THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN SHAPING STUDENTS' CHARACTER THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES (IPS) LEARNING

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the role of teachers in shaping students' character through Social Studies (IPS) learning. Teachers not only function as transmitters of knowledge but also serve as role models in instilling moral, social, and religious values in students. This research employs a library research method by gathering data from various literature sources such as books, journals, articles, and relevant documents related to character education and Social Studies instruction. The findings indicate that teachers make a significant contribution to character formation, particularly through exemplary behavior, habituation, and the integration of religious and social values within the learning process. Social Studies learning provides real-life contexts that enable students to understand values such as responsibility, cooperation, tolerance, environmental awareness, and citizenship. Moreover, character values aligned with Pancasila can be internalized through systematic and continuous learning activities. The discussion emphasizes that the success of character education is strongly influenced by the quality of the teacher's role, as teachers serve as figures who are looked up to and imitated. Collaboration between schools and families is also necessary to ensure consistent value reinforcement. Thus, Social Studies learning not only enhances students' cognitive abilities but also plays an essential role in building positive character needed in social life.

Keywords: Teacher's Role, Character Education, Social Studies Learning, Pancasila Values, Student Character Development

INTRODUCTION

Teachers hold a central role in the field of education, not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as key determinants of the success of the learning process. Education has significant importance in the continuous development of human potential. Beyond the mere transfer of knowledge, education plays a crucial role in shaping positive character and personality. Ki Hadjar Dewantara pioneered the early foundations of character, moral, and cultural education through the concept of the "three centers of education," namely the family environment, the school environment, and the social environment. Today, the school environment—particularly the role of teachers—has become a major factor in shaping students' character. The role of teachers in modern education has become increasingly complex. They function not only as academic instructors but also as educators of character, morality, and cultural values. Thus, teachers do more than guide students in understanding academic content; they also contribute significantly to the formation of positive character traits that will impact students' lives in meaningful ways.[1]

Therefore, understanding and implementing character education is essential for teachers. The school environment serves as a highly strategic setting for developing students' character. As educators, teachers bear significant responsibility in shaping a generation with strong character, culture, and moral values. Teachers are not only experts in academic instruction but also role models who contribute meaningfully to students' character formation. In addition to mastering academic content, teachers are responsible for character education, which forms the foundation for developing well-rounded individuals. This responsibility encompasses not only cognitive aspects but also social values such as tolerance, cooperation, mutual assistance, and respect.

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[1] (Tripusa, Mashudi, & Aminuyati, 2019, p. h. 2.)

Character education plays a crucial role in producing excellent individuals who possess not only strong cognitive abilities but also character traits that support success in various aspects of life.

The importance of Social Studies (IPS) learning in shaping students' character is emphasized in research conducted by Ali Ibrahim Akbar, as cited by Marhayani. According to his findings, a person's success is influenced only 20% by technical skills (hard skills), while as much as 80% is determined by non-technical skills (soft skills). From this explanation, it can be concluded that character formation holds a highly significant role. Students with strong mental abilities and good moral values are considered capable of developing distinguished personalities. The process of building character through Social Studies learning is not easy; it requires continuous effort to achieve outcomes aligned with national educational goals. Therefore, a sustained and consistent effort is necessary throughout the learning process. [2]

1. Definition of the Teacher's Role

In the field of education, the term "teacher" is not unfamiliar. In the traditional perspective, a teacher is regarded as an individual who deserves respect and serves as a role model. Being respected implies that their words are trustworthy, while being a role model means that their behavior should exemplify proper conduct within society. Recent shifts in teaching and learning paradigms have brought new expectations requiring teachers to enhance their roles and competencies. This is because the teaching process and students' learning outcomes are largely influenced by the role and competence of the teacher. Teachers with high competence are more effective in managing the classroom, enabling students to achieve optimal learning outcomes. [3]

A teacher has three main responsibilities: professional duties, humanistic duties, and social duties. A teacher's professional duties involve delivering knowledge, skills, and values that students have not yet learned but need to know. The humanistic duties of a teacher include helping students fulfill essential human tasks and develop themselves as fully as possible, including self-transformation, self-identification, and self-understanding. Through education, teachers are expected to help students develop their thinking or reasoning abilities so they can contribute creatively to the process of cultural transformation, leading to improvements in their own lives and the lives of the community in which they live. The social duties of a teacher include fulfilling responsibilities as a good citizen and participating in the application and practice of the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (UUD 1945). [4]

2. Definition of Character

The word "character" originates from the Greek word *charassein*, which means to engrave or carve. Initially, character was understood as a mark or distinctive feature, which later evolved into the idea that character reflects an individual's behavioral patterns and moral condition. As a person grows, their character develops from childhood and becomes something predictable, closely related to their surrounding behaviors. [5]

Character education is a deliberate effort to help individuals understand, internalize, and apply core ethical values. Based on this definition, when we consider the character we want to develop in students, the goal is for them to understand these values, give deeper attention to the truth of those values, and then apply them with conviction, even when faced with external or internal challenges and pressures. In other words, students are expected to have strong self-awareness in carrying out these values. [6]

3. Definition of Social Studies (IPS) Learning

The term *learning*, which is often associated with the activity of *teaching*, originates from the root word *ajar*, referring to instructions given to be understood or followed. With the addition of the prefix *pe-* and the suffix *-an*, the word *pembelajaran* (learning) emerges, referring to the

[2] (Amin, 2021, p. h. 2.)

[3] (Arianti, 2018, p. hal. 118)

[4] (Wardani, 2010, p. hal. 238)

[5] (Sudrajat, 2011, p. hal. 28)

[6] (Sudrajat, 2011, p. hal. 49)

process, action, or method of providing instruction so that students are willing to learn. According to Syaiful, learning is a two-way communication process, where teaching is carried out by the teacher as the educator, and learning is done by the students or learners. Learning is an activity programmed by the teacher within an instructional design, aimed at encouraging students to learn actively and providing learning resources.

From these definitions, it can be concluded that learning is an interaction between learners and educators. It involves assistance from the educator to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, the development of skills and habits, as well as the formation of attitudes and beliefs in learners. In other words, learning is a process designed to support learners in achieving effective learning. [7]

Social Studies (IPS) is a field formed from the integration of various branches of the social sciences, such as sociology, history, geography, economics, politics, law, and culture. This discipline is developed based on existing social realities and phenomena. Referring to the earlier explanation, it can be concluded that Social Studies is defined as "a subject that explores social life through materials grounded in historical, geographical, economic, sociological, anthropological, and governmental analysis." Therefore, the term Social Studies (IPS) used in this study carries the same meaning as the broader concept of social studies. [8]

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METHOD

This study uses a library research method, which relies on various library sources as the foundation of the research, such as books, journals, articles, and other documents related to the topic. [9] Library research is conducted by collecting information and data using various materials available in the library, including reference books, previous relevant studies, articles, notes, and journals related to the issue being examined. This activity is carried out systematically to gather literature related to the role of teachers in shaping students' character through Social Studies learning. [10]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
1. The Role of Teachers in Shaping Students' Character

Character refers to the way a person thinks and behaves, and each character possesses unique traits. Good character is reflected in empathy toward others, behavior aligned with ethical principles, and the presence of cognitive, emotional, and moral behavioral aspects. Education is necessary to develop and utilize each individual's potential. It can cultivate three components: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. Education serves as the foundation for the advancement of a nation, and the quality of a person's education corresponds to the country's economic level. Character education occurs when schools instill character values in all students, including knowledge and the awareness or willingness to apply positive values toward God Almighty, oneself, and the surrounding environment. In character education, **the role of the teacher is**

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[7] (Febriani, 2021, p. h. 61.)

[8] (Yusnaldi, 2019, p. h. 6.)

[9] Liza Handayani Batu Bara dan Kamaluddin Tajibu, "Pendidikan Karakter dalam Filsafat Pendidikan Islam," *ISTIQRA* 11, no. 1 (19 Mei 2023), hal: 3, https://doi.org/10.24239/ist.v11i1.1649.

[10] Milya Sari dan Asmendri Asmendri, "Penelitian Kepustakaan (*Library Research*) dalam Penelitian Pendidikan IPA," *Natural Science* 6, no. 1 (10 Juni 2020), hal: 44, https://doi.org/10.15548/nsc.v6i1.1555.

crucial. Teachers not only provide academic knowledge but also teach moral values, religious principles, and social norms to develop the desired character in their students. [11]

A teacher is a professional educator and one of the key factors in shaping the next generation of a nation. Teachers play a very important role in the field of education, especially in the teaching and learning process, because students fundamentally need the guidance of teachers to help them develop themselves and optimize their talents and abilities. A teacher is someone who is experienced in their professional field. Through their knowledge, they can help students become intelligent individuals. [12]

In the learning process, the role of the teacher is vital; **technology or social media cannot replace the role of teachers**. Teachers have great responsibilities in educating children and providing good moral examples for them. Teachers at school serve as good leaders for their students. [13]

2. Social Studies (IPS) Learning as a Means of Shaping Students' Character

Social Studies learning seeks to apply the values contained in the social sciences to students, with the aim of shaping their character so they become good individuals who are beneficial to society in the future. One of the main goals of Social Studies learning in schools is for students to become responsible in forming their character as good citizens. The relationship between Social Studies education and character education is very close, as reflected in the objectives that emphasize the formation of good citizens.

Social Studies education plays an important role in shaping students' character because it teaches daily events and issues that aim to instill national character in students, including becoming good citizens, having strong nationalism, caring for the environment, and being responsible. However, many students or members of society still consider Social Studies learning to be unimportant, which results in the goals and expected outcomes of Social Studies education not being fully achieved.

Social Studies learning plays a significant role in shaping students' character, especially in the aspect of responsibility. However, societal or student perceptions that underestimate the importance of Social Studies can hinder the character-building process. Therefore, teachers, as educators, play a key role in shaping students' character and morals. Teachers are not only transmitters of academic material but also serve as role models for students. Teachers need to focus on teaching skills while instilling character education so that students can grow into socially responsible individuals in the future. [14]

Learners are expected to achieve various outcomes through character education, including the instillation of religious, cultural, and social values upheld by the Indonesian nation. Character education aims to develop values such as faith, piety, nationalism, patriotism, responsibility, honesty, care, discipline, and independence. The internalization process in character education aims to form individuals who are responsible, confident, and morally upright, not only within formal educational institutions but also within informal ones.

Character education also requires collaboration between schools and parents. The three main components of character education are morals, feelings, and actions, which are interconnected. Character learning begins with providing understanding, followed by actions or behaviors, and ultimately becomes a habit. Teachers serve as role models, and this process focuses on the development of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective values.

Social Studies (IPS) learning uses an integrated approach and is arranged based on real-life contexts, with themes that include facts, events, and basic concepts within society. Teachers in IPS learning play an important role in instilling moral values in students. This learning is also directed

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[11] (Difany, 2021, p. hal. 1)

[12] (Salsabilah, Dewi, & dkk., 2021, p. hal. 7166)

[13] (Rahmatika, Muriani, & dkk., 2022, p. hal. 134)

[14] (Aprianti, Nurkhalisa, Arifin, & Rustini, 2022, p. h. 186.)

toward developing students' intelligence, skills, and attitudes, with the aim of enabling them to think critically and solve problems.

The nine pillars of character implemented in IPS learning include love, responsibility, honesty, respect, cooperation, hard work, leadership, friendliness, and tolerance. IPS education also helps students develop their potential so they can become citizens who are aware of social, environmental, and national issues. This learning process focuses on cognitive, psychomotor, and affective values, with the goal that students can behave and act in accordance with the values they uphold. [15]

The concept of Social Studies (IPS) learning must align with the development of the times.

The main goal of Social Studies education is to shape and develop individuals into good citizens. The identity of a good citizen can be generally described as follows: [16]

1. Demonstrating a patriotic attitude, which includes love for the homeland, the nation, and the state.
2. Respecting and understanding the values, systems, and practices of social life.
3. Possessing social integrity and responsibility as a citizen.
4. Understanding and respecting cultural values or traditions inherited by the nation.
5. Having the motivation to actively participate in the implementation of democratic life.
6. Being aware of issues occurring in the social environment.
7. Possessing attitudes, ideas, and skills as a citizen.
8. Having an understanding and respect for the current economic system.

3. Implementation of Character Values in Social Studies (IPS) Learning

Character education aims to improve the processes and outcomes of education with a stronger emphasis on the consistent and balanced formation of students' character and morals in accordance with the graduate competency standards at each level of education. Character education does not merely provide basic information; it also focuses on positive habits that help students understand (cognitive), feel (affective), and act (psychomotor). [17]

Several factors can influence a person's character. Internal factors originate from within the individual, while external factors come from their surrounding environment. The character possessed by the Indonesian nation, which reflects the values of Pancasila as a whole, can be described as follows:

a. Belief in the One and Only God

This refers to an awareness of faith and devotion as part of each person's character. This character reflects the first principle of Pancasila, which includes respecting others, cooperating with others, and practicing worship according to one's own religion. Thus, there should be no attitudes that impose one's beliefs on others.

b. Just and Civilized Humanity

This character reflects the second principle of Pancasila, which emphasizes justice and civility. This attitude is demonstrated by acknowledging that all people have equal status, rights, and obligations. Additionally, habits that can be cultivated in students—such as an interest in performing humanitarian actions—can instill mutual respect and appreciation.

c. The Unity of Indonesia

This refers to the spirit of unity and integrity, which means prioritizing the common good over personal interests. It also includes upholding the dignity of the Indonesian nation.

d. Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom of Deliberation/Representation

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[15] (Megawati & Ningsih, 2020, p. h. 258.)
[16] (Mulyadi, Firman, & Rusdinal, 2021, p. h. 526.)
[17] (Nurdiana sari, 2021, p. hal. 11)

This involves making decisions based on moral responsibility to God Almighty, as well as values of truth and justice. This character reflects the ability of individuals to engage in deliberation to reach consensus.

e. Social Justice for All the People of Indonesia

This character includes having a sense of mutual cooperation, fairness in various situations and conditions, and respect for others.

Character education within learning is expected to instill character values reflected in Pancasila within students. Social Studies (IPS) learning integrates character education through the phases of planning, implementation, and evaluation. [18]

4. Moral and Ethical Value Approaches in Social Studies Learning

The word *"nilai"* (value), translated as *"value"* in English, carries the meaning of "price." However, when the word *"price"* is connected to an object or perception from a certain point of view, its meaning can vary. Price can be interpreted according to different disciplines such as economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, politics, and religion. Differences in interpreting the value of something are not only caused by variations in human interest toward material things or scientific approaches, but more importantly, by the need to articulate the value of something in order to understand and utilize the meanings of life.

In everyday life, society often interprets ethics as something related to the distinction between right and wrong behavior in human life. According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (1996: 400), ethics is defined as "the science of what is good and bad, moral rights and obligations, as well as a set of principles or values related to morality and judgments about right and wrong held by society." Etymologically, the word *"ethics"* comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which refers to customs or good habits. Derived from this word, ethics has developed into the study of human habits based on agreements in different spaces and times, which reflect human behavior in general. [19]

At present, ethics has become a field of study which, according to Fagothey, examines the human will, specifically human decisions regarding what is right and wrong in their actions. In line with this view, K. Bertens states that ethics plays an important role, emphasizing that not everything that can be accomplished through science and technology should necessarily be done. Humans need to set boundaries based on their moral awareness.

The development of value-based approaches is designed to encourage students to develop attitudes of tolerance in social interactions and to cultivate social awareness and responsibility. This process is grounded in social knowledge and skills. Instilling democratic attitudes, a spirit of cooperation, and a healthy sense of competition from an early age becomes a key priority.

In Social Studies (IPS) learning, there are relevant values aligned with curriculum development principles, emphasizing that all subjects must contribute to the enhancement of faith, piety, and noble character. Ethical development aims to instill scientific, social, and moral values, including an appreciation of pluralism and universal values.

Examples of Social Studies learning materials at the elementary school (SD/MI) level include topics such as Individuals and Society, Humans and Their Environment, The Influence of Foreign Cultures on Indonesian Culture, The Struggle of the Indonesian Nation Toward Independence, as well as Human Rights (HAM), Democracy, and Law Enforcement. [20]

CONCLUSION

In contemporary times, ethics has become a field of study that, according to Fagothey, examines human will—specifically, human decisions regarding what is right and wrong in their actions. In line with this view, K. Bertens states that ethics plays an important role, in which not

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[18] Nurdiana Sari, hal. 12-13.
[19] (Susanto, 2016, p. H. 14.)
[20] (Siska, n.d., p. h. 288.)

everything that can be done through science and technology is necessarily permissible. Humans must set boundaries based on their moral awareness.

The development of a value-based approach aims to encourage students to develop tolerance in social interactions, as well as enhance their sensitivity and sense of social responsibility. This process is built on social knowledge and skills. Instilling democratic attitudes, the spirit of cooperation, and the willingness to compete from an early age becomes a primary emphasis.

In Social Studies (IPS) learning, there are relevant values aligned with curriculum development principles, which emphasize that all subjects must contribute to the enhancement of faith, piety, and noble character. Ethical development is carried out to instill scientific, social, and moral attitudes and values, including appreciation for pluralism and universal values. Examples of IPS learning materials at the elementary school level (SD/MI) include topics such as Individuals and Society, Humans and Their Environment, The Influence of Foreign Cultures on Indonesian Culture, The Struggle of the Indonesian Nation Toward Independence, as well as Human Rights, Democracy, and Law Enforcement.

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