Building Social Awareness Through Meditation

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Abstract— **Social awareness for adolescents needs attention. Social awareness as an effort to build a personality needs attention. This is because education is an effort to install the dignity and freedom of individuals to develop their talents, interests, and abilities. Awareness theory in the present is very helpful in efforts to raise public awareness to play an active role or participate in development activities, especially education. This concept of awareness education strongly emphasizes self-awareness as a subject. This awareness communally finally forms social awareness. With social awareness, which is built based on intersubjective relationships, the community is expected to be able to think about solving the problems it faces.**

Keywords— *Meditation, Social awareness*

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization brings fundamental changes in human life. Attitude, behavior, culture and lifestyle are heavily influenced by globalization. Progress in transportation and technology brings ease in communication. Access and distribution of information, science is faster and more efficient. Online trading, online transactions, e-commerce, online transportation, electronic mail, digital signatures, up to e-banking become new patterns that leave the old patterns that are manual. On the other hand, globalization has a bad influence on life, especially students. As a material for preliminary studies, it is necessary to convey the opinion of Lickona that there are ten characteristics to watch out for because if these characteristics exist among adolescents then it means that a nation is heading for the brink of destruction.[1] These ten characteristics are (1) increased violence and vandalism, (2) stealing by students is increasing, (3) increasing cheating, (4) disrespect of authority, (5) peer cruelty, (6) Bigotry, (7) bad language, (8) sexual precocity and abuse), (9) increasing self-centeredness and declining civic responsibility), (10) self-destructive behavior. In Megawangi's view (2001: 53) about ten pillars of character that should be taught by children at school age, namely (1) love of Allah, trust, reverence, loyalty, (2) self-relined and responsibility), (3) honesty and ratability, (4) respect an courtesy), (5) love, empathy, awareness and cooperative), (6) confidence, creativity, and determination, (7) leadership and justice, (8) kindness and friendliness, (9) tolerance, peacefulness, and unity.

In Lickona's view conceptualizes character into three interrelated dimensions, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Each dimension has a sub-sub that is able to describe a good character or calls it a "components of good character".[1] Moral insight includes moral awareness, knowing moral values, perspective taking, moral reasoning, decision-making, self-knowledge. Megawangi, places social awareness as content in character education is moral feeling includes conscience, self-esteem, empathy, loving the good, self-control, humanity. Then, moral action dimensions include competence, willingness, and habit.[2]

Social awareness will be able to build strong personalities in the global era without limits. The level of awareness of each human being varies depending on the interaction that has been done, the level of education, the psychological condition, and the experience of his life. This social awareness is important, because of increasingly complex social problems, the increasing level of community economic inequality, hunger, poverty that still occurs in the world. For this reason, social awareness becomes a solution that needs to be developed. With social awareness, which is built based on intersubjective relations is expected to be able to solve the problems faced.[3] Society is not a collection of individuals, but a system formed by relationships between individuals based on their characteristics. Society is a reality that has different characteristics from one community to another.

Institutions that have a role in developing social welfare are schools. School is a place to sow, cultivate, instill, and develop positive values for students.[4] The values instilled in students should be relatively fixed, meaning that they are fundamentally unchanged or at least very difficult to change from one generation to the next. In line with this view, idealism philosophy argues that value is absolute or permanent, "what is said to be good, right, wrong, will be like that, because the value is not created by humans, but is part of the universe, even though it is not the deepest meaning.[5] Social awareness is a value that must still exist throughout the history of human civilization.

Sheldon and Johnson found a social awareness model that contained a number of social awareness form used by people in their social lives. The forms of social awareness are (1) self-experience which is seen from the perspective of oneself. This form of social awareness can occur when someone tries to understand his anger and can be illustrated by the thought "I am indeed angry", (2) self-appearance which is seen from the perspective of others. This form of social awareness can occur when someone who wears a swimsuit will appear in front of a crowd, and realize that other people are watching themselves, (3) the experience of others which is seen from their perspective. This form of social awareness can occur when someone tries to feel what

is felt by others and can be illustrated by the thought "I will also feel embarrassed if I become him". (4) The appearance of others which is seen from the perspective of oneself. This form of social awareness can occur when someone is laughing at someone else's appearance and can be illustrated with the thought "Why doesn't he comb his hair?" (5) Self-appearance which is seen from the perspective of yourself. This form of social awareness can occur when a person examines his appearance carefully in front of the glass and can be exemplified by anorexia sufferers who insist that he is too fat, regardless of the protests of others, (6) self-experience which is seen from the perspective of others. This form of social awareness can occur when we visit a psychologist and can be illustrated by the thought "He reacts as if I am angry, maybe I am indeed angry", (7) the experience of others which is seen from the perspective of myself. This form of social awareness can occur when we deny the rights of others to feel insulted and can be illustrated by the thought "He has no right to be angry", (8) the appearance of others which is seen from his perspective. This form of social awareness can occur when we are aware of a teen obsession with his face or certain parts of his body.[6]

The results of research conducted by Greenberg, Weissberg, O'Brien, Fredericks, Resnik, Elias showed that social awareness may contribute to better behavior and achievement in school and increased engagement with community and school resources: Positive Classroom Behavior: Students with strong social awareness can more easily adapt to their environment, empathize with the perspectives of others, and engage in fewer disruptive classroom behaviors. This, in turn, creates an environment where students can focus on learning.[7] Likewise, the results of Gehlbach, Young, Roan's study show that students who demonstrate strong social awareness are able to engage in constructive communication with their peers and resolve conflicts when they arise.[8] These students benefit from peer learning and how to take advantage of social supports. Students who are able to adapt to new environments, understand the needs and perspectives of others, and know where to get support when they need it is less prone to emotional distress and less likely to engage in risk behaviors, such as drug use and aggression, that interfere with school success.[7]

Efforts can be made to develop social awareness for students at school by using meditation. Meditation is more of a psychological approach to calming the mind, feeling, and spiritual, but not fantasizing. Naturally, an untrained mind is very difficult to control. Imaginations and emotions always mislead humans if the mind is not properly trained. [9] Meditation is the Chinese perspective on education, a kind of learning, like other sciences, which teaches that humans must be willing to accept the wisdom that will be given to them.[10] Meditation gives you the opportunity to know yourself and develop knowledge that is very useful for one's own welfare, family and environment. If you really do meditation practice, all your ego and lust do not have the opportunity to control yourself, because you are the king and queen for your own personal self.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The approach used in this study is qualitative, by using case studies, which explains a phenomenon or event, especially about students' social status. The settings in this study were Santa Maria Surabaya junior high school students, East Java, Indonesia. The focus of this research is the forms of awareness that arise in Santa Maria Junior High School students after a period of one year doing meditation in school for approximately 5 to 10 minutes every day. This study explores changes in students' social awareness. This research was carried out in the period from November 2017 to July 2018. Data collection techniques in this study were in-depth interviews and observations. Interviews are used to obtain data about feelings after within 9 months of doing meditation in school. While observations were made to obtain data about the real form of social awareness in schools both in interaction with peers, administrative staff, teachers, and principals.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Ursuline education process is a prominent characteristic of Surabaya's Santa Maria Middle School, based on the values contained in the school's vision and mission. As a religion-based school, Santa Maria Surabaya Middle School has habits derived from core values, namely *service et amate* which means to serve and love. Core values continue to be developed and taught to students in more real forms, such as *serviam* (I want to serve), integrity, against the tide (courage to fight the flow in truth), compassionate motherhood (compassionate motherly spirit), achievement motivation, team spirit/*inseam*.

Some fundamental problems in students include selfishness, undisciplined, irritability, giving up easily, being indifferent, lacking in social care, not doing homework, fighting between friends and many more. The data found in the Counselor section shows that this is clearly evident from the violations committed by students. To overcome this, the school makes a solution to more mature student behavior, giving awareness of the nature of man and himself through the habit of meditation when silence is done every day at 11:00.

Meditation at Santa Maria Surabaya Middle School as an inner discipline towards self-awareness that recognizes and believes in its existence is carried out in several forms, namely: meditation during silence, ground meditation and school pastoral meditation. Meditation during silence is carried out every day at 11.00 WIB for 5 minutes to restore life full of awareness and a more meaningful life. With meditation, the moment of silence leads students in an atmosphere of self-awareness and believes in their existence as part of the human awareness of who they are. Grounded meditation at Santa Maria Middle School is held every Wednesday at the school field during the first-hour lesson. This meditation was attended by all 7th to 9th-grade students who were led by a team from the Dulink group and Green Leader. This group is a community where one of the activities invites friends in school to be aware of the presence of the universe and to safeguard for a better quality of life. Grounded meditation in Santa Maria Surabaya Middle School has various forms. Grounded meditation is

done quietly with a relaxed and comfortable body position as possible.

Meditation guides will invite participants to feel the fresh air around them by closing their eyes, and then taking a deep breath, hold and exhale slowly. Participants must repeat the position as comfortable as possible so that silence is created within them. Then the guide will include life values and good sentences that are useful to help develop the character of the pastoral school meditation participants understand that personal identity is only intended to provide an understanding of human potential. Spiritual development is not based on one's intellectual or faith but from the results of the process of feeling and the discovery of his life experiences. Enlightenment cannot be achieved only by reading and learning, or by a genuine belief in something outside of oneself.

During meditation, students are asked to sit freely. Students are allowed to sit in chairs, floors, or other places that feel more comfortable. But the soles of the foot tread on the floor. Students are asked to adjust their body positions as often as possible. Students are asked to close their eyes and concentration, by breathing slowly and deep and then expelled in a row. This respiratory activity is carried out 4 to 5 times. The condition of the diaphragm or abdomen, every breath into the stomach, fills the body with breath from the bottom up, like filling a bottle with water. Slowly blow through the nose and repeat the process until you feel relieved. Body position is established, palms in open condition facing up and eyes closed. When the eyes are closed, students enter into a quiet atmosphere wherein the silence the meditation guide inserts words that help self-awareness. These words will enter the students' conscious nature, then be captured and processed by the subconscious senses to form a higher quality thinking construction. The words that are inserted into his subconscious mind are "realize that you are a quality person, realize that you are a good person, a quality person" and other positive forms of reinforcement.

During meditation are also given questions to ponder. The questions include (1) what is of great value to me ?, have I been selfish all this time ?, have I helped others ?, have I felt cared for the suffering of others? In another meditation, a story is played as below:

Can I see my baby?" ask a mother who just gave birth to happiness. When the sling moved into his hand and he opened the blanket that wrapped the baby boy's face, the mother held her breath. The doctor who was waiting for him immediately turned to look out of the hospital window. The baby is born without both ears! Time proves that hearing a baby who has now grown into a child works perfectly. Only his appearance seemed strange and bad. One day the boy rushed home and buried his face in the arms of the crying mother. He knew his son's life was full of disappointment and tragedy. The boy sobbed, "A big boy mocked me. He said that I'm a strange creature." The boy grew up. He is quite handsome with his flaw. He also liked his schoolmates. He also develops his talents in music and writing. He was eager to be a class leader. His

mother reminded, "Later you will hang out with other teenagers" But in my heart, my mother felt sorry for her. One day the boy's father met a doctor who could graft an ear for him. "I believe I can move a pair of ears to him. But there must be someone who is willing to donate his ears," said the doctor. Then, the boy's parents began looking for who would sacrifice their ears and donate them. A few months have passed. And the time had come for them to call their son, "Son, someone who doesn't want to be known is willing to donate his ears to you. We have to send you to the hospital immediately for surgery. However, all this is very secret." said the father. The operation was successful. A new man was born. His great musical talent turned into a genius. He also received many awards from his school. Sometime later he married and worked as a diplomat. He met his father, "Well, I have to know who has been willing to sacrifice all of this to me. He has done something great but I haven't repaid his kindness at all." His father replied, "I'm sure you won't be able to repay the kindness the ear." After being silent for a moment his father continued, "In accordance with the agreement, it's not time for you to know all these secrets years by years." Both the man's parents still keep a secret. Until one day it comes a sad time for the family. That day the father and son stood at the edge of the coffin of his mother who had just died. Slowly and gently, the father caressed the hair of the mother's body that lay rigid, then, he pushed it open so that it appeared ... that the mother had no ears. "Your mother once said that she was happy to be able to lengthen her hair," whispered the father. "And nobody realizes that he has lost a little beauty, isn't he?" True beauty does not lie in the appearance of the body but in the heart. The essential treasure does not lie in what can be seen, but in what cannot be seen. True love does not lie in what has been done and known, but in what has been done but is not known.

When the story is read in the context of almost one class crying, they realize how parents give enormous sacrifices to their children. The results of interviews with several students showed that meditation was able to contribute in the form of increasing new beliefs as a form of cognitive awareness of phenomena that occur in society. With the new awareness that is formed, mediation habituation will create a critical awareness where students feel valuable, quality, critical, meaningful to others and so on. New beliefs that are born in a process of making the mindset and way of thinking of students towards an everyday event will provide confidence in an action.

Interviews conducted with informants indicate that at first, meditation for them (students) is less interesting, but after several times of doing and in meditation there are good messages and stories about life experiences, they are increasingly enjoying. There are even some students who do it independently at home. For those who meditate can

provide the inner soul and provide motivation to do better before. The contents of the story about the sacrifice of a mother during meditation provide a great contribution in developing students' social awareness, especially to parents. This is evidenced by the recognition of parents that their children become more responsible, care for others, aware of their rights and obligations at home, and voluntarily help with work at home. This parent's recognition shows that self-confidence and self-motivation that are built continuously can create a new belief that he is a qualified person.

A qualified person certainly has a way and paradigm in thinking, speaking and acting. Continuous meditation can develop better self-strength, confidence and motivation. Self-control that builds up well will always make you aware of your own nature when you interact with others.[11] The process of self-awareness in the process of meditation:

> *Hopefully I, as far as I can, avoid intentionally hurting others. May I relate to myself, others, and events around me with kindness, understanding and non-judgmental attitude. Hopefully, I use my day in a way that is in harmony with my deeper values.*

This proves that the social environment in which they develop greatly influences their construction of knowledge. The tendency that they understand that a person's personal quality will only be measured by the value obtained in school, the number of playmates, the amount of appreciation gained from teachers and schools, become popular among peers, is liked by the opposite sex and about things that make happy among teenagers. His meeting was obtained through the process of meditation. Meditation becomes an alternative model of effective character education because in it there is a deep awareness of the nature of human beings as social beings.

Meditation can develop students' awareness of actions, knowledge and acts of kindness. Meditation is the process of absorbing transformed values in each new behavior within the individual. With the absorption of these values, the understanding of social reality that prioritizes new human values and the characters that will be formed become easier to carry out. Learners understand more about the meaning and life that exists in the community so that it puts more emphasis on the spirit of service, dedication, compassion for others, the courage to fight negative currents and have the spirit to move forward for the good that will come.

IV. CONCLUSION

Schools currently only focus on the implementation of academic-based learning, in the sense that many schools that only run the curriculum and forget the character building of students. This character building is truly based on awareness and meaning of the life of their rights and obligations in the community. Indeed, many schools provide good and good stimulus to improve their character education, but the stimulus given is only temporary in school so that the response is only limited to the obligation that must be done at school. In other words, the responses made by students at the school are limited to the behavior of school children rather than the behavior of students as dignified human beings.

This can be seen from the increasingly free behavior of school children outside of school which is actually far and away from the aspirations of dignified humans, for example, the rampant drug users, school violence, violence that leads to death, pornography, the spread of news lie or hoax and so on. This condition proves that the world of education only gives false awareness or pre-awareness. Schools must be able to foster critical awareness for their students so that students can free themselves from the impotence that makes them not free. Education must be able to liberate, education must be a savior of adolescents so that education creates quality youth.

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