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The Role of Scouting Education in Building the Character of Elementary School Students: A Scout Leader's Perspective

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Abstract

Objective: This research aims to discover the Scout Leaders' perspective on the role of Scouting Education in building the character of Elementary School students. **Novelty:** The study provides insights into the unique challenges and strategies employed by Scout Leaders in character education. **Methods:** The study employed a qualitative approach utilizing the phenomenological method. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with Scout Leaders at SDIT Amaliah and analyzed following the Miles and Huberman model. **Results:** The research results have four main focuses: urgency, implementation, challenges, and strategies of Scout Leaders in building student character through Scouting Education. **Conclusion:** The research concluded that Scouting Education has a significant role in shaping student character, especially the characters of independence, discipline, leadership, caring, courage, responsibility, and cooperation through Scouting activities that have been implemented. Although Scout Leaders face challenges in building student character through Scouting Education, the leaders have a strategy so that character values are still internalized effectively, namely by conducting Scouting activities through fun team games. This research contributes to supporting character building through Scouting Education in Elementary Schools.

Keywords: Character Building, Scouting Education, Scout Leader Perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

Character is an important aspect that every individual must have because it is directly related to the values, attitudes, and behaviours that reflect their personality, such as independence, caring, discipline, and responsibility (Soraya, 2020). Therefore, character education is needed to instil these values so that individuals can behave according to prevailing social and moral norms (Meldayani & Ain, 2024; Yudistita et al., 2024). Instilling character early in basic education is essential in building a superior student personality. Character building can be done through various school activities. One activity that plays a vital role in the character-building of elementary school students is Scouting Education. The main objective of implementing Scouting Education in schools is to form personality, character, and noble character while developing students' soft and hard skills (Hidayati, 2021). The purpose of Scouting Education has also been regulated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2010, which states that Scouting Education aims to form each of its members into individuals who are faithful, pious, noble, have a spirit of patriotism, obey the law, are disciplined, respect the noble values of the nation, and have life skills as the next generation who play a role in maintaining and building the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), practising the values of Pancasila, and preserving the environment (Republik Indonesia, 2010). In the implementation, Scouting Education applies interactive and progressive learning methods, including 1) application of the Scout code of honour; 2) learning through hands-on practice (learning by doing); 3) activities in groups involving cooperation and competition; 4) activities in the natural environment; 5) awarding in the form of marks of proficiency; and 6) the role of Scout leaders as facilitators who support the process of student character building. This shows that the characteristics of responsibility, independence, discipline, caring, leadership, and cooperation can be formed through Scouting activities (Lubis et al., 2024; Siregar et al., 2024).

Scout leaders have an essential role in the process of student character-building. Still, there are challenges faced by Scout leaders in several elementary schools in Indonesia in carrying out this role, including limited supporting facilities (Natamia et al., 2022), low student interest and participation in Scouting activities (Nala et al., 2023), limited time due to busy academic schedules (Ristiyani & Asmawan, 2023), and limited competence of leaders due to lack of training and professional development so that it can hinder the effectiveness of student character building (Margunaji & Sugiyanto, 2024). Therefore, in overcoming these challenges, cooperation between Scout leaders, schools, and other related parties is needed to ensure Scouting Education can run effectively in shaping student character. Researchers have found several previous studies on the role of Scouting Education in building the character of elementary school students. However, no research has been found that discusses this based on the perspective of Scout leaders. This is the novelty of the research to be carried out. The research presents the Scout leader's perspective to learn more about the urgency, implementation, challenges, and strategies of Scout leaders in shaping student character through Scouting Education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method to explore the experiences of Scoutmasters at SDIT Amaliah in shaping students' character through Scouting Education. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the subjective experiences and meanings given by research subjects to the phenomena they experience (Creswell, 2013). The phenomenological method is used because it aims to understand the life experiences of individuals in a particular context (Moustakas, 1994), in this case the experience of Scoutmasters in shaping students' character through scouting activities.

This study was conducted in December 2024 with research subjects, namely Scoutmasters at SDIT Amaliah who have active experience in scouting activities, both for the Siaga and Penggalang levels. The focus of this study includes urgency, scouting activities, challenges, and strategies applied by Scoutmasters in shaping students' character.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews to explore the perspectives of Scoutmasters regarding the focus of the study. In-depth interviews were chosen because they allow for in-depth exploration of the experiences and views of research subjects (Patton, 2002).

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) which consists of three main stages, namely Data Reduction to Filter interview results to obtain information relevant to the focus of the study. Data Presentation to compile information in narrative form to facilitate the analysis process. Conclusion Drawing to formulate themes from the data that has been processed to answer research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on in-depth interviews with Scout leaders at SDIT Amaliah, researchers obtained results regarding the urgency, implementation, challenges, and strategies of leaders in building student character through Scouting Education. The leader stated that school Scouting Education is essential because it contains a code of honour, Tri Satya and Dasa Darma. Scouting Education can be a forum for forming individual and social character in students. In addition, Scouting Education has added value for students, as it can develop soft and hard skills according to their abilities. All Scouting activities at SDIT Amaliah, both Siaga and Penggalang, are guided by the General Proficiency Requirements (SKU). Currently, the Siaga Scout level at SDIT Amaliah is Siaga Bantu. Scouting activities implemented at the Auxiliary Scout level are one-day camping, cooking, exploring, and getting to know the environment. These activities can shape students' individual and social characteristics, such as independence, discipline, leadership, caring, responsibility, and cooperation. Meanwhile, the average Penggalang Scouts at SDIT Amaliah is Penggalang Ramu. Scouting activities that have been implemented at the Penggalang Ramu level are camping, filling in the SKU, and actively participating in branch activities in the form of the Agile Regu Competition (LRT), which includes several categories of competitions such as obstacle courses, catapults, and team yells. Through these activities, it can form the character of discipline, independence, courage, responsibility, and cooperation in students.

Scout leaders face challenges in building student character. Among them, students who are apathetic when participating in training because they do not like Scouting activities, the

limited number of Scout leaders, and limited time prevent leaders from delivering Scouting activities to build student character. However, the leader has a strategy so that Scouting Education at school continues to run effectively to shape student character by delivering material through games, such as treasure hunting. So, the leader prepares a Learner Worksheet (LKPD), which contains questions about Scouting material for each team. The leader also prepares printed media in the form of pictures or writings that will be posted in several corners around the school, and then each team is asked to find information about the questions listed on the LKPD. If the team considers all the information correctly, it will be rewarded. With this strategy, the leader managed to increase students' enthusiasm for participating in Scouting activities by optimally utilizing the number of leaders and the time available. Scouting activities that actively involve students in teamwork have proven to be effective in making it easier for leaders to direct the team as a whole without having to deal with individuals one by one, and activities like this are effective in conveying Scout values in a short time. The following researchers will discuss leaders' urgency, implementation, challenges, and strategies in building student character through Scouting Education based on the results obtained and associated with previous research.

Urgency of Scout Education

Scouting education in schools plays an essential role in building individual and social student character. The code of honour, Tri Satya, and Dasa Darma are the basis for instilling moral and ethical values in students (Fahmaan et al., 2024). Tri Satya and Dasa Darma are essential guidelines in Scouting Education that can guide students' attitudes and actions in daily life and organizations. Tri Satya contains three main points that reflect the commitment of Scout members to God, the nation, and fellow human beings. First, Scouts promise to fulfil their obligations to God Almighty and contribute to the nation and state following the values of Pancasila. This shows the importance of spiritual awareness and love for the country as a base for action. Second, Scouts are committed to helping their fellow human beings and are involved in building society. This value emphasizes social care, teamwork, and responsibility for those around them. Third, Scouts also promise to obey the Dasa Darma, which are ten noble values guidelines in daily behaviour (Azzahra et al., 2024; Rasem, 2023). The values that guide the Dasa Darma include devotion to God Almighty, loyalty, trustworthiness, and care for others. In addition, Scouts are expected to live frugally, responsibly, courageously, and uphold a sense of justice and togetherness. These values also emphasize the importance of maintaining harmony with nature and the environment. By integrating the Tri Satya and Dasa Darma in life, Scouts are not only invited to become individuals with noble character but also to become responsible citizens who are ready to make a positive contribution to the nation and state (Nazwa et al., 2024; Triningsih, 2019). In addition, Scouting Education also plays an essential role in developing students' soft skills, especially in social skills such as communication, relationship building, and teamwork, as well as individual skills such as time management, leadership, self-confidence, independence, and responsibility (Wati et al., 2020). Developing students' soft skills also involves values such as religion, honesty, discipline, work ethic, creativity, independence, love for the country, environmental care, and social care (Ahmad & Arsa, 2018). Developing students' hard skills is also an important part of Scouting Education; students are trained to produce work according to their scouting skills, such as rigging and

pioneering. Hard skill assessment can be done through skills demonstrations such as hasta karya, semaphore, sandi-sandi, marching, and games (Yusuf et al., 2021).

Implementation of Scout Activities

Scouting at the elementary level is divided into two parts based on age range: Siaga and Penggalang. Siaga Scouts are Scouts aged 7-10 years consisting of three levels, including: 1) Siaga Mula, at this level students are just starting to get to know Scouting which begins with the introduction of Dwi Satya and Dwi Darma, the introduction of Scout attributes, playing simple educational games, learning the procedures for flag ceremonies and basic marching; 2) Siaga Bantu, at this level students have understood the basic understanding of Scouting and are ready to help friends in team activities; and 3) Siaga Tata, at this level students have understood, practised, and shown examples in Scouting activities (Fhitriansyah et al., 2024). The Penggalang Scout, which is a Scout member aged 11-15 years, consists of three levels, including: 1) Penggalang Ramu, is the first level that can be achieved after members fulfil certain conditions, such as diligently attending Penggalang troop training and understanding the contents of the Tri Satya and Dasa Darma; 2) Penggalang Rakit, is the second level achieved after members complete the Penggalang ramu level and fulfil additional requirements, such as practising Tri Satya and Dasa Darma in everyday life; and 3) Penggalang Terap, is the highest level achieved after members fulfil further requirements that are more complex (Firmansyah et al., 2023). All activities carried out at each level, both Siaga and Penggalang Scouts, refer to the SKU. SKU is a series of requirements that Scout members must meet to obtain the General Proficiency Mark (TKU). The SKU is designed to develop members' skills, knowledge, and attitudes according to their age group: Siaga, Penggalang, Penegak, and Pandega (Setyawan & Istiawan, 2020). Several Scout activities can build students' character, including camping, exploring nature, and getting to know the surrounding environment. Through these activities, students are trained to: 1) be independent in making decisions and be responsible for the tasks assigned, thus forming a strong character of responsibility; 2) work together in teams, improving communication and coordination skills between members; 3) act as a squad leader in scout activities, so that leadership character can be formed effectively; 4) increase concern for social and environmental; and 5) discipline in obeying rules and time (Amreta & Hidayati, 2022; Ihsan et al., 2018; Ramadhan & Ikhlas, 2024). The LRT competition, which contains Scouting competitions, is designed to test Scout members' skills, knowledge, and agility, especially at the Penggalang level. This activity aims to increase independence, leadership, skills, and strengthen unity amongst Penggalang Scouts. LRT competitions, including: 1) stick colonies, an activity of performing formations and movements using sticks in a coordinated manner; 2) team yells, an activity of delivering yells to increase team spirit and cohesiveness; 3) mottos and signals, an activity of using communication codes such as semaphore or morse; 4) mapping, an activity of reading and making maps; 5) obstacle course, an activity of passing through obstacles that test agility and teamwork; 6) catapult, an activity of shooting catapults with the right target; and 7) dry crossing, an activity of crossing an area without touching the ground or water using aids (Omang, 2024).

Scout Leader Challenges and Strategies

Scout leaders face challenges in building students' character, followed by strategies to ensure that students' character-building continues to run effectively. One significant challenge is students' low interest and understanding regarding the benefits of Scouting activities. Many students join this activity only out of obligation, not out of personal interest. This lack of motivation makes them inactive and not earnest in carrying out activities, so the goal of character building is challenging (Suhaida & Bardaningsih, 2022). In fostering Scouting, the leader utilizes educational games to increase student motivation to participate in Scouting activities, which has proven effective. Through these games, the leader can invite students to discuss what they have learned, their challenges, and how to apply character in everyday life (Kristi & Suprayitno, 2020). The lack of human resources to foster scouting in elementary schools is also a significant obstacle. The limited number of coaches can affect the quality and continuity of the Scouting activity program. It can hinder character-building in students. However, the limited number of leaders can be overcome by organizing training for teachers to become Scout leaders to increase the number of competent leaders (Asnawi & Triwahyuningsih, 2014). There are other challenges, such as the tight academic schedule that limits the time for Scouting activities. This time limitation reduces the opportunity for students to participate in activities to the fullest, hindering students' character-building. To overcome these challenges, coaches utilize free time, such as weekends, to hold more intensive Scout activities (Ristiyani & Asmawan, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Scouting education has a significant role in building student character, especially independence, discipline, leadership, caring, courage, responsibility, and cooperation. These characters are formed through Scout activities such as camping, cooking, exploring, getting to know the environment, filling SKU, and actively participating in competitions. The challenges Scout leaders face in building students' character are the lack of interest in participating in Scout activities, the limited number of leaders, and limited time. However, the leader has a strategy of integrating fun games during the activity. This research is expected to be useful for leaders in effectively building students' character through Scouting Education. Further research is needed with more subjects to obtain more valid data.

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