The Characters of Primary Students in Coastal Tourist Destination Beach Area

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Abstract—The phenomenon of coastal tourism causes the changes in various aspects of coastal society. The changes affect not only adults but also to the students of elementary school. Character education which is appropriate for students of elementary school is a way for getting them ready to face the changes. This study aims to identify the character’s values which live in the students of elementary school in coastal tourism area, hence these values can be the source of information in formulating policies of education at school or local governments to put the model of character education which are suitable for student of elementary school in coastal areas. This research is a qualitative research using case study approach. The researcher identifies the prominent character values which have not been seen in the majority of students. The results of this study indicate that creative and loving the environment are prominent characters of the students of elementary school in the coastal tourism area. In the other hand the character of discipline, independence, responsibility, and politeness are the characters which tend to be seen in them. The level of prominent character is getting higher while the less values are getting worse along with the rising of the grade level of students. This would be the basic information in formulating micro policies at school, so does in macro-regional governments in raising appropriate and relevant character education for elementary students of elementary school in coastal areas of tourism.

Keywords—character, character education, students of primary school, coastal tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the competencies that should be possessed in order to meet the quality of human beings in the 21st century is human with the character. This makes character education as an important priority in building education in various countries in the world [1], [2], [3], [4]. Models of character building also have been formulated by various countries to integrate character education into formal education system. Lickona in her various writings in [5], [6], [7], [8] revealed that the importance of character education for the development or the life of students. First, character education is the best way to ensure students to have a good personality in their life. Second, character education is the way to improve their academic achievement. Third, some students are not able to form strong characters themself elsewhere. Fourth, to train them how to respect others and to live in heterogeneous societies. Fifth, based on the issues related to moral and social such as impoliteness, dishonesty, violence, violations of sexual activity, and low working (learning) ethics. Sixth, to prepare students to face the world of work.

The last one, to teach cultural values which are part of the work of civilization.

Mastering intellectual abilities and ignoring the elements of character values will certainly lead to various actions and negative behaviors, also the collapse of the character of students. Hence this is a clear indication that good intellectual ability is not enough to build a good quality human being. We can see how important a citizen to have good character values, especially in the countries with very high levels of heterogeneity population just like Indonesia.

The past, recent and the future of Indonesian society will always be a society which has complex, pluralistic and diverse diversity. The variety of differences in culture, interests, economics, and perceptions often lead to social conflict in this society [9], [10], and putting character education as one of the solutions for this conflict. The era of globalization which brings rapid development of technology and information requires someone to have good and excellence character, in order to maintain moral and culture values as uttered by Lickona. Indonesian tourism is one of the entry point for foreign culture beside the technologi of information.

Suyata in [11] stated that the process of setting in education of moral character is always failed because there is no general characteristics’ identification of the subject of character education both individuals and social groups. It is including the character values which already exist both in individuals and groups before the inclusion of character education. Suyata also said that the character of society is the most important part of the culture of the community. This study will identify character values belong to coastal students, both prominent character values and unseen character values. The results of this study are expected to be information and consideration for the preparation for school and local governments’ policies related to appropriate and relevant character education for students in coastal tourism.

A. What is Character?

The word character comes from the Latin “kharakter”, “kharassein”, or “kharax”, in greek it is called carassein which means to make sharp, deep. Character is defined as character, characteristic, psychological traits, moral or attitude which belong to someone. Soekanto [12] in his sociological dictionary explains that character is defined as a special characteristic which comes from the basic structure of someone's personality. In the other hand, Noddings in [13] defines character as belonging and active manifestation of character traits which called virtue. Based on above opinions, those indirectly imply that character also can be interpreted...
as the good character or personality of someone and in accordance with the norm. In various sources also found variety of different definitions of characters which state that character is not only a good character or personality, but the bad character is also a part of it.

Berkowitz and Bier in [1] and [14], and Damon in [15] define character as a complex collection of psychological traits that allow someone to act as an agent that determines someone’s moral. Hence, character can be defined as a set of characteristics that make someone takes the decision to do something right (good) or wrong (bad). Character also can be defined as a marker which is able to distinguishes someone to the others, it is also about how someone give value of what they and other do, about who and what are they going to be, whether it is good or bad [16], [17]. Someone’s character is a living foundation that determines how someone will think and act in their daily life.

Dewantara in [18], [19], said that character is the same as moral or nature, character is the result of the blending of the movements of mind, feelings, and will. Characters are shown in someone’s behavior both for themselves and the others. Shortly, character can be seen as a moral or nature. Moral is a unity between actions, thoughts, feelings, desire and will. A moralized human being will be a personal with good personalit性和 well self-controlled. These character values need to be put in each individual early. Character values can be put in through character education.

B. Character Education and The Values

Character is something which is not simply formed. Lickona [20] says that character is a behavior based on moral judgment which is actually influenced by moral knowledge. Moral knowledge (knowing), moral feeling (feeling) and moral action (action) cannot be separated function but they are affecting each other. The form and development of individual characters is not only determined by the innate factor (nature) but the very important is influenced by environmental factors (nurture). Character of students is formed by various factors such as, family, community, school, and some external factors which also interact with the students [21]. Character is formed through a combination of various perceptions coming from external and internal factors which are sustainable and integrated in statements and actions. Since it is not easy to change someone’s character that has been formed when the effort is only done in short time.

Character education can be interpreted as a conscious effort for an educator to build, develop and harmonize someone’s psychological structure so that can be relevant to the values which are considered as appropriate and correct values [20], [22], [23]. The values which considered as appropriate and correct are the values which are appropriate to norm and the rules of the society. Hence, it can be interpreted that character education is not only dine by someone to the other one, but character education also can be done by someone the themselves in order instill the character values.

Indonesia develops the values of character education based on the four main sources such as Religion; Pancasila; Culture, and National Education’s Goals. Based on these four sources, it can be identified as 18 values which are contained in the National Education System of Law such as: Religious; Honest; Tolerance; Discipline; Hard work; Creative; Mandiri; Democratic; Curiosity; Spirit of nationality; Love the Motherland; Appreciate Achievement; Friendly / Communicative; Love peace; Like to read; Environmental awareness; Social care; and Responsibilities (Kemendikbud, 2010).

In 2017, based on Presidential Regulation No.87, the values of character education are crystallized into five pillars of character education. They are: 1) Religious Value (faith, devotion, cleanliness, tolerance and love for the environment); 2) Nationalist Value (love of the land of Air, national spirit, and respect for diversity); 3) Value of Integrity (honesty, exemplary, politeness, and love for truth); 4) Mandiri Value (hard work, creative, disciplined, brave, and learner); 5) Mutual Cooperation (cooperation, solidarity, mutual help, kinship). These values are trying to be integrated in the education system at all levels, in order to instill virtue values early and build human character.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes proposed research method. Section III presents the obtained results and following by discussion in section IV. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. PROPOSED METHOD

This type of research is qualitative research using case study approach. This type of qualitative research is used in order to explore accurately, and interpret the character of students in the middle of the coastal tourism phenomenon [24]. The sample of this study use one of school in coastal area of tourism, Gunung Kidul, Special Region of Yogyakarta. This school was chosen as a sample because it is a State Primary School that is closest to the coastal area, and 90% of parents / guardians of students are people who live / work in the coastal areas of tourism. Data collection was carried out with in-depth observation to all students who consisted of six study groups at the school, interviews were also used to support observations. To get a deep and representative observation, researchers settled in the area of the research setting for two months. In order to maintain the validity of the results, triangulation and member check techniques are used. Data analysis uses inductive data analysis [25] with the following steps: 1) Assessing the results of data collection; 2) Reduction I; 3) Reduction II; 4) Conceptualization; 5) Theoritization.

III. RESULTS

Based on the observation results, there were some dominant character values emerged from students of primary school in coastal tourist destination. These values were the dominant ones found out in observations in most of the students of research subjects.

The results showed that the majority of the students were very skillful when given assignments to make handicrafts. In many occasions, they seemed to be able to improve the examples from teacher using their imagination, so they created a more creative work than that of the examples. The prominence of their creativity was exhibited when trying to solve non-academic problems. The character of teamwork also stood out when they did those activities.
Beside creativity, the character of environmental awareness was also shown by the students in coastal tourist destination area. This character was not only demonstrated at school but also outside when they interacted with their environment, which was coastal beach. The students were able to use the available natural resources maximally. They also recognized and appreciates their environment properly.

The observation resulted not only in identifying students’ dominant characters but also identifying some unseen character values of themselves. These following values are those invisible of most of the students in primary schools in coastal beach area.

The character value of discipline is one of those unnoticed characters in students of coastal tourist destination beach. Many students violated the regulations on school outfit and other explicit and implicit regulations included in the school regulations.

Other than the unseen discipline, the observation results discovered that the values of independence were not noticeable. There were actually some students who earned their own money by working in the beach area, but their supposedly strong self-determination in learning was not shown. The values of independence failed to be demonstrated were their ability to finish assignments independently and to study by themselves even without parents’ assistance.

Other results of the observation also showed that the character value of responsibility was not visible in the students, more specifically their responsibility in learning. It was undetected since there was lack of motivation, enthusiasm, and competitiveness in the learning process. The deficient proof of their responsibility was also perceived in their commitment in doing the assignments and homework given by the teachers.

The character of politeness was another invisible character in the students of coastal tourist destination beach. It was identified when they interacted with the teachers. The impoliteness had gradually become disrespectful attitude. Their impoliteness was not only exhibited when interacting with the teachers at school but also when interacting with other older people in their surroundings.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Creativity

The character value of creativity was one of those outstanding characters in students of coastal tourist destination area. Being creative has seemingly been their image among the teachers’ talks. As it has been said, one’s characters should be a sustaining figure inside that individual self [26].

One of some examples of the character was when the students were instructed to make handcrafts. The students were given only the direction to glue small sticks as a car frame, but then they added beach sand when gluing the sticks to strengthen the car frame. Besides, they did not make the same model as teacher’s example. There were many types of cars created by the students ranging from sport cars like Lamborghini, then Jeep, bus, up to kinds of trucks. Also, the students were very creative in making the interior detail of their cars up to the degree that was very intricate for the bumper, rearview mirror, antenna, and wiper on the front and back car window. The cars they constructed were also colored with various colors using markers so it became more attractive.

Kaufman & Sternberg [27] stated three definitions of creativity: firstly, creativity is a realization of distinctive, novel, and innovative ideas; secondly, it needs high quality; and thirdly, it should be suitable to the existing assignments or demands. Based on these definitions of creativity, the degree of creativity shown by the primary students of coastal tourist destination can be said as fulfilling the quality in general. Expanding their handcraft from the teacher’s example according to new things and their imagination resulted in high quality up to the degree of having sale value, and also in accordance with the given assignment.

Being creative in academic matters were not visible in the students, but their creativity in psychomotor activities and skills was evidently recognized. The difference in motivation and enthusiasm was very noticeable when doing handcrafting activities compared to when studying in the classroom.

Furthermore, the students were able to solve the problems, even though they were not academic problems. Using their analytical and imaginative skills was one indicator that the character value of creativity really stood out among the students. Accordingly, Ringel [28] emphasized that the definition of creativity was a form of cognitive process, analytical ability, rational thinking, and imaginative yet fantasy-related process.

B. Environment Awareness

The character of environmental awareness is an essential character to be developed in early ages. Having environmental awareness will likely create a preserved social and ecological environment for the next generations. Hence, the character value of environmental awareness is one of those dominantly perceived in the primary students of coastal beach area. This attitude should not only realized by taking good care, preserving, appreciating, and sustaining, but also in empowering it according to the ethics [29]. This was shown when some students who went fishing used big fishing hooks. They did not intend to catch small fish, so if they got one, they would release it back to the sea.

The students also recognized and appreciated their environment. This was because of their high intensity in interacting with the nature. They could identify various sea animals that were foreign to researchers. Moreover, they recognized different harmful sea animals like sea urchin, sea centipede, and jellyfish, and how to overcome the harm. Wells [30] pointed out that it was important for the students to get used to interact with nature for it would develop immense environmental awareness when they grow up.

Although there were some students who throw out the trash in inappropriate places when having a break, most of the students were aware that trash should not be thrown out carelessly. The awareness of ecological environment will increase one’s awareness of social environment [31].

C. Discipline
Discipline can be defined as obedience towards applicable and fair regulations [32]–[34]. The discipline of students in coastal tourist destination was not evident since there were many violations of rules and regulations. In primary school level, trivial disciplinary violation often occurs [35], but this trivial indiscretion was done by only a few students. However, the violations of regulations by these students in coastal tourist destination area were done by majority of the students. The regulations emphasized that students should wear a neat outfit, but in the process many students let their shirts out of their pants and even opened the top two or three buttons. There were found some male students coming to school in the morning wearing their shirts untucked. The awareness to be discipline will be established when there is no big difference between teacher’s value system and students’ value system [36]. Students assumed that when they wore neat uniforms, they would look uncool or nerdy.

Students’ indiscipline was also visible through their hair style and color. This was obvious in grade 2 until grade 6 students. The majority of male student color certain parts of their hair. The violations students do at school may define their behavior in the society [37]. When the students were asked why they colored their hair, they answered by saying that their parents also colored their hair and even some of them were taken by their parents to a hair salon to color their hair. Unfortunately, this phenomenon can describe the lack of social control in the society.

Discipline attitude is necessary to be developed since early ages. The lack of discipline which intervenes teaching and learning process manifests itself in many ways including bullying, vandalism, alcohol and addictive substance consumption, cutting out classes, and inability or unwillingness to finish their assignments at home [38].

D. Independence

Students independence is an ability of not relying on others in accomplishing their assignments and obligations. It was seen in how the students in both higher and lower classes were unable to do their assignments with their own efforts. The students were very dependent on their classmates. Copying other students’ assignments has been a culture among the students, even they preferred not to do the assignments and to wait for one of their friends finished doing it so they could copy it. This phenomenon did not only happen when doing the assignments, but also when grade 6 students had their National Exam try out. The arranged seating did not prevent them to trade answers using agreed codes. Unfortunately, the individual who cheats in academic settings will likely repeat the same behavior in other situations [39]. In this case, firmness is needed in the form of proper punishment to make the students aware that what they did should have not been done.

Students’ dependence in learning was also recognized when students 24 students were asked whether they studied at home. These students consisted of 7 grade 6 students, 4 grade 5 students, 7 grade 4 students, 2 grade 3 students, and 4 grade 2 students. Among these 24 students, 19 of them stated that they rarely or never studied at home with various reasons. Students’ intrinsic motivation to study independently will improve if other aspects support and permit this to happen [40], [41]. Thus, not only teachers, parents’ role to support, accompany, and assist the students to study at home independently is greatly needed.

E. Responsibility

Lickona [20] defined responsibility as an awareness to genuinely carry out a task or obligation in the family and at school by giving their best. Primary students’ responsibility at school is studying passionately and with all their hearts. One example of the lack of responsibility in the students of coastal beach area was their lack of enthusiasm and motivation which was noticeable when the teachers delivered the materials and gave out assignments. Most of the students especially male students did not pay much attention to the materials the teachers gave. Students preferred to talk with their friends or to get themselves busy with their toys so they would not focus on teacher’s explanation. Competitiveness among the students in academic aspect also invisible since the students chose to work together on their individual assignments. The students were not ashamed to copy others’ assignments or not to accomplish them. The lack of students’ enthusiasm was caused by low learning motivation and teachers’ inability to shape and create interesting learning atmosphere for primary students.

In addition, the teachers deliver the materials conventionally while primary students are still in concrete operational developmental stage [42], with low ability to focus. Teachers should be able to make efforts in presenting learning process according to students’ developmental stages. In this case, teachers’ enthusiasm in teaching plays an important role. Teachers’ enthusiasm is an essential component in constructing learning environment and can impact positively towards students’ enthusiasm, motivation, and achievement [43], [44].

F. Politeness

Politeness is a means for an individual to communicate properly in the society [45]. Someone who does not apply politeness will probably be ostracized or not be accepted in their social lives. The character value of politeness should be applied in student-teacher interactions, but the observation proved that it was not present. Most of the students talk to the teachers using low speech level of Javanese language (ngoko), which should be used for peer interaction. This phenomenon occurred clearly in grade 4, 5, and 6. The students were accustomed to talk to teachers using Javanese language, but the language that they used was not appropriate for a language that upholds politeness and ethics in its usage. However, politeness in speaking has a high relativity if viewed universally [46], [47],[48]. On the other hand, eastern culture especially that of Indonesian, emphasizes politeness in speaking especially in interaction between teachers and students. Based on the condition in this school, the teachers made efforts to be role models in developing polite attitude in their students [49], [50], but it did not affect much. It was because the low speech level of Javanese language had been their daily language used to talk to their parents.

Politeness in interaction will be initiated when both parties trust each other [51]. If this impoliteness continues on, it will gradually become disrespectful attitude towards the teachers.

One example showing students’ disrespect is when some male students stayed outside even though break time was
over because some of them were still finishing their meal. The homeroom teacher waited for a few minutes inside the classroom until finally the teacher came out and asked the students to immediately come into the class. One of the students, in high-pitched tone, answered using low speech level of Javanese,””Opo koe ki ora ngerti nek seret?” That utterance means, “Don’t you know that I’m thirsty?”" that was spoken with emphasize and high-pitched tone. This indicates that rooted impoliteness will become a bigger problem to solve, and even often become a trigger of social conflicts.

The unseen character values in the primary students along the coastal beach area does not mean that they are not present in themselves. These invisible character values are still in the level of moral knowing [20]. Therefore, supports from many parties, family, and school are needed to cultivate character values in students as moral feeling, to realize them as moral action, and make it a habituation.

V. CONCLUSION

Primary students in coastal tourist destination beach generally demonstrate two dominant characters which are creativity (in handcrafting) and environmental awareness. However, students have not shown the character values of discipline, independence, responsibility (as a student), and politeness. Based on these results, it is expected that this study can inspire other academic practitioners to conduct further investigation related to model to develop character education relevant to primary students in coastal area. These research results are also expected to inform the policy makers both for micro and macro so they can formulate suitable policy related to character education for primary students in coastal tourist destination beach area.

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REFERENCES


