Research Article

The Synergy of the Tri-Center Education in Shaping Social Responsibility Theoretical and Practical Review

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Abstract

Education is not solely the responsibility of formal institutions, but rather a multidimensional process involving family, school, and community the three centers of education as proposed by Ki Hajar Dewantara. In this article, we develop a three-center educational framework as a basis for fostering students' social responsibility. Using a qualitative approach in the form of a literature review, this article examines the roles and responsibilities of each pillar (family, school, and community) and formulates collaborative mechanisms that enable the holistic internalization of prosocial values. Based on an analysis of recent studies, we found that the three-center educational framework is relevant and effective in strengthening character education and social responsibility, especially in the context of modern challenges such as individualism and digital disruption. Therefore, systematic synergy between these three pillars is necessary as a character education strategy in the 21st century.

Keywords: Three-center Education, Social Responsibility, Character Education, Collaboration, Family, School, Community.

INTRODUCTION

Education today faces the challenges of globalization, modernization, and rapid technological development. It is not only academic abilities that are required but also character, empathy, and social awareness, so that individuals can adapt without losing their identity and values. In this situation, the traditional paradigm that places all educational responsibility solely on schools has become inadequate.

This old paradigm must be updated with a more holistic approach that involves various social actors.

The thinking of Ki Hajar Dewantara, through the concept of the tri-center education—family, school, and society—offers a relevant framework for facing these challenges. This concept emphasizes that education is a collective effort, and character (including social responsibility) is shaped through continuous interaction between the three pillars. Such an educational structure allows the comprehensive internalization of moral, social, and cultural values, which are not only theoretical in the classroom but also live in the daily lives of individuals.

Based on this, it is important to analyze in-depth: (1) the role of each pillar in shaping social responsibility; (2) effective collaboration mechanisms between the pillars; and (3) the relevance and implications of this in the context of modern education in Indonesia and globally. This article aims to present this analysis based on the latest scientific literature.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review design, focusing on theoretical exploration and practical analysis of the synergy between the tri-center education—family, school, and society—in shaping students' social responsibility. This approach was chosen as it allows the researcher to deeply explore various theories, concepts, and findings from previous studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of how the collaboration between these three educational environments contributes to the strengthening of students' social character.

The research data were obtained through a review of relevant scholarly sources, such as books, journal articles, research reports, seminar proceedings, and educational policy documents published in the last ten years. These sources were selected based on the criteria of topic relevance, publication credibility, and data currency. The data collection process involved systematically reading, noting key concepts, and grouping information according to the focus of the research.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques, which were organized through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was done by selecting relevant information regarding the role of each educational center and the forms of synergy in shaping social responsibility. Data presentation was carried out in the form of thematic descriptions linking theoretical studies with practical implementations found in various studies. The analysis results were then synthesized to provide a comprehensive picture of the synergy between the tri-center education and its contribution to the development of students' social responsibility.

The validity of the data was strengthened through source triangulation, comparing various references from the fields of education, social psychology, and sociology. This triangulation aimed to ensure the consistency and reliability of the data. Additionally, the researcher conducted a re-verification of the literature cited to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the findings.

With this method, the study not only presents a conceptual understanding of tri-center education but also provides practical interpretations related to the implementation of family, school, and community collaboration in shaping students' social responsibility in the context of modern education.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Tri-Center Education: Philosophy and Contemporary Relevance

The concept of tri-center education has been revisited in contemporary research. For example, research by Ramazhana & A'Yun (2024) shows that this theory remains relevant in shaping student character in the modern era by reinforcing moral values through the principles of continuity, concentricity, and convergence between family, school, and society.

Moreover, in the context of character education and 21st-century skills, a study on biology students emphasizes that the tri-center education model plays an essential role in strengthening both character education and 21st-century skills (critical thinking, collaboration, independence). Furthermore, an article evaluating the implementation of character education in elementary schools in the digital era reveals that the values of Dewantara's thinking remain relevant to address the challenges of technological disruption.

Therefore, tri-center education is not merely a historical legacy but a dynamic framework that can be adapted to modern educational needs, including character education and social responsibility.

Character Education, Values, and Social Responsibility

Character education aims to foster moral values, ethics, social responsibility, and integrity. Recent studies show that character education in schools can enhance students' social and moral ethics, but its effectiveness greatly depends on the commitment of teachers, parental support, and a conducive school environment.

In the context of tri-center education, character education is not solely reinforced in schools, but requires synergy with family and society. This model allows values such as cooperation, empathy, and social responsibility to become part of students' daily lives, not just curriculum material. This aligns with the view that character and values education is a collaborative effort involving family, school, and society.

The Role of Each Pillar in Shaping Social Responsibility
Family: Moral and Social Foundation

The family is the first and foremost informal educational center. Parents, through daily interactions, role modeling, guidance, and norms within the household, play a crucial role in shaping a child's basic morality, empathy, and social awareness. Within the tri-center framework, family education is seen as a prerequisite for the

success of character education in schools and society. Research shows that the family's role is vital in instilling moral values and character from an early age.

Families also play a role in internalizing cultural and social values, which form the basis for social participation within the community. This is especially important in the Indonesian context, with strong local wisdom and community norms.

School: Formal Institution, Structure, and Intellectualization of Values

As a formal institution, schools play a role in intellectualizing values and character concepts, providing structured social experiences. The curriculum, group activities, character services, and school culture become arenas for consistently practicing social values. Research shows that character education in schools can significantly contribute to forming social and moral ethics, especially when supported by teachers' commitment, the school environment, and parental participation.

Additionally, in the modern and digital context, the implementation of character values according to Dewantara's thinking remains relevant, as an effort to maintain the morality of the younger generation against the negative impacts of technological disruption.

Society: The Arena for Application and Real-World Social Context

Society, including local environments, communities, cultural norms, and social structures, functions as the arena for testing and applying values formed within the family and school. Interaction with the social environment, participation in community activities, volunteer work, and involvement in local communities allow students to actualize social responsibility.

In a study on the collaboration of social institutions for youth character education, the collaboration between social institutions within the community (neighbors, social organizations, religious institutions/communities) has been shown to help foster moral awareness and social responsibility, as well as prevent negative behavior.

Thus, society is not merely the backdrop but an integral part of the character education and social responsibility process.

Effective Synergy and Collaboration Mechanisms

Based on recent literature and theoretical frameworks, here are some mechanisms that can encourage effective synergy among family, school, and society:
- Open and continuous communication: Schools need to establish regular communication with parents to share students' character development, values, and social activities. This builds alignment in values and understanding between home and school.

- Cross-pillar collaborative programs: For example, community service activities, social work, and community events that involve students, parents, local communities, and schools together. Through joint programs, social responsibility values can be tangibly experienced by both students and the community.
- Community involvement in school policy and culture: Parents and the community's participation in school committees, decision-making processes, and the development of a contextual and relevant school culture.
- Integration of character education in the curriculum and daily practices: Character education should not be a standalone subject but integrated into all learning activities and student interactions both at home, school, and in society.

Empirical studies support that a collaborative model between social institutions (school, community, family) is effective in shaping character and social responsibility.

Implications and Relevance in the Context of Modern Education in Indonesia
- The tri-center education paradigm remains relevant to face contemporary challenges: modernization, digital disruption, individualism, and shifting social values. Recent studies show that implementing the tri-center model can strengthen character education while also fostering 21st-century skills.
- Character education and social responsibility must become an integral part of the national education system, not just an additional option or short-term project. This requires a collective commitment from families, schools, society, and policymakers.
- Active involvement from society and families can bridge the gap between formal education and the social realities of the surrounding environment, making students more prepared to contribute positively to their communities.
- For effectiveness, teacher training, parental orientation, and the development of a collaborative culture in society are necessary to ensure that character values are not just theoretical but are lived out in everyday practices.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the tri-center education model—family, school, and society—offers a relevant and effective framework for shaping students' social responsibility. This model allows character education to develop holistically: from the internalization of values within the family, intellectualization and reinforcement in school, to real-world application in society. Therefore, to create a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also socially responsible, systematic collaboration among the three pillars is essential.

As recommendations, we suggest the following:
1. Schools should design collaborative programs that routinely involve parents and the community.
2. Families should actively support, provide moral and social role models, and establish communication with schools.
3. Society and policymakers should facilitate spaces for social participation for students, such as through community engagement, social activities, and local culture, so that character education can be applied in real life.

Limitations and Future Research Agenda

This article is based on a literature review. Therefore, further empirical research is needed, such as case studies in local communities, longitudinal surveys on students, or evaluations of the tri-center collaborative programs to measure concrete effectiveness in fostering social responsibility. Additionally, the diverse socio-cultural context in Indonesia requires local adaptation, so cross-cultural/regional research is also recommended.

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