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## **NATIONAL BIG DAY COMMEMORATION ACTIVITY: STRENGTHENING THE SENSE OF NATIONALITY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Education in the context of fostering a national spirit in the era of openness is currently a formal institution that is related and has a big responsibility. One of the educational institutions that has a significant effect on the practice of national values is elementary school. The reason is, formal institutions such as elementary schools are the initial foundation for students to pursue higher school levels. The success of character education of a nation can be seen from the national spirit of the students. This national spirit is an embodiment of the character of the nation and can be seen from several indicators, which for elementary school students are celebrating national holidays and participating in national activities. These indicators will later be developed in making statement items on a national attitude scale.*

**Keywords:** *national spirit, character education, student, elementary school*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since Indonesia's independence in 1945, every citizen must possess a spirit of nationality and love for the country. This is of course to fill and continue the current independence. To make it happen, hard and serious work is needed and does not need to be seen in front of others, but it can be started from the simplest things to the biggest things. As for the simple application of the values of

nationality in the world of education, such as the raising of the red and white saka on the commemoration of national holidays, the devotion of students when respecting the red and white saka, and the awareness of students when obeying the rules and norms that apply in their environment

The spirit of fostering a national spirit in the current era has challenges that are increasingly being felt. Today, the Indonesian state is faced with two main forces which indirectly have an impact on the squeezing of the spirit of nationality. These two things include cosmopolitanism which is linear with globalization and ethnicity which is coupled with ethnocentrism. Even Kalidjernih, (2009) explains "the increasingly globalization of the world in the social science tradition, cosmopolitanism is considered an anti-thesis of nationality". In this era of globalization, many Indonesians are directly or indirectly proud of things that have western cultural roots. Meanwhile, the customs and culture of the nation itself are slowly being abandoned and underestimated (Sion, 2016; Ludang, 2010; Ludang et al., 2011). When viewed from the penchant for consuming western culture and forgetting about one's own culture, it is not entirely the main indicator of nationality. However, a sense of love and belonging to one's own culture is a future picture of how the strengthening of the nation's noble values can be maintained. In addition, loyalty and concern for the nation can be represented by a love for the values and characteristics of the nation. Because someone with their own national culture means that person has participated in growing and developing the country's productivity.

Hariyono (2014) explains that the ages of children at the primary school level range from 6 to 12 years of age. So that at that age the children's characters tend to be different and they will prefer to play, work, and do things in groups. Therefore, it is very appropriate to instill the spirit of nationality from an early age in children of vulnerable elementary school age. This is due to the frequent grouping of children so that the effect will be more comprehensive than children above them (Supriadi, 2013). The need to prioritize nationality education from an early age has become a mandatory agenda for formal educational institutions. These conditions must be accustomed to in schools, especially elementary schools. Nationality education can be a solution for improving the morals of the nation and state. The existing social conditions are the main reason why nationality education should be improved again in educational institutions. Efforts to re-campaign the spirit of nationality through educational tools can be done by integrating the values of nationality in the learning methods of primary school education.

Initial research conducted by researchers at elementary school (SD Negeri 1) Melayu, North Barito Regency, shows that efforts to strengthen the nationality characteristics of students include flag ceremonies on Monday, national activities such as carnivals, competitions, and walks, as well as cultural extracurricular

activities. However, the students did not have the enthusiasm for participating in these activities. The intelligence and activeness of students in carrying out activities such as flag ceremonies seriously are sometimes not optimal. The majority of students have not been solemn in participating in activities that aim to strengthen the spirit of nationality and patriotism.

The lack of enthusiasm and patriotism that exists in students has implications for the appreciation of the values of national and state life which do not have a place in student life. Schools as educational institutions have made various efforts to solve these problems. As for what has been done by schools, such as upholding school rules, actively conducting socialization and rules, to imposing sanctions on students who have received guidance but still violate school rules. In addition, on the commemoration of national holidays, such as the day of national awakening, or the Pancasila sacredness, it is often interpreted as ceremonial only, which has an impact on the lack of growth in the spirit of nationality in students. During the flag ceremony, not a few students did not fully interpret the meaning of the ceremony.

Teaching and learning activities and processes in schools are formal institutions that have the task of developing the potential, abilities, and creativity of students who will make them the next generation of the nation. Of course, to achieve this goal, schools need to make a lot of efforts, such as educational activities should be supported by coordination in line between school leaders, teachers in related fields of study, guidance and counseling and all education personnel, even parents of students also play an active role in developing educational institutions.

## **NATIONALISM**

### **Understanding**

Nationalism is an understanding for teaching to love the nation and the state for the awareness of citizens that can potentially jointly achieve, maintain and devote the identity, integrity, prosperity and strength of the nation. nationalism is an understanding that prioritizes national unity and freedom. Nationalism contains several principles, namely: unity, freedom, equality, personality, and achievement. nationalism can also be interpreted as a combination of a sense of nationality and a national understanding. With a high national spirit, the fear of a threat to the integrity of the nation will be avoided.

According to Hutchinson & Smith (2000) nationalism is more of a cultural phenomenon than a political phenomenon because it is rooted in ethnicity and promodern culture. Even if nationalism is transformed into a political movement, it is superficial because national political movements are ultimately based on

cultural motivations, especially when a cultural identity crisis occurs. From this point of view, the nationalist nationalism political movement is a means of regaining ethnic pride as the basic capital to build a country based on cultural similarities. A national spirit will flow with a sense of social solidarity, a spirit of self-sacrifice and can foster a spirit of patriotism. A sense of social solidarity will strengthen the national spirit of a nation.

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary in Listiyarti (2007) "nationalism comes from the word national and ism, namely nationalism which implies awareness and spirit of love for the country, has a sense of nationalism, or maintains the honor of the nation," according to Hitler in Chotib and Djazuli (2007) "National nationalism is the attitude and spirit of sacrifice to fight against other nations".

Nationalism has several forms according to Retno Listyarti (2007) including:

1. Citizenship nationalism is a nationalism in which the state obtains political truth from the active participation of its people. Membership of a nation is voluntary. This form of nationalism was first developed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and became the material for his writing;
2. Ethnic nationalism is where the state obtains political truth from the original culture or ethnicity of a society. Membership of a nation is hereditary;
3. Romantic nationalism is a form of ethnic nationalism in which the state obtains political truth as something natural and is an expression of nationalism or race. Romantic nationalism emphasizes ethnic culture in accordance with romantic idealism;
4. Cultural nationalism is nationalism in which the state defines the political correctness of the common culture and is not hereditary like the color of the skin;
5. Nationalism is a variation of nationality which is often combined with ethnic nationalism. In nationalism, the nation's state is a community that contributes to the maintenance and strength of the state;
6. Nationalism of religion is nationalism in which the state derives political legitimacy from religious equality.

### **Principles**

The spirit of nationalism must be embedded in the souls of the nation's future generations. This inherent spirit can strengthen the identity and dignity of a nation and become a differentiator from other nations. The principle of nationalism according to Ruslan Abdul Ghani in Mona (2010) in a broad sense is as follows:

1. The principle of togetherness

The value of togetherness requires every citizen to place the interests of the nation and the state above personal and group interests. The application of this principle in everyday life requires citizens to have an attitude of self-control in national life which includes political, economic, socio-cultural and defense and security life which must be reflected in the mindset, attitude pattern, and action

pattern. A culture of mutual cooperation, a willingness to respect each other and mutual respect for differences, and a willingness to sacrifice for the benefit of the nation must be firmly attached to the heart of every citizen. The spirit of togetherness of groups of people who are godly, not just religious, is part of the understanding of the precepts of God Almighty. Togetherness in a humanist cultural identity, not intolerance culture (ethnicity, religion, race and custom) is in line with the principles of Just and Civilized Humanity, in an intact territorial unity with many islands united by straits and oceans, not a group of islands separated by straits and the ocean is the spirit of the principle of Unity of Indonesia, political unity and democracy. The people possess sovereignty, and the state obtains political truth from the active participation of its people in the form of the people's will which is carried out in political representation, not democracy with majority votes and open democracy without proportion, because this is the spirit of peoples principles led by Wisdom in Representative Consultations, as well as the spirit of togetherness in achieving social welfare for all citizens. Not only equal opportunity to work on the personal welfare of citizens without protection for the weak and to provide space and great protection for non-citizens. The spirit of shared welfare, social welfare must then be used as the basis for the principle of Social Justice for All Indonesians. The word togetherness has the meaning of a bond formed because of a sense of kinship / brotherhood, more than just working together or an ordinary professional relationship. it is appropriate that common interests take precedence over personal interests. Abandon differences and build similarities, will lead citizens to achieve common goals. Because it's no secret that humans are selfish creatures. Anything that does not have added value for themselves, most of the time there will be no participation, even considered insignificant, everyone thinks that what they do is non-reciprocal. So we start to learn to lower the Ego for the common good. Each individual has different contributions. The difference in the contribution should not create negative friction which can have an impact on division. If you want to work together, be prepared to be willing to make sacrifices.

## 2. The Principle of Unity

Unity is very appropriate equivalents to describe the meaning contained in the diversity that exists in Indonesia. Indonesia is a unique country in the world. Indonesia is not only a country that has various ethnic groups, languages but also religions. Therefore, the issue concerning intolerance is a very sensitive matter. Unity itself comes from the word one which means whole or not divided. Unity implies the uniting of the various features into one unified and harmonious whole. all the people who feel the same fate and responsibility who live in the territory have succeeded in becoming an independent nation and forming a unitary state, namely the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

### 3. Principles of Democracy

The principle of democracy views that every citizen has the same position, rights and obligations, because the essence of nationality is the determination to live together which prioritizes the interests of the nation and state that grows and develops from below to be willing to live as a free, independent, sovereign nation. fair, and prosperous. Democracy is not just a political symptom but a way to organize all aspects of society, nation and state life in a comprehensive and holistic manner. Thus, democracy can be a means of guarding the existence of nationalism. So that the goals of democracy are realized, mutual justice, the goal of equality for all, deliberation to reach consensus and sustainable development.

#### **Concept**

The concept of a nation itself which means Nation is a group of individuals who speak the same language and have the same customs and culture. Not only that, this group of individuals also has the same fate and fate. Wibowo (2012) states that the spirit of nationality is a way of acting, thinking, and having an insight that prioritizes national and national interests above the interests of himself or his group.

This opinion is corroborated by Mustari (2011) who argues that the national spirit is a way of thinking and behaving that shows the spirit of loyalty, concern and high respect for language, the physical, social, cultural, economic and political environment of the nation. So it can be said that based on the characteristics of the national spirit, it is part of the sense of nationalism.

Quoted from Samani (2012) emphasizes that fostering a sense of nationality in the nation's children must be developed from an early age through formal elementary schools. Because in character, there is value education, character education, moral education, character education which aims to improve the ability of students to make good or bad decisions, maintain the good and realize this goodness everyday wholeheartedly. Samani (2012) continues that the values that come from religion, Pancasila, culture and the goals of national education are religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love the country, respect achievements, friendly/communicative, love peace, love to read, care for the environment, care about social and responsibility.

The national spirit is one part of the values of national character which is important to be improved in the character education process. Strong character is a fundamental foundation that can give the human population the ability to coexist in peace and form a world filled with goodness and virtue. But what is very important is to be free from violence and immoral acts.

Based on some of the expert opinions above, it can be concluded that the spirit of nationality must be endeavored by the school in improving the character of each student to become a person who always has enthusiasm for learning, with the aim that students always learn new things to deepen their knowledge. The success of character education of a nation can be seen from the national spirit possessed by students. This national spirit is a manifestation of national character and can be seen from several indicators of national spirit based on the Ministry of National Education (Rencana Strategis Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Tahun 2015-2019). The value of the national spirit has the following indicators: Celebrating national holidays; Imitate national heroes; Visiting historical places; Carry out routine school ceremonies; Participating in national activities; Display hero characters. These indicators will later be developed in making statement items on a scale of national attitudes.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

### **Students**

Being successful educators is not enough to rely on mastering the material alone, but educators need to recognize and understand the characteristics of their students. (Saryati, 2014) explains that with a teacher / educator who can understand the students / students, the characteristics of these students can also be understood and can find out what is needed by students to direct and guide their students. This is done so that the teaching and learning process runs well and gets good results. In the teaching and learning process carried out by teachers in the elementary school environment, there is often a mismatch of conditions, situations, and student needs. It is necessary to use models, strategies, methods, and media that are always the same, even in general, learning carried out by teachers without using media makes students less motivated and less enthusiastic about the learning process (Nurhasanah & Sobandi, 2016). Everyday learning is dominated by teacher activeness, which tends to be passive in learning, there needs to be direct instruction from the teacher so that students can be active in learning.

In general, the period of elementary school age children is the period of children gradually from the age of 6 to 12 years (Hariyono, 2014). At that age children tend to have different characteristics from younger children. They prefer to play, move, work in groups and enjoy feeling or doing things directly. According to Supriadi (2013) explains that the characteristics of students in elementary schools generally prefer to move, play, and try new things. Sometimes they also work in groups and like to do things in person. Children at primary school age, especially those in low classes, are very easy to accept new knowledge taught by

the teacher, in this case students need to be given directions so that the potential possessed by students can develop widely. Because a teacher is a figure that is imitated by students.

### **Build Character**

In a discussion related to character formation, the understanding of character and character education will be explained, the process of character building, the objectives of character education implementation of character education in schools, and the importance of character teachers.

#### **1. Character education**

According to Coon (Zubaedi, 2011), Character is "A subjective assessment of a person's personality related to personality attributes that can or cannot be accepted by society". These characters will shape motivation with dignified methods and processes. Good character includes care and actions based on ethical values, and includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of moral life (Asmani, 2011). Character is an attitude of intellectuality, morals or character which becomes the identity of a person or group of people as well as the values of human behavior related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow humans, the environment, and nationality which are manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on religious norms, law, karma, culture, and customs. Characters can be interpreted as morals, so that characters are identical to morals. A nation that has character is a nation that has morals, but on the other hand, if a nation does not have character, that nation also has no morals.

Based on the above understanding, it can be emphasized that character is human behavior related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow humans, the environment, and nationality which are manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words and actions based on religious norms, law, etiquette., culture, and customs. People whose behavior is in accordance with the norms are called noble characters.

According to Zubaedi (2011), Character Education is "a deliberate (conscious) effort to realize virtue, namely objectively good human qualities, not only good for individuals, but also good for society as a whole". The character education process is seen as a conscious and planned effort, not an accidental one. On this basis, character education is a serious effort to understand, shape, foster ethical values, both for themselves and for all citizens or citizens of the country as a whole.

Character education is very well implemented, especially for students. With character education that is applied systematically and continuously, students will become emotionally intelligent. This emotional intelligence is an important provision in preparing students for the future, because someone will find it easier and more successful in facing all kinds of life challenges, including challenges to



succeed academically. In addition, character education is the key to individual success. So, character education is very important for teachers to influence student character. The teacher helps shape the character of students by providing examples, how to speak or convey good material, tolerance, and other related things.

## 2. Character process

The character education process is seen as a conscious and planned effort, not an accidental one. On this basis, character education is a serious effort to understand, shape, foster ethical values, both for themselves and for all members of society as a whole (Saptono, 2011; Isa Aydemir et al., 2020; Hartani et al., 2020).

Character education needs to be developed in everyone. Character education is manifested in a process or activity stage of fostering essential meanings, because in essence humans are creatures that have the ability to learn and live the essential meanings that are very important for human survival. Character education seeks to foster a complete personality, skilled in speaking, using symbols and signs that are factually well informed, humans create and appreciate aesthetics supported by a rich and disciplined life.

The most important element in character building is the mind, because the mind is the forerunner of everything, in which there is a whole program formed from his life experience. This program then forms a belief system that can form thinking patterns that can influence their behavior. According to Koesoema (2010), there are several things that need to be considered in shaping children's character, namely habituation of polite behavior, awareness of cleanliness, tidiness, and order, and habituation to being honest and being disciplined. From these things, it can be concluded that character building is everything parents do to influence children's character. Parents help shape children's character by providing examples, ways of speaking or convey something good, tolerance, and other related things.

## 3. Character education goals

According to Koesoema (2010), the purpose of character education is to facilitate the strengthening and development of certain values so that they are manifested in children's behavior. The assumption contained in the objectives of character education is that academic mastery is positioned as a medium or means to achieve the goal of strengthening and developing character. Correcting student behavior that is not in accordance with the values developed by the school. This goal means that character education has a goal to straighten various negative children's behaviors to become positive. Build harmonious connections with families and communities in playing the responsibilities of character education together. This goal means that the character education process in schools must be connected with the educational process in the family.

The opinion above is the same as the formulation of national education goals as stated in the Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which leads to the development of Indonesian human character, although its implementation is still far from what is intended in this Law. In short, national education is character education, not only academic education.

#### 4. Implementation in schools

Schools are expected to be able to create an atmosphere that is conducive to realizing character values in daily actions at school. Principals, teachers, employees and other education personnel are able to be examples for students and school members. Thus, character values can be manifested in daily life at school by all school members as a habit (habituation). Character education in every school is expected to prevent the increase in delinquency behavior among students. Character education aims to make a generation of students who are superior and resilient and have a competitive edge, by providing good character and religious training to students.

Character education is very important to be implemented in order to restore the character of the Indonesian nation which is starting to fade. With the implementation of character education, it is hoped that it can be a solution to social problems that occur in society. The implementation of character education in schools can be carried out in the realm of learning activities, developing school culture and learning activity centers, extracurricular activities, and daily activities at home and in the community. National character education can be done by habituating noble moral values to students and familiarizing them with habits that are in accordance with national character. The character values for the social studies subject include the main character values and the main character values. These character values are then selected to be integrated into learning activities in accordance with the material to be delivered.

Character education does not lie in learning material but in activities that are attached to, accompanying, and accompanying it (an atmosphere that colors, is reflected and encompasses the learning process of habituating good attitudes and behavior). In other words, character education is not based on material, but on activities. This is explained in the Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers in relation to the main duties of teachers, namely educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing and evaluating. The inculcation of character values in students is carried out through the examples shown by the teacher in their attitudes and behavior. Exemplary is very important because in teaching anything the teacher should be an example for students as an exemplary figure. Likewise, in instilling character in students, the teacher must first become a teacher with character. It means that the attitude and all actions of the teacher

must describe good character to students so that later motivation will emerge in students to emulate positive attitudes and actions taken by the teacher.

This is in accordance with the opinion of Hidayatullah (2010: 25), which states that one of the main values that must be a teacher's character is exemplary. This exemplary character includes the character of simplicity, closeness, and maximum service so that the potential of students can be optimally empowered. The effort to implement character education is the availability of a curriculum based on a holistic approach, which is to integrate character development into every aspect of school life as a whole. According to Zubaedi (2011), there are several characteristics of a holistic approach, namely that the school is a community of students where there are bonds that connect students, teachers, and schools. Cooperation and collaboration among students are more important than competition. The values of justice, respect, and honesty are part of everyday learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Discipline and classroom management are the focus of problem solving rather than reward and punishment, and teacher-centered learning models should be abandoned and shifted to classroom democracy where teachers and students come together to build unity, norms, and solve problems. Another effort or strategy is to create a comfortable and pleasant environment. A comfortable and pleasant environment is absolutely created so that children's character can be formed. This is closely related to the formation of positive emotions in children and can support the process of forming empathy, love, and a child's conscience or inner self.

Thus, the character education process must be carried out regularly or continuously so that the moral values that have been embedded in children do not only reach a certain level of education or only appear in the family or community environment. In addition, the moral practices brought by the child do not appear to be formality, but are deeply ingrained in the child's soul.

#### 5. Character teachers

In order for teachers to be able to provide education and learning to instill character in students, a teacher with character is needed. A teacher with character is not only able to teach, but also able to educate. A character teacher is not only able to transfer knowledge, but is able to instill the character values needed to navigate his life. Teachers with character not only have intellectual abilities, but also emotional and spiritual abilities, so that teachers are able to motivate students to learn to live in the midst of society.

## CONCLUSION

The inculcation of character values in students is not something can be done instantly, but it requires constant effort from the teacher. This is because the characters that are currently formed may be the inculcation of character values in previous times and the results of planting character values at this time may become daily behavior in the following year. By having intellectual and spiritual intelligence, it will make it easier for teachers to instill character values in students. In this case the teacher must be skilled at choosing ways and creating situations that can foster student activity in internalizing character values through optimal learning activities.

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