

Sekolah Perjumpaan (Social School) as a Model of Molding Social Character and Humanity Values for Teenagers

Zulkipli Lessy^{1*}, Abdul Munib², Saifullah Idris^{3,} Agus Mukmin4

^{1*,2}UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, ³UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh,
⁴Institut Agama Islam (IAI) Al-Azhar Lubuklinggau
*Corresponding Author. Email: zulkipli.lessy@uin-suka.ac.id

Abstract: This research aims to explore how Sekolah Perjumpaan (social school) in Midang Village, West Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Barat Province shapes the social character of local teenagers. The research method used was a case study with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques used observations and in-depth interviews with mentors, religious leaders, governmental representatives, and members of the Midang Village community to discern social activities at Sekolah Perjumpaan. Data was then analyzed by categorizing similarities and differences in themes, previously managed through data reduction, data display, and data verification to yield findings. The findings showed that Sekolah Perjumpaan maintained social harmony, which was built upon the foundations of social norms as the ethical basis for strengthening intrapersonal relationships and a life guide adopted by teenagers. Social characters and human values were implemented at Sekolah Perjumpaan, which resulted in reciprocal shares and mutual respects that mirror the attitudes, such as proper self-positioning, good attitudes, and responsibility. Additionally, Sekolah Perjumpaan had existed to teach patience, sincerity, consciousness, or commitment to doing good.

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Introduction

Indonesian students have developed character, although no character evaluation is at school. In contrast, other courses such as Math, English, Bahasa Indonesia Language, Natural and Physical Sciences, or Social Studies Sciences assess students' progress. Moral development has roasted the attention of both governmental and private educational institutions, from early childhood to higher education, as these are institutional means to enhance teenagers' potential so they benefit society and the nation (Dasopang et al., 2022). Such a beneficial principle starts from an assumption that the essence of education is a sustainable process to develop children's potential to create a faithful, pious mankind. Therefore, education is a process of self-humanizing and lifting up manpower and capacity to become more self-confident and independent and have high self-esteem academically and socially (Ballantine et al., 2022). Thus, aspects considered in education include consciousness, enlightenment, value, and attitudinal changes (Soyomukti, 2010). It is in line with the purpose of national education that is contended in the document of the System of National Education Number 20, the Year 2003 that reads:

The function of the National Education is to develop ability and shape character of civilized nation to humanize their life and culture. Also, its purpose is to develop students' potential, so they become faithful persons, who believe in the unity of God,



and who shape their noble behavior, healthiness, competency, creativity, independence, responsibility, as well as become democratic citizens (Sumarna et al., 2018).

A national hero and a prominent figure in Indonesia's education, Ki Hajar Dewantara, once asserted that the purpose of Indonesia's education generally is to nurture and beautify the behavior, attitude, mind, and physics of children following the development of the world and especially the local community (Adawiyah, Sulfasyah & Arifin, 2016). Abdillah and Hidayat (2019), in *Ilmu Pendidikan: Konsep, Teori dan Aplikasinya* [Pedagogy: Concepts, Theories, and Application], asserted that education is a process where society builds education to teach young people toward progress with the aid of educational methods which are suitable to their capacity. It is to achieve the highest target of intelligence, physics, spirituality, and appropriate behavior.

Young people seek their education through formal, informal, and nonformal means. Education in a family is an informal type that has an important role. Besides education in the family, one also can seek education from school. It is called a formal type because the school is certified and has regulated systems. Formal education is systematic education with classes for teaching, moral reinforcement, and evaluation (Dewey, 2004). *Informal education* is an educational system that supports the first type, either possessed by the government or privates (Ballantine et al., 2022; Dewey, 2004). Society usually operates the third or the nonformal education. This type of education is established based on intrapersonal relations and emotion. It is formatted for a short or long-term period following the need of the community (Walters, 1997).

Furthermore, nonformal education exists in society; usually, its establishment is based on communication between one person and another due to similarity in ideology, perception, and objective that occurs outside the formal school milieu. Usually, in school, an individual should be ethical in interacting with others, such as respecting others (Adawiyah, Sulfasyah, & Arifin, 2016). Sekolah Perjumpaan is therefore included in the nonformal category, which is now understudied. Nonformal education is operated by society and is intended for the members who need education services and functions as an additive to formal education. As such, nonformal education has a significant role in enhancing the quality of human resources. It is also needed to empower teenagers through nonformal types of curriculum to strengthen the quality of human resources (Wahid, 2014).

The community school of Sekolah Perjumpaan is an example of the nonformal education system located in Midang Village, West Lombok, Nusa Tenggara Barat Province, intended to mold the social character of teenagers. The idea emerged due to a need for more social character building through the village's formal education, so the community's presence to create the Sekolah Perjumpaan is part of an alternative school. Additionally, Sekolah Perjumpaan was established to fill the gap the government left, especially in the area where young people have few opportunities to afford quality education, as education is their right (Mahmud, 2012). As an institution that was established from the grassroots based on common consciousness among the community members, Sekolah Perjumpaan was built as a catalyst in manifesting community objectives, such as the realization of a good society, the implementation of positive language to create harmonious relationships, tolerance, openness, and social acceptance (Observation in 2021).

Character education aims to develop teenagers' attitudes, ethics, and responsibility. They should utilize those mentioned morality values so their daily attitudes benefit humanity and the environment (Raharjo & Shidiq, 2018; Saputri et al., 2022). Also, character education



is implemented to refine teenagers' morality, which has been degraded due to globalization. Therefore, in character education, a teacher or a mentor should share good values based on spirituality, develop behavior and ethics, and support religion and nationality (Khawani et al., 2022; Kurniawan, 2013). The System of National Education should focus on developing and enlarging such practices, which are implemented not only in the formal system of schooling but also in the informal and nonformal sectors, such as at Sekolah Perjumpaaan at Midang Village. The school is different if compared to the formal school. It focuses on behavioral aspects to be changed. When teenagers study, they learn concepts and moral values to be practiced, such as sincerity, honesty, mercifulness, justice, benevolence, or being altruistic to the public (Katz et al., 1999). They should practice these moral values when interacting with others. Thus, teachers need an education-based community for their practice of teaching. The school also educates teenagers to be active in entrepreneurial economies, such as chicken poultry, fish breeding, and growing vegetables.

Given the description, this research aims to contextually explore how character education is implemented in the Sekolah Perjumpaan as a nonformal type of schooling. This exploration is significant to investigate a gap the government left where the community of Midang Village has filled the gap by playing important roles, such as molding good character in the local teenagers.

Research Method

The research method used was a case study with a qualitative approach stressing a social phenomenon, including the reinterpretation of experience, the establishment of sensitivity to the other, feelings, and the opinions of participants. These pieces of evidence were gained through interviews (Leavy, 2017). Mainly, the researchers focused on the data-gathering process through observation and interviews with mentors, religious leaders, governmental representatives, and members of the Midang Village community (de Jong & Berg, 2008). The researchers' position in the research was central; they were in the middle of the participants, their voices and thoughts, and our interpretation and understanding of their experiences (Leedy, Ormrod, & Johnson, 2019). Our presence there is considered active because we engaged in monitoring, observing, and being active in listening and talking without being subjective in intervention and without imposing and influencing the research process (Glesne, 2006). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) described such a situation as natural participation.

Before deploying in the research field, we invited the participants to engage in the research. The participants were invited through WhatsApp, and they agreed to involve. Based on the agreement, we came to the location at Midang Village to conduct observations and interviews. In our observations, we described the objective situation and considered our position to determine our roles as fair as possible (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It means that our roles as actors in this process are to understand and describe the phenomenon based on what we saw, felt, sensed, and heard (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

In detail, the following were our steps in conducting the process of data gathering, which include (1) the researchers conducted a primary observation by visiting the village from morning to evening in order to be familiar with the activities of the community, mainly with the activities of Sekolah Perjumpaan; (2) we conducted interviews with spiritual leaders, the teenagers, mentors of Sekolah Perjumpaan, members of the community by recording information with a mobile phone. Then we transcribed the information in the Microsoft Word



typewriter, and (3) we documented relevant information related to our research topic. With such a procedure, we were able to describe facts.

In the data analysis, we involved ourselves in organizing data, categorizing it, and making similarities and differences. Appropriation of categorizations was also made to follow the objectives of the research and questions. We followed steps in our analysis based on the frame suggested by Miles et al. (2014): data reduction, data display, and data verification. In brief, the characteristic of our description is a deductive method (Kumar, 2005).

Results and Discussion

Sekolah Perjumpaan (Social School): Agenda of the Community without Class

In order to preserve humanity's values as a spirit for all, there is a need for spirituality to be instilled in teenagers so that they can be sportive and yet be sincerely honest. The implant of human values such as solidarity among humankind must also be done to ease hate and prejudice. Negative values would last by themselves if good human values are practiced; whenever hate is rewarded by love, the hate will end (Fromm, 2019). The foundation of love and benevolence have been found in the Sacred texts of any religion, which says, "Love those who live in the world, then God in the heaven will love you." Included is what Sekolah Perjumpaan embraces, such as giving a reward by listening and paying attention to people when they are talking and accepting the conversation with an open heart.

Sekolah Perjumpaan suggests the concept of *perjumpaan* is to realize value-based teaching for the teenagers and the community in Midang Village, West Lombok, so that it may become an alternative education or a complement to their formal school, such as the regular school and *pesantren*. The objective of Sekolah Perjumpaan is to improve the morality of teenagers. It also implants humanity's values in them. Both cognitive and psychomotor aspects are two priorities of Sekolah Perjumpaan to develop.

In nurturing beauty, consciousness is an early foundation in shaping a harmonious environment, and success in a teaching process is correlated with methods and strategies because manifesting success needs structure and infrastructure behind achieving an objective. Thus, the teachers, when delivering a lesson, should commit to their students to lift collective consciousness for achieving social harmony (Bottomore, 1974; Rahim, 2020). To invent faithful, pious teenagers, Sekolah Perjumpaan has performed savvy work by engaging the community, so some families can release their children to participate. Through such engagement, the community and the teenagers could have mutual understanding and sharing. One of these, if through this nonformal education, is where they committed to improving the quality of humanity in the village. This method has pushed teenagers to acknowledge values and virtues that shape them as good humankind so they can make responsible selfdetermination over complicated issues.

Model of Character Education at Sekolah Perjumpaan

Education focuses on how humankind actualizes their potential, materializing in their attitudes and manifesting in their behavior. They also actualize their potential so they live wealthy, happily, and meaningfully and benefit others (Bagir, 2019). In the teaching process, Sekolah Perjumpaan has prioritized social aspects in the meeting or *perjumpaan*, which is positive for everyone because *perjumpaan* becomes a significant aspect in molding social character. In this context, Sekolah Perjumpaan has a significant role in building the consciousness of teenagers as well as tolerance and social acceptance.



Sekolah Perjumpaan functions as a catalyst in establishing mutual acceptance in human relations. The villagers will respect one another from healthy social meetings (perjumpaan). For this purpose, Seligman (2002) has mentioned that the role of positive psychology is to support the realization of the daily life of every person who wants a happy, healthy, and quality life. In this context, positive psychology relates to life in what we call "eudaimonia." Thus, positive psychology emphasizes the creation of people's welfare, happiness, optimism, and hope. Psychologists encourage people to live positively to achieve happiness (Seligman, 2002). Furthermore, according to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), the task of psychology does not merely help recover people who have a mental illness but also helps them live more productive and identify and develop their potential (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi 2000).

Essentially positive psychology has three main pillars. The first pillar is the positive life experience of an individual by exploring his or her positive emotion. The second pillar is the positive physical property of an individual, in which he or she explores his or her positive integrity, talents, and strengths. The third pillar is a positive community, where they explore positive social intuition, such as life moderation, strong family, and education, that encourages positive development (Aulia, 2015; Guritno et al., 2022).

Relative to how the researchers perceive social harmony (Bottomore, 1974), Sekolah Perjumpaan has the main role of bearing humankind with a sense of gratefulness because they feel happy and are respected due to acceptance. The gratefulness then triggers a condition of positive psychology that enhances mental health. An individual is said to have positive mental health if he or she has a high level of psychological healthiness and a low level of stress (Aziz, Wahyuni, & Wargadinata, 2017). With such conditions, the concept of 'humankind' is not the subject of mental illnesses but a field of fortune. In brief, positive psychology teaches humankind to enjoy life (Manurung, 2010).

In the context of mutual acceptance, the teenagers have accepted Sekolah Perjumpaan as a vital means to practice spiritual teachings. The unofficial curriculum of Sekolah Perjumpaan follows local Islamic traditions and practices in the community. The common practice seen as greeting each other when meeting, such as that has been modelled by the Prophet, "*assalam alaikum*" which means "may blessing be always addressed upon you". From this daily practice, members of the community of Sekolah Perjumpaan disseminate such a good practice all over the community. It also motivates community members to recognize the various backgrounds of citizens living together in a community. Such encouragement is in line with the philosophy of Indonesia. With the recognition of six or more living religions in Indonesian society, it is discouraged if someone looks down on a religion other than he or she embraces. Sekolah Perjumpaan thus has a slogan that reads, "We must be better until we do not have the chance to meet and speak." This slogan becomes the spirit of Sekolah Perjumpaan.

The good standing of nurturing Sekolah Perjumpaan is inseparable from how community members communicate, so it is essential to build the youth's character in experiencing daily life. Language is an identity that characterizes humankind (Yudibrata, 1998), and this means that language used by community members is to work and collaborate because 'humankind' is a working person (Snijders, 2004). In interaction and self-identification, language in human life has a greater function, namely to enhance the human capability of language, which mirrors social aspects (Dardjowidjojo, 2003).

The pioneers of positive psychology contend that life will be more meaningful if it is developed effectively. Positive aspects are positive emotion, integrity, courtesy, smartness,



and glory in what we have and earn in a day. These aspects support humankind in developing integrity (Yudhawati, 2018). In addition, the establishment of Sekolah Perjumpaan as the basis of character education, which is positive, particularly among teenagers, enables them to show their grace and gratefulness, their listening to others, their sincerity, respectfulness, and responsibility in order to mitigate conflicts in society. Sekolah Perjumpaan has taught harmonious relationships in social environments to refine the social vision of teenagers. Formatting a visioner environment can teach teenagers to share roles and educate them about tolerance. Tolerance is an attitude of someone in respecting differences in terms of religion, race, and ethnicity (Zamroni, 2011).

Molding character toward a life change among teenagers is more challenging than we imagine. The presence of Sekolah Perjumpaan is one of the social methods of how the community molds character by instilling humanity values, in which someone should take a premier self-consciousness rather than personal ego to build love among humankind. In this context, Sekolah Perjumpaan has provided a space for their social activities to fill their spare time and revitalize interrelationships for embracing positive norms. Thomas Lickona (2012) has defined *character education* as human efforts for mutual help so that one is aware of understanding and recognizing others and instilling ethical values. In a broader sense, Lickona (2012) mentioned that character education is a conscious effort to materialize courtesy, namely the quality of humanity, not only for individuals but also for society (Lickona, 2012). During recruitment, mentors at Sekolah Perjumpaan usually solicit teenagers to meet their promises to reward them with benevolence. It aims to recognize again the commitment Sekolah Perjumpaan has made to realize the promise. Moreover, this all is a human value in line with a religious value practiced by the community.

Internalizing Character Values at Sekolah Perjumpaan

Gordon Allport has defined *value* as an ideological commitment of someone to behave on his or her choice. Such value is placed in a critical position when humankind encounters many choices for doing something related to himself or themselves. Still related, Daroeso has defined value as having three bases: (1) a value is an abstract reality that can be implemented. However, the practice of a value can only be observed as someone has honesty. It is a value we cannot see; (2) value is normative, meaning it contains wish and hope. In brief, value has ideal characteristics. The value manifests as a norm as the basis for humankind to behave, such as justice. All people need to behave in a way that mirrors a just value, and (3) a value is a motivating factor to support what humankind does. For example, humankind acts rudely because they are enforced by specific values they hold firmly.

Generally speaking, value is divided into two parts: values of being and values of giving. Values of being are things inside humankind that develop into behavior, such as when treating others. Honesty, brevity, loving peace, sincerity, potentiality, discipline, being moderate, genuine, and adaptability are included. Additionally, value is considered urgent, and it must be practiced to be accepted as equal to what was given, such as loyalty, trustworthiness, respect, love, grace, sensitivity, altruism, benevolence, generosity, justice, and mercy. Educating someone only to think with his or her intelligence and without morality builds a menace in social life (Otaya, 2014).

In the context of the community of Sekolah Perjumpaan, there is a jargon that says, "We are all teachers, and all places are schools. Sekolah Perjumpaan uses this jargon to mold the character of the teenagers. This has become the foundation for teenagers to continue learning and interacting with one another. The interaction which occurs in Sekolah



Perjumpaan during the teaching and learning processes is egalite. A teenager with the other is saying '*kakak*' and '*adik*' (older and younger brother), so they will not feel as if they feel gaps when the interaction occurs because this will trigger inconvenience. At the same time, this can also consider an ice breaker before, during, and after the process, which is also a tool for a mutual reminder between the teacher and the teenagers. With such a method, each interaction with other humans is a place for learning (Interview with Fariqul Umam, 2022).

Interpersonal interaction is done through language. However, sometimes is conducted in the form of a communicative attitude. In this way, language becomes a source of issues, for example, due to the inaccuracy of using inappropriate or impolite language. It becomes one stress of Sekolah Perjumpaan, where the teenagers are suggested to use polite and formal language when they speak either with those who are older or with young people and children. Accordingly, Habermas stated that attitude and social interaction are determined by language to tailor tolerance between one another in public spaces (Fay, 1996; Fultner, 2014).

In order to interact harmoniously, Sekolah Perjumpaan motivates teenagers to enrich their person-to-person interaction, as it plays an essential role in building the world view for mutual respect for one another. To stress character and human values, Sekolah Perjumpaan encourages everyone to sustain responsibility, mutual respect, greeting, smiling, listen while speaking, and prioritizing moral standing (Fultner, 2014).

Internalizing character values in Sekolah Perjumpaan's milieu is done through informal learning, sharing experience, conducting and practicing goodness, or outreach programs in society. Moreover, in many aspects, Sekolah Perjumpaan emphasizes entrepreneurial competence, which aims to motivate teenagers to learn and become wise through language, social meetings (perjumpaan), and behavior. Using language is to practice how to receive guests and serve them. For this aim, discrimination is forbidden in this context as one should be a humanist rather than a discriminator for another who lives in the same environment. One should not look at the differences and originalities of people; instead, one should stick to the core values of Sekolah Perjumpaan to wove connectedness and closeness. Internalizing these values is one of the ways of instilling character values for protecting teenagers from moral deviance, such as crimes, and juvenile delinquency, including but not limited to drug and alcohol abuse.

There are two schools of psychology, and these two schools are in contradiction one against the other in seeing the process of obtaining value. The first is nativism, or what some scholars call naturalism, which suggests values as the process of regeneration from native characters that one owns (originality). Therefore, heredity has been critical in claiming values (Dewey, 2004; Ehlers & Lee, 1963). The second school is empiricism, which suggests obtaining values as the result of social interaction between an individual and the other and with the environment (Ballantine et al., 2022; Tomlinson, 2017). Thus, the roles of parents, the teacher, and society are maintained in the locale that becomes the residence in which he or she lives. Thus, empiricism becomes an influencing factor for a teenager in internalizing values (Kneller, 1984). However, there is a school that bridges the two schools called Convergence. This third school perceives that someone's values are influenced by heredity and environment (Dewey, 2004; Ehlers & Lee, 1963; Kneller, 1984).

Conclusion

The results of the data analysis conclude that (1) the teenagers at Midang Village have successfully retained their morality values taught in Sekolah Perjumpaan for creating social harmony for all members of the community of Sekolah Perjumpaan by devoting social norms



either in the community or the school because social harmony roots in love and closeness, as well as in humankind who do not repress the other. (2) social integration is built through the values of Sekolah Perjumpaan, language, and positive emotion because these values can be instilled through social meetings (perjumpaan). These can be norms to mitigate problems related to juvenile delinquency.

Recommendation

This research has an open window for inclusive thoughts of future researchers who will study Sekolah Perjumpaan more deeply. Thus, future researchers on Sekolah Perjumpaan should focus on the psychological aspects of teenagers, so broader perspectives of teenage learners can be explored to become a novelty of knowledge and a new theory. The research also recommends that policy makers, such as the community leaders, the district chiefs, and the regency governments, should take concrete actions to build youths' character, as this is the foundation for building the nation. Finally, the research recommends that mentors of Sekolah Perjumpaan should bear their essential roles to the public that this nonformal education is critical, and stakeholders should share their contribution to molding the youths' character. The mentors should make notice to larger societies that youths' character building today is the priority, so everyone is responsible for his or her contribution.

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