

## STORY TELLING IN TEACHING CHILDREN VALUES AND BUILD CHARACTER

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### Abstract

This paper intends to discuss about the advantages of storytelling toward children. Story telling teaches them values and build their character. The writing of the paper is based on the condition and some facts that happen nowadays where changes that occur in today's society has led to a variety of positive and negative impacts. In positive side, the growth of knowledge, technology and information in the present time gives an ease in society life. However, negative impacts on society today such as violence/ bully, criminality, drug abuse, and free sex. All these caused by the decrease of values and moral in the society. To solve this problem, values and build character is highly needed. In this case, through story telling not only will teach children values and build their character but also the effective way to introduce them about culture and moral to the children.

**Key words:** build character, storytelling, value.

### A. INTRODUCTION

Growing impact of globalization is now bringing Indonesian people forget or leave the values and character of the nation. Many problems that arise due to declining values character such as moral degradation, violence, conflict, crime, teen involved in drugs, and free sex. In addition, if we look at the context of the world of education, many examples of other irregularities or deviation, such as student lying, dishonest, cheating, fighting and disrespect to the teachers, bullying friends, and utter impolite. We often hear and see from the media of this real picture, both print and electronic. For instance what happened in recent years, the world of education tarnished with various cases of violence or bullying. As happened in one of the elementary schools in Jakarta, senior students bully their juniors to death. Still in Jakarta, students brawl using sharp weapon cause the death of 7 high school student.

These conditions convince us that we are seriously having lack of character education. In line with what is told by Kak Seto (2008), the various problems that arise in the community are considered because of the lack of character education. The low affection make people easily ignore others, even hurting them. The low sense of responsibility makes people work less than their best, even neglecting their work. While, Thomas Lickona in Muslich (2014), mentioned that there are ten indicators where the nation was heading for the brink of collapse. They are:

1. The increase of violence among adolescents.
2. The use of language and words are deteriorating.
3. The strong effects of peer-group in violence.
4. The increased of self-destructive behavior, such as drug abuse, alcohol and free sex.
5. The distortion of good and bad moral guidelines
6. The decline in work ethic
7. The lack of respect for parents and teachers
8. Low sense of individual responsibility and citizens
9. Widespread of dishonesty
10. And a sense of suspicion and hatred among peoples.

If we examined these indicators above carefully, it seems that these all already occurred in Indonesia. Therefore, to restore and bring back the values and character need to be instilled to children. One of the ways that can be used is the activity of storytelling. Storytelling is closely associated with strengthening the attitude and character of children. Story telling is very important for gaining the educational objectives related to enhance the children good characters as well as attitude for Indonesia's future. To educate them with good and strong character are a must. In hope that they will have values and good character and able to employed them in everyday life.

Storytelling activities basically can be done at home by parents and at school by teachers, because story telling is an activity that does not need specific time and place to conduct. We can do it anywhere and anytime. It is also sure enough that story telling gives valuable experience to children. A fairy tale believed to strengthen the relationship between parents at home and teachers at school, develop children imagination in order to stimulate their creativity, instill values and ethics, build character, inspire and involve a variety of emotions,

affect behavior, give more positive words knowledge and increase their vocabularies, to train children to express their opinions and critical thinking, stimulate the child to have attachment with books and interest in reading.

Moreover, Nia Hidayati (2009) tells that storytelling is the best way to educate children without violence, shape character, teach values as well as moral and ethical, the truth, and practicing self-discipline. Storytelling is also an effective way to provide human touch and build up the fairness. Children are more able to understand the things that need to be replicated and which should not be, through stories that we re-tell. This will help them in identifying themselves with the surrounding environment, and enable them to assess and put themselves in the midst of other people.

According to Fadillah (2013) story is one way to attract the children interest. Generally child loves to hear any stories, but the favorite story is the story that is related to the world of animals, like the deer, monkey, etc. In addition he also said that the story telling method is the way to deliver learning materials. By storytelling, it will be easier to attract the learner's attention. Hence, storytelling can also relieve boredom in following teaching and learning process in class. Especially at this stage of early childhood, storytelling is one of the favorite activities in learning process. In addition, a story or fairy tale becomes attractive communication medium to convey moral lesson or message to the students.

According to Scott Russell Sanders *and* Fadillah (2013) there are ten reasons why children need to listen to the story. They are:

1. Listening to the story is something fun for children
2. Stories can affect society
3. The story helps children see through the eyes of others
4. Story show the children about the consequence an action
5. Story educate the children about aspiration
6. Story helps children to understand the place/location
7. Stories help children how to use time
8. The story helps children to know or recognize about suffering, loss, and death
9. The story teaches children how to be human
10. Stories give or provide answer about the curiosity and mystery creations.

From the statement above, it can be concluded that the activities of storytelling can educate children naturally and shape children's character. How to shape a person's character? The best way to shape the children's character is giving them a positive influence through story. With these tales exemplary nature, tenacity, tolerance, moral, mental, responsibility, cooperation, simplicity, character and other positive properties can be given to children.

To get clear description about the advantages of the storytelling connection to character building, here will be explained some sub topics such as; what is story telling itself and what is the function of telling story related to character building, what kinds of stories that suitable for children, when the best time to do story telling and how to tell children a story?

## **B. WHAT IS STORY TELLING?**

Educating young children similar to carving a stone that will never be lost and last forever. In that sense, a model of caring and proper education at an early age of children will be very attached to adulthood. As the next generation, growth and optimal development of children from an early age is an asset and human resource potential that could determine the future of a Nation. In order to educate them, we need an approach to make them content during their learning process.

Learning process given to children should use the model of fun learning and interesting to do, so it would be something meaningful to the child. Storytelling activities is one way to attract the attention of children. Usually, the kids will be happy and enthusiast to have fun activity. It is believed that story telling have a magnet to attract them and move from previous activity to be ready to listen story from their parents or teacher in order to relieve their boredom. Why the children love story or fairy tale? What is the story or fairy tale itself?

The art of storytelling or better known as the storytelling of ancient story, it is told in the form of prose and hereditary in nature, from one generation to younger generation. Fairy tale is a simple story that is imaginative and fictional, for example, the strange events happen in the past time. According to Liberatus (1998) in Kurniawan (2011) fairy tales are mere fiction far from reality. Served in the fable such as magical things, strange and unreasonable creature. Formerly a fairy tale created for small children, it is full of advice. Because fairy tales first appeared in the days of ancient literature in Indonesia, it was originally classified as oral literature that delivered verbally.

Meanwhile, Dananjaya in Sukmaya (2013) states that fairy tale is a story (narrative prose/folk narrative) that is part of the oral/verbal folklore as a whole. He also classified it into: 1. Mite, 2. Legend, 3, fairy tales

and, 4. funny short story or anecdote. In accordance with myths, legends, there are differences among them. According to R. Bascom the differences are:

1. Myth is a story that is considered really occurs and thought as sacred by the owner of the story. Myth characters are gods or demi-gods. The story usually takes place in another world; this is fantasy in nature, as well as the story that happened in the past.
2. Legend has similarities with the myth, which is considered really happened, but the story was not considered sacred. Legend characters are ordinary people, with special power or destiny. Legend set in the real world, and the story comes at a time not so long ago.
3. Tale is a story that is deemed not actually happen, and is not bound by time

As we know, kids love story, because they love to dream and imagine something unreal, and try to imitate what they see from and listen to. Children will be happy and more motivated *listening* to stories than *doing* exercise. Usually the story favored by the children is animal stories. Animal story is the story in which the characters are described as human, so the animals can talk, think etc. Some examples of stories about animals that are very well known are the story/fairy tale of the hare, the tortoise, ape or monkey. Besides that, the story of the prophet figures, heroes, and inventors also a favorite for children.

### C. SHAPE CHILDREN'S CHARACTER THROUGH STORYTELLING

Storytelling is not just for killing time, but has a goal and deeper values. A mother telling a story to her kids before going to sleep, not only to create a comfort and warm condition before sleeping time, but she also hoped that the moral values or good character, played by the characters, can be a role model (www.cerita anak.Net, 2010/2011). In other words, a story can be helpful as a venue for character education for children.

The nature of the child who is often seen in life are honest, willing to know, love daydreaming, love to listen to a fairy tale, want to imitate, spontaneity, want to try something new, and not easily forgotten. From all of this nature, through storytelling to shape the children's character become easier, as through character of the story will give positive effect. Some lessons are often portrayed in a story where a great and powerful people can be defeated by a small person, if the small person use their wits. Other examples, such as the stories of the prophets who preach the truth, justice and uphold monotheism.

In the fairy tale or story, there is an ideology that must be delivered and taught to children. That ideology in the form of the values associated with noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled creative, independent, and democratic citizens and also teach children about responsibility. Goldman (1997) in Sukmaya (2013) views ideology as a world view, which is consist of ideas, aspirations, and feelings that connect together members of a particular social group and defending it with other social groups world view. With this perspective, the characters are taught to children through fairy tale or story is considered as an ideal world view that is inherited and must be owned by the child. Through fairy tales, children are taught to be noble, healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become a democratic and accountable citizen. Therefore, it is sure enough that storytelling can give a positive influence in order to shape the children's character.

Besides, storytelling is a simple ways that have meaning and can provide immediate impact on children's personality. However, many parents and teachers think storytelling is an activity that is out of fashion and not in time. In truth, storytelling can give a great influence to the development of the child. Because it has the power that capable of affecting mind and psychology of the human mind in an extraordinary way. Humans have a remarkable memory and childhood period is the right time to instill moral values to them. Eventhough, parents and teachers sometimes do not realize about this even they consider this is not important activity to do

Some of the things that make us avoid telling stories to the children are as follows; (1) felt no need to tell stories to children. It is because of the parents busy working outside home so that they have no time and energy to be with their child, and finally storytelling activities replaced by the television shows and computer games, (2) do not know the benefits of storytelling to children, one of the benefits of storytelling, it is able to build and develop the child's personality, (3) Parents are Embarrassed to look hilarious when telling stories in front of the children, (4) confused with storytelling techniques.

Storytelling is not just reading to children but also requires a bit of knowledge roles, control of voice, facial expressions, gestures, and appreciation. All these become very important in the process of storytelling. Narrator also involves a tool, such as a simple image, or a doll that can help turn the story that we tell in the minds of listeners. Once the story is finished, the interaction can be maintained, for example by guiding the child to take lessons from the story (<http://popsy.wordpress.com/2007/05/06/pentingnya-telling-for-anak/>). There are certain principles that must be held by us as parents or teachers when performing storytelling. The main principle is that a story or a fairy tale must have a value that reflects the responsibility of developing the child's personality. In this case, we have to be smart to pick and choose the stories or fairy tale that contains a message and a positive value for the personality development of children, both psychologically and morally. As a method of communication and media, stories or fairy tales that we read also must give effect to fun and learning for children so that messages and values contained easily absorbed by children. In addition, our ability to telling story also important in supporting the usefulness of a story or a fairy tale.

According to Chakra (2012) there are some steps preparing storytelling. First, choosing a story for telling. How to choose a story? Think about the purpose of telling story. Is there any special message or is it just for fun or both of them. Fairy tales or story should be taken from the child's world and tailored to their age. For children aged 2-3 years appropriate story is a story about the objects and animals. Besides, introduce fairy tales for children should be selected stories that the character is not more than 3 or 4 characters. Second, reading thoroughly and repeatedly. Read the story for two or three times, in order to make you know the story completely. Next, summarizing, and the last is remembering.

Furthermore, Chakra adds his explanation about the criteria of selecting a story. He mentions that story should contain natural elements and religious education, contains advice and examples of role models and a noble character. Fairy tales or stories do not give bad impact toward children personality development. Based on the previous explanation it can be concluded that selection of a good fairy tale is needed for the expected input into the child's brain and emotions well, therefore it is necessary on materials selection story. The thing to note is; However, the weight to be taken in the selection of fairy tales is the content of a story or a fairy tale itself.

About when the right time to tell a child story there is no definite formula, because storytelling is an activity that does not require specific time and place, and can be delivered as a distraction such activities are gardening, yard work, cooking in the kitchen or other simple activities. When doing activities, parents give pieces of the story relating to the activity undertaken. However, many argue, a good time for storytelling is during leisure time, when playing, and before going to bed. Interactive atmosphere, a warm hug and gently sweep will make the child feel comfortable when listening to a fairy tale.

#### **D. STORYTELLING AND CHARACTER BUILDING**

The relationship between fairy tale and character education can be seen from the function of the fairy tale. Fairy tale has several functions, namely the projection system, cultural institutions, educational tool. Mood booster, channeling tensions that exist in the community, community control and social protest. While, according to R. Bascom in Sukmaya (2013), one of the functions of fairy tales or stories that are part of folklore as a whole, is as a pedagogical device. From the story, we can get values from the content. Story has a function to deliver a moral lesson and build character and also entertaining. From some of the above functions can be concluded that the fairy tale may serve as an educational tool as well children character education.

Meanwhile, Zainal Fanani in Fadillah (2013) argues that the function of stories or fairy tales in children's education is as follows:

1. As a means of inner contact between parents and teachers with children
2. As a medium to deliver a moral message or values
3. As a method to provide supplies for our student to be able to make the process
4. As a educational emotional facilities for children
5. As a means of nurturing imagination or creativity for children
6. As a means for language skill development for children
7. As a means for developing analytical skill of children
8. As a mean to enrich children's knowledge and experience
9. As one method to provide therapy for children who experience psychological problems
10. As a means of entertainment and burnout prevention

Similar to Desy (2013) explanation in her paper, there are many benefits of storytelling for children's education. Build inner contact between the child and the child's parents with his teacher, the media conveys messages to the child's imagination or children's fantasy education, to train the emotions or feelings of the child, assist in identifying themselves (actions), an inner experience, can offer as entertainment, fairytale recognize the opportunity to interpret the experience of life outside they self. Children are introduced to a variety of ways, pattern, and approach the human behavior so that they get necessary skills for the future.

Kak Seto (2008), also argues that the fairy tale has many advantages which are able to train children's cognitive, social, honing creativity, and foster a sense of beauty and refinement, social sensitivity, triggering critical power, the windows of experience for children, children's language skills, trigger multiple intelligent and contains entertainment. Meanwhile Heni, Director of Institute of Research and Development of Children in Sukmaya (2013), argues that there are many values that can be learned from fairy tales, among others, the value of honesty, humility, solidarity, hard work, tolerance, and if the storyteller able to bring the story properly, then the character can awaken his audience well too.

Build a child's character, which is a psychiatric education of children, is not as simple as planting seeds. As dictated by Natsir (2012). Our children are a family asset that is will become the nation's assets. Raising a child physically is much easier than educating their soul because physical growth can be directly observed, whereas mental development can only be observed through reflection. Therefore a person's character can be

observed in two ways, namely attitude and behavior. For children, fairy tales become attractive communication medium to convey some lessons and values or moral messages that can shape the character of the child when a fairy tale or story that performed very well by the storyteller affect the child's development and functioning convey moral teachings and also entertaining. Mustafa (2008) suggests that exposure to fictional fairy tale is about events or activities associated with a particular character in context. On the whole sequence of events or processes can be used as an entertainment, rides moral teaching or both.

From the description above, it can be summarized that story telling is very necessary for children. Stories can be used as one of the teaching methods or as teaching materials. For example, parents or teachers choose a story of the fighters, and then tell the kids to be able to take the messages contained in the story. When a child can understand the message of the story, they will add insight in developing the personality of the child. In short, it can be understood that storytelling is very useful for children.

## E. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, fairy tales or story telling can be trusted to have benefits for teaching children the noble values and character education instill in children with subtle and fun way; various efforts to revive storytelling activity must be adopted by parents and teachers. And one thing to keep in mind is the activity of storytelling is not a method of learning of obsolete, but will forever be ever-lasting.

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