Creative and Innovative Learning Approaches in Forming Students' Character in Early Children

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood education is an important basic level of education in forming the character and qualities of children in the future. This matter because Early childhood is a golden period and the initial foundation for growth and development child development. The environment has an important role in forming the attitudes, personality and development of abilities of early childhood. One institution that parents can choose to provide stimulus to young children is a PAUD institution. Innovative learning in schools is a learning strategy that emphasizes the delivery of learning material to students, in the form of expository, inquiry, problem-based learning, improving thinking skills, cooperative learning, contextual learning, affective learning, and scientific approaches. The formation of student character that needs to be developed in the pillars of national education refers to the processing of values in the areas of thought, feeling, physical or physical, and processing of the heart which becomes spirit in moving thoughts, feelings and will; or known as thinking, feeling, careful, and exercising. Students' character formation must also be developed, including the character of tolerance and love of peace to be more emphasized. This creative and innovative based learning method aims to make students feel comfortable and happy in learning but not forgetting the most important aspect, namely material that can be studied in everyday life. The technique used in this research is a library research technique *which* collects data from various sources as a reference in preparing and researching this article.
Keywords: Learning, Creative and Innovative, Character.

1). INTRODUCTION

Education is a means to achieve an adequate scientific process, but there are still many people who have not utilized this means to hone and increase their capacity. Education is a conscious effort to encourage students to experience learning events in their lives and always places humans as subjects, because humans are the perpetrators of education. This educational effort aims to form a complete human being, a person who is independent in attitude, thinking, feeling, insightful, able to develop

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themselves and work together. Education in a general sense must include elements of clear objectives, material coverage, dynamic interaction between educators and students in the learning process, teaching methods, the environmental context in which education takes place and assessment of student performance outcomes (Sylvia et al., 2021) .

Education is a conscious effort given deliberately by someone to another person (student) so that the other person can reach maturity. There are several definitions according to experts' views regarding education and each has certain differences. Some define education as the creation, awakening and conscious transmission of knowledge, abilities, skills and values. A rather complete definition, education is a conscious, systematic and continuous effort to acquire, generate knowledge, abilities, skills and values, sensitivity, as well as the results of these efforts (Sylvia et al., 2021)

Early Childhood Education is education that serves children from birth to eight years. Early childhood is a person who is experiencing a very rapid process of growth and development for later life. Early childhood is a group that is in a unique process of growth and development, namely patterns of growth and development, intelligence, social emotional, language and communication that are specifically in accordance with the child's level of growth and development. Basically, young children are imitators, what they see and hear they will do, so as educators you must be able to set a good example. One way is by using learning media containing educational elements that focus on children's social and emotional development (Maghfiroh & Suryana, 2021) .

Early childhood education lays the foundation for development towards the next stage. Aspects of early childhood development include the formation of religious and moral values, cognitive, language, physical motor and social emotional as well as independence (Suryana et al., 2015) . Meanwhile, according to Mulyasa, basic early childhood education is most important in children's personal development, whether related to character, physical abilities, cognitive, language, arts, social emotional, spiritual, self-discipline, self-concept and independence. Therefore, to provide educational stimulation to children, we must first know the characteristics of children and how children learn and play (Mulyasa, 2012) .

According to Montessori in a journal written by S. Elytasari, good learning arises from children's freedom to choose their activities and to improve it, a reformulation of what it means to be a teacher is carried out. So educators who are responsible for teaching young students must do it in a fun way (Elytasari, 2017) . Every learning has a goal that will be achieved, to achieve this goal, learning carried

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out by teaching staff will use various learning methods or models that are in accordance with the characteristics, abilities, desires and interests of children and utilize the potential of the environment around which children learn, besides that they also determine material that will be delivered to students. The implementation of learning models or methods can run well with the support of strengthening teachers' abilities to innovate to create interesting, creative, innovative and fun learning (Nurdin, 2021) .

Creative and innovative learning concepts are ways of learning that teachers can apply when teaching by providing meaningful and interesting activities for children. Teachers must consider the type of learning services implemented so that students can develop according to their developmental stage (Warmansyah et al., 2023) . An important element in character formation is the mind, because the mind, in which there are all programs formed from life experiences, is the pioneer of everything. This program then forms a belief system which can ultimately form thinking patterns that can influence behavior. If the embedded program is in accordance with the principles of universal truth, then its behavior runs in harmony with natural laws. As a result, this behavior brings calm and happiness. On the other hand, if the program is not in accordance with universal principles, then the behavior brings harm and produces suffering. Therefore, thoughts must receive serious attention from various parties (Purwadhi, 2019) .

Formation of student character, people with character can be called natural traits, namely someone who responds to situations morally in real action through behavior that has the ability to relate to himself. And also the ability to use logic. Character formation is required to create a pleasant school atmosphere by including basic character values. There are several things that need to be considered in character building, namely helping students to understand why they have to do good things, so to shape students' character, students not only know about good things, but they also have to know why they need to do those things (Muhammad, 2020) . Character education is education that is included in the domain of affective aspects in order to instill noble character in students which is very important to achieve through the learning process at school (Magdalena et al., 2020) .

Based on the explanation above, the substance of this research is how creative and innovative learning approaches can be used to shape the character of students in early childhood. Meanwhile, the focus of his research is on character formation in early childhood. The aim of this research is to look

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at creative and innovative based learning approaches in shaping the character of students in early childhood.

2). METHOD

Research methodology comes from the words " method " which means the right way to do something, and " *logos* " which means science or knowledge. So the methodology is " a way of doing something by using the mind carefully to achieve a goal " . Meanwhile, research is " an activity to search, record, formulate, analyze and prepare a report. " (Deepublish; Smart, Successful, Noble, Across Generations, 2023) . Qualitative methods are used to obtain in-depth data, data that contains meaning. The author in this research will explore the meaning of information or empirical data obtained from books, results of scientific or official research reports or from other literature.

This research uses library research or library *research* . Library research is research carried out using literature (libraries), whether in the form of books, notes or reports of previous research results.

Literature studies can also study various reference books and similar previous research results which are useful for obtaining a theoretical basis regarding the problem to be researched. Literature study also means data collection techniques by reviewing books, literature, notes and various reports related to the problem you want to solve. Meanwhile, according to other experts, library studies are theoretical studies, references and other scientific literature related to culture, values and norms that develop in the social situation being studied (Cahyono, 2021) .

In this research the author applies library research methods because there are at least several underlying reasons. Firstly, data sources cannot always be obtained from the field. Sometimes data sources can only be obtained from libraries or other documents in written form, whether from journals, books or other literature. Second, literature study is needed as a way to understand new phenomena that occur that cannot yet be understood, then with this literature study we will be able to understand these symptoms. So that in overcoming a symptom that occurs, the author can formulate a concept to solve a problem that arises. The third reason is that library data remains reliable for answering researchers' questions. However, empirical information or data that has been collected by other people, whether in the form of books, scientific reports or research reports, can still be used by library researchers. Even in certain cases, field data is still not significant enough to answer the research questions to be carried out (Cahyono, 2021)

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This research uses a qualitative approach. Because the data sources and research results in library research *are* in the form of descriptions of words. Moleong revealed eleven characteristics of qualitative research, namely: natural background, humans as tools (*instruments*), using qualitative methods, inductive data analysis, grounded theory *(* towards the direction of constructing theories based on data), descriptive data (data that collected in the form of words, images and not numbers), more emphasis on process than results, there are limits determined by focus, there are special criteria for data validity, and designs are temporary (research designs continue to develop according to field realities) , the research results are negotiated and mutually agreed upon (research results are negotiated and mutually agreed upon between researchers and data sources) (Cahyono, 2021) . From this quote it can be understood that the author emphasizes the importance of the process in research rather than the results. In general, the qualitative research approach in literature studies is the same as other qualitative research. The only difference is the source of the data or information used as research material.

3). RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of literature research regarding creative and innovative based learning approaches in shaping the character of students in early childhood, there are several things that need to be understood in this approach, namely:

1. Learning Approach

Approach can be interpreted as our starting point or point of view towards the learning process. The term approach refers to a view of the occurrence of a process that is still very general in nature. Therefore, the learning strategies and methods used can be sourced or depend on a particular approach. Roy Killen, for example, notes that there are two approaches to learning, namely a teacher *-centred approach* and a student *-centred approach* (May, 2012).

A teacher-centered learning approach is characterized by the management and administration of learning being determined entirely by the teacher. The student's role in this approach is only to carry out learning activities according to the teacher's instructions. Students almost do not have the opportunity to carry out activities according to their interests and desires. In contrast, a student-oriented learning approach, management and management of learning is determined by the student.

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Students using this approach have open opportunities to carry out activities according to their interests and desires (Sanjaya, 2009) .

Furthermore, the teacher-centered approach uses direct instruction, deductive learning or expository learning strategies. In this strategy, the teacher's role is very decisive both in selecting content or learning materials and determining the learning process. Meanwhile, a student-centered learning approach reduces discovery and inquiry learning as well as inductive learning strategies, namely student-centered learning (Sanjaya, 2009) .

Approach is a person's process and way of responding to something that is uncertain in nature. Approach as a basic goal is used in determining plans, methods and steps to achieve certain goals. Suprayekti stated that the learning approach gives educators an idea of the steps taken to achieve curriculum goals. Meanwhile, Ahmad Sudjarat stated that the learning approach is our view of the general learning process where this approach influences the way of learning with certain theories (Hasriadi, 2022) .

This approach is a philosophical framework that lays the foundation for how a person achieves goals such as humanism, liberalism, theology and quantum. Every philosophical foundation used in education, even though it looks the same, will have an impact on different technical approaches and frameworks. Based on this point of view, the learning approach is an aspect of the general learning system. Philosophy contains, inspires, strengthens and lays the foundation of a learning approach that includes theory to achieve certain goals.

Many learning approaches are used in the world of education, from preschool to high school. In general, there are two approaches, namely: (Hasriadi, 2022)

1) A student-centered approach, namely a learning approach that is student-oriented.

2) Educator-centered approach, namely an educator-oriented learning approach. Educators as teachers adopt three approaches to classroom management, namely the power approach, the learning approach, and the group work approach.

a. Power Approach

This power approach aims to provide discipline in the classroom so as to create and maintain a good classroom atmosphere.

b. Learning Approach

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This approach is based on assumptions in the planning and implementation process that prevent the emergence of student behavior problems and solve these problems if they cannot be avoided.

c. Group Work Approach

In this approach, educators must create an atmosphere for the group to improve work efficiency well.

2. Learning strategies

In the world of education, JR David stated that strategy is defined as " *a plan, method, or series of activities designed to achieve a particular educational goal* ". So, a learning strategy can be interpreted as a plan that contains a series of activities designed to achieve certain educational goals (RL Siregar, 2021) .

There are two things that we should pay attention to from the definition above. First, a learning strategy is a design of action (a series of activities) including the design of using methods and utilizing various resources /strengths in learning. This means that the preparation of a new strategy until the process of preparing a work plan has not yet reached action. Second, strategies are prepared to achieve certain goals. This means that the direction of all strategic decisions is goal achievement. Thus, the preparation of learning steps, the use of various learning facilities and resources are all directed towards achieving goals. Therefore, before determining a strategy, it is necessary to formulate clear goals, the success of which can be measured, because goals are the spirit in implementing a strategy. Not all goals can be achieved with just one strategy (RL Siregar, 2021) .

Kemp also explained that a learning strategy is a learning activity that teachers and students must carry out so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively and efficiently. In line with the opinion above, Dick and Carey also stated that a learning strategy is a set of learning materials and procedures that are used together to produce learning outcomes for students (Sanjaya, 2009) .

Newman and Logan in Abin Syamsuddin Makmur put forward four strategic elements of every business, namely:

1) Identify and determine specifications and qualifications for output *and* targets that must be achieved, taking into account the aspirations and tastes of the people who need them.

2) Consider and choose the main approach (*basic way*) that is most effective for achieving targets.

3) Consider and determine the steps *that* will be taken from the starting point to the target.

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4) Consider and establish benchmarks (criteria) and benchmarks (*standards*) to measure and assess the level of success (*achievement*) of the business.

   If we apply it in a learning context, the four elements are:

1) Determine specifications and qualifications for learning objectives, namely changes in students' behavioral and personal profiles.

2) Consider and choose the learning approach system that is considered most effective.

3) Consider and determine steps or procedures, learning methods and techniques.

4) Establishing norms and minimum limits for measuring success or criteria and standard measures of success (Majid, 2012) .

Learning strategies can be understood as the teacher's ability to use methods to achieve the goals to be achieved. For example, the lecture method. In using this lecture method the teacher uses technology, the teacher's voice is loud when teaching, the teacher inserts humor when teaching, which is the teacher's strategy in teaching.

3. Learning methods

Method literally means way. In its general meaning, a method is defined as a method or procedure used to achieve certain goals. The word "teach" itself means to give lessons. Learning Methods are methods or techniques for presenting lesson materials that will be used by teachers when presenting lesson materials, either individually or in groups. In order to achieve the learning objectives that have been formulated, a teacher must know various methods. By having knowledge about the nature of various methods, it will be easier for a teacher to determine the method that best suits the situation and conditions. The use of teaching methods really depends on the learning objectives (Istarani, 2014).

The actual method is a set of methods used by a teacher in conveying knowledge or transferring knowledge to his students which takes place in the learning and teaching process or learning process. From this expression, a general conclusion can be drawn, namely that the more a teacher masters a learning method, the better he or she will be at using that method. When mastery goes well, the better the learning targets to be achieved will be (Nuha, 2016) .

Learning methods contain the meaning of a path taken to achieve a goal (Arifin, 2003) . Learning methods are also the way teachers use to convey lessons to students. Because delivery takes place in educational interactions, learning methods can also be interpreted as the methods used by teachers in

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establishing relationships with students during teaching. Thus, learning methods are tools for creating teaching and learning processes (Hamdani, 2011) .

The method according to JR David in *Teaching Strategies For College Class Room is a way* of achieving something. To implement a strategy, a certain set of teaching methods is used. In this sense, learning methods become one element in teaching and learning strategies. Elements such as learning resources, teacher and student abilities, educational media, teaching materials, organization of available time, class conditions and the environment are elements that support teaching and learning strategies. In Arabic it is known as thariqah (path/way) (Majid, 2012) .

Methods are used by teachers to create learning environments and specialize activities in which teachers and students are involved during the learning process. Usually the method is used through one strategy, but it is also possible that some methods are in varying strategies, meaning that the determination of the method can be varied through different strategies depending on the goals to be achieved and the content of the process that will be carried out in learning activities (Majid, 2012) .

The learning method is an effort to implement plans that have been prepared in real activities so that the goals that have been prepared are achieved optimally. This means, the method is used to realize the strategy that has been set. Thus, it can happen that one learning strategy is used by several methods. For example, to implement an expository strategy, you can use the lecture method as well as the question and answer method or even discussion by utilizing available resources, including using learning media. Therefore, strategy is different from method. Strategy refers to a plan to achieve something; while methods are methods that can be used to implement a strategy (Sanjaya, 2009) .

Methods play a very important role in teaching. Whatever approach and model is used in teaching. According to Nada Sudjana, learning methods are the methods used by teachers to establish relationships with students during teaching (RL Siregar, 2021) .

4. Creative and Innovative Based Learning

Learning is a plan that contains a series of activities designed to achieve learning objectives. And it can also be interpreted as the science or art of using learning resources, so that learning competencies and objectives can be achieved and carried out in accordance with learning planning. According to some experts, learning is the effort of teachers or educators to guide, direct or organize learning.

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Learning is an activity effort to deliver learning materials to pupils or students so that they can receive, understand, respond, appreciate, master and develop them (Magdalena et al., 2020) .

Learning according to Heri Rahyubi is a process of interaction between students and educators and learning resources in a learning environment. Winkel, in Eveline Siregar & Hatini Nara, states that learning is a set designed to support the learning process, by taking into account extreme events that play a role in the series of internal events experienced by students (E. Siregar & Nara, 2011) . From the several definitions above, regarding learning, there are several points that can be absorbed from the meaning of learning, namely that it is a conscious and deliberate effort, learning must make students (citizens) learn, goals must be set first before the process is carried out, and the implementation is controlled, both in content , time, process and results.

Creativity as a form of learning, is a vital part of the development of cognition, which can help explain and interpret abstract concepts by involving the skills of curiosity as well as the ability to discover, explore, search for certainty and enthusiasm, all of which are very great qualities that exist in children. These aspects can be strengthened by providing children with technical mastery and a broader vision, so that creativity can inform a variety of other learning (Beetlestone, 2013) .

According to the Latest Indonesian Dictionary, creativity is the ability to create (Reality Team, 2008) . Creativity is everyone's property and right, it cannot be monopolized by anyone. In fact, everyone should have creativity to achieve individual success. Because creativity is actually a *skill* . According to A. Chaedar Alwasilah, in Ngainun Naim's work, creativity is the ability to create new forms, new cognitive structures and new products, which may be physical, such as technology, or symbolic and abstract, such as definitions, formulas, literary works or paintings. Creativity is creating effective and mysterious surprises, because inspiration or solutions come quickly, on time and are not forced (Naim, 2009) .

There are several important things to develop creativity in the learning process, namely Creativity is not an innate trait or talent from birth, creativity is the result of reasoning abilities that encourage someone to try to discover something new. Failure is a path to success, so a person in realizing creativity should not need to be afraid of failure. Human life has various problems, therefore openness in ideas is needed. Creative work requires an attitude of acceptance of subjectivity, tolerance for differences, utilization of other people's opinions, respect for other people's experiences and opinions. Creative thinking is the enlightenment of hope to achieve better results and goals, so that learning

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activities are largely determined by the creativity of the people involved. Developing creativity requires the ability to utilize existing potentials, both from within and from outside a creator. Within each person, strengths have been created that will encourage the development of creativity, but they are often not used properly (Balitbang, 2007) .

Creative learning can be seen as a form of learning that is closely related to intelligence. According to Gardner, in Florence's work, creativity is a form of "multiple intelligence" which includes various brain functions. Creativity is an important and necessary component. Without creativity, children will only work in cognitive areas and think narrowly. With creativity, the brain will interpret abstract concepts, thereby enabling children to achieve greater mastery, especially over lessons that are difficult to understand (Hamdayana, 2014) .

There are several advantages and disadvantages of this creative learning model, namely:

a. Learning experiences and activities will always be relevant to the child's level of development,

b. The activities chosen in learning are always adapted to the interests and needs of the child,

c. All learning activities are more meaningful for children, so that learning outcomes will last longer,

d. Creative learning will grow children's thinking skills,

e. Presenting pragmatic activities in accordance with the problems that children often encounter in the environment,

f. Develop children's social skills, such as cooperation, tolerance and respect for other people's ideas (Hamdayana, 2014) .

Innovative learning is a learning process that is designed in such a way that it is different from learning generally carried out by teachers. Innovative learning is a learning program that directly solves the problems being faced by the class based on class conditions. Innovative learning techniques are needed to overcome contemporary educational challenges and improve the professional competence of teachers. Apart from that, knowing how and when innovative learning can work requires critical reflection about the objectives of teaching and the combination of techniques. With innovative learning it is hoped that students will be able to think critically and be skilled in solving problems. Such students will be able to use clear reasoning in the process of understanding something and will be easy to make choices and make decisions. Innovative learning also requires teacher creativity in teaching. In this case, teachers are required not to be monotonous (Magdalena et al., 2020) .

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Learning is a learning strategy that places greater emphasis on students' activeness in thinking, acting and communicating with the aim of making learning conducive and enjoyable (Warmansyah et al., 2023) . Creative learning focuses on developing students' critical thinking skills, collaboration skills and creativity. Teachers are expected to be facilitators who encourage students to come up with new ideas and involve them in activities that stimulate creativity. Learning methods such as problem-based projects, group discussions, and experiments can be used to stimulate student creativity. Meanwhile, innovative learning in the Merdeka curriculum emphasizes developing problem solving skills and adapting to change. Students are encouraged to develop initiative, creativity and courage in facing challenges. The teacher acts as a facilitator who provides support and guidance so that students are able to overcome problems with new approaches and solutions (Yudha, 2024) .

Creative and innovative learning in schools is a learning strategy that emphasizes the delivery of learning material to students, in the form of expository, inquiry, problem-based learning, improving thinking skills, cooperative learning, contextual learning, affective learning, and scientific approaches. The aim of creative and innovative learning strategies is to provide facilities for students to increase their own knowledge, change behavior for the better, and grow students' talents according to their individual potential (Azzahra & Sya, 2023) .

5. Shaping Student Character

Etymologically, the word character can be understood from a number of languages. " *Character* " (Latin) means *instrument of narking* , " *charessein* " (French) means *to engrave* (carve), "watek" (Javanese) means *wanci characteristics* , "character" (Indonesia) means innate traits that influence behavior; character; character; temperament (Koesoema, 2007) . So the term character means having character, having personality, behavior, character, character and character. An individual with good and superior character is someone who tries to do the best in his relationship with God Almighty, himself, fellow human beings, the environment and nationality which is manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words and actions based on norms. religious norms, laws, manners, culture and customs. People whose behavior is in accordance with these norms are said to have noble character (Gunawan, 2014) .

In terms of terminology, according to Alwisol, character is defined as a description of behavior that emphasizes the values of right and wrong, good and bad, both explicitly and implicitly (Alwisol,

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2006) . Related to this, Wynne said the word character comes from Greek which means " *to* mark" and focuses on how to apply good values in the form of actions or behavior. Therefore, someone who behaves dishonestly, cruelly, or greedily is said to have bad character, while someone who behaves honestly and likes to help is said to have noble character. So the term character is closely related to a person's *personality* , where a person can be called a person of character *if* his behavior is in accordance with applicable moral rules (Wynne, 1991) .

Character refers to a series of attitudes and behaviors. Character includes attitudes such as the desire to do the best, intellectual capacities such as critical thinking and moral reasoning, behavior such as honesty and responsibility, maintaining moral principles in situations full of justice, interpersonal and emotional skills that enable a person to interact effectively in various circumstances. , and a commitment to contribute to the community and society. Characteristics are the realization of positive development as an individual (intellectual, social, emotional and ethical). An individual with good character is someone who tries to do the best (Musfiroh, 2008) .

Students are required to have character values which include the components of knowledge, awareness, will and follow-up in implementing these values, but in reality the required character values are not realized well because students have not been able to apply them in life. everyday (Kholifah, 2020) . The role of the teacher here is very important in educating and forming the character of students in the world of education so that the required character values can be realized in everyday life. This is in accordance with the function of education in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Chapter I Article 3, which states that national education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the life of the nation, with the aim of developing potential. students to become human beings who believe and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Where students can get this in education (Kiska et al., 2023) .

In the world of education, everyone knows that a teacher's job is not only to teach in the classroom and impart knowledge, but a teacher's job is to instill character values in their students so that these students become human beings with character. Teachers have a central role, both as planners, implementers and evaluators of learning. This means that the teacher's ability to create

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quality learning really determines the overall success of education. The quality of learning really depends on the teacher's ability, especially in providing ease of learning to students effectively and efficiently (Mulyasa, 2017) .

The expected student characters are:

a. Religious, devotion and obedience in understanding and implementing the teachings of the religion (belief) that one adheres to, including in this case an attitude of tolerance towards the implementation of worship of other religions (beliefs), as well as living in harmony and side by side.

b. Honesty, attitudes and behavior that reflect the unity of knowledge, words and actions (knowing the right thing, saying the right thing and doing the right thing), thus making the person concerned a person who can be trusted.

c. Discipline, habits and actions that are consistent with all forms of applicable rules or regulations.

d. Hard work, behavior that shows genuine effort (fighting to the last drop of blood) in completing various tasks, problems, work, etc. as well as possible (Datunsolang et al., 2021) .

However, it is not easy for a teacher to develop the character of students. Because character formation must be based on patience, diligence and must be gradual. This fact implies to us that being a teacher is also a good role model for our students. The teacher's strategy in improving students' character is by instilling the values of honesty, kindness and responsibility. Learning in the classroom will definitely make an impression on students. However, it is not enough for character education to only be taught through classroom subjects, but the school can also implement it through habituation and example. Habituation is directed at efforts to acculturate certain activities so that they become patterned or systemized and routine activities. (Datunsolang et al., 2021) .

6. Early childhood

Early childhood is a person who is experiencing a very rapid process of growth and development for later life. This is in line with Suryana's opinion, defining early childhood as an individual figure as a sociocultural creature who is undergoing a development process that is very fundamental for later life and has several characteristics (Suryana, 2013) . Apart from that, Sujiono also defines that early childhood is an individual who is undergoing a rapid and fundamental development process for later life. Early childhood is in the age range 0-8 years (Sujiono, 2012) . Furthermore, Sudarna also defined early childhood as a process of fostering the growth and development of children from birth to 6

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years, which is carried out comprehensively, covering all aspects of development by providing stimulation and providing educational guidance to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children are ready to enter further education (Sudarna, 2014) . According to Dadan Suryana, early childhood has five aspects of development, namely the development of religious and moral values, cognitive, language, physical motor, and social-emotional. These aspects of development must receive optimal stimulation from the surrounding environment (Dadan, 2011) .

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that early childhood is aged 0 to 6 years who experience very rapid growth, and development that is very fundamental for further development. At an early age it is called the golden age, because this is the golden period that really determines how the child's life will continue.

Education is a teaching and learning process that can produce changes in behavior. Education is carried out in the form of teaching and learning activities carried out at school or outside school (Dista, 2020) . Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is very important because it is the basis for the formation of a complete human personality, which is characterized by character, noble character, intelligence and skill (Pitaloka et al., 2021) . The education given to children under 8 years of age, even when they are still in the womb, is very important. In the first year of life, children experience very rapid growth and development. Development in the first years is very important and determines the quality of children in the future (Dozan & Fitriani, 2020) . The characteristics of the objectives of activities in early childhood education are usually directed at developing creativity, language development, emotional development, motor development and values development as well as developing attitudes and values (Sutini et al., 2019) . This is based on the background of PAUD children who have a tendency to always move, have a strong curiosity, like to experiment and test, are able to express themselves creatively, have imagination and like to talk. This is in accordance with the activity program in PAUD which is oriented towards shaping behavior through habituation and developing the basic abilities found in students according to their stage of development (Hartawan, 2022) .

4). CONCLUSION

A creative and innovative based learning approach in shaping the character of students in early childhood has several key conclusions:

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1. The importance of creativity and innovation: This approach emphasizes the importance of developing creativity and innovation in the learning process. Creativity and innovation not only help children understand subject matter in a more interesting way, but also contribute to the development of their character, such as self-confidence, independence and critical thinking skills.

2. Child-centred learning: This approach encourages child-centred learning, where children are given opportunities to explore, experiment and express their own ideas. This allows children to learn in a way that suits their interests and abilities, and fosters curiosity and intrinsic motivation.

3. Supportive learning environment: To support this approach, the learning environment must be designed in a way that stimulates creativity and innovation. This includes providing varied materials and tools, as well as creating a positive atmosphere that supports collaboration.

4. Character development: Through creative and innovative activities, children learn important social and emotional skills, such as empathy, cooperation and responsibility. This activity also helps them understand the moral and ethical values that are important in everyday life.

5. Role of parents and educators: Parents and educators have a very important role in supporting this approach. They should provide support and encouragement, as well as create opportunities for children to engage in creative and innovative activities. Training and professional development for educators is also important to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge.

Overall, creative and innovative based learning approaches can help shape strong character in young children in a fun and effective way, and prepare them to face future challenges better.

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