EARLY CHILDHOOD CHARACTER EDUCATION PRACTICES BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM IN ACEH: CHALLENGES AND EFFORTS MADE IN GLOBALIZATION ERA

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Abstract

This study was aims to reveal the challenges and efforts in implementing early childhood character education based on local wisdom in Aceh society This study has been conducted using qualitative approach. Its result indicates several challenges faced by Acehnese in implementing character education based on Acehnese local wisdom, including: (a) the impact of technological development; (b) changes in the physical environment such as natural disasters and natural resources; (c) contact with other communities and the culture of the community replaces local culture; (d) modernity promises ease and speed so that the tradition of local wisdom is seen as complicated and slow so that the summarization of tradition is carried out. Therefore, Aceh local wisdom is not only ritual but also contains Islamic values that have become a culture in Aceh.

Keywords : *Early Childhood, Character Education, Challenges, Efforts.*

A. Introduction

Character education is one of the topics that are currently under the spotlight and special attention in education. One of the educational institutions both formal and non-formal who participate in this issue is early childhood education. (Battistich, 2005) character is the realization of one's positive development as a person—intellectually, socially, emotionally, and ethically. According to the statement, to be a person of good character is to be the best person that one can be positive characters need to be implanted since early childhood to build a good life of the child in the future. It because the character of a child cannot be formed instantly but through the process of character formation. This statement in line (Fakhriyani, 2017) that early childhood character education is a very crucial education that must be obtained by every child. One of the efforts of character education planting process is by utilizing local wisdom values for early childhood area. (Lickona, 1997) added good character consists of knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good. Chracter education is a type of education that a hope eventually is to create learners who have moral integrity that capable to be reflectedin daily life, both interacting with God, human beings

or natural environment (Murtako, 2015). Indonesia has a variety of local cultures and noble values that can be formed in character education, one of them is Aceh culture. Aceh is a region that is thick with its Islamic fiber in various aspects, including education aspect that the community teaches education based on Islamic values. To instill the values of character education, parents are the first moral teachers for a child, as the most enduring influencers. (Lickona, 2013) mentioned that children can change teachers every year, but they have one parent throughout the growth period.

According to (Mungmachon, 2012) local wisdom is basic knowledge gained from living in balance with nature. It is related to culture in the community which is accumulated and passed on. This wisdom can be both abstract and concrete, but the important characteristics are that it comes from experiences or truth gained from life. Local wisdom has pedagogical value because it aims to regulate behavior that is beneficial to the common interests of the community (Tilaar, 2015). One effort in the preservation of local wisdom is similar to what happened in korea. According to Kang, Lee, & Hong in (Guang Lea Lee, 2013) teaching children to acquire positive character traits appropriate for Korean society will prevent the disappearance of Korean values, and is essential to maintaining Korean heritage. Children who possess good character as accepted in their own culture will have a strong identity, and be able to take pride in and appreciate their own values within an ever-evolving global environment, and gain respect for self and others. These are necessary skills in today's global era. Therefore, research has shown that these children will strive not only to preserve their own moral values but also to contribute to the diverse cultures of all mankind.

In addition, the role of families in Aceh society, especially parents are very significant in educating, nurturing and guiding to guide moral values for their children. Child education in Aceh culture can not be separated from Islamic values that have long been held since hundreds of years ago. It is like the phrase "*Adat bak Pho teumeureuhom, hukom bak Syiah Kuala, Adat ngon hukom hana tom tjree, lagei zat ngon sifeut*". This phrase is very popular which means how closely the relationship between culture and religion is. (Daud, D, 2005) affirmed that Islamic teachings crystallizine and take root in the customs of Acehnese society so that it is difficult to distinguish between the Islamic teaching and the Acehnese custom as they coalesce into one, thus concluding all the customs and culture of Aceh fiber full of the spirit of Islam. According to (Alwasilah, A. Chaedar, 2009) based on his research stated that there are a number of proven traditional education practices (*etnodidaktik),* such as in Kampung Naga and Baduy adat communities in preserving their traditions. But in

fact the whole society that has organized education that can be called as a tradition education, including good character education. This is like what happened in Aceh where people still exist in maintaining local wisdom become an integral part of everyday life and become the basis for solution to problems that occur in society.

In addition, character building for children not only from parents but also the necessity of synchronization from school. Research conducted by (Benninga, Berkowitz, & Kuehn, 2003) on the relationship between the implementation of character education and academic achievement in elementary schools in California, the United States concluded that primary schools that carry character education are seriously and well designed tend to have high academic achievement. Indonesia as *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, actually it has many traditions and values of local wisdom which need to preserved and developed so that the character and characteristics of Indonesian people with their various cultural values do not just disappear as the negative effects of materialism and individualism culture. Many traditions and local values have become a very important force in the framework of the survival of nation-states of Indonesia in the era of globalization and the information age today. Vygotsky's theory suggests that development can only be understood in the social context in which the child functions, the various aspects of culture influence what children think about and the skills they acquire that also influence how children acquire knowledge and skills (Spodek & Saracho, 2006).

Meanwhile, the development of science, technology and the influx of foreign culture sometimes affect the local culture and the global life order has begun to feel its impact on people's lives. (Astuti, 2017) found some shifts in local cultural values in the Acehnese society such as *dodaidi* traditions (put the child to sleep), telling the story of Islam and *meunasah ceremonies* and education which are now beginning to dissipate. This shift in values spawned the emergence of a culture of individualism, hedonism and even materialism which is the bad influence of modern development that erodes and marginalizes the Acehnese custom that known as Islamic values. (Sularso, 2016a) adds that evidence of this neglected local wisdom is seen when local values are not absorbed and manifest in behavior or attitudes, the identity of the community of owners is also formed. All this is a fact of how local wisdom is neglected. Awareness of it is important to do in order not to forget the values of excellence in this archipelago. The tradition in educating the children in Aceh society as described above shows that in Aceh culture there are certain concepts and some traditions that have long been practiced by the past

community. Therefore, this study aims to explore the concept of early childhood character education based on local wisdom of Aceh.

Method

This research uses qualitative approach with explorative descriptive method. The research setting is Banda Aceh, Aceh Pidie, and Aceh Tamiang. Subjects in this study are traditional leaders, education leaders, religious leaders and some communities. Sources of data in this study are primary and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are traditional leaders, educational leaders and some communities (parents). Whereas, secondary data sources are sources of supporting data or data sources that indirectly provide data to researchers such as documents that reinforce data from primary sources. Sampling method used is purposive sampling technique, with sampling is adjusted to the purpose of research. The main instrument in this study is the researchers themselves. Technique of collecting the data in this study are using interviews, observation and document review / documentary study.

No	Responden's name	Category of responden	Region
1	Badruzzaman Ismail	Chairman of Aceh Provincial Assembly	Banda Aceh
2	Warul Walidin	Chairman of the Education Council of Aceh Province	Banda Aceh
3	Abdul Hadi	Chairman of the Pidie Regional Traditional Council	Pidie (Sigli)
4	Khaira Ulfa	A mother in Banda Aceh (parents)	Banda Aceh
5	Jam'an Gade	Secretary of the Pidie District Education Assembly	Pidie (Sigli)
6	Beby Haryanti	A mother (parents) and as an author.	Aceh Tamiang

Data analysis method using data analysis phase according to Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono, 2014) that is by data reduction, display data, and conclusion / verification.

Therefore qualitative research is always descriptive meaning data analyzed in the form of descriptive phenomena, not in the form of numbers.

B.   Discussion

According to Badruzzaman Ismail, Chairman of Aceh Provincial Assembly in an interview on 19/02/2018 say that:

"Aceh is known as a place that combines religion and adat into two important pillars in social arrangement, this is as mentioned in *hadih maja* (maxim) namely; *adat bak Poe Teumeureuhom, Hukom bak Syiah Kuala, Qanun bak Putroe Phang, Reusam like Admiral* . It can be interpreted that *Poe Teumeureuhom* (executive-sultan's authority), *Syiah Kuala* (Yudikatif-ulama), *Putroe Phang* (legislature),*Admiral* (army defense). In addition there are also other *hadih majah* : *hukom ngon Indigenous lagee ngon sipheut substances* (law [religion] and customs such as substances and properties that can not be separated).

The author conducted an interview on this challenge to Warul Walidin, Chairman of the Education Council of Aceh Province on 22/02/2018 to express challenges in education:

"The first challenge is the number of external influences, such as today's IT, digital, social media world. That I think is a challenge. Then another challenge occurs a leniency of parental responsibility for children in society towards education. Well it must be nurtured back so that people again care 100% on their children. If the first child came home asked, " what you learn today, nak?" Now parents are less like that. So I think family culture iu must be strengthened again. So family is not just about biological feeding but also about protective, educative, sociological ".

The same thing is mentioned by Abdul Hadi 25/03/2018 , Chairman of the Pidie Regional Traditional Council:

"The influence of the outer culture that comes in is so influential that this becomes the responsibility of MAA as well as to keep socializing so as not to lose the culture that becomes our national identity. Then the ignorance of the stakeholder with the existence of this culture, in narit majah mentioned that *Adat bak po teumeuruhom, hukom bak syiah kuala,* which must be understood what is custom. That custom is all activities of life, government, education is all part of custom. *Hukom* 's managed religion is led by scholars. It must be understood. Then we used to be very respectful teacher yes but now ideal example is not parent but TV, waking up watching TV, it's all been lost good example. "

The same thing was mentioned by Abdul Hadi, Chairman of the Pidie Regional Customary Assembly:

"The influence of the outside culture that comes in is very influential so that this is the responsibility of the MAA as well so that it continues to socialize so as not to lose the culture that is the identity of our nation. Then the ignorance of stakeholders with the existence of this culture, in the narrative, it is stated that "*adat bak po teumeuruhom, hukom bak syiah kuala*" must be understood what is custom. Customs are all activities of life, government, education, all parts of adat. The Hukom is managed by a religious leader. That must be understood. Then we used to be very respectful to the teacher, but now an ideal example is not a parent but a TV, even waking up watching TV, indeed all have been good examples. "(CW: AH: 03/25/2018)

In connection with that, according to Azyumardi (in Sri Astuti, 2017: 160) the flow of culture from outside is a separate challenge faced by people in implementing character education in children. For example, Android phones, the internet, as well as television which certainly contains pluses and minuses, one side of the matter is the product of scientific and technological advancements that are acknowledged to have had a lot of positive influence and progress for humans and their culture. But on the other hand the media can bring bad influences such as images and spectacles that are not feasible for children.

Therefore, Khaira Ulfa, a mother in Banda Aceh, emphasized the role of parents, following the results of the interview:

"Maybe this is right, now the information is getting easier, we can only get information about parenting from our cellphones, about children's character education, so we can't take things, sometimes there are new things that are not in the family we are the challenge, so if there is no story about parents, if there is something wrong, they get scolded or pinched, right? While parenting is not right now, so maybe that is a challenge when we want to be patience with children, maybe sometimes parents say "*nyan cutit aju*", yes maybe like that. This is a challenge from the inside, if there are challenges from outside. For example, in our children's home, we have already committed it, "brother, if you eat, you can't stand, if you don't eat your left hand" So sometimes it's just outside the meal, it might be odd, whose name we are accustomed to and committed even though it is time to eat also have to sit down, so sometimes just one bribe, especially the children who have difficulty eating so eat it chase, run- run away so sometimes "how come you don't give a damn if he doesn't want to eat if he doesn't play while playing" while we want to teach one side he eats, maybe that's how it is. And there may even be challenges from yourself, because we are trying to apply the good character before when there are challenges like that if we are going to do

anything again, are tired, the mood is no longer the same too "yeah it's gap, tomorrow start again" So it is also a child who is a child, so "this day is OK, tomorrow is not allowed", so there is indeed from myself. "(CW: K: 02/26/2018)

The development of information technology that occurs at this time is the impact of the globalization of the world. This is a phenomenon and reality that occurs in the world of education. Globalization is transformed into a force that engulfs all corners of the world and causes cultural and social order to change rapidly. Cultural currents can occur without the hustle and bustle of the masses through the virtual world (digital world). In this condition the task of education becomes increasingly heavy (Martono, 2014: 284). Therefore, parents and society as part of the world's population also experience the impact of globalization.

In addition to these challenges, the authors also found other challenges from Beby Haryanti, namely:

"Well maybe this is the case, many people might think such as haram or something like that, but when in fact we have to distinguish which is the Shari'a which is the culture. Well, as people think that way, it might be possible to set it if this child is not crippled, for example, he will be bad morally, until there are Acehnese, for example, there is a very recalcitrant child who will be cast as "never been *peucicap*". Now that should not actually bring shirk beliefs. So, yes, we do it with symbols, our hope is like that of our culture, our tradition, do not mix it with faith. If we believe that because of that, we are already forbidden, there is already shirk. Maybe the separation is all we have to understand, don't mix culture with the faith, the challenge there is possible. Including for example the *peusijuk* tradition, it is actually to cool which consists of cold grasses to cool, this person is for example angry, just the negative things is cooled, that's all. Only people think that if they don't get *peusijuk,* for example, the car will crash, that's what is not allowed, just consider it to cool the heart. This is the term also we pray for children while caressing, we can also pray as usual, so maybe that is the analogy, so there are things that say, we pray for children by caressing, well the child knows we pray with good things . "(CW: BH: 02/12/2018)

The author also conducted an interview about this challenge to Warul Walidin, Chair of the Aceh Provincial Education Council, to reveal challenges in education:

"The first challenge is the number of external influences, such as IT now, digital, social media. That I think is a challenge. Then another challenge is a loosening sense of responsibility from parents to children in society towards education. Well, it must be nurtured again so that the community cares about 100% of their children. When children go home, they are asked, "What is learning today?" Now parents are not like that. So I think family culture must be strengthened again. So the family is not just a matter of biological feeding but also a protective, educative, sociological problem ". (CW: W: 02/22/2018)

(Ratna, 2013) adds an argument in his research in the study of traditional family-based family education on urban communities in Medan, as follows:

Cultural shifts are always the result of time travel and environmental change. But the shift is expected instead of precisely removing the original identity, but supporting the better direction. In relation to national integrity, traditional cultural shifts are expected to be positive, to eliminate the egoistic tribal sense while on the other hand the cultural shift can strengthen the sense of nationality that all traditional culture in the archipelago is a part of the nation's culture. While recently seen is the adoption of western culture which is then considered as if it will be part of the culture of the Indonesian nation. The informant considers that the effort made is to develop Aceh local treasures that are not only ritual but contain *values* and especially Islamic values that have become a culture in Aceh. In addition, the mechanism for formulating character values should be done by schools involving elements of parents, school committees and local communities. The informant considers that character education is not only the responsibility of the parents, but also the involvement of educational trilogy that is family, school and community that integrate between general education, Islam and local wisdom.

In this case the importance of local wisdom built early in the environment basic education. Given at this stage the basic elements of culture that exist in local wisdom is buried in the students themselves (Sularso, 2016).The revitalization of Aceh culture can not be negotiable. If cultural conservation efforts are not systematically and consistently carried out, it is feared as a result of the current excessive flow of external cultures, our cultural values will be degraded, shifted, changed, and even lost in society.This can be said to be a realistic challenge. Before the condition occurred, from the beginning the ancestors have been warned in a *hadih majah* Aceh: "*matee aneuk meupat jeurat, gadoh adat pat tamita*", (deceased child is clearly his tomb, but losing the custom where we can look). This phrase is not just a beautiful and unadorned poetic slogan, but it is a statement full of meaning and philosophical value that need to be considered and contemplated. Strengthening

cultural identity as capital in the process of social mobility is an absolute requirement, in order to run simultaneously and sustainably. As mentioned in (Yusri Yusuf, 2010) that with the strong tradition, then the community can enforce Sharia Law with a good and perfect. Thus, it is also included in the field of education, especially in educating early child in Aceh society.

Based on the results of several interviews mentioned above, it was revealed that there were challenges in implementing character education in Acehnese society, namely the influence of technology (gadgets), there were some people who were still unfamiliar in interpreting *Syari'ah* and culture, as well as parental involvement in formal, informal and informal education.

The Efforts for Implementing the Early Childhood Character Education in Aceh

After the emergence of these challenges in applying early childhood character education in Aceh society, the author then conducted an interview to reveal the form of efforts of the challenge. Interviews with some indigenous figures, educational and community leaders in Aceh, the efforts undertaken in the application of character education in the Aceh community as follows:

"If the MAA Pidie itself has a vision and mission that is the customary purpose to form *akhlakul karimah in* accordance with qanun. We are assigned to form *akhlakul karimah* then he will dignified can interact and cultured. Because I am not a cleric, then this is how I cultivate custom fields. Therefore we want to revive all customs that are not against Islam. The formation of human character in general, yes, but it also revives the Acehnese arts. For example like seumapa there is advice in it, so not only limited to art but it contains *value* in it that contains the value of Islam in it. Then MAA Pidie also has a mission that is to be a glorious traditional assemblies that glow bright, brilliant in knowledge, and be regarded so intent to be known by the crowd. Developing local treasures especially in Pidie ".

The statement is similar to the result of interview with Jam'an Gade, secretary of the Pidie District Education Assembly, that it is necessary for the involvement of the education trilogy, his statement as follows:

"If society does not support it will not work. Everything will be involved, educational trilogy, family, school and community. In early childhood as an official institution so the government follows the implementation through the curriculum, and parents are in sync in shaping the character of the child. Beside, teachers should be good examples for children because children will imitate what they see. For example in one case where a child gets a

school lesson but is different from the one taught at home, so the child sometimes assumes that the truth is his teacher or his mother, one of them. This is not very good for the character formation of a child. so what to do is, when there is something different in home and school teaching, then the mother should visit the school,communicate solely to equate perception so that what is taught to the child synchronize between school and home."

From the explanation it can be understood that one of the efforts undertaken by the Aceh Traditional Assembly (MAA) and the Aceh Education Council (MPD) are both institutions established by the government as the autonomy and privilege of Aceh. Both institutions have sought to revive (revitalize) Acehnese traditions related to character education of children. For example, by holding *dodaidi* contest (singing at the time of the child want to sleep), as well as reactivate *meunasah* (*mushallah*) and *gampong* (village) that can support children's character education such as learning in *meunasah* and *bale sumeubeut* (village recitation center).

It was revealed that there were efforts from the community both from traditional leaders, educational leaders and the community (parents) themselves to overcome the challenges of globalization today. Therefore, people began to realize the importance of patterns and methods of education of children who are able to prepare a strong generation despite the storms of the times continue to hit. In parallel, this means that the awareness of the importance of children's education based on tradition and local values becomes important. It should be emphasized that families, communities and governments are the three components that can work together and synergize to educate children to reach a better future. In addition, in view of the sociology of family education, society and even religious, media,and peers are agents who play a role in shaping knowledge, attitudes, values, norms, behaviors, and expectations to be able to parcipate effectively in society (Damsar, 2015)

C. Conclusion

Child character education in Aceh culture can not be separated from Islamic values that originated from the family. This means the family can be a medium of inheritance to instill cultural values for early childhood. Social change will not happen if the cultural order is rooted well in society, that is, the cultural order which has a strong foundation and philosophy, in this case it clearly is the Islamic values. These values continue to be maintained until now, so it is difficult to separate between the teachings of Islam and Aceh's customs. Both are synergized, so it becomes a force that moves society to do a social movement *(social of action)*prophetic nature that leads to the creation of an Islamic

generation and society. In this context a phrase " *hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut*" has always been a patron in behaving and behaving everyday for the people of Aceh.

There are several challenges faced by Acehnese in implementing character education based on Acehnese local wisdom, including: (a) the impact of technological development; (b) changes in the physical environment such as natural disasters and natural resources; (c) contact with other communities and the culture of the community replaces local culture; (d) modernity promises ease and speed so that the tradition of local wisdom is seen as complicated and slow so that the summarization of tradition is carried out.

The results show that local wisdom-based education is one of the pillars and an important part in educating one of them to form the character of children from an early age. The concept of early childhood character education based on local wisdom in Aceh society is in line with Islamic education values. Both religion and culture united used as a place to set the action, activity, association and interaction from the smallest neighborhood (family) to the wider community. Aceh local wisdom is not only ritual but also contains *values* and especially Islamic values that have become a culture in Aceh. In addition the mechanism of character formulation of values needed to be done by the school involving elements of parents, school committees and local communities. Character education is not only the responsibility of parents, but also the involvement of educational trilogy that is family, school and community that integrate between general education, Islamic values and local wisdom.

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