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**CHILDREN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL
 EDUCATION IN “KRAMBIL” CHILDREN’S HOME OF READING
 AND CREATIVE STUDIO COMMUNITY**

Alfiana Yuli Efiyanti

Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia
 alfi_huda@pips.uin-malang.ac.id

Abstract. The development of children's character becomes urgent considering that children are a part of young generation who will undertake the nation's future. Education process is one of the best way to develop children's character. The process can be carried out through formal, non-formal or informal education. Based on a research using descriptive qualitative approach, it is known that the efforts of “Krambil” Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio community to characterize children who come from lower-middle class in Blimbing, Malang through non-formal and informal education. Through literacy or reading activities, children are encouraged to develop their knowledge by analyzing the author's idea. In addition to reading, children are also invited to understand and love Indonesian culture through various artistic activities, such as dancing, singing, storytelling and creating dances and composing songs. Children also gain an environment to develop creativity based on their talents and interests. Accompanied by the founder of that community in most activities, some characters have been established by “Krambil” Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio. The most prominent character is the creativity. In addition, other characters also exist, such as self-confidence, gratefulness, discipline and so on.

Keywords: Children Characters; Characters Education; Non-formal and Informal Education

A. INTRODUCTION

Young generation is the most important element of a nation. They are the hope for achieving the nation's ideals. Young people should have the spirit to implement the ideals of the nation, so it requires children with good characters. Although children were born with a good character, the environment where they grow affects their character development. Therefore, every society has an obligation to provide a good environment to shape the character of children. This character building can be accomplished through habituation.

Beside habituation, children's character can be formed through an educational process. Therefore, character education for children since early age needs special attention. The Indonesian educational system regulating the education for Indonesian children states that the implementation of education can be formally carried out in formal educational institutions or schools. Moreover, it can also be held by non-formal institutions such as educational institutions or learning courses, and it can be carried out in form of informal education within the community which are not constrained by the curriculum, space and time.

In formal education, children are required to study for nine years at school. There is also a regulation concerning the length of time to study, starting from 7 am until 4 pm, on Monday to Friday at some full day schools, or starting from 7 am until 2 pm for non-full day

schools. Beside learning in formal educational institutions or schools, children have their own spare time. To spend this spare time, there should be efforts to provide other types of education, non-formal and informal ones. Both are educational program held by all citizens, both in households and community.

"Krambil" Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio community located in Blimbing district of Malang is one of the communities that participated in shaping the character of children by organizing informal education for children of the lower-middle class. The community's executors invite children to learn together outside school hours. This community facilitates these children to be creative through the home of reading and art studio with a wide variety of activities.

B. MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Children Character Building

Based on the terminology, character is a human nature, which refers to the nature of psychology, morals, and character. Every child is born with one's temperament, needs, and talents. However, a person's character is automatically influenced by the environment since human's life is inseparable from the environment where he/she lives. "There are two factors that influence the formation of character, the innate nature of the child such as knowledge, experience, accepted moral principles, guidance, and parent-child relationship or interaction. A positive environment will also form a positive character in children." (Prasetyo, Nana, 2011 8).

Thus, it is necessary to care for the children's character formation in an environment. Character education is an effort to help humans to create a well formed personality. Education is not only formal one that is conducted in schools, but also in the environment family and society. The closest environment to the child's life is the family. Thus, the character education should start from the family, and to be developed in school and community.

2. Nonformal and Informal Education

Formal and informal education have been existed since the 1960s. This concept fits the concept of recurrent learning and long life education as proposed by Tight (1996) in Marzuki (2009) that the concept of education with regard to the expansion of education and lifelong learning. Thus, non-formal education is the recognition of the importance of education, learning and training outside formal education institutions.

In its development, Combs and Ahmed (1974), stated in Marzuki (2009), make a clear distinction between formal, informal and informal education as follows: Formal education is a structured, hierarchical system of education, implemented from primary school to university, academic studies, specialist program and a variety of institutions, full-time, in form of technical and professional practice. Informal education is an education that shows the true long life education process, in which individuals gain attitudes, values of skills and knowledge, from everyday experiences, and from the influence of education and resources in their environment. The sources in the environment are from family, library and media. Nonformal education is any type of educational activity organized outside the formal education system, either carried out separately or is part of a larger activity, which serves a particular educational objective and specific learning objectives.

Further, Marzuki (2009) also quoted Fordham (1993) who stated that the characteristics of non-formal education in the 1970s are: (1) relevant to the needs of disadvantaged groups, (2) care for particular category of people, (3) focus on the formulation of clear objectives, (4) flexible in organization and methods.

Unesco (2006) defines non-formal education as:

"Any organized and sustained educational activities that do not correspond exactly to the definition of formal education. Non formal education may therefore take place both within outside educational institutions, and cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational programmes to impact adult literacy, basic

education for out-of-school children, life-skill, work-skill, and general culture. Non formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the “ladder system” and may have different durations and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved.” (Omoyeni & Ajayi, 2012).

According to UNESCO, nonformal education depends on the context of each country. It can be an education for adults, basic education for dropped out children, lifeskill education, skill training, and general culture education. The most important, it is well organized and done continuously, is for all age levels, and is not held by formal institution. Therefore, it has no level rules with flexible time. However the providing of the sertificate depends on the need.

In Indonesia, formal and nonformal education are stated in Law number 20 of 2003 concerning National Education System. It explains that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a conducive learning atmosphere and process to make the students able to develop their potencies to achieve religious spiritual strength, self control, personality, intelligence, good character, and important skills for themselves, their society and country. National education mainly consists of formal education (education at school), nonformal education, and informal education.

The target of nonformal education covers all social levels, disregard age, sex, socioeconomic status, and previous education. It is not only for those uneducated people, dropped out students, unemployed graduates, but also for all society including people with high education level and settled job. Therefore, the targets are those who need knowledge and skill to develop them in accordance with the slogan lifelong education.

Based on the explanation, nonformal education serves to develop two dimensions of human quality namely individual and social dimension which both influence and being influenced by other aspects of human life such as economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental aspects. As a result, nonformal education can be achieved by various life aspects such as social, economic, politic, cultural, technological and environmental education (Hiryanto, 2009).

3. Method

The article is based on a quantitative descriptive research describing the phenomena and real condition of the subject. It is a community of lower-middle class children. The name of the community is “Krambil” Children’s Home of Reading and Creative Studio. The center of the community is located at Jl. LA. Adi Sucipto, Blimbing, Kota Malang. The key informants as the research main source consist of the community founder and children assistants, Ibu Kiti Suhartatik and Bapak Surip, with three community members.

The research was conducted for 6 months and it consisted of three steps, namely data collection, data reduction and data presentation. The researcher also checked the validity of the data to ensure that the result of the study is able to fulfill research criteria such as (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability and (4) confirmability.

To fulfill the requirements of the credibility, the researcher conducts prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer briefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy checks and member checking (Bogdan, R.C & Biklen, 1982).

To fulfill the second criterion, the transferability, the researcher tries to understand the character and behavior of the informants to enable the result of the study applied in other places which have similar description and characteristics.

The researcher fulfills the dependability by asking an independent auditor to review her activities in the form of trial audit. The auditor reviews not only the field information data, but also archives and reports.

For the confirmability, the researcher reconfirms the study to the independent auditor and the informants. She warrants the truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality of the study. Therefore, the result of the study is acceptable and scientific qualified.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. The Description of the Research Subjects

"Krambil" Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio was officially established in 2015, even though its activities started from 2005. The idea was from Ibu Kiti Suhartatik who cared for children in her neighborhood at Jl. LA Adi Sucipto, Blimbing, Kota Malang. Living in the suburban area, most of the children were from lower-middle class. They did their after school or holiday activities without their parent supervision. It moved Ibu Kiti to assist them.

Ibu Kiti supported by her husband began to manage their small front porch to be a learning area for children. She put various children books in bookshelves. She bought some of the books and got the rest from her colleagues. Children, around 5 to 10 at first, started to read and borrow the books during their after school time and holiday.

The activities in the community grew with time and they were not only dealing with reading. The number of the children in the community also increased. Bu Kiti and Pak Surip began to be tutors to help the children studying, reciting Quran, and doing their homeworks. To answer the children high enthusiasm for learning, the community provided various activities. The caretakers formed study groups such as drawing, storytelling, dancing, singing and other groups based on children talent and interest. The children could follow the activities for free.

In 2015, when the number of the children reached 60, the caretakers considered the need of a well structured community. Then, they founded "Krambil" Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio. Since then, they made a schedule for their activities.

2. Non-Formal and Informal Education in Children Character Building and "Krambil" Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio

"Krambil" Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio is a community created spontaneously, based on the need of lower-middle class children to keep studying. According to their design, ways and process, children in the community are studying without a curriculum, time, room and mobilization. Stated by Ibu Kiti that she facilitates those children's need as long as in the corridor of studying activities. They can come anytime they need and want to learn. However, as a tutor, Ibu Kiti arranges activities for all children to give them equal opportunity in developing their talents and interests.

Regular daily activities include reading, reciting Quran and memorizing prayers, and congregational prayer. Meanwhile, other activities for talent and interest development are scheduled in one week as shown in the following table:

Table D.1. The list of activities based on talent and interest in "Krambil" Children's Home of Reading and Creative Studio

Day	Activities
Monday and Wednesday	Drawing, painting using many media (paper, canvas, fabric, bottle, etc.)
Tuesday and Friday	Regional dancing, singing, music, and art
Thursday and Saturday	Storytelling, writing story
Sunday	Workshop by using any materials (used bottle, used cardboard, etc.)

Even though the activities are scheduled, the tutor prioritizes the children's needs to express themselves. It means that the schedule is flexible according to the situation. Learning activities that give freedom for the students support Comb's idea that states that non-formal/informal education can be done by anyone, anywhere and anytime. Even though they are not linked, activities in this community are developed and demanded by children. Children in this area are previously only play or do useless activities. After the creation of this community, they like reading, studying, and being creative. An interview with them shows that they get use to create new things by exploiting their own sources.

3. The Most Prominent Character in “Krambil” Children’s Home of Reading and Creative Studio

The form of education giving opportunity for children to express themselves freely in “Krambil” Children’s Home of Reading and Creative Studio gives positive impact for children in the neighborhood area as stated by their parents. Studying and fun activities successfully build their characters. They have abilities in managing their time to choose interesting activities. Religious activities like memorizing prayers, reciting Al-Qur’an and congregational prayer are packed in fun activities to make the children feel grateful. Books in home of reading are free to borrow without tight requirement to build children’s honesty.

According to the results of observation and interview, the most interesting matter in learning activities through non-formal and informal approaches in “Krambil” Children’s Home of Reading and Creative Studio is the children’s creativity that keeps improving. It is indicated from their various and useful works. Those works are in the form of painting, recycling products, and children’s arts skill.

E. Conclusion and Recommendation

1. Conclusion

Children as young generation including those from lower-middle economy class must have strong character. Character building is not only through educational process, but also through children’s environment. Therefore, people of certain community have important role in building children’s character. Education from people around them is done through non-formal and informal education.

“Krambil” Children’s Home of Reading and Creative Studio plays an important role in giving non-formal and informal education for children from lower-middle economy class in Malang, especially in Blimbing Subdistrict. Many activities teach them to become independent, grateful, creative, discipline and honest. Teaching system is packed in an informal and flexible format. However, the tutors keep fully observing children’s activities.

The most prominent of character values taught by “Krambil” Children’s Home of Reading and Creative Studio is creative character. Children have high creativity since they can create new works by exploiting any source they have. The works vary, in form of arts products and art skills.

2. Recommendation

The result of the research suggests some recommendation for educational authorities and observers or non-formal and informal educational organizations.

For the educational authorities in research of education are recommended to pay more attention to the non-formal and informal educational organization. They must know that both educational institutions play an important role in building children’s characters through communities developed in society. The attention can be in a form of trainings for non-formal and informal educational organizations or for children, beside their formal education at school.

For the observers or non-formal and informal educational organizations in society are recommended to always insert character values in every educational activity in society since children can learn indirectly from their environment.

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