An Analysis of Teacher’s Strategy toward Students’ Character Development in the New Normal Era of Rural Area in South Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 pandemic had the biggest impact on human life, including education. During COVID-19 pandemic, learning is done online in the schools, so the teachers and children/students are longer meet face to face for approximately two years. The learning process is carried out at home, it can change the character of the students. This study aims to describe the teacher’s strategy in developing the characteristics of students and to explore the characteristics of students in the new normal era of rural areas in South Sulawesi. The type of research used qualitative research using three data collection techniques, namely interviews, observation and documentation of 10 teachers, and 10 school committees. Data were collected and analyzed textually. The results of study showed that the teacher’s strategy in developing the character of students in rural areas during the new normal had no difference with the character development of students before the COVID-19 pandemic. It was just new normal, teachers were more intense and more assertive in implementing strategies in the context of character development that had been going on for a long time. The teacher strategy was the application of instructional objectives, building communication and cooperation with parents, integration of character education with other subjects, and cultural transfer.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID-19 has spread all over the world on March 11, 2020, WHO declared it is a “global pandemic Covid 19” which has not been 100% lost on this earth. Covid 19 is a new threat to humans globally (Naja & Hamadeh, 2020) so that the governments of all countries take various policies in order to break the chain of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the implementation of social
distancing, border closures, restrictions on human movement, and large-scale social restrictions (Hasnawati, S., Apris, M. A., Apriyanti, C., & Hairuddin, K. 2021; Yunitasari & Hanifah, 2020) COVID-19 affects various aspects of human life including education, economics, behavior, social, physical, emotional and human mental health (Avianty, I., & Sinring, K. 2021; Haug et al., 2020; O'Connor, 2020; Manullang & Satria, 2020; Joseph et al., 2020; Sujarwo et al., 2020; Widikash et al., 2021) The COVID-19 outbreak has not only impacted urban areas but also remote areas around the world.

It causes closing schools throughout the world, including Indonesia, as a form of government policy in order to stop the spread of Covid 19 (Bram et al., 2020) although there is relatively little information on the quantity of children/students and adolescents exposed to Covid 19 (Isba et al., 2020). Closing schools globally is one solution in the context of terminating the Covid 19 pandemic, although there is no control of covid 19 with the pattern of school closures that can prove its effectiveness.(Viner et al., 2021) Education must continue to process (Akhiruddin et al, 2021), therefore learning is carried out using online techniques and school children/students stay at home (Manullang & Satria, 2020). The policy of studying at home does not run without impact, although this online learning, many parties consider that this online learning is a flexible learning, however, this policy has an impact on the development of students while at home. Based on a study conducted in China during learning carried out at home showed that there was an increase in symptoms of depression and anxiety for children. (O'Connor, 2020), adjustment disorder, panic, chronic stress and insomnia. (+ et al., 2020) The implementation of the virtual learning process affects children's daily lives, and raises concerns about social disturbances and socialization as a child’s daily routine (Joseph et al., 2020)

Learning process is done at home (Hamid et al., 2020) and going online during the covid 19 pandemic can create a social crisis for children, which can shape children's different characters before the covid 19 pandemic (Van Lancker & Parolin, 2020) Children’s physical activity during online learning has decreased which results in a lack of children's social socialization activities in the environment.(Guerrero et al., 2020) According to the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, (2020) says that physical activity for children/students and adolescents can help children’s physical and mental health, this is also influenced by self, family, school, social factors and interactions with each other.(Tremblay et al., 2015)

Humans are social creatures who cannot live without the help of others (Fiske, 2018) Socialization is very important for children/students because good social development is influenced by the ability to adapt in the midst of society (Baferani, 2015)In addition, primary interactions between teachers and students no longer occur in approximately 2 years. Although parents have an important role in the development of children’s characteristics (Baferani, 2015) The interaction between teachers and students during this pandemic uses social networks that automatically limit direct interaction between teachers and students (Cheng Ean & Phoe Lee, 2016) although, the use of social networks in the learning process can support the creativity and freedom of teachers in expression, however, can affect aspects of the character of students. (Froment et al., 2017) because in the learning process there are two things that are carried out by the teacher, namely the transfer of knowledge and the transfer of culture.

To do online learning or the use of social networking limits cultural transfer between teachers and students. Cultural transfer is part of the competence that must be possessed by teachers (Hagenauer et al., 2016). Cultural transference is in personal and social competence. Teachers who are responsible for the changes and development of the character of students. teachers as facilitators, movers of learning, it's just that during the Covid 19 pandemic, the teacher’s roles and responsibilities are not optimal (Caena & Redecker, 2019) This is due to many factors including the learning process is not carried out face-to-face, many areas in rural areas have unstable signals, not all students who have the same economy have online learning tools. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, 34.5% of students cannot access the internet for use in the online learning process (Indonesia & Indonesia, 2020).

The factors described above can create restrictions on interaction between teachers and students. The establishment of interaction between teachers and students can help students in their cognitive development and the achievement of educational goals (End Pane, 2019) Approximately 2 years of the
covid 19 pandemic, at that time, the interaction of teachers and students experienced limitations that made changes the character of students including the ease which students skipped on the grounds of signals, cheated during exams. When the character of these students was allowed to continue, it would damage cognitive development and character of students. (Allesandro and Kristina Roseven Nababan, 2021) character and intellectual (cognitive) development of students is the responsibility of the teacher (End Pane, 2019). Teachers must understand the potential of students (Retnawati et al., 2017).

Some previous study had conducted research namely the research conducted by Putri Bestari (2021) and the findings are the teacher's strategy in carrying out coaching on the character of students using 3 methods, namely (1) forms of coaching such as the use of school literacy and the intensity of extra activities. co-curricular (2) coaching with a pattern of giving examples, habituation, advice, giving, giving sanctions and giving praise (3). Building parental communication and cooperation. (Bestari, 2021) this is in line with the results of Syaiful Rizal's research (2017), namely (1) combining character development materials with other subjects, 2) intensity of learning experiences, 3) increasing extracurricular activities 4) civilizing or habituation both in the classroom and outside the classroom, and 5) building the intensity of cooperation between teachers and parents through school committees. (Rizal & Munip, 2017) (Akhiril Pane, 2019; Tomporowski et al., 2015) Only from several researchers There is no one researcher who examines these variables in rural areas of South Sulawesi. One of the factors that influence the characteristics of students is the environment and local wisdom. (Tomporowski et al., 2015) This is in accordance with Bronfenbrenner's theory of bioecological systems theory that the environment has an important role in influencing children's development (Bronfenbre, 1977) (Özkan Yıldız & Yılmaz, 2021).

This study aims to describe the teacher's strategy in developing the characteristics of students and to explore the characteristics of students in the new normal period in rural areas of South Sulawesi based on the formulation of the problem as follows: What is the teacher's strategy in developing the characteristics of students during the new normal in rural areas of South Sulawesi? And What is the description of the characteristics of students in the new normal in rural areas of South Sulawesi?

2. METHODS

This study described the teacher's strategy and the characteristics of the students in the category of a qualitative study. A qualitative approach with a depiction pattern is used in in-depth data collection regarding the teacher's strategy in developing the characteristics of students in the new normal era and the characteristics of students in the new normal era in rural areas of South Sulawesi.

The data collection technique used through interview, observation and documentation with the pattern of compiling a list that becomes the material in interviews, observations and documentation. Interviews were carried out directly to the object of research. After making observations, the last stage was research on documents such as lesson plans, teaching materials, and evaluation instruments. This was done as a form of ensuring the validity of the data that had been collected.

Based on the triangulation pattern above, it is understood that the interview is a direct source of information from the subject, then the researcher checks the truth of the interview results with observation and documentation techniques. This is done to check the correctness of the data obtained. The subjects of research in this study were the principal, teachers, school committee heads and students.
The results of the study will be compiled with a verbal transcript which will then be analyzed using textual techniques (w. Paul Vogt, 2015).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The teacher is the most important component in developing the character of students, because the development of student characteristics is one of the roles of teachers in the schools. Students' Character development can be implemented in education (First et al., 2017) Students are given the freedom to interact with others, with the community, family in the context of developing the character of students (Lapsley & Woodbury, 2016) it's just that students have difficulty interacting with teachers and the community environment during the covid 19 pandemic, so the teacher's role is not carried out optimally. The learning process is carried out at home via online, this is based on Circular No. 3 Year 2020 March 9, 2020 (Hamid et al., 2020). However, during the online learning process, more and more students participate in the learning process (Trubavina et al., 2021). According to Amri, the head of the SMA PGRI Balang-Balang school committee, said that during the Covid 19 pandemic and online learning, many changes have occurred to our children, among the changes we can see is that our children/students were lazy (interview, Amri, 23 August 2021).

Responding to changes in the characteristics experienced by students during online learning at home, teachers need to apply various strategies in the context of developing the character of students, because teachers are the component of education that is responsible for developing the character of students (Peeters et al., 2016) Schools as educational institutions have a responsibility to transfer knowledge and culture as well as good values. (Thirachai & Sunthorapot, 2016) the teacher's strategy in developing the character of students is as follows:

**Strengthening the character development of students through Instructional Objectives in Lesson Plan.**

To restore the character values of students and the achievement of national education goals, teachers need to make strategies. The teacher's strategy has been stated in the Lesson Plan of the Instructional Objectives section which will be implemented in the face-to-face learning process during the new normal, especially in schools located in rural areas of South Sulawesi (Documentation and Observation, August 26, 2021).

The teacher's strategy in developing the character of students in this new normal period is included in the Learning Process Plan for instructional purposes (Lapsley & Woodbury, 2016) Instructional objectives are teacher instructional strategies that teachers use in developing the character of students (Rasmitadila et al., 2020) although it is acknowledged that teachers experience various difficulties in developing the character of students after the online learning process is carried out (Trubavina et al., 2021).

Character building through the unification of character education into subjects (4 Competencies)

The closure of schools is one of the government’s policies in order to break the chain of the spread of Covid 19 (Bhavya Bhasin et al., 2021) despite school closures, however the learning process continues to run with an online pattern, distance learning, which also affects the quality of students' self. The teacher only interacts with students by means of conferences and online chats for ±2 years (Rasmitadila et al., 2020).

The implementation of online learning and interaction with conference and online chat techniques for ±2 years has changed all aspects and patterns of students' lives, including character. What is certain is that it is much different if the learning process is carried out face-to-face, the teacher can find out directly the characters of the students, so that the teacher can immediately adjust the approaches and methods in the learning process (Nambiar Deepika, 2020) Therefore we need a strategy that must be implemented by the teacher in anticipating the character of students from bad characters to good characters. This unexpected change forced Educational Institutions to take steps and solutions to the problems they are currently facing (Adnan, 2020)

One of the teacher's strategies in developing the character of students in this new normal is to integrate character teaching materials into subjects. During the COVID-19 pandemic, all components,
including teachers, take steps and strategies in finding solutions to all problems that are a result of distance learning (online) in any learning process, teachers are required to link character subjects (interview, Aidin Amruddin, August 23, 2021) following subjects that can be integrated with character subjects are as follows:

1. Religious subjects
2. Aqidah Ahlak
3. Hadith and Tafsir
4. And others
5. IPS
6. Sociology
7. Culture
8. Social environment
9. Practice
10. Other science

The sources of character education developed in Indonesia are social, cultural, religious, Pancasila and the target of achieving education and contain the values of honesty, religious, responsibility, studious, creative, innovative, independent, characterized by local wisdom, honest, democratic, sensitive to social and environment, tolerance discipline, communicative, mutual respect and respect .(Wulandari & Kristiawan, 2017).

Instilling character education in students, essentially not only in the learning process, but teachers are required to create strategies to integrate character education into the daily lives of students in schools, the community and in the family (interview, Asmawati, August 25, 2021).

**Building Intensity of Communication and Cooperation with Parents**

Communication and collaboration with parents is one of the teacher’s strategies in developing the character of students (OZMEN et al., 2016) In essence, communication and cooperation with parents are often carried out after the issuance of government policies regarding the permissibility of face-to-face learning. Communication between parents and the school through the school committee (interview, Teacher, Safaruddin, August 23, 2021) Communication and collaboration between teachers and parents is important and is a teacher strategy in the context of developing the character of students, especially in this new normal period, as As explained in the previous discussion, it was said that during the online
learning process, many influenced the character of students (Özkan Yıldız & Yılmaz, 2021; Gisewhite et al., 2021)

Communication between teachers and parents is needed so that the teacher or the school has information about the student’s family environment situation (Hillman et al., 2019). This was carried out not only after the Covid 19 pandemic (new Normal) but even before the covid 19 pandemic, educational institutions in this case the teacher had carried it out (interview, Ridwan Ali S.Pd, August 23, 2021). According to Syuraini et al. said that forming the character of children/students there must be good cooperation between teachers and parents (Shuraini et al., 2018). Optimization of cultural transference; as the role of Teacher.

**Optimizing self-habituation activities with an insight into the development of character and noble character**

National education functions as a character developer who has good character and character, this is stated in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 (Wulandari & Kristiawan, 2017) In general, education functions to develop spiritual, intellectual, physical and social values (Malinda et al., 2017). Education carries out two transfusions for the participants themselves, namely the transfer of knowledge to develop the intellectual, mental values of students and cultural transference to develop the spiritual, physical and social values of students.

The transfer of knowledge and the transfer of culture is the task of teachers in schools. Cultural transfer is carried out by teachers with exemplary patterns and habituation and teachers are required to have competence in creating a sense of security, comfort so that students are motivated to learn (Postholm, 2016). Schools are located in rural areas, during this new normal, teachers familiarize students with praying in congregation, besides that students are accustomed to using polite language. When there are students who are caught speaking rudely and do not participate in congregational prayers, the teacher strictly gives sanctions (interview, Agus Ismail, August 23, 2021). Based on observations on August 23, 2021, it was found that congregational prayers at the nearest mosque were also attended by other teachers. In addition, the way students dress is always controlled by the teachers.

![Diagram](https://example.com/diagram.png)

The table diagram above provided an overview of the pattern or habituation education that teachers improved during the new normal which was carried out strictly. With the control method on students any time.

Many researchers have conducted studies related to this study such as the research the teacher’s strategy in carrying out coaching on the character of students using 3 methods, namely (1) forms of coaching such as the use of school literacy and the intensity of extra activities. co-curricular (2) coaching
with a pattern of giving examples, habitation, advice, giving, giving sanctions and giving praise (3). Building parental communication and cooperation. (Bestari, 2021) this is in line with the results of Syaiful Rizal’s research (2017), namely (1) combining character development materials with other subjects, 2) intensity of learning experiences, 3) increasing extracurricular activities 4) civilizing or habituation both in the classroom and outside the classroom, and 5) building the intensity of cooperation between teachers and parents through school committees. Tomporowski et al., 2015) Only from several researchers There is no one researcher who examines these variables in rural areas of South Sulawesi. One of the factors that influence the characteristics of students is the environment and local wisdom.

Be a role model for students

Teacher figure who becomes the center of attention of students, the teacher is an independent figure, as a guide and counseling for students (Abida Ferindistika Putri et al., 2019). The teacher as a person who is mandated to be a figure for students and has competence in sorting out what is good to do and what should be avoided. (Rindu & Ariyanti, 2017). Therefore, the concept of Indonesian education which emphasizes more on social orientation which is based on the perspective of collectivism. The concept of Education that can be applied by teachers in South Sulawesi and in general Indonesia is the concept of Education which is based on pedagogical theory based on Geisteswissenschaftliche theory (humanity) and Bildung theory (Revina, 2018).

Teachers are role models for students (San-Martín et al., 2021) what the teacher does whatever the students do because the teacher is used as a figure who is the center that is imitated by students. Therefore, teachers are required to behave, speak words, how to get along, how to dress that can be transferred to students. Likewise, teachers in rural areas of South Sulawesi always maintain their attitudes, behavior, grammar, and dress so that they become examples of what’s more in this new normal era. Students are thirsty for behavioral references, speech, how to get along, how to dress (interview, Head of the Balang State Junior High School Committee, September 1, 2021) Qualified teachers are teachers who have the competence and competence of teachers who can set an example for students and the teacher environment is personal competence and social competence (Judge, 2015).

Description of the characteristics of students in the new normal in rural areas

For approximately 2 years, students studying at home through online experience various changes in character. The dominant character change that is often done by students is lazy, insensitive to the surrounding environment, this is due to lack of interaction with the surrounding environment (interview, member of the school committee. August 23, 2021) for more details along with the characteristics of children/students during online learning on covid 19 period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Character Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>lazy to wake up early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not Socially Sensitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Less polite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lack of mutual respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Speak rude language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>reduced social adaptation</td>
<td>There is a ban on gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Irregular eating pattern</td>
<td>Every time you eat which results in weight gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Easy to stress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Dry mouth, pounding heart, (Hawi et al., 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lack of confidence in doing Homework</td>
<td>Lack of independence in doing tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During online learning, students experience changes in eating patterns, namely irregular eating patterns and an increase in the quantity of food that results in obesity in students (interview, member of the school committee. 23 August 2021) Obesity has a close relationship with depression. (Khan & Moverley Smith, 2020) Obesity can change the hormone cortisol which suppresses serotonin levels that can trigger symptoms of depression. (Rosyanti et al., 2017). Then, students had irregular sleeping habits (interview, member of the school committee. 23 August 2021) Even though sleep is very important for health. (Becker & Gregory, 2020) (Gregory & Sadeh, 2016) too much sleep can form a lazy character.

4. CONCLUSION

Online learning implementation has a direct impact toward the character development of students, especially schools in rural areas. The development of students’ character during the COVID-19 pandemic has a significant difference with the learning process before the Covid 19 era. The teacher is the most important component in education who has responsibility for developing the character of students, therefore teachers need strategies that are standardized in the offline learning process during the new normal. Although until now the offline learning process has not been maximized and normal. Even, teachers continue to apply strategies in character development which during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced a decline/change in character. The teacher’s strategy in dealing with changes in the character of students in a period of 2 years is a strategy that in essence has long been standardized. Before Covid 19, teachers has implemented this strategy, the only difference is the intensity and consistency in carrying out the strategy. The teacher’s strategy is the preparation of lesson plans by strengthening the character development of students, character building through the integration of character education into subjects (4 Competencies), building the intensity of communication and cooperation between teachers and students’ parents, and optimizing cultural transfer. Generally the impact is teacher’s strategy in developing the character of students who have experienced changes for approximately 2 years of online learning, it has been seen that changes in the character of students include the way to dress, to talk with others, how they get along and now students are more active in doing homework independently if compared since online learning is implemented.

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