

Character Building of Caring for the Environment in Social Studies Learning Through an Ecopedagogic Approach

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Abstract: Character education is a national strategic policy contained in the 2013 curriculum. The government's policy on character education has succeeded in developing eighteen character values derived from the culture of the Indonesian nation. One of the character values that needs to be internalized in learning is the character of caring for the environment. This is based on the declining awareness of students and public concern for the problems of the natural environment, as well as the social environment. So that social studies learning becomes a strategic alternative in shaping the character of caring for the environment through intracurricular and extracurricular activities, by using an ecopedagogic approach as a comprehensive concept to support the process of building environmentally caring character in social studies learning. Meanwhile, the formation of environmentally caring character can be done using a problem solving model that is integrated in the social studies learning process, collaborating on social capital and local wisdom in intracurricular and extracurricular activities. Thus, students' sensitivity to various social problems in the environment increases, students can be skilled in making accurate decisions in solving social and environmental problems, and are able to grow students' analytical skills.

Keywords: Character, environmental care, social studies learning, ecopedagogic

Introduction

Education is a mirror of the face of a nation. In the process of education, a nation puts great hopes to prepare the community and its younger generation so that they can inherit the noble values of the nation and realize a better national life in the future. Education is an important key in forming quality human resources. Quality human resources are the main factor in realizing a Golden Indonesia in 2045. A quality education system can determine the future of the Indonesian nation. The Indonesian nation is civilized, ethical, characterful, and intelligent. So that the educational process does not only emphasize the process of transferring knowledge from an educator to students, but education must be able to transfer values to students. The educational process must be balanced between developing cognitive competencies and developing affective competencies, as well as psychomotor competencies.

Character building of students is the main focus in the Indonesian education system. The Indonesian government through the Ministry of Education and Culture issued a regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 20 of 2018 concerning strengthening the character of formal education units. In this rule, there are eighteen character values that must be developed at the level of educational units, one of which is the character of caring for the environment. The results of the study revealed that in the learning process teachers can develop honest character, discipline, hard work, communicativeness, responsibility, creativity, independence, and environmental care (Hendri, 2022). Therefore, education is not only expected to increase student intellectuality, but also encourage students to have ecological intelligence. Thus the educational process needs to synergize between students and the natural environment. Teachers make the natural environment a source and learning medium for students, because students can be agents of change in preserving nature to create harmony between humans and nature. Students' ecological awareness is an important factor to encourage the formation of an environmentally caring character.

The increasingly poor environmental conditions are the basis for forming a caring character for the student's environment. Data in 2021 shows that Indonesia produces 21.88 million tons of waste (Mahdi, 2022). Statistics in 2020 show that water availability in Indonesia has experienced a downward trend from 2010-2035, air quality is also a problem that needs to be highlighted for environmental disturbances, and the problem of reducing Indonesia's forest land is a factor causing many natural disasters that have occurred in the last 20 years (BPS, 2020). The problem of environmental and socio-cultural destruction is a common concern, especially for the world of education. The ecopedagogic approach in formal education is an alternative to breaking the gap between ecological and social injustices in the world of education, as well as being a way to solve environmental problems, through more effective social movements by internalizing character education, as well as exploring ecological issues as public issues. Then these issues can be constructed through an ecopedagogic approach in the learning process, especially in social studies teaching (Hadi Pratiwi, 2020; (Eryaman et al., 2010).

Ecopedagogics and ethnopedagogics can be used as approaches in educational practice to teach students about environmental concerns, and support students' ecological intelligence. Educational practice is not only based on the value of local wisdom but has the aim of equipping students with understanding, awareness, and life skills, and students can understand that life must be balanced (Supriatna, 2016). Apart from the ethnopedagogic approach by utilizing the value of local wisdom, the formation of the character of caring for the student environment can be done by applying a problem-based learning model. The results of the study revealed that the effectiveness of applying the problem-based learning model increased mastery of concepts in children by 10.34% with a significance of 95%, then this model influenced student habits and student environmental concerns (Nova et al., 2020).

Ecological understanding and awareness are the result of an educational process oriented towards the paradigm of postmodernism, not an education based on a pragmatic-materialist view. Therefore, internalizing the character of caring for the environment through social studies learning provides space for students and

teachers to carry out contextual learning activities based on reality and facts. Environmental awareness can minimize the impact of environmental damage, and can encourage students to have critical thinking and critical analysis in taking actions in solving environmental and social problems.

The ecopedagogic approach focuses on students' complete understanding of the nature of man with nature, and has a close relationship. The learning process is not only based on the development of material textually, but shifts to the contextual realm, so that the process of reconstructing students' knowledge is more meaningful (Nafisah et al., 2020). Character education and ecopedagogics are frameworks in helping teachers to introduce and teach students about the environment. The ecopedagogic approach and character education are a single unit of transdisciplinary concepts. (Ingman & Christy McConnell, 2021). Ecopedagogics aims that students must be empowered through social studies learning, so that students have a critical view regarding sustainable builders, limited natural resources, and the ability to adapt to an environment that is constantly changing. This is in line with the application of the green curriculum as an alternative for the education system to internalize the character of caring for the environment in the learning process with an ecopedagogic approach.

Methods and Research Design

The writing method in this article is a qualitative method with a type of literature study approach or library research. The author seeks to examine the theory and analyze literature books related to the context of the theme discussed, namely the character of caring for the environment and ecopedagogics. In addition, it performs analysis of scientific articles and journals, sourced from Google Scholar, Proquest, using bibliometric analysis. In qualitative research, literature review is used to build methodological basic assumptions, which means that assumptions are built from inductive to deductive. Literature reviews derived from various sources are analyzed and discussed in depth as a basis for formulating alternative new studies, or building propositions.

Results and Discussion

The discussion in this article is based on an in-depth review of the literature. Talking about the environment, it will be related to nature and all its problems. The environment is the source of life for humans, so the environment has a causal system for human survival. Man and the whole entity of life are a whole inseparable from milieu. Therefore, humans have an important role in protecting, and maintaining a good balance between humans and ecology. This can be realized if the learning process internalizes environmentally charged education into various subjects, especially social studies subjects.

The environmental damage that continues to occur in the world these days proves that how urgent it is to actualize learning with an ecopedagogic approach. The damage that occurs is a way of looking at it based on the paradigm of anthropocentrism. This paradigm considers that man is the center of nature and only man has value, while nature is the element of the fulfillment of human interests and needs. Anthropocentrism eventually gave birth to egocentrism, egocentrism in question is the human ego to act on the basis of his personal interests or the interests of his group, and base himself on rational actions. So the paradigm of anthropocentrism is the opposite of the paradigm of ecocentrism, which is very broadly related to environmental ethics.

Jan Lighthart is a shopper who builds critical thinking on existing theories, but he sees that the learning process should introduce students to the environment and go directly into the field to assess and identify existing realities. The concept developed by Jan Lighthart is in line with the concept of ecopedagogics based on the environment. With the ecopedagogic approach actualized in the learning process, it is hoped that students can care about the environment and form a balance (Kusumawardani & Kuswanto, 2020). Based on the literature review that has been analyzed, so that there are several propositions that can be developed into aspects that need to be further studied ecopedagogically in social studies learning.

Proposition 1: Application of Problem Solving learning model to support

ecopedagogic-based learning

The use of problem solving learning models can help students to have skills in solving social and environmental problems contextually. The problem solving learning model is a model that focuses on teaching as well as student skills in solving problems. The development of problem-solving skills needs to be linked to high-level thinking skills that can facilitate students to be able to determine practical solutions to the problems that have been identified (Pepkin, 2004; Mahanal et al., 2022) . Through an ecopedagogic approach students can build their knowledge constructs through a learning context that is comprehensively directed to be associated with their environment. Based on the results of bibliometric analysis, the position of the problem solving learning model has been mapped in several studies or researches. The mapping can be seen in the image below.

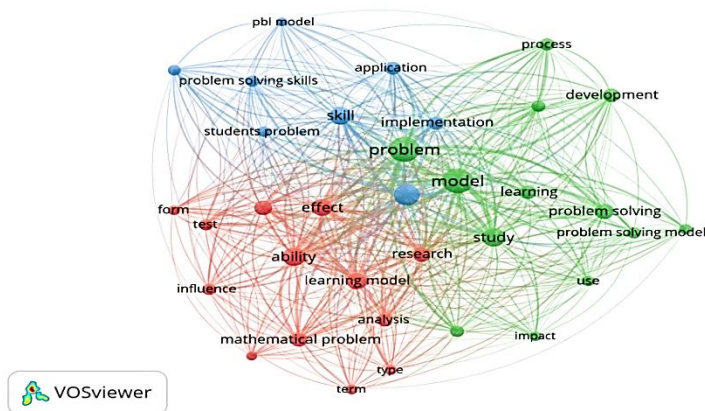


Figure 1. Bibliometric Mapping of Problem Solving Models

The results of the analysis show that research related to problem solving is related to learning, and the PBL model. Some of the keywords seen in the mapping results above are the variables that are most often studied. Several colors in the mapping show that the variables have categorization in three large clusters that dominate studies connected to the problem solving model. However, there is a gap between the variables studied, especially the discussion

of the concept of ecopedagogics. From the mapping above, research on problem solving models is only in the scope of model development, its impact and implementation in general. So that the discussion of problem solving that intersects with ecopedagogics does not appear in the mapping results.

Proposition 2: Integration of character education and local wisdom in social studies learning through an ecopedagogic approach

Internalizing the value of local wisdom in the learning process is something to consider, given that students live in a diverse cultural environment, so that understanding of the diversity and cultural environment of students is the main factor in supporting the success of the learning process. Culture is the whole knowledge possessed by a group of human beings and is used as a guide for life to interpret its environment in the form of actions. Thus, exploring and preserving various elements of local wisdom, traditions and local institutions, including norms and customs can be useful and can function effectively in the process of cultivating character education (Fajarini, 2014). Local wisdom values can be said to be cultural values in a society that are closely related to culture, environment, and society. Man is inseparable from his natural environment (Uge et al., 2019).

Local wisdom is a unique culture that can be used in the development of a country, and is the basis of sustainable national development (Pornpimon et al., 2014). The results showed that local kaerifan values can be a driver of character formation, therefore the character values formed through the integration of local wisdom are discipline, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, tolerance, social care, and environmental care. Meanwhile, the application of learning models and learning tools with a local wisdom approach is quite effective in improving student learning outcomes (Hidayati et al., 2020; (Ramdiah et al., 2020). Thus the results of the bibliographic mapping can be seen in the figure below.

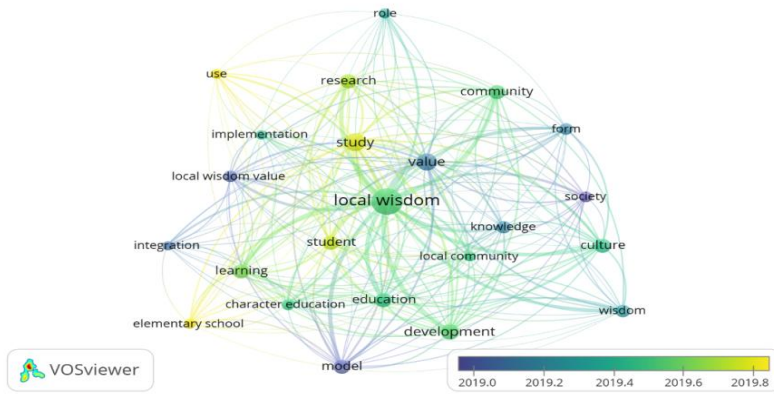


Figure 2. Bibliographic Mapping of Local Wisdom

Discussion and Recommendations

Based on the mapping and bibliographic analysis above, various studies have been carried out with themes or variables related to problem solving learning modes, character education, and local wisdom. It provides a general picture that there are research gaps that can be a more in-depth study in future studies. The gap is a void for researchers to be able to build scientific ideas related to variables that do not have a wedge with variables or themes that have been analyzed using bibliometrics. Thus, it can be recommended to be a further study, namely how character education and local wisdom can be a comprehensive part in building student character with an ecopedagogic approach. As well as implementing a problem solving learning model through an ecopedagogic approach to social studies learning, with the aim that students are able to have ecological intelligence abilities supported by an attitude of caring for the environment.

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