

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Education plays an important role in establishing the quality of human resources in order to have capability to compete the challenges and the development of 21st century era. In Indonesia, according to the law on National Education System Number 20 year 2003, national education is aimed at developing the capability, character and civilization of the nation. It means that the national education expected to enhance the potentials and the life of the nation especially the young generation so that they will become a person with good human values who are religious, healthy, knowledgeable, competent, intelligent, creative, and independent human beings as well as democratic and responsible citizens. The goal requires a balance between the cognitive ability and affective ability of learners. In other words, education in Indonesia is not only oriented to the development of thinking ability, but also the development of learners' behavior or characters as individual and a member of society. The balance between learners' cognitive ability and positive character is one of the key factors that determine the success of learners. Previous research results showed that by having a good character, learners can improve and implement the moral values and noble character, and then apply them in daily life (Nurhasanah & Nida, 2016). With a good character, learners would have a tendency to improve the academic achievement (Nurhasanah & Nida, 2016). This suggests that a good character

contributes not only to the development of social-emotional aspects but also to the cognitive aspects of learners.

However, there is a great challenge in achieving the goal of good character building as the moral degradation occurred recently affected most of the Indonesian youth. The challenge meant above is challenge in facing the development of the technology, as supported by Sihombing (2014), the moral degradation is affected through the exposure to the digital world. It is in line with Cozma (2011) who states that globalization does not only bring positive impacts but also negative impacts especially for the young generation who might be careless. Other influences of technology are teaching users anything at any time, changing lifestyle, bringing new habits, even it is said that the globalization is a form of sophisticated hypnosis which are able to change people's behavior and the way they communicate or socialize with the others (Istiyanto, 2016).

Fitri (2017) also clarifies that the changes of human behavior happens because the facilities that exist in this globalization era are mostly misused by its users. For example, the internet is often used as an arena to find pornographic sites, mobile phone are used to store data that do not educate someone's morality and others. Mutohar (2013) argues that the concept of politeness morality become loose because it is influenced by western culture due to the ease of finding information in this globalization era. It is also explained by Agustin (2011) that the way people especially young generation act is started by following celebrities who tend to use western culture. He adds that bad behavior is done by people as the result of the information they received. For instance, the fast few years on social media there were a lot of number of case which indicated moral degradation.

Kagan (2001) found out that most of the young teenagers nowadays tend to be rude, disrespectful and lost their moral path. He also reported that more than three quarters of students got excessive violence at school from their friends. Two thirds of them felt harassed or bullied at school very often. Bullying appears to be an international phenomenon among young individuals in the world. Bullying behaviors can be a comprise physical interactions such as hitting, kicking, shoving or pushing, while also including verbal attacks such as taunting, teasing, or name calling. Bullying becomes a trend among the young students at school and it still cannot be stopped until this date. Possibly, as students learn to respect, love, care and accept others, it will decrease the random acts of violence currently occurring at schools.

Moral degradation is also influenced by other things as stated by Bhakta (2017) that moral degradation or character of a person can be affected by family, school environment and society because young generation has a wide environment in interacting or socializing with others and they will learn many things from their environment. Regarding the moral degradation, Hidayati et al. (2014), state that there are variations of students' negative behavior that appear in school like cheating during the test, quarreling, consuming drugs, alcohol and promiscuity. In addition, Hartini (2017) also mentions some related problems which usually happen such as talking inappropriate or rude speech, disobeying law in school, being truant not discipline, being involved in motorcycle gang, smoking, consuming alcohol, quarreling, doing free sex and losing manners in interacting with others.

In responding to moral degradation and its prevention toward the younger generations, policy makers (the Ministry of Education of Indonesia) took an immediate action to build and develop better character of the young generation by implementing curriculum 2013. Curriculum 2013 is fully integrated to the implementation of character education within the schools in Indonesia. The presence of Curriculum 2013 covering character education dominantly brings a hope for the betterment of students, particularly their morality. Curriculum 2013 has made it explicit that every teacher at school is a counselor, rather than just a teacher. In other word, they are not only expected to teach subject matters, but also life and religious value, as in the curriculum document, the four core competences to achieve in all subjects are divided into 4: two competences are concerned on character building, while the two others are on cognitive aspect. Here is why character education is important and necessary due to modern societies are struggling with disturbing trends such as racism, violence, and the other negative things. Berkowitz and Bier (2005) state that character education can help people especially young generation build good character that in turn can help to build good societies, likewise the effective character education can have many different outcomes. Character education affects various aspects such as knowledge, thinking, emotions, motivation, behavior and skills. The one that clearly take attention is that character education frequently improves academic performance, reduce risky and undesired behaviors which indicate the symptoms of moral degradation such as drug use, violence, premarital sexual behavior. Moreover, it can also increase the desirable behaviors such as being care with environment, helping students to interact properly with their teachers and fellow

students and turning their classroom into a better learning environment. By that the implementation of character education can increase socio-moral cognitive development, problem solving skills, emotional competency, improve academic achievement, and it decreases students' negative behaviors. Based on the explanation above, it can be stated that character education can positively impact both behavior and academic achievement, reduces undesired behavior and improves desired behavior.

It is also widely considered that character education can help to strengthen and develop character values of learners. Abu, Mokhtar, Hassan, and Suhan (2015) state that in the last decade, character education has been always considered in every educational design. Moreover, there is also an increasing interest in finding out a correlation between character education programs and social and academic achievements (Chang & Muñoz, 2007). As defined by Çubukçu (2012), character education is a planned and systemic approach to educate learners to become good citizens with self-respect, responsibility and honesty. It is also defined as the deliberate attempt to influence the behavior of students through customizing repeatedly (Abu et al., 2015), school-based process to promote personal development through the development of virtues and moral values (Pattarro, 2016). Character education is also defined as a certain curriculum that develops students' understanding of the qualities and characteristics of good character (Almerico, 2014). Thus, in general, character education can be viewed as an effort made by educational institutions to make the values of positive characters for learners. The purpose of character education is to enable learners to understand the moral values, understand and do the right and good value, and understand the

purpose of life (Battistich, 2005, Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006), and improve the education quality of implementation and output in schools that lead to achieve the character building and noble character of learners as a whole, integrated, and balanced in accordance with applicable competency standards (Nurhasanah&Nida, 2016). Character education also has a positive correlation with academic and affective aspects, as well as the establishment of positive social perceptions (Diggs & Akos, 2016; Thompson, 2002). A study by Tannir and Al-Hroub (2013) also reported that character education has contributed to the improvement of the students' self-esteem. The purpose of character education reflects the importance of character education to support the success of learners, both in academic and social life. Regarding the important role of character education, many countries have strengthened the implementation of character education in the respective educational systems.

Character education must be prioritized in primary school because elementary students are categorized as young learners. It is supported by Cameron (2001) that young learner is being learner aged between five and twelve years old, so the young learner's age is in primary school. Most of Indonesian young learners do finish elementary school education at age of twelve. Moreover, in Indonesia the learners generally learn English in the fourth grade for public school and in the first grade for private school. Fauzee (2012) also supported that character should be developed from the early age of children to avoid misbehavior in the future life. He further argued that character education is a life education that must be built since people are still in the childhood to know which one is right and which one is wrong. It means that educating students to understand, act upon, and

cares about universal virtues like respect, truthfulness, responsibility, and caring should be started in early age because they are a fast learner and easier to be directed, guided and prevented to a negative behaviors.

The implementation of character education reinforcement is expected to develop the students' motivation in learning and to optimize the students' potentials so that the students will become citizens with strong characters, high nationalism, good capability and ready to face the global challenges since the early age (Muttaqin, Raharjo, and Masturi, 2018). To support the character education program, the role of the teacher is very crucial. As people who interact more with students, teachers must instill the values of character education reinforcement. Rahmi and Erlinda (2014) state that teachers' role in the classroom is not only about delivering knowledge through the material provided by the school, but teacher might be able to implement character education through appropriate teaching and learning approach. However, Albani and Madkur (2016) state that teachers need to understand that there are three components to be integrated in classroom namely; moral knowing (moral knowledge), moral feeling (the moral sense) and moral action (moral conduct). In line with opinion above, Harmer (2007) also state that the way teachers acts in the classroom plays a crucial point in building students' character. It can be said that the teachers are the key role in developing students' cognitive skill and as model for the students. Hawley and Hawley (1975) argued that the responsibility of the moral or character development of the child falls upon the schools. Teachers and all the stakeholders should make the schools as a place where the students can develop their character as an individual and at the same time use his powers to further the

larger activities of the group. It is also the moral responsibility of the teacher to supply every possible aid to this process. Pivotal roles of teachers may affect students' attitudes and motivations to language learning. The teacher is one of the main factors that have a lot of influences on students' achievement, performance and their success (Balushy, 2011 cited in Koç, 2012).

In line with the above theories, Berkowitz and Schwartz (2004) also stated that building a successful character education program requires participation from all stakeholders. Schools exhibit positive results by teaching character traits, while involving all teachers, administrators, students, and parents. It is because much of a child and adolescent's day is spent at school where they learn how to read, write and do arithmetic. These students are developing mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally from teachers, school counselors, administrators, and other students. If the school especially teachers can educate young people of high character, the country will eventually become a nation with high character. The character education can be successfully conducted if there is an effective implementation, teacher commitment, teacher sense of efficacy, and student acceptance of programs (Bulach, 2002, Brown 2001). According to Likona, Schaps, and Lewis (2001), in order to implement character education, the school staff especially teachers must become learning, caring, and moral community in which all share responsibility for character education and attempt to adhere to the same core values that guide the education of students. Hence, School should include character education in order to help students not only to become smart but also to become good, to empowered teachers to not only teach content of the subject, but also life and religious value and that school as the institution must be

concerned with their students' morality (Ryan and Bohlin, 1999) as cited in O'Sullivan (2004); (Wynne, 1992) as cited in O'Sullivan (2004). However, some of the teachers failed to implement character education in their classroom, due to their lack of training and they confused of what strategy to use in inserting character education into their lesson. While those who had regular training, they consistently modeled and explicitly taught the nominated values in classrooms (Troutman, 2014).

Referring to the explanation above, this topic is really important to be explored because of some reasons. It is a highly needed issue to be discussed since the young generation's problems are mostly related to their characters and behavior. Teachers have a big responsibility to cope with this problem because they deal with this issue on a daily basis but most of them still confused about how to instill the character education into their lesson. Moreover, the students of elementary school still really need attentions and guidance on how character should be formed and developed to be good characters. For that reason, the purpose of the study is to investigate the program of implementing character education at North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS) Singaraja. North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS) Singaraja is chosen as the setting of the research because the school is considered as a character education based school. Based on the preliminary observation and interview conducted, the school has various and rich programs of character educations. It is also a national plus school which has flexibility in developing programs including character education. NBBS is a favorite school in North Bali and it is really well-known by the people as a school which is really concern with children's educational needs. They always share care,

commitment and always focuses on providing the students with successful and positive learning opportunities. Researcher also aims to investigate the programs which are implemented in inserting character education at NBBS Singaraja and how the teachers perceive the implementation of character education at NBBS Singaraja.

1.2 Research Identification

The problem appears because of the gap between expectation and reality. In the expectation, the students are expected to be academically competent and have a good character in order to be ready to face the 21st century era. However, in reality, the young generations nowadays are mostly affected by a moral degradation. They prefer to try and follow negative things which then make them fall into a negative behavior. It is supported by the study conducted by Kagan (2001). He found out that most of the young teenagers nowadays tend to be rude, disrespectful and lost their moral path. He also reported that more than three quarters of those students got excessive violence at school from their friends. Two thirds state they felt harassed or bullied at school very often. Moreover, it is also identified that teachers find many difficulties about implementing the program/strategy to insert character education in all classroom activities.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the research background above, the research questions of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What programs are implemented in inserting character education at North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS) Singaraja?

2. What are the teachers' perceptions toward the implementation of character education program at North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS) Singaraja?

1.4 Research Objectives

According to the research questions mentioned above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate the programs implemented in inserting character education program at North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS) Singaraja.
2. To investigate teacher's perceptions toward the implementation of character education program at North Bali Bilingual School (NBBS) Singaraja.

1.5 Research Limitation

This study focuses on describing the programs of implementing character education and to describe the English teachers' perceptions toward the implementation of the blended character education program in school (NBBS Singaraja). The analysis of the study is restricted in terms of programs used in implementing character education and the teachers' perception toward the implementation of the character education. This study is also limited in terms of the numbers of observation that could be carried out due to limitation of time, finding and resources.

1.6 Research Significances

The results of this study are expected to provide significant inputs both theoretically and practically for teachers, schools and other researchers.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

The result of this study is expected to be one contribution to the development of knowledge and theoretical insight about character education and the program/strategy used for inserting character education into the lesson especially in English classroom.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

1.6.2.1 For Teachers

This study is expected to be used as a reference for other elementary school English teachers in inserting meaningful character education values into their classes effectively and practically.

1.6.2.2 For Researchers

Hopefully, this study can be useful for other researchers to become the first-hand reference and additional information when they want to conduct a similar study. It is also expected that there will be further and deeper study for the study, improvements and the future researcher could improve a better understanding of character education and program or strategies for implementing character education into the classroom, in which it could help teachers to insert character education into their lesson.

1.6.2.3 For English Language Education

This study is expected to be useful both for lecturers and the English language education students as a reference for their teaching and learning process.