total blindness which cannot receive light stimuli from outside, and low vision whose visual acuity can still receive light stimuli from outside. In Indonesia itself there are also blind people in various regions.

Surakarta City, which is one of the regions in Central Java Province, also has blind people. Based on data quoted from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in Central Java province in 2021, there were 1,626 people with visual impairments (*Sebaran Pasar Dan Pusat Perdagangan Menurut Klasifikasi, 2019, 2020*).

In line with Law No. 20/2003 in article 5, paragraphs 1 and 2, which states that all citizens, including persons with disabilities, have the same right to a decent and quality education. With the existence of proper and quality special education for persons with disabilities, especially in this case blind people, it will support their needs to be able to live in the social environment of society. The legalization of self-development for people with visual disabilities is regulated in Permendikbudristek number 48 of 2023 article 20 paragraph 1 point G which contains that the service facilities used by people with visual disabilities are about developing aspects of orientation, mobility, social, and communication.

Character education is a learning system that aims to make students a good person when they are in the community. Based on the above problems, blind people really need this. But in reality, blind people who are in special schools (SLB) have not received special attention regarding character education. Meanwhile, blind students need additional curriculum to provide knowledge about the ability to care for themselves, adapt and carry out daily activities (Desiningrum, 2016). These aspects are in fact very much needed by blind people who are still in SLB. Of course, if these aspects can be fulfilled, it does not rule out the possibility that the problems faced by blind people can be resolved.

In other research, (Gunawijaya & Srilaksmi, 2020) explained that in learning activities for blind students at Panti Mahatmia, there are obstacles, namely the condition of students who are not ready to receive learning and the condition of teachers who have not been able to use the right methods for blind students there due to several things. Given the need for special supporting facilities and infrastructure to implement appropriate methods for students with visual impairments. With these conditions, it will certainly complicate the process of planting material for students with blindness. As a result, there will be a disrupted process for blind students in socializing in the community. The hopes and desires that blind people have must be suppressed due to physical deficiencies and difficulties in interacting in the social environment of their community (Khamdun, 2015).

Indonesia as a nation has a lot of local wisdom such as friendly, polite, humble, helpful. Local wisdom has been a way of life for the Indonesian people since long ago. Local wisdom is defined as a set of knowledge and wisdom possessed by certain ethnic groups as an effort in responding to an event, which has benefits and functions and is passed on to the next generation as values and norms of social life (Amal & Siregar, 2023). In the city of Surakarta itself, there are also local wisdom values that participate in guiding the lives of the people of Surakarta. Some of these values include *Lembah Manah* and *Grapyak Semanak*. *Lembah Manah* which means humble and *Grapyak Semanak* which means friendly are two values that can trigger the emergence of other character values.

Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach method. In the problems raised in this study, it is necessary to describe in detail, completely and in depth which is arranged in the form of sentences to support and facilitate the process of presenting data. This is in line with the purpose of the descriptive qualitative approach, which is to obtain a broader, accurate, thorough and detailed picture of a phenomenon (Sutopo, 2002). This research uses a descriptive approach to know and understand a detailed description of how character education strategies for blind students at YKAB A Surakarta special school.

The data used in this study have two types, namely primary data as data obtained directly at the research location and secondary data as data obtained indirectly. The sampling technique applied in this research is purposive sampling technique. The informants of this research consisted of blind students and educators at SLB YKAB Surakarta and the management of the Solo Bersimfoni community as the creators and actors of the local wisdom values of *Grapyak Semanak* and *Lembah Manah*. This research has data obtained through interviews, documentation studies and field observations.

In this study using data analysis techniques (Sugiyono, 2016) The Miles and Huberman model with interactive analysis conducts an analysis by comparing a cause-and-effect which is then mapped in a description of the field data obtained. There are 3 stages in the data analysis process carried out, namely reducing or sorting the data that has been obtained, then presenting the processed data, and finally drawing conclusions from the data that has been processed before.

Result

1. Character Education of SLB YKAB A Surakarta

Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) A YKAB Surakarta also has a learning structure for students who attend school there. Each class is differentiated based on the deficiencies that each student has. This is the case with blind students who attend SLB A YKAB Surakarta. Similar to regular schools in general, special schools (SLB) also have a curriculum in giving lessons to students. The curriculum in terms of providing character education is also owned by SLB A YKAB Surakarta, in this case for students with visual impairments.

The implementation of character education in SLB YKAB A Surakarta can be said to have been implemented, but in its existence it can be considered not optimal in educating the character of students there. Character education in SLB is still focused only on one aspect, namely the cognitive aspect of the students themselves. In addition to the cognitive domain, character education must also strengthen the affective and psychomotor aspects (Lestari, 2016). This can be proven by so far the character education process carried out at SLB YKAB A Surakarta is still integrated or integrated with several subjects that are in line with the character values taught to students. So it can be said that the implementation of character education for blind students at SLB YKAB A Surakarta has not been carried out systematically and planned.

Table 1 Integration of Subjects with Character Values

No	Character education values	Subject
1	Discipline, Nationalism, Tolerance, National spirit, Democracy, and Independence	Civic Education
2	Preserving the value of local wisdom	Javanese language
3	Religious, and faith-based character values	Islamic/Non-Islamic Education

2. Character Education of SLB YKAB A Surakarta

Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) A YKAB Surakarta has five blind students whose education level is equivalent to grade 4. Each blind student certainly has different personal characteristics from one another. Generally, students with visual impairments tend to be easily offended, rely too much on others, are not confident, easily suspicious, and so on (Irdamurni, 2018). These characteristics are also found in blind students who attend SLB A YKAB Surakarta. Based on interviews conducted with educators and field observations, it can be said that the characteristics of blind

students who are there tend to be easily ignited by their emotions, difficult to manage during learning, easy to blame each other and others.

Blind students in carrying out daily learning activities use braille media in reading and writing. Braille book media is effective in improving the understanding of blind students (Wahyuni & Prameswari, 2016). With a model that has been designed in such a way, braille letters are one of the main media for blind students in learning and daily activities in public spaces. However, blind students in SLB A YKAB Surakarta, stated that they are not or less interested in braille books that have a number of thick pages and contain learning materials. They tend to be interested in braille books that contain stories or comics which in terms of pages are not too many and thick. While braille books of this type are not widely available in SLB A YKAB Surakarta.

From the results obtained related to the condition of blind students in SLB A YKAB Surakarta, there are several important things that are related to each other. The needs of blind students for characteristics that tend to be easily ignited emotions, difficult to regulate and often misunderstood between them, can be anticipated through character education with customized media based on the interests of blind students who are there, namely braille books that have few pages and contain stories that are light and not related to learning material.

3. Local wisdom values of *Grapyak semanak* and *Lembah manah*

Local wisdom is an idea or thought that arises and continues to develop in a society in the form of values, customs, norms, culture, language, beliefs, and daily life (Rummar, 2022). Every region, especially in Indonesia, has its own local wisdom values. So does the city of Surakarta which is located in Central Java Province. Surakarta people who are known to be very polite and well-mannered are certainly inseparable from the existence of 8 local wisdom values that are in one series and named *Hasthalaku*. The eight values of local wisdom owned by the city of Surakarta have been a theme for the younger generation which continues to be spread through schools that partner with the Solo Bersimfoni community.

Solo Bersimfoni is a community that creates and develops *hasthalaku* values, two of which are *grapyak semanak* and *lembah manah*. Based on an interview with one of the administrators of this community, he stated that *grapyak semanak* means friendly and *lembah manah* means humble. These two values are some of the local wisdom values of the Javanese community, especially in the city of Surakarta. With

these two values, the people of Surakarta city can become a good and friendly society towards others. This is in line with other research which states that a person who has the nature of these values is a virtuous human being, and the virtuous attitude possessed by the Javanese community based on these values is considered a character or character of the Javanese community itself (Nuryantiningsih, 2022).

Discussion

Implementation and discussion

This research is inseparable from the theoretical concepts that have been conveyed by previous experts. There are several experts who talk about character education strategies that can be applied to the education system. One of the experts who has the concept of theory related to character education is Thomas Lickona. Character education according to Thomas Lickona (1992) can be defined as a conscious and deliberate effort in helping individuals to understand, care and act based on existing ethical values. In Indonesia, character education has also become important in the education system. It is not uncommon to find formal schools that have placed the character education system in the learning process. According to Thomas Lickona, character education has three main elements. The three elements are moral concept (moral knowing), moral attitude (moral Feeling), and moral action (moral action). The three elements are certainly interrelated with each other and have different explanations for each.

The implementation of character education strategies in this study is also adapted from the theoretical concepts conveyed by Thomas Lickona. Through 3 stages, namely the introduction of moral concepts to blind students, then bringing up the thoughts of blind students towards the attitudes that should be done when plunging in society, and the implementation stage of the emergence of thoughts about attitudes that should be done through behavior or actions. In the first phase, namely introduction, blind students in SLB A YKAB Surakarta are introduced to the concepts of behavior or morals in the value of *grapyak semanak* and *Lembah manah* through the media of braille storybooks in which the stories contain local wisdom-based character values in the Surakarta city area. Based on the data obtained regarding blind students' interest in braille storybooks, at this introduction stage students are directed to read the stories that have been determined and in braille form to introduce moral concepts in the value of *grapyak semanak* and *lembah manah* which become local wisdom-based character values for the people of Surakarta.

In the second stage, namely the phase of bringing up students' thoughts on the behavior that should be done when plunging in a social environment or moral feeling using a different method from the first stage. Stories that have been digested and processed by students will be transferred or forwarded in the form of questions as a reflection for blind students in understanding the content of the story. The importance of reflection questions in the implementation of learning activities aims to determine the level of student understanding of the material that has been conveyed previously (Saprudin & Nurwahidin, 2021). The reflection questions given are related to the character values contained in the story, such as for example how the grapyak semanak attitude of the character in the story when encountering conflict, how the character's lembah manah attitude in speaking or interacting with older people, and so on. So that with the reflection questions given to students, it can indirectly raise students' thoughts on moral attitudes that they can do when doing daily activities.

The third or final stage in the implementation of character education strategies for blind students at SLB A YKAB Surakarta is the moral attitude or character carried out by blind students in daily activities or moral action. The formation of the psychomotor aspects of blind students arises from the implementation of the character values that have been implemented cognitively and affectively (Aziz et al., 2023). After the introduction and thought-provoking stage of the moral concepts in the values of grapyak semanak and lembah manah, students will be directed to implement the character attitudes that have been learned in the stories and problems that have been given previously. It takes a long time for students to carry out this stage. Given the need for continuous implementation and application in daily activities, it can indirectly shape the character of the individual himself (Fatmah, 2018). In a period of approximately 3 weeks, accompanied by field observations conducted by observing directly related to the behavior of blind students in daily activities in the school environment, there are several changes in behavior patterns that are quite significant from the aspect of the needs of blind students in SLB A YKAB Surakarta.

Changes in behavior patterns experienced by the remaining blind people in SLB A YKAB Surakarta are based on the value of grapyak semanak and lembah manah..in the aspect of the value of grapyak semanak. Some things caused by the limited vision factor of blind people who tend to be negative such as sensitive, timid and so on (Mambela, 2018). The negative character can change to be more active and

cheerful, especially when in the school environment with other friends as a form of hospitality that is raised through the value of *grapyak semanak*. In the aspect of the value of *lembah manah*, students who previously behaved sneaky and did not pay attention to the teacher during class learning turned into more respectful and appreciative of people who were speaking in front of the class as a form of humility raised through the value of *lembah manah*. This is because in essence the purpose of the implementation of education is to be able to change the behavior of students who were originally bad to be good and still maintain the good ones (Zaini, 2013).

Conclusion

Students with visual impairments are part of the education system in Indonesia. Each of them is entitled to the same learning rights as other regular students. The unmet affective and psychomotor aspects of blind students in terms of character education at SLB A YKAB Surakarta, as well as the need for a special learning model for blind students encourage this research to be carried out. Through the character values of *grapyak semanak* and *lembah manah* which are packaged in the form of stories and presented to blind students in the form of braille letters and in its implementation adapting from the 3 stages conveyed by Thomas Lickona, namely moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action, can change the behavior patterns of blind students. Those who previously tended to be passive and unable to respect teachers when interacting and learning activities at school, turned into more active in interacting and more able to respect teachers when giving lessons in the classroom.

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