

## AN ANALYSIS ON THE BEHAVIORS DEPICTED BY CHARACTER-ORIENTED KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING AND PILOTING THE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY

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### Abstract

The educational paradigm implemented along this time affects the process and the conduct of education to concern more on how to develop the intellectual intelligence or rational thoughts in search of fighting against the global, but neglecting the character education, morality development and character building. The process of instructional activities, intended to direct and upgrade the development, should consider some stages as well as the engaging aspects of children development. During the child development, the newly acquired experiences do not only enrich the existing ones, but are also incorporated with building the unique characteristics and adaptation patterns within students' life so as to enable that the new experiences acquired by the children in their early ages will give impacts to their prospective developments. Therefore, the concentrated attention on the early-age education, either formally or informally, is of urgency. Kindergarten curriculum comprises three major developments, namely: morality and religious values, socio-emotional development, and fundamental skill development. In its implementation, the development of the fundamental skills is prioritized as the preparation before being admitted in elementary school. Meanwhile, the character building expected through implementing the religion, morality, and inner characteristic has not sufficiently gained the portion in terms of creating the morally-equipped generations. In addition, the in-depth focus on implementing the universal moral values in the kindergarten and its representation in the instructional activity is supposed to contribute the development of life skills during the instructional development.

**Key words:** character education

### INTRODUCTION

The globalization era nowadays is initiated by the swift alteration in any aspects of life causing the range of activities and communication goes nearly unlimited. This process implies both positive and negative implications on the structure of humans' lives. For instance, the radicalization of alienated values in society affects and indeed determines the way how humans are behaving in particular societies. Therefore, every single individual does need the skills for selectively accommodating new values by means of fitting them out to the integrated strength of values, traits, and characteristics.

The educational paradigms that have been implemented all this time prioritize more on developing intellectual intelligence or, other words, rational thoughts as the requirement to fight against the universal challenge through neglecting the character

education, maintaining the morality, and establishing the inner characteristics. In reality, it can be clearly identified that creating competitive individuals does not refer to creating the characterized humankind. Therefore, the qualified models and strategies allowing to balance the process of humanization is necessarily required in which it allows the doers to see humans as the creatures who require the intelligence sharpening through education in the context of environmental ecologies. By nature, it manifests the humanization process that emphasizes more at educating humans as the social and characterized creatures who have the moral autonomies as well as cultural sensitivity. Consequently, this kind of process triggers humans to be able to manage conflicts, to respect heterogeneity, and to be tough in facing the flow of change.

Humans' development essentially

tends to be progressive and coherent. It is progressive due to the systematically continual alteration. Meanwhile, it is coherent due to the relationship engaging the on-going alteration combined with the coming one. Moreover, the alteration that occurs in the initiation of development stage is going to exhibit its impact to the next stage of development. The instructional process that is to direct and upgrade the quality of the development should consider the stages as well as the engaging aspects. During the child growth, the newly experiences acquired by the children do not only enrich their banks of experiences, but also are incorporated to the existing experiences that encourage children to construct the sole patterns of behaviors and adaptation within their lives. Therefore, the intensive emphasis on the early-age education: either in the formal, informal, or non-formal educations is required.

Kindergarten curriculum, by nature, covers three major fields of development; they are: moral and religious values, socio-emotional, and fundamental skill development. During its implementation, kindergarten curriculum emphasizes more on developing the fundamental skills of children as the preparation before being admitted to elementary education. Meanwhile, character building that is manifested through implementing religious values, morality, and inner characters has not fulfilled the proportional portion in search of creating the morally-equipped generation. In addition, universal morality clustering in the kindergarten and its representatives in the instructional activity will be prospected as the fundament of developing universal morality-based instructional activities attached by the essence of building the character. Consequently, there will be various models of instructional activities that allow developing every single aspect of characters in the kindergarten education.

The implementation of competency-based curriculum in the kindergarten is expected to be the initiation stage to deal with the crucial challenge of upgrading the quality of education radically that is in line

with the development of the life skills and character building. Moreover, one out of the manifestations of life skills in kindergarten refers to how children are able to comprehend and implement moral values through teachers' directions and advisories.

Character education in kindergarten focuses on mastering personal and social competence by means of making some strategies of caregiving, caring, and educating the children by piloting a couple of activities based on the environmental conditions they live and by making some games during instructional activities. These expanded programs cover up the aspects of faith and piety to God Almighty, inner characters, socio-emotion, and discipline. Consequently, the implementation of moral values signifies the main focus. Therefore, it is fully of necessity to develop specific identification on the teachers' comprehensions and behaviors in implementing education that mainly focuses on inner characters and universal moral values.

These exposed phenomena are supposedly expected to be the main result of this study. The major object engaging with this study refers to teachers' behaviors that are attached by essential comprehension on universal moral values in developing and implementing character education that systematically involves at the structure of character education in kindergarten.

This study was conducted by identifying the implementation of moral values through implementing various models and strategies of character-based instructional activities in the structure of character education in kindergarten. Supposedly, the patterns of behaviors that contain moralities and wisdoms should be educated since children are in their early ages due to the effects that will everlastingly attach them when they are being adult.

The education of universal values, manifesting the honesty, respect, courtesy, independent hard-working, and tolerance constitutes a crucial issue to discuss and should encourage teachers to be aware of how they are approaching children so that it

is completely necessary to consciously establish and manage the expected instructional activities. Consequently, during the instructional process, there will be the well process of building students' characters and behaviors through moral and character education.

### RESEARCH METHOD

To determine the location, purposive sampling was elected due to the characteristics of the areas in Malang City, identically known as the educational, tourism, and industrial city, that matched to the purposes of this study. The process of electing the schools was also conducted purposively by means of selecting 5 kindergartens in Malang City. Those 5 kindergartens, moreover, covered conventional, religion-based, nationalistic, and multicultural kindergartens (considering National Education Ministry Regulations). This consideration was expected to dig out some various possible issues that might emerge in every single school, specifically in accordance with the moral and character educations regulated within the systematic structure of education emphasizing at skill-based competence. Moreover, the selection process of respondents of this study was also through purposive manner. Firstly, in addition to arrange the instruments (interview guide and observation checklist), National Education Minister, experts' team, principals of kindergartens, and all of teachers were recruited to attend Forum Group Discussion (FGD) for gaining the vision of how the paradigm of moral values and character educations in the culture-based kindergartens' instructional were alike, especially referring to behaviors of the teachers who were aware of the local and traditional wisdoms in developing and implementing life skills. In general, in terms of collecting the data, this study formulated six methods in total simultaneously and in the integrated manner. Those methods covered: forum group discussion; content analysis; questionnaire; observation through formulating the rating scale; interview; and documentation.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study, either through FGD or observation on the instructional activities, revealed that the teachers' knowledge and comprehension on the moral values and character education in accordance with the systematic structure of character education were significantly high. In developing the instructional activity, it was required to concern more on two major developments, namely: habituation and fundamental skill developments. The habituation development constituted the activities that were conducted continually and applicable in the daily life so that they were going to be attached to the children as the good influences for their prospective development in some aspects covering moral and religious values, socio-emotional, and independency developments. From these forms of habituation development, character education in kindergarten was attached. The aspects of morality and religious values development were to upgrade the children's courtesy to the God Almighty. Meanwhile, the societal and independency developments were directed to establish the ability of children to manage their emotions before interacting with the surrounding society.

In developing the implementation of habituation, there were four kinds of activities, they were: 1) the routine activities constituting the activities that were conducted in kindergarten every single day, for instance by making a line, praying before and after finishing the activities, singing the nationalistic and religious songs, brushing the teeth, shaking hand, and greeting; 2) the spontaneous activities signifying the activities that were steered spontaneously, likewise: asking for help in a good manner, offering the help nicely, congratulating those who have the good achievement; 3) giving good examples implying the activities engaging the process of giving the nice examples to the children to follow by means of showing off the respectable behaviors; and 4) the planned activities referring to the activities that were intentionally programmed in the instructional activity (SKM and SKH).

In fact, the teachers did apprehend that the concept of moral education in kindergarten stage was considered crucial for the children in terms of initiating to socially interact apart from the different backgrounds of moral education they had already had in the precedence. As the consequence, the teachers were required to accommodate the family background in line with the essence of children as the purely innocent creatures of which morality needed to be well maintained to meet the requirement of being integrated within their life. Further, the essence of moral education alluded to the effort of upgrading the education relevance on the values of life in the reality by means of preparing the children to mingle up or either develop their potentials. Moreover, the moral and character educations did not only increase the competency of the students as the individuals, but also as the member of particular group. In addition, those kinds of educations were also expected to educate the children to be capable of making a decision in the real life considering their characteristics as humankind.

The implementation of moral and character educations within the instructional activities of the kindergarten did not necessarily concern on the specific aspects needing to be enhanced. This could be through mapping the universal moral values that are allowed to be expanded to the kindergartens' students before further realizing them by means of arranging the syllabi and the instructional scenarios. The instructional patterns in moral and character educations were to be integrated within the instructional activities and not allowed to be discretely. However, alluding to the competency-based curriculum, the indicators of success was firstly necessary to measure students' achievement in moral education. Secondly, the models of evaluation were also required to reach the nature of traditional local wisdoms. At last, the life skills constituted the authentic assessment referring to the development of the children behaviors in their societal environments, especially when they were at school.

In fact, the major responsibility of

teachers was to arrange the mapping of universal moral values engaged with moral and character educations that were developed as the sustainable behavioristic indicators. The teachers were supposed to be able to insert multiple-aspects of instructional environment covering classrooms, playgrounds, working-spots, and other supportive and pleasant areas. Moral and character educations did not necessarily require various learning media and resources, so that all of elements engaging with the instructional activity were allowed to accommodate the available learning media. Whatever the materials, themes, or the aspects developed in the instructional were, the teachers were to keep holding the principles that required them to be capable of managing the instructional media and techniques based on the set standardization of child development so that the children were attracted and impressed.

In general, the behaviors of kindergarten students in getting moral and character education have been capable to implement the character education and project their moralities and characters in accordance with their ages. The syllabus arrangement of the character-based moral education has been clearly branded in the moral values having been taught particularly on certain themes and weekly programs, kinds of programs, the successfully-planned daily programs, integrated programs, denoting the moral values, and containing the essence of child independency development.

Apart from the absence of mapping process by the teachers on the moral and character values universally, they have already implemented all of those values if they were administered to comprehend the list of universal values. Logically, there was no difference between kindergarten and the distinctive visions and missions. In essence, all of the teachers confessed that there were universally accepted moral values apart from the various kinds of kindergartens' visions and missions to which the religion and cultures admitted the truth and assistances. Furthermore, the universal moral values comprised the faith to God, honesty,

confidence, bravery, affections, discipline and responsibilities, teamwork, tolerance and respect to others, humbleness, apologizing, and modesty.

The strategic tactics that could be executed in search of growing the moral values and characters up were through telling the story that are connecting to the values of inner characters, advising and giving the pleasant models constantly, habituating living healthily and teaching the spirit of politeness, providing the children with conducive environment, either physically or socially. Supposedly, all the tactics were to be effective if the teachers were able to collaborate with the parents.

The participations and supports provided by the parents were completely determinable in influencing the success of education and instructional activities of kindergarten. Indeed, in any instructional activities, parents were required to actively engage themselves due to the child development progress as well as emotional engagement and due to the fact that the children were mostly spending time with their parents at home. In fact, the data exhibited that there were effective teamwork engaging parents with the kindergartens' teachers. Various parents' supports found out were:

- 1) The establishment of parents' group in the school as well as in every single classroom that was periodically holding a meeting. It was intended to: a) discuss the child development in participating within the instructional activities, actively participate and support the children activities, coordinated by the school, the committee, or either by the parents themselves; b) spontaneously support the schools' financial and other required needs; c) be willing to hold the gathering session which later is to arouse the social etiquette and activities.
- 2) Apart from the continual support provided by the parents, the traditional wisdom-oriented and competency-oriented instructional

activities within the character education were also facing varied obstacles. The data of this study conveyed various obstacles found out by the teachers in implementing the life skill education, namely: a) the odd understanding of parents on their child education that discouraged them to support the programs piloted by the school and to habituate and give feedback to the teachings gained from school in their child daily life; b) the frequent distinctive point of views depicted by the parents and the schools, for instance: the children were to apologize after fighting to others, but the parents sometime kept debating and blaming each other outside the school.

- 3) The schools and parents tended to focus on the cognitive competence as the preparation to be admitted in elementary school and rather neglect the development of child moralities and characters.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In accordance with the aforementioned elaborations and explanations, the followings are the summations:

1. The teachers' knowledge and comprehension on character education of morality and character educations in kindergarten were significantly high, including the procedures to teach. However, they have not been systematically arranged into the particular models of character-based instructional activities.
2. The teachers' comprehension on the morality and inner characters that should be attached in every single instructional activity of kindergarten was averagely good. However, the specific training was still necessary in search of compiling the character-based instructional activities into the structure of character education.

3. The teachers' strategies and techniques in implementing the morality and character were conducted through: (1) telling the character-nuanced stories, (2) advising and depicting justifiable examples constantly, (3) habituating to live healthily, politely, and disciplinarily, (4) directly experiencing, visiting the orphans' institutions and holding out-bound activities, and (5) providing the conducive physical and social environments. Moreover, all is compiled into the game-based instructional activity assisted by the parents.
4. In term of dominance, there was no difference of moral and character principles that were implemented in the certain kinds of kindergartens of which visions and missions were totally various in regards to the life skills of kindergarteners constituting the very general life skills and so amateur development. Consequently, they were probably still not allowed to implement the ideological and abstract values. In short, all of materials were in the form of concreteness.
5. Alluding to the child logical thinking development, the moral behaviors were the easiest aspects to be developed and habituated. Meanwhile, the comprehension on morality let alone philosophically and ideologically, was still left untouched.
6. The obstacles experienced by the teachers in implementing the moral and character values in the structure of character-based education were from: (1) the teachers' competencies dealing with the child development and character education; (2) the different knowledge, habituation, and modeling between what have been acquired in the school and in the homely environment; and (3) the lack of attention from the engaging

elements to early education and promoting the competencies of kindergartens' teachers.

### **Suggestions**

By specifically identifying the data of the study and the aforementioned conclusions, the suggestions are formulated as follows:

1. It is necessary to radically introduce moral and character educations within the structure of character education throughout all elements of education.
2. It is of requirement to compile clear formulation of moral and behavior educations within the framework of character education and the kindergartens' curriculum so that the competency standardization and the success indicators within the instructional activities and models are standardly set.
3. The quality of teamwork engaging the schools, parents, and other elements or institutions are to be strengthened to support the instructional activities.
4. The implementation of morality and characters in kindergarten is completely of urgency due to the patterns of behaviors that will be initiated since the early age of the children. Therefore, the teachers need to be trained to plan, develop, and implement the instructional activities in the concrete and real manners.
5. The support from the whole elements is highly required to integrate the governments, businessmen, and religion scholars in search of filtering the proper information coming from television, radio, or other mass communication media.
6. The character education is to be adapted as the parameter of early education so that the orientation will no longer be based on the competency of reading, writing, and calculating as well as merely based

on the cognitive competence.

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