



A Comparative Analysis of Character Education in Low-Grade Students in China and Indonesia

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Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang Pendidikan karakter di Dua Negara dengan latar belakang budaya dan kondisi serta ideologi yang berbeda yaitu Cina dan Indonesia. Untuk itu analisis ini dibuat sebagai perbandingan pelaksanaan pendidikan karakter di Cina dan Indonesia dengan tujuan nantinya dapat diterapkan dalam perencanaan pendidikan karakter yang dapat di aplikasikan di sekolah. Analisis ini menggunakan teknik literatur dengan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dimana informasi dikumpulkan dari berbagai jurnal-jurnal pendidikan budaya dan sumber sumber lainnya yang berkaitan dengan topik pembahasan. Analisis mendapatkan dua buah negara meletakkan pendidikan karakter sebagai tonggak utama pembentuk kurikulum pendidikan. Namun terdapat perbedaan konten kurikulum, interpretasi karakter, dan metode pengimplementasian. Cina melaksanakan pendidikan karakter dengan literasi *Di Zi Gui* bermanfaat dalam penguatan moral dan budi pekerti. Dan Indonesia melaksanakan Pendidikan karakter melalui nilai-nilai Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Karakter, Pendekatan Karakter, Literasi *Di Zi Gui*, Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila

Abstract

*This article discusses Character Education in Two Countries with different cultural backgrounds, conditions and ideologies, namely China and Indonesia. For this reason, this analysis was made as a comparison of the implementation of character education in China and Indonesia with the aim that it can later be applied in character education planning that can be applied in schools. This analysis uses qualitative literature techniques, where information is collected from various cultural education journals and other sources related to the topic of discussion. The analysis found that two countries place character education as the main pillar in forming the education curriculum. However, there are differences in curriculum content, character interpretation, and implementation methods. China implements character education with *Di Zi Gui* literacy, which strengthens morals and character. And Indonesia implements character education through the values of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project.*

Keywords: Character Education, Character Curriculum, Literacy in *Zi Gui*, Profile Strengthening Project Pancasila Students

Introduction

The development of the 21st century today is marked by the development and use of information and communication technology in all aspects of life. Technology can connect the world beyond geographical barriers so that the world becomes borderless, technological advances have also affected almost every aspect of our lives, including education.

Education is also a major milestone in any systematic development of a country. A country can be said to develop when the educational processes in its country can be in line and in harmony with the ideology of the country itself. Education is the forefront in giving birth to a generation that is the nation's ideal. The quality of education has an impact on human resources because through quality education, differences in the achievements and careers of community

members will be created (Putri et al., 2022; Syukri, 2019). Quality education is not only focused on empirical achievements, but also aims to develop students who are knowledgeable and become good individuals, namely individuals who grow up with moral personalities (Arthur, 2014; Nucci, 2019, Lickona, 2018).

Growing individuals with moral personalities cannot necessarily grow on their own, but through a continuous process of education and training known as character education. This is in line with character education is a solution to the problem of moral deterioration and improving the quality of human resources as the foundation of nation development (Dr. Jessica, 2017).

In Indonesia itself, this character education must also be adjusted to the ideology of Pancasila as the main focus of the educational curriculum. Pancasila is understood by Indonesia as a state ideological philosophy that can have a positive impact on the development of an order system, including the educational order, especially character education. From Pancasila, steps that can grow an individual's Morals to become a good individual and have the character of Pancasila values are known as the Strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile Project.

Furthermore, in China, Character Education is integrated with tradition and culture based on the Historical Ideology known as Literacy Di Zi Gui. In classical Chinese literacy activities, *Di Zi Gui* (弟子規) education is not only reading and writing, but also includes practice and social interaction in relation to knowledge, language and culture. *Di Ze Gui* is a book that contains guidelines and standards for being a good child and disciple based on the teachings of Confucius (Kuangfei, 2016). Until from the two philosophies embraced from these two countries, it is hoped that it can provide the effectiveness of good character education for the growth and development of the morals of the nation's successors.

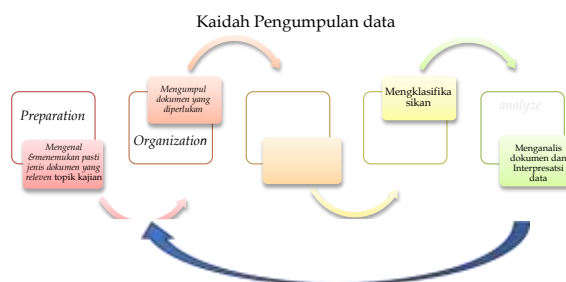
For this reason, the effectiveness of character education cannot be assessed through the delivery of knowledge alone, but requires systematic planning that includes character elements such as teaching methods, environment and student readiness levels (Arthur, 2014; Nucci, 2018). Therefore, the analysis of this study is carried out to explain the approach to character education in both countries with the ideological philosophy that underlies character education in the two countries. Which is

expected to be a comparison for a certain country as an added value that can be applied in the educational process, especially in Indonesia itself.

Method

This article is analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method where the study of literature documents is in the form of literature. Data collection This analysis does not involve respondents but uses literature documents and journal articles as the primary source of study data. This analysis does not require respondents because the reviewer is the individual responsible for collecting, identifying and peeling the data. Until the interpretation of value-added data that will be applied in both countries. The data collection rules used in this qualitative descriptive method are as follows:

Tabel 1. Kaidah Pengumpulan Data



Result and Discussion

Character Education

According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI), education is the process of changing the attitudes and behaviors of individuals or groups as an effort to improve quality, mature human beings with learning, teaching and training efforts; process, methods and acts of education (Jensen, 2020). The definition of Education is a series of activities or learning processes that are carried out consciously by educators to improve students' competence and potential. In education, it is not only about subjects, but also the attitude, character and personality of a student.

Plato defined character as a person's ability to understand good things and do good things. Aristotle defined character as a person's ability to do good. Character cannot be built automatically but can be built through teaching, example and practice (Arthur, 2014).

According to Salahuddin and Alkrienciehie, character is a characteristic of an individual or a group of people that contains values, potential or ability, moral capacity, and tenacity in facing a challenge or difficulty (Gamal, 2020).

Meanwhile, according to (Anggreani et al.: 2021) character education is the process of implementing and instilling positive values in a person whose goal is to improve the quality of human beings as a whole, starting from thoughts, words, actions and deeds.

From some of the above understandings, it can be concluded that character education is a series of individual conscious processes to learn themselves in morals, attitudes, deeds, actions and words that aim to improve the quality of human beings as a whole.

Character Education Curriculum

The curriculum in Chinese schools has evolved over time as feedback on various factors, such as the economy, social demands, and advances in educational theory. One of the key aspects of the evolution of the curriculum in China is the emphasis on a holistic approach to education, which integrates academic subjects with practical skills and moral education. This moral education is also linked in the Chinese Curriculum which includes unique components such as the teaching of the country's traditional culture, values, and history.

The educational curriculum in China has developed from the ancient period to modern times in order to improve the quality of education for the community. Historically, China has been known for its well-organized education system and emphasis on discipline. In the past, the educational curriculum in China was focused on traditional learning such as Confucianism, mathematics, and language. And now it continues to develop and evolve by emphasizing the mastery of communication skills, critical thinking skills, and cooperation between students but still a strong character-based education.

Overall, the evolution of China's educational curriculum system reflects the country's commitment to creating a generation that is talented, innovative, and ready to compete at the global level while still possessing good Chinese cultural character. By continuing to carry out reforms and improvements, China seeks

to make its education system one of the world's foremost. (Arumi & Fatimaningrum, n.d.)

In line with that, the education system provided by China is a strong character-based education. Where the Chinese government pays special attention to its education sector. The fact is that it is implied that the Chinese education system before starting to learn, students will be invited to warm up, aiming to maintain body health and increase the spirit of living the day, pickets and school cleanliness will be carried out together. The goal is to improve student discipline through cleanliness, as well as cooperation, the habit of Chinese students to have self-study sessions, long Chinese education system, which provides good study time, gives time to Chinese students so that they can experience a nap after lunch and before lessons resume. (Wahab Shakhriani et al., 2022b)

From the explanation of the study above, it is clear that the Education Curriculum in China is integrated (intracurricular) in every learning at every level of education, starting from the level of basic education or known there as Basic Education. Furthermore, if we analyze comprehensively and comparatively, there must be a difference in the Character Education Curriculum in Indonesia itself, for character education to be a co-curricular learning that stands alone to be provided at every level of education. The co-curricular learning of character education which we know is the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project

Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 12 of 2024 concerning the Curriculum in Early Childhood Education, Primary Education Level, and Secondary Education Level, states that the curriculum structure contains intracurricular and co-curricular activities, and can contain extracurricular activities in accordance with the characteristics of educational units. In the explanation of co-curriculars, it is explained that co-curricular activities are learning activities that are carried out to strengthen, deepen, and/or enrich intracurricular activities in the context of developing students' character and competencies. These co-curricular activities are at least carried out in the form of a project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile (in equality education in the form of empowerment and skills based on the Pancasila student profile).

The curriculum of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project itself is designed for Indonesian students to have self-strengthening and practice the value of Pancasila as the ideology of the Indonesian state with the slogan "Indonesian students are lifelong learners who are competent, have character, and behave in accordance with the values of Pancasila." The Pancasila student profile is designed to answer one big question, namely students with what kind of profile (competence) the Indonesian education system wants to produce. In this context, the Pancasila student profile has competencies that complement the achievement of Graduate Competency Standards in terms of instilling the character of Pancasila values. This goal is also in line with the values built in Scouting education. The competency of the Pancasila student profile pays attention to internal factors related to the identity, ideology, and ideals of the Indonesian nation, as well as external factors related to the context of life and challenges of the Indonesian nation in the 21st Century which is facing the industrial revolution 4.0 period from kindergarten to higher education.

In Basic Education in Indonesia, the Character Education Curriculum Content of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project provides an experience of strengthening competency competencies which are formulated into six dimensions, including the six dimensions are: 1. Faith, fear of God Almighty, and have noble character. 2. Global diversity. 3. Work together. 4. Independent. 5. Critical reasoning. 6. Creative. The six are interrelated and strengthen so that efforts to realize a complete Pancasila student profile require the development of all these dimensions simultaneously. And from these dimensions it shows that the Pancasila student profile does not only focus on cognitive abilities, but also attitudes and behaviors according to one's identity as an Indonesian nation as well as a citizen of the world.

Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project as a Form of Indonesian Character Education

The Character Education Program in Indonesia in the independent curriculum and is running until now is known as the "Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project". The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project is cross-disciplinary collaborative learning in observing, exploring, and/or formulating solutions to real issues or problems that are

relevant to students (Ministry of Education and Culture Information Center; 2024).

The Pancasila student profile strengthening project is designed separately from intracurricular and focuses on looking at the process, namely the experience of students when undergoing the process of observation, data collection, processing, execution, evaluation, and reflection. Therefore, the implementation must be designed with sufficient time to be able to see the development of students' competencies and character.

The Pancasila student profile strengthening project, as one of the means of achieving the Pancasila student profile, provides an opportunity for students to "experience knowledge" as a process of strengthening character as well as an opportunity to learn from the surrounding environment. In this activity, students have the opportunity to learn important themes or issues such as climate change, anti-radicalism, mental health, culture, entrepreneurship, technology, and democratic life so that students can take real action in answering these issues according to their learning stages and needs. The Pancasila student profile strengthening project is expected to inspire students to contribute to the surrounding environment. (Satria et.al 2024)

The Pancasila student profile strengthening project is expected to inspire students to contribute to the surrounding environment with the implementation of Empowerment and Skills can use a project-based learning approach. For educational units that have been completed, they can carry out a project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students as a form of activity development. In the curriculum structure, the implementation of the Pancasila student profile strengthening project is contained in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture concerning the Early Childhood Education Curriculum, Primary Education Level, and Secondary Education Level which regulates that the curriculum structure consists of intracurricular and co-curricular. Co-curricular activities in PAUD education units and Primary and Secondary Education levels are implemented at least in the form of projects to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. Meanwhile, Equality Education is carried out through Empowerment and Skills based on Pancasila student profiles. It is hoped that the project to strengthen the Pancasila student profile can be an

optimal means in encouraging students to become lifelong learners who are competent, have character, and behave in accordance with Pancasila values.

Of course, the hope of the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students cannot solely run well without good implementation guidelines in the form of principles. For this reason, the Principles of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project are implemented in a holistic, conceptual, student-centered, and exploratory manner, among others.

Holistic means looking at something as a whole and comprehensively, not partially or separately. In the context of designing a project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students, a holistic framework encourages us to study a theme in its entirety and see the interconnectedness of various things to understand an issue in depth.

Furthermore, the second principle that serves as a guideline for the implementation of this strengthening project is the contextual principle, conceptual related to efforts to base learning activities on real experiences faced by students in daily life. This principle encourages educators and students to be able to make the surrounding environment and the reality of daily life the main material for learning.

Then the third principle is student-centered. The student-centered principle is related to a learning scheme that encourages students to become learning subjects who actively manage their learning process independently, including having the opportunity to choose. Educators are expected to carry out various roles that open up many opportunities for students to explore, no longer the 'main actor' who explains a lot of material or gives instructions.

The last is the exploratory principle, which is related to the spirit of opening a wide space for the process of self-development and inquiry. The exploratory principle is also expected to encourage the role of the Pancasila student profile strengthening project to fulfill and strengthen the abilities that students have obtained in intracurricular programs.

So that from some of these principles, it is hoped that the Pancasila Student Profile

Strengthening Project will provide benefits (Satria et al. 2024):

1. Developing competencies and strengthening the character of the Pancasila student profile to face the challenges of an increasingly complex world.
2. Hone initiative and participation to plan learning actively and sustainably.
3. Develop the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to do a series of activities at a certain time period.
4. Practice problem-solving skills in a variety of learning situations.
5. Showing responsibility and concern for issues in the surrounding environment as a form of learning outcomes.
6. Honing students' learning power and leadership in the learning process.

Based on some of the explanations above, it can be concluded that the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students co-curricular makes students in Indonesia more focused on developing and cultivating themselves in having religious character, independent responsibility, mutual cooperation, critical thinking and global perspective.

Literasi Di Zi Gui Sebagai Bentuk Penanaman Karakter di Cina

Literacy Di Zi Gui was written by the educational figure Li Yu Xiu, 2,000 years ago, based on the teachings of Confucius during the reign of Emperor Kangxi, during the Qing Dynasty. *Di Zi Gui* (弟子規) is a moral etiquette for students or children taken from Confucius' Analek book, Lun Yü / Holy Word, Chapter IV on "Lessons", then rearranged in words that are easier for a scholar, Jia Chun Ren of the Qing Dynasty (Hendri, 2011).

In Zi Gui, translated as Rules for Students or Standards for Being a Good Disciple, it was written during the Qing dynasty and emphasized the basic requirements for being a good disciple and getting along with others. Although this book is intended for students and children, it is applicable to all groups. The book is written in three verses and contains the following seven sections.

Through literacy, *Di Zi Gui* aims to teach moral values, ethics and harmony as listed in table 2 below.

Table 2. Literacy Programs in Zi Gui

Bab	Pedoman	Keterangan	Urutan
1	Berbakti Kepada Orang Tua	入則孝 / Rù Zé Xiào	2-7
2	Menghormati Senior dan Menyayangi Saudara / Junior	出則弟 / Chū Zé Tī	8-12
3	Mawan Diri	謹 / Jìn	13-18
4	Bisa Dipercaya	信 / Xìn	19-24
5	Mengatasi Sesama Manusia Tanpa Kecuali	泛愛眾 / Fàn Ài Zhòng	25-30
6	Bergaul Dengan Mereka yang Berkeabajikan	親仁 / Qīn Rén	31
7	Bila Waktu dan Tenaga Ada, Belajar Ilmu Sastra dan Seni	餘力學文 / Yú Lì Xué	32-34

From table 2, in general *Di Zi Gui* has 7 guidelines for being a good child and disciple, teaching five noble human qualities, namely (1) compassion, (2) chivalry, (3) moral or ethical order, (4) wisdom and (5) credibility. In addition, *Di Zi Gui* also teaches eight ethics, namely filial piety, brotherhood and respect for elders, loyalty, trustworthiness, ethics, truth, honesty, and self-knowledge (Sulistio, 2017).

Literacy in Zi Gui can be done 15-20 minutes before class starts, with the concept of reading mouth, eyes looking and hands pointing at the Mandarin character being read. This literacy aims to foster a sense and willingness in students that strengthens their character, improves the language skills of Chinese students and the ability to think rationally. The implementation of character education through literacy *Di Zi Gui* is integrating what is read in it Habituation of the network of learning activities at school, daily activities at home and in the community

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Based on the explanation above, we can take the implicit message that the Literacy habituation method in Zi Gui aims to strengthen the character given so that it can be applied continuously so that it becomes a habit that is inherent in students and is difficult to abandon.

Conclusion

Character education in the lower grades in Indonesia is carried out in a co-curricular program in the form of a project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. The Pancasila student profile strengthening project program has made a significant contribution to efforts to strengthen character education for low-grade students in Indonesia which can have several positive impacts, including, More meaningful learning: Soft skills development. Better student character: Multi-stakeholder involvement.

While in China Character Education is included in the Intracurricular program, through literacy habituation *Di Zi Gui* has become an integral part of character education in the lower grades of China. This classic text provides a strong moral foundation for children to grow into individuals with character and benefit society by focusing on Confucian values (social relationships, the value of politeness), manners, harmonious relationships from an early age, which are integrated in the daily life of students at school and at home so that the cultivation of this character can continue to grow throughout life and cannot be abandoned

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