



SOCIAL CARE CHARACTER BUILDING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD IN CIREBON CITY

Fitri Meliani¹, Qorina Widadiyah², Lina Marliani³, Meylina Gita⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Islam Bunga Bangsa

Email: fithinker1453@gmail.com ¹, qorinawida@gmail.com ², qorinawida@gmail.com ³, meylinagita@bungabangsa.com ⁴

Abstract:

This article aims to examine how schools build social care characters in early childhood through storytelling and market day. This is a preventive effort against the decline in social skills and empathy in early childhood, along with the challenges of technological development. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the type of field research (field research) in the context of a case study. The subjects of this study were teachers of classes A and B. The methods used were observation, interviews (to principals and teachers) and documentation at Taud Saqu Al Binaa Kota Cirebon. The results showed that Taud Saqu Al Binaa conducted social care character education at early childhood by compiling programs in the form of storytelling of the Palestinian people's conflict and market day in the context of fundraising (philanthropy) to help Palestinians who are experiencing conflict with Israel. One of the attempts to build social care to children is by integrating this kind of behavior in their daily lives so as to make them get accustomed to the attitudes and actions. The process of inculcating social care characters in students, there are two stages: first is the example of the teacher; second is habituation that must be done continuously. Meanwhile, in strengthening the two stages, several programs, namely: philanthropy, takjil on the road, donations for victims of natural disasters, social services, distribution of qurban meat and qurban food security.

Keywords: *Character Building, Social Care, Early Childhood Education*

INTRODUCTION

It becomes an interesting thing if philanthropy is associated with education, especially Islamic education. In the urgency of education, apart from being a transfer of knowledge, education also functions as a transfer of value. That is, Islamic education here serves as an agent for social change organized by educational institutions. In this regard, it is more specific that formal education serves as a process of social renewal. Therefore, there is a very wide space to connect philanthropy and Islamic education. Philanthropic values such as the habit of giving back out of love for others can be transferred through learning in Islamic education, especially in formal institutions. The purpose of this is none other than to cultivate philanthropic spirits, namely the habit of social behaviors such as giving to others which is instilled through education. It is also based that in Islam humans are encouraged to love each other, help, as a form of application as real humans in social life. Thus, there is a harmony between Islamic philanthropy and Islamic education (Devianti et al., 2020).

Social behaviors that develop in early childhood are behaviors that are formed based on the foundation laid in infancy. Some are new forms of social behavior and have new grounds. Many of these new foundations are fostered by social relationships with peers outside the home and things watched from television or story books (Sholekah,

2020). In line with that, the results of research that has been conducted by Alicia Benavides-Nieto in (Istiana, 2022) said that the highest socialization life in human life begins in early childhood. Therefore, it is important to instill forms of positive behavior in children from an early age so that when the character they get will become a habit for them.

Based on the results of research conducted by Boston University (Johnson & Merry G, 2016) shows that the ability to have empathy in young people has decreased by 40% over the last 10 years, along with the development of technology and the internet. It is undeniable that technological advances along with the presence of smartphones also play a role in decreasing empathy in the younger generation, because the higher the sense of empathy, the lower the addiction to smartphones and vice versa (Anthony Jnr. et al., 2019). Some of these sources prove that the rapid development of technology now has an impact on the social development of society, increasingly becoming an anti-social person and does not care about the surroundings because it is too focused on life in cyberspace. Actually, there are many activities that can foster a sense of social care, one of which is to help, especially help in kindness. As Allah Almighty says in the passage of Surah Al-Maidah verse 2 which means: "And help you in (doing) virtue and piety, and do not help in committing sins and transgressions. And be fearful of Allah, verily Allah is very heavy in His torment". This verse shows that the Qur'an has for hundreds of years advocated the concept of help.

Storytelling is the activity of conveying a message, an information, or just a fairy tale story that is conveyed directly to others, using or without tools, by the person who conveys the story. With the application of storytelling, children can get value from the stories read by the teacher and apply them in everyday life. Storytelling allows children's facial expressions to develop according to how they feel when they hear the story (Rahmawatiningsy, 2020). The storytelling method is a method that is preferred when used as a method in the process of children's education is to help children learn what is expected from a story by the way the teacher provides material that is in accordance with their abilities and intellectual development. This means that they can think, express attitudes, and skillfully act according to the content of the story. In addition, this method also accommodates the characteristics of children with high imagination and fantasy power (Retnasari et al., 2023).

Market day is one of the programs of Entrepreneurship Education promoted by the government in order to internalize entrepreneurial spirits from an early age. This program is carried out so that children can implement directly in the field how the process of buying and selling transactions. Market day is also one of the places to instill character in children (Areli, 2018). The implementation of market day can be used to foster creativity in children, love to share, problem-solving skills, and decide problems (Ayuningtyas & Hidayah, 2022). In the process of market day activities, students will integrate the process of buying and selling transactions from the production process to the sale of the product. During the process, the role of teachers and parents is needed as companions. While other students will act as consumers who are the sales target of the products that have been prepared (Muhammad Ghozali & Rahayu Apridayanti, 2022).

The implementation of storytelling and market day has been carried out in several schools in Cirebon City, including Taud Saqu Al Binaa Kota Cirebon, in its implementation, storytelling and market day, there are no written and standardized guidelines even though many schools have implemented this program. On the other hand, the implementation of this program is eagerly awaited by students because this activity is one of the fun activities because they learn to play chili sauce. To realize the same quality of storytelling and market day implementation, it is necessary to have guidelines used in the implementation and also the administrative system. This is because the implementation only relies on teacher participation.

Early Childhood Education Institutions (PAUD), which is the second environment for children after the family environment, also play an important role in instilling character values in early childhood. Birhan et al. (2021) said that children's

personalities can be influenced by the school environment, therefore ECCE plays a significant role in providing direction for further development. ECCE with a positive atmosphere will encourage children to act positively by using common sense in dealing with various problems, and vice versa. That is, if the child is in an environment that embodies a sense of social care, they will learn to be a caring person, for example by helping friends when difficult and also willing to share with friends in need.

RESEARCH METHODS

Based on the type of data, researchers choose to use qualitative research. The type of approach that researchers apply to qualitative research is in the form of a descriptive approach, which describes the solution of existing problems based on data. In other words, the goal is to find answers to phenomena using systematic scientific procedures. In qualitative research, field notes are very important to be used in data collection in the field because field notes are the main tool attached to various qualitative data collection techniques (Moleong, 2018). Data collection techniques through the use of observation, interview techniques and documentation. Observation or observation of the implementation of children's activities before and after storytelling activities on the process of growing social care for children aged 5-6 years. Interviews with teachers were conducted after researchers made observations to find out the characteristics of each student. After conducting interviews and obtaining student data, researchers applied the storytelling method with the help of teachers. The next interview was conducted after the storytelling application activity to find out the changes in each child's attitude. Data analysis techniques with the use of the following step stages: data acquisition, data reduction, data presentation, inference, and validation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Care Character Education Practices, Humans living in this world definitely need other humans to carry out their lives, because basically humans are social creatures, according to social beings means that life is alone but most of their lives are interdependent, which in the end will achieve relative balance. Therefore, humans should have social concern for others in order to create balance in life. Social care is an attitude and action that always wants to give help to the community or others in need.

Meanwhile, according to the PAUD Study Center of the Yogyakarta State University Research Institute, social care or caring for others is an attitude of children who are able to understand the condition of others according to the views of others, not according to their own views. Understanding this attitude should be by practice in the way the child is exposed to real situations. Social care is a sense of care that arises from within oneself to whatever is in the environment around us. Social care comes from the word "care" is a sense of attention and "social" is an environment to interact with. Social care can also be interpreted as a sense of concern that arises from within us towards the environment around us. Social care comes from the sensitivity of the heart that knows no difference and also expects self.

Concern is an attitude and action that always seeks to prevent and correct deviations and damage (humans, nature and order) around him. The character of caring is very important and must be maintained as a form of unity spirit that must always be firmly held by each member of society. Deva & Putri (2022) said that the factor that causes the decline in social concern is due to technological advances. These technologies include: Using internet, Entertainment facilities or games, and TV Shows.

Social care is a character value that should be instilled from an early age to children, especially in this day and age children prefer to play with gadgets. Introducing gadgets in early childhood can certainly have a positive and negative impact simultaneously on children. Based on observations, during school hours some parents did not immediately take their children to go home, but talked first with the class teacher. That's when the child approaches his parents to borrow a smartphone and then runs the game application while waiting. This has the potential to make children's empathy

decrease, because indirectly children prefer to play gadgets alone rather than playing in the school yard with their friends. Even if his friend approaches, it is only limited to being a spectator because the child is engrossed in playing games and does not necessarily want to lend his smartphone. In fact, at other times there are children who become angry while playing smartphones because they feel disturbed by the presence of friends who watch and talk a lot.

In the formation of social care characters, aspects of development that are felt to have a relationship are social emotional aspects. The following are social emotional indicators applied in Taud Saqu Al Binaa Cirebon City including: a) Willing to give and apologize; b) Play together (snakes and ladders game, etc.); c) Work independently; d) Dare to go to and from school alone (for those whose homes are close to school); e) Play according to the type of game he chooses; f) Dispose of garbage in its place; g) Tidying up toys after use; h) Comply with applicable regulations; i) Go to school on time; j) Communicate with friends when experiencing disasters (pain, sadness, etc.). The results showed that the social-emotional aspects applied in learning activities at Taud Saqu Al Binaa Cirebon City were appropriate, with reference to Permendikbud Number 137 of 2014 concerning Standards for Child Development Achievement Levels.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of National Education (Koesoema, 2007), some strategies or ways that can be done in cultivating social care characters through school culture are as follows:

Providing Facilities for Social Action and Social Service Activities In this case, the school provides facilities for social activities and social service of students, social service activities can be in the form of distribution of basic necessities to local residents, distribution of zakat, or distribution of sacrificial meat during Eid al-Adha. **Providing Donation Facilities** Providing donation facilities means that schools provide a place for students to make donations by means of alms or infaq every week, every day and others.

Collecting Money for Natural Disaster Victims In this activity, it means that when natural disasters occur such as floods, earthquakes or other disasters, the school conducts fundraising activities which will later be given to victims of natural disasters.

Creating Class Harmony In this activity, students are expected to create a peaceful and peaceful learning environment, respect and respect the opinions of their friends, help each other and others. **Empathizing with Friends** In this activity, it is more about the nature of empathy or caring nature of students, such as loving each other between friends and school residents, helping others and others, so that later social care characters will be created.

According to the above statement it can be said that, school is not only a place to learn to improve intellectual abilities, but also develop and expand children's social experience in order to get along with others in society. Among examples of forms of social care at school are: helping friends who are experiencing difficulties, helping teachers and school staff who are experiencing difficulties, thanking people who provide assistance, collecting infaq every Friday, being able to work together with all friends, visiting friends, participating in mutual cooperation in the school environment, sharing food and drinks with friends and so on.

Storytelling the Story of Palestine on Early Childhood, In according with the Ministry of Regulation, that PAUD is a strategy fostering children from birth to the age of 6 years which is carried out by providing educational stimulation that aims to help optimize growth and development both physically and spiritually so that children have readiness to continue their education to the next level. Taud Saqu Al Binaa is located on Jalan Satria Gang Anyelir Masjid Al Binaa, Warnasari Kelurahan Kesambi, Cirebon, Indonesia, West Java. The establishment of this institution in 2012 was due to the anxiety of seeing the phenomenon of the lack of awareness and concern of parents towards children's education at an early age.

Many children in the area do not receive attention for their growth and development even though there is a posyandu. So, even though they don't have their own building, they are trying to create an early childhood education institution,

which at that time even rents people's land and builds semi-permanent buildings. This institution from year to year continues to increase, that can be seen by the number of students who continue to grow. Even from the results of an interview with Nurhayati, as the Head of PAUD Taud Saqu Al Binaa, she explained that students who attend this institution do not only come from one village but also from various villages even from Cirebon City, but also from outside the city. The existence of trust from the wider community due to the good quality of education can be seen from some of the achievements obtained and also the output of students.

Taud Saqu Al Binaa carries out storytelling of the Palestinian conflict which is packaged through stories that attract children's attention to children aged 5-6 years practiced by teachers. The story is presented in the form of a story entitled "About Gaza" which is loaded with Palestinian Islamic cultural values such as divinity, the spirit of struggle, and humanity. In addition, if examined further, the story in this fairy tale also invites the public to remember and apply Indonesian values such as the value of solidarity between people and the spirit of unity which has indirectly eroded along with the era of globalization. This "About Gaza" story is practiced by teachers, with the medium of hand puppets. The school presents such a story because the author is well aware that the child's world is play and storytelling. The teacher presents a story full of the values mentioned above so that Indonesian children learn the value of eastern culture again.



Image 1. Building empathy through storytelling about the conflict in Palestine

The choice of Taud Saqu Al Binaa as the place for writing was carried out for a number of reasons, namely because the PAUD is often a private elementary school based on Islam so that Palestinian material that is thick with religious-Islamic nuances will be more easily captured by children. The last reason is because issues related to Palestine are still very rarely raised at storytelling moments in schools so that there is little understanding of Palestine that children understand.

The results of research at Taud Saqu Al Binaa are that before storytelling, children with low social have less behavioral problems, one of which is difficulty adjusting attitudes with their friends. Then, researchers with the help of teachers provide treatment in the form of storytelling for 1 days with a duration of 60 minutes. The results of the study were proven by observation where it was found that storytelling was proven to improve children's social skills, this was by showing children's social abilities that were able to adjust to their friends. It can be seen that when the teacher gives group assignments, children can be cooperative or cooperate with their group mates. Observations made by researchers also found that of the 9 children who were the focus of this study, there were still 1 children who had a low behavioral improvement.

This was then followed up by an interview with the teacher. The question asked by the researchers was "what is behind the low results of the two children? From the results of teacher interviews, it is stated that there are 2 factors behind this problem,

namely the child's environment and parenting. Environment is one of the factors that can affect children's social development, especially in the family environment. The family environment is the closest environment to the child. Children with the initials AR are in a family environment where parents are busy with work, and interact less with children. The family environment is the first and foremost aspect in influencing child development. Children spend more time in the family environment, so the family has a lot of role in shaping children's behavior and personality and giving real examples to children.

Based on the results of interviews with teachers, it is known that AR at home is more often with his grandparents, so he spends more time playing at home and is less able to interact with peers in the environment where he lives. This causes when at school less able to socialize with friends. Socialization is a process where children train their sensitivity to social stimuli and learn to get along with others in their social environment (Nurhafizah, 2018). The social development of children is also very dependent on the individual child, the role of parents, and the child's family environment. When at home, AR used to play alone and was not used to sharing toys with his friends. The condition of children who are only at home and rarely play outside the house with their friends, causes children to be less able to interact and cooperate with their friends. So even though storytelling treatment is given, it is still not optimal to grow the character of social care in children. This can be seen from his attitude that children still do not want to share with their friends.

Based on the students' responses to the Arab-Palestinian folktale "About Gaza," it can be concluded that the audience's feedback indicates positive results, suggesting that storytelling media is an effective means of introducing foreign cultural values to children. Some of the key points include:

Storytelling Can Change Children's Mindsets, After the storytelling session, the knowledge of most children, who initially thought of Palestine as a group of people (not a country) being hurt by another group named Israel, has changed. This proves that storytelling can broaden their understanding of the conveyed content (the story about Gaza).

Storytelling Can Serve as a Means of Introducing Islamic Cultural Values, According to the findings, students became aware of Palestinian issues during the storytelling activity. All children expressed that they really liked the story and empathized with the situation of their siblings in Palestine. This demonstrates that storytelling can captivate students, implying that they have become "immersed" in the narrative.

Storytelling Is Often Used for Educational Purposes, The storyteller conveying the folktale is their teacher. This proves that storytelling is well-established in the educational world for delivering instructional content.

Storytelling Can Convey a Message Unconsciously, A message that is effectively conveyed but processed unconsciously by the listeners indicates that the message has entered their subconscious minds. **Storytelling Can Create Sympathy and Empathy,** All students expressed sadness because their friends in Palestine currently need assistance. They all stated that they want to help Palestine. In a concrete manner, the children are ready to assist the school in organizing Market Day and allocate the proceeds from their sales to be donated to the people of Palestine..

Fundraising Care for Palestine through Market Day, From the image below, it can be seen that Taud Saqu Al Binaa has Hold a Market Day for funding to help brothers in Palestine. There are three obstacles faced by teachers in Market Day activities on the social-emotional abilities of children aged 5-6 years. First, teachers still experience a lack of accompanying teachers, because student easily make noise with emotions at will regardless of educators. Second, teachers still experience obstacles in the buying and selling process, namely students have difficulty in summing, making them less confident between sellers and buyers. Third, teachers are still experiencing problems in controlling the location of Market Day activities. In an activity if the educator does not master the

location of the activity, it will be difficult to guide students well, and students will be confused about what they will do.

Market day is realized by Taud Saqu Al Binaa by providing opportunities for children to sell in the form of food, healthy and nutritious drinks or other forms of creativity. However, parents are still assisted in this case to provide home-made food (processed food) in collaboration with their children or still facilitated, for example fried rice, traditional cakes and contemporary cakes and so on. It is indeed regulated by the school not to recommend products made or sold using micin, preservatives, instant noodles, sausages, renteng drinks, artificial sweeteners, apartam and others that can endanger health, especially for children. Furthermore, when it is the child's turn to become a seller, parents prepare a plan of what food will be sold during the market day with the provisions that have been given from the school, starting from choosing the menu that has been observed by the child during the market day Sunday before so that it can be adopted. Selling food with safe packaging (not easily spilled) to keep it neat and clean when consumed. Then if the food you want to keep warm while on sale, parents can deliver the food close to the execution time.



Image 2. Fundraising through Market Day

The existence of this program makes students happy to come to school and eager to follow learning because there are various kinds of food choices sold in the school environment, children like affordable prices and there are those who supervise so that the food eaten will be hygienic. Market day activities make students enthusiastic in following, because the rules applied at school are not allowed to bring pocket money and cannot snack outside school during class hours. The policy on the market day program at Taud Saqu Al Binaa school allows students to bring pocket money, but some or all of the money can be infused on Fridays, which is limited to a maximum of Rp.10,000 per person.

As for the exposure that has been described, it can be concluded that the market day program applied in educational institutions makes school residents, both teachers, students, and parents can establish good communication and work together in fostering entrepreneurial character in children since the golden age. The existence of a market day held in a school creates an active and pleasant school atmosphere so that the school becomes a place that students miss and becomes a *doroangan* to go to school and follow learning. In addition, from this explanation, the main core can be taken for the development of children in the future, namely the market day program can give birth to an Islamic generation with entrepreneurial characters such as spirit (cheerful), never give up, get used to a healthy lifestyle, tenacious, conscientious, honest, obey the rules taught by Islam and still set aside benefits for the afterlife (grateful). In addition, students also learn to help the difficulties of brothers and sisters in Palestine.

Based on the research findings, the researcher suggests that teachers should prepare activities thoroughly, including arranging the place and preparing the necessary items for the market day event. Additionally, assistant teachers should be involved to

ensure that the market day activities can run optimally. Furthermore, teachers should clearly and comprehensively explain the rules and concepts of the market day so that the children do not feel confused during the event. For the school, it is advisable to utilize existing facilities to support the market day activities. For example, the spacious school yard can be used as the venue for the market day event. Additionally, the school's proximity to places selling traditional food can be utilized for conducting market day activities outside the school premises.

CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it can be concluded that the integration of social care education in *storytelling* and *market day* activities contributes significantly to the development of student character. These findings provide a theoretical and practical basis for educators who want to implement a holistic approach in character education. Palestinian storytelling methods can foster the social care character of children aged 5-6 years. This can be seen in changes in children's attitudes before and after storytelling. The child seems more enthusiastic and steeped in what is explained, and after doing the *storytelling method* the child's curiosity increases. The character value of social care through *market day* can be obtained from habituation activities applied in the daily lives of children aged 5-6 years such as working together in selling goods and the proceeds of the sale are collected for charity, sharing with relatives in Palestine, accustoming children for responsibility, cooperation with other children, as well as knowing money. With the results of this study, it is hoped that teachers can use it as input when determining or choosing learning methods to improve the implementation of learning in the classroom. The limitation of this study was that it was studied for children aged 5-6 years by improving children's social-emotional abilities. For further research, you can use market day activities. For educators, it is expected to focus more on assisting learners and accompanying teachers, preferably more so that accompanying teachers can focus on children who still need assistance and motivation from educators.

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