**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT IN CULTIVATING MORALS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN AT SDN 15, LUBUKLINGGAU CITY**

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**ABSTRACT:** The school environment is a unified space in a formal educational institution that systematically implements guidance programs to help students develop their potential optimally, covering moral, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical-motor aspects. Schools are not merely places for the "transfer of knowledge." The background of this research is the observed low respect among children at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau, where the principal acknowledged students’ generally good behaviour but insufficient respect toward parents. The school aims to strengthen the spiritual side based on family principles. The objective of this study is to describe and analyse the cultivation of moral values in elementary school children. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach, intended to describe and analyse phenomena, social activities, and perceptions systematically and in depth. This research is qualitative descriptive, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results indicate that the school environment at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau fosters moral development through daily religious practices, teacher modelling, and integration of moral values in lessons, although challenges remain in consistency and parental involvement. The conclusion highlights that a supportive, family-like school environment is effective in promoting moral values but requires active collaboration between teachers and parents. This research implies the need for structured moral education programs and suggests future studies explore parental engagement strategies to reinforce moral cultivation in children.

**Keywords:** moral education, school environment, elementary students, qualitative research.

**INTRODUCTION**

Environment includes everything surrounding living creatures such as animals, plants, and humans. According to Haryati (2016), environment consists of all physical and non-physical elements in the surrounding area. Baharuddin (2007) defines environment as all external factors influencing children's development and constantly affecting them. Supardi (2003) states that environment comprises all objects, both living and non-living. Law No. 23 of 1997 explains that all objects, forces, conditions, and living beings—including humans and their behavior—influence the sustainability of life and human well-being. The environment is the place where we live and learn about everything within it.

School is a place to receive and provide lessons. Sumitro et al. (2006) describe schools as educational environments that develop children into intelligent, skilled, and well-behaved citizens. The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) defines school as a building or institution for learning and teaching. Sunarto Agung (2006) adds that schools have evolved into institutions that systematically manage learning. Schools are social systems of interaction, involving relationships among individuals (Wayne in Soebagio Atmodjiworo, 2000). According to Daryanto (1997), schools are places to study, read, write, and learn to become better individuals.

Planting refers to the process of instilling or embedding something within a person. According to the KBBI, the term originates from "plant," meaning to sow seeds, with "planting" implying the process, method, or act of embedding values or traits. Planting, therefore, represents the implementation of desirable qualities in human character.

Moral refers to attitudes, actions, and behaviours distinguishing good from bad in a person. Elizabeth B. Hurlock defines morals as systems of cultural customs and norms that guide habitual community behaviour. J. Wantaj emphasizes moral ability to discern good from bad in individual behaviour. Widjaja AW describes morals as teachings about good and bad actions and behaviour. The KBBI defines morals as generally accepted teachings about good and bad actions, obligations, manners, and character.

However, the problem addressed in this research is that students at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City demonstrate low moral behavior, particularly in respecting their parents and adhering to school norms. The current condition at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau reveals inconsistent moral behaviour among students, despite efforts to emphasize spiritual values and a family-like school atmosphere. This research is significant because it seeks to understand how the school environment can effectively cultivate moral values in elementary school children, contributing to character education efforts. The solution offered involves exploring and describing strategies within the school environment—such as teacher modelling, integration of moral values in lessons, and daily practices—to strengthen moral development among students.

**METHODOLOGY**

The approach used in study This is approach qualitative . Research qualitative (Qualitative research) is a research aimed at For describe and analyze phenomenon , event , activity social , attitudes , beliefs , perceptions , thoughts of people individually and collectively group . In general , research qualitative has two purposes main , namely First , to describe and explore and second , to describe and explain (Nana Syaodih ) Sukmadinata , 2005:60). In line with opinion expert said , researchers use approach study qualitative in carry out study with focus objective For describe and explain .

Study This including in type study descriptive . Mohammad Nazir (2003:54) stated that study descriptive aiming For make description , overview or painting in a way systematic , factual and actual about facts , properties as well as connection between the phenomenon being investigated . Researchers mean to describe in a way systematic and in-depth moral instillation in students Elementary School at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City use approach qualitative . Therefore that , kind study This is study descriptive qualitative . Subject study is somebody or something from which obtained description . Subject in study This is head school , class teachers , and students of SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City .

Determination Subject in study This based on consideration that they is those who know best situation and conditions related what do you want researcher know . This is because of parties the involved in a way direct in implementation moral instillation at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City . Election subject with considerations and objectives certain This in accordance with purposive technique according to opinion Sugiyono ( 2010 :299) is of the opinion that determination subject study qualitative done with purposive technique .

Sugiyono (2010:62-63) stated that that in the research qualitative , technical data collection used is a natural setting ( natural conditions ), primary data sources , observation , interviews in - depth interviews, and documentation . In this research this , technique data collection used including : observation , interviews and documentation . Explanation related technique data collection in study This is as following .

1. Observation

In the research This type observations used​ is participation passive . Susan Stainback ( Sugiyono , 2010:312) states that in observation participation passive researcher be in place the activities of the person being observed , but No involved in activity said . Researchers do observation in a way directly at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City . From the observation in a way directly , researcher get experience observation in a way directly . Researchers see and observe Alone Then take notes events that occur . Objects observation in study This among others; (1) Activities learning good inside​ and outside class ; (2) Routine activities at school ; (3) Activities spontaneous ; (4) Exemplary from head school , teacher; (5) Conditioning physique and non- physical ; and (6) Interaction between students and teachers, students and principal school , and students and residents other schools ( eg. employee school ).

2. Interview

In addition to observation , research this also uses technique interview in collect data. Interview is conversation between two parties​ with Meaning certain . In the research qualitative , interviews used​ nature in-depth . Interview deep done with submit question open that allows Respondent give answer in a way wide . Research This use type interview semi-structured in accordance with Esterberg's opinion ( Sugiyono , 2010:73) regarding types interview . Interview semi-structured nature flexible Because can use other questions outside guidelines the interview that has been compiled . In case this , researcher can develop question moment interview in progress Because development of data / information obtained . In the research this , researcher do interview with parties involved​ in a way direct in implementation moral instillation at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City . Interview done to head schools , class teachers , Islamic religious teachers, and students . In order to support implementation interview , researcher use tools among others: list of questions , books notes , tools recorder and camera .

3. Documentation

Documentation is technique data collection that can in the form of writing, images , or works certain . In the research this , documentation data nature as complementary and supporting from activity observation and interviews . Documents collected by researchers​ shaped picture ( photo ) of activity students at school , books notes activity students , documents notes behavior students owned by teachers, notes violation students owned by the teacher.

In the research qualitative , researcher is instrument main . Because the problem is sought from object study Not yet clear and definite , the data sources and expected results are also not yet clear . After focus study clear so be developed instrument simple research . Instruments​ study This intended to be able to complete the collected data ( Sugiyono , 2010:307). It has been mentioned that study This use technique data collection in the form of observation , interviews , and documentation . Therefore That in data collection , researcher as instrument main assisted guidelines observation and guidelines interview .

1. Guidelines Observation

Guidelines observation is guidelines study in do observation about all something related​ with subject study For dig information as much as possible give additional . Guidelines This in the form of excavation information regarding with development program self , integration in eye lessons , development culture school , and development of learning process . Guidelines observation used so that observations are made No deviate from objective research . According to Sedarmayanti (2011:92) guidelines observation is the inspection process document can give information in a way precise and accurate , then required guidelines or the guide that will direct examiner to aspects that need to be considered done in a way systematic . Guidelines observations used​ in study This covering aspect routine activities , activities spontaneous , exemplary , conditioning , integration in eye lessons , culture school and learning process good in class , school and outside school .

2. Guidelines Interview

Guidelines interview used so that the interview is conducted No deviate from objective research . Interview in study This use guidelines interview to head school , grade II teachers, and students Grade II Elementary School at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City . Contents of the guidelines interview to head school and class teacher covering routine activities related with moral instillation at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City conditioning carried out by the school in frame moral cultivation , activities learning good inside​ and outside class , relationship student with teachers, role models head schools and teachers, problems that have happen related behavior students who are lacking good and sanctions what is given .

3. Guidelines Documentation

Guidelines documentation is tool aids used​ For collect data in the form of document like taking pictures activities and transcripts interview .

Study qualitative use flexible technique​ in the process of collecting and analyzing data depends on the steps previously used and existing data obtained (Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata , 2005:114). In general general the steps in the form of planning , starting data collection , basic data collection , closing data collection and completion . In this research This technique data analysis used is the interactive model , Miles and Huberman. Miles and Huberman ( Emzir , 2011:129), explained that there is three type activity in data analysis namely data reduction , data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

1 ) Data Reduction

Activity First in data analysis is data reduction . Data reduction is form purposeful analysis​ For sharpen and discard the missing part important as well as organize the data so that results end can depicted in a way clear . The data reduction process in study This done after researcher do data collection through observation , interviews , and documentation . After the data is complete collected , researchers choose related matters​ with moral instillation in elementary school students at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City . The selected things related the moral cultivation among others: development programs self , integration in eye lessons , development culture school as well as development of the learning process .

2) Data Display ( Data Presentation )

Step two in data analysis is data presentation . Miles and Huberman ( Emzir , 2011:129), stated that in study qualitative most frequent data presentation used is text that is narrative . The data presentation model is usually in the form of matrix , graph , network work and charts . In the research this , researcher choose presentation of data in form table explained​ in a way descriptive . This is carried out so that the data is collected can understood with Good .

3) Conclusion Drawing/ Verification ( Conclusion Drawing )

Step three in data analysis is withdrawal or verification conclusion . Sugiyono (2010:99) explains that conclusion in study qualitative is findings new the previous one Not yet Once there is . Withdrawal conclusion in study This done after the data is presented under review with appropriate theories .​

Sugiyono (2010:121) is of the opinion that the data validity test in study qualitative includes , among others: credibility test ( internal validity ), transferability ( internal validity) external ), dependability ( reliability ), and confirmability ( objectivity ). Based on various method testing validity of the data that has been mentioned , researchers using credibility test in do research . Test the credibility of the data or trust to results study qualitative done among others through extension observation , improvement perseverance in research , triangulation , discussion with Friend peer , analysis case negative , and member check.

Credibility test in study This done through triangulation , extension observation and member check. Triangulation is used is triangulation technique . Triangulation techniques and triangulation source . Triangulation technique done with method check data to same source​ with different techniques . For example, the data obtained through interview , then checked with observation and documentation . If the data obtained through various technique the different , then researcher do discussion more carry on with the relevant data source or else, for ensure which data is considered true . Apart from that triangulation technique , researchers also conducted credibility tests with triangulation source that is check the data that has been obtained through a number of source . Data that has been obtained and analyzed furthermore requested agreement (member check) with a number of existing data sources . Member check this intended so that the information obtained in accordance with what is meant by the data provider . ( Sugiyono , 2010:127-129).

**RESEARCH RESULT**

The results of this study reveal that the school environment at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City plays an essential and multifaceted role in cultivating moral values among elementary school-age children. Based on observations, interviews with the principal and teachers, and documentation of school activities, the study identifies multiple dimensions through which the school environment influences students’ moral development, namely: daily religious routines, teacher modeling, structured discipline systems, integration of moral values into the curriculum, interpersonal relationships within the school community, and collaboration with parents.

One of the central strategies observed is the incorporation of daily religious practices designed to cultivate spiritual awareness and moral responsibility. At SDN 15 Lubuklinggau, students participate in communal prayers every morning before lessons begin. This activity is not merely ritualistic but includes short reflections led by teachers on themes such as honesty, respect for parents, empathy toward peers, and gratitude. Teachers believe that these shared moments establish a moral foundation at the start of each day, reinforcing values that the school views as essential to student character formation.

Moreover, teacher modeling emerges as a critical element in the cultivation of morals. Interviews with teachers reveal that they consciously strive to act as role models, demonstrating polite language, respectful interactions, and responsible behavior. Teachers emphasize consistency between what they teach and how they behave, recognizing that students are highly observant and often emulate adult behavior. For instance, when conflicts arise among students, teachers do not resort to punitive measures alone but instead guide students in understanding why certain behaviors are harmful and how to resolve disagreements peacefully. Such moments are treated as opportunities for moral instruction in real contexts.

The school’s approach to discipline is also designed to foster moral development rather than impose punitive control. The principal describes the disciplinary system as grounded in clear rules communicated to all students but implemented with a “family-like” approach. When students break rules, they are not simply punished but are engaged in discussions about the impact of their actions on others and the importance of responsibility. Teachers and the principal collaborate to ensure that discipline remains fair, consistent, and educational in purpose. This approach reflects the school’s stated goal of balancing authority with compassion to instill values such as honesty, responsibility, and self-control.

An important finding from interviews and observations is the integration of moral education into the academic curriculum. Teachers do not treat moral education as a separate subject but embed moral themes across various lessons. For example, Indonesian language classes might involve stories that highlight moral dilemmas, while social studies lessons include discussions of community responsibilities and respect for diversity. Teachers report planning their lessons with these objectives in mind, aiming to make moral considerations a natural part of students’ learning experiences.

The study also highlights the role of interpersonal relationships in the school environment. SDN 15 Lubuklinggau seeks to maintain a warm, supportive, and inclusive atmosphere, where students feel cared for and respected. Observations reveal that teachers address students by name, inquire about their well-being, and encourage peer support. The principal emphasizes that such relational practices are not peripheral but central to moral cultivation, as they model and reinforce values of respect, empathy, and social responsibility in daily interactions.

Collaboration among staff is another critical component identified. Teachers and the principal meet regularly to discuss student behavior and plan collective strategies for moral guidance. These meetings provide a space to share observations, suggest interventions, and maintain consistency in expectations across classrooms. The principal describes these collaborative efforts as essential for aligning the school's moral education goals and ensuring that all staff support students in a unified manner.

Parent involvement, while recognized as a challenge, is also part of the school’s strategy. Interviews with the principal indicate that the school actively seeks to engage parents through regular meetings, communication about student behavior, and invitations to school events. The goal is to create consistency between the moral values emphasized at school and those reinforced at home. However, teachers note that parental engagement is uneven, with some families highly involved and others less responsive. The school acknowledges this as an ongoing area for improvement and is exploring strategies to build stronger school–family partnerships.

Data from documentation, such as school rules and records of meetings, corroborate these findings. Documents reveal explicit references to values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility as core objectives of school policy. Meeting minutes show that teachers discuss specific incidents of student misbehavior not only to assign consequences but also to develop tailored guidance strategies, ensuring that students learn from their mistakes rather than merely receiving punishment.

The study also identifies challenges faced by the school in its moral education efforts. Teachers report that differences in students’ home environments sometimes undermine school-based moral instruction. For example, some students receive conflicting messages about honesty or discipline from family members, making it difficult for the school to achieve consistent results. Moreover, the large class sizes occasionally limit the ability of teachers to provide individualized moral guidance. The principal acknowledges resource limitations, such as a lack of counseling staff, that constrain more intensive interventions with students who exhibit persistent behavioral challenges.

Despite these challenges, the study finds evidence that SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City’s school environment exerts a positive and significant influence on student moral development. Observations of student interactions reveal many instances of polite language, cooperative behavior, and respect for teachers, suggesting that the school’s strategies are having an impact. Interviews with teachers include anecdotes of students who initially displayed behavioral problems but improved over time through consistent guidance and support. Teachers and the principal agree that the “family-like” approach—balancing clear rules with compassionate support—is central to these successes.

Teachers also highlight the importance of cultural and religious context in shaping the school’s approach. Given the community’s predominantly Muslim background, religious practices and values are naturally integrated into moral education. Teachers believe that grounding moral lessons in familiar cultural and religious frameworks makes them more meaningful and accessible to students. However, they also express a commitment to inclusivity and respect for diversity, ensuring that moral instruction does not become dogmatic or exclusionary.

Overall, the results suggest that the school environment at SDN 15 Lubuklinggau City promotes moral education through a combination of structured routines, teacher modeling, relational practices, consistent discipline, curriculum integration, staff collaboration, and efforts at parent engagement. While challenges remain—particularly in achieving consistent parental support and addressing resource constraints—the school demonstrates a clear and intentional strategy for cultivating moral values among its students. These findings underscore the importance of viewing moral education not as a single program or subject but as an integral aspect of the entire school environment, requiring commitment and coordination among all members of the school community.

The study’s results provide practical insights for other schools seeking to strengthen moral education. Key lessons include the value of embedding moral instruction into daily routines, prioritizing teacher role-modeling, fostering supportive relationships, and maintaining consistent, fair discipline practices. Additionally, the importance of staff collaboration and parent engagement suggests that moral education is most effective when approached as a collective responsibility rather than the task of individual teachers alone. By adopting such comprehensive and contextually sensitive strategies, schools can better fulfill their role in shaping the moral character of the next generation.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on results research that has been served above Conclusions that can be researcher take is role environment school towards children's morals namely 1) 1. Enforcing Discipline on Children, 2) Being Involved Full in Build Character , 3) Becoming Good Example or Example for Children , 4) Cultivating Values Priorities for Children, 5 ) Forming Active and Interesting Learning Strategies .

morals/ morality is a demands good behavior to have​ individual as morality , which is reflected in thoughts / concepts , attitudes , and behavior behavior . And this moral cultivation is very important For done on children age early . For improve participant morale educate become more good teacher need For grow concern his students about moral values are with method show that the teacher truly care . Teachers can show it with attitude on reaction to deviation moral values that occur .

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