

Quickly Solving Student Problems: The Implementation of Servant Leadership Through the Student Character Building Program in Elementary School

Rd. Furqon

School of Postgraduate, Educational Administration

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Bandung, Indonesia

rd.furqon@upi.edu

Abstract — This research aims to provide solutions to school institutions to solve student problems quickly. The proposed solution is to implement the Teacher Servant Leadership Approach through the Student Character Building Program. This research uses descriptive qualitative methods, the data collection techniques used are interviews and observations, and the data analysis technique is triangulation. The findings of this study reveal how to implement Servant Leadership through the student character development program at school and how this program can solve student problems. By paying intensive attention to students, teachers can create an environment where students feel free to talk about their problems, thus enabling faster solutions. The impact of Servant Leadership through the student character development program is that it can benefit students by preventing problems, solving existing problems, and planning follow-up..

Keywords: Student problem-solving, servant leadership, character building, the role of the teacher

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of forming and fostering humans into individuals with character. According to [1], Education is a process of learning the knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people that are passed down from one generation to the next through teaching and research. Develop a strong sense of character by adopting noble values. [2] The character has three interconnected parts: (a) moral knowledge, which includes moral awareness, knowledge of moral values, perspective determination, moral thinking, decision-making, and personal knowledge. (b) Moral feelings include conscience, self-esteem, empathy, loving good things, self-control, and humility. (c) Moral action has three character aspects: competence, desire, and habits.

A school is an institution that has programs to achieve educational goals. Taken from the Minister of Education Decree (2010: 9), values in character education are religion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic, curiosity, national enthusiasm, love for the country, respect for achievement,

friendliness /communicative, peace of mind, love of reading, caring for the environment, social care, responsibility [3]. In education, of course, it requires an educator with superior competence.

A teacher carries the state's mandate to educate the nation's life. According to [4], the teacher must include several personalities, namely: 1) Faithful and pious, 2) Noble character, 3) Wise and wise, 4) Democratic, 5) steady, stable, and mature personality, 6) Authoritative, 7) Honest, 8) Sporting, 9) Becoming a role model for students, 10) Self- evaluating, and 11) Developing yourself independently and sustainably. The teacher educates his students to become individuals of character, as civilized human beings who are helpful for their lives and the lives of the surrounding environment.

However, there are still many students who have bad behavior. In many schools, there is bullying, sexual violence, and intolerance. Minister of Education Nadiem Makarim, in his speech, also mentioned the three great sins in education: intolerance, bullying, and sexual violence [5]. Bullying is very dangerous, so we have to know. According to [6], Bullying has been defined broadly as the systematic abuse of power; various forms of bullying have been identified, some overt, as in physical and verbal abuse; some covert, as in exclusion, rumor spreading, and the negative use of cyber technology. Furthermore, (Bankdata.kpai.go.id, 2021) in [5], based on the data that has been released, there are 24,974 child protection cases in Indonesia, and of the many cases, there are 3,194 child protection cases in the education sector. Besides that, the students also become lethargic and lazy and lack enthusiasm for learning at school—the school's slow pace in solving its students' problems. The impact is that there are students who feel scared and reluctant to go to school and can even drop out of school.

Seeing the phenomenon above, as an educator, I (the researcher) feel called to my soul to research the above problems. This research is important because this increasingly dynamic and complex life requires schools and teachers to restore the true functioning of schools. This study aims to solve school student problems, such as

bullying, sexual violence, intolerance, and lazy classroom learning, by implementing a teacher's servant leadership approach through a student character-building program at SDIT Irsyadur Rahman, Kabupaten Cirebon.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Student Problem Solving

Research focuses on three things, namely solving student problems, servant leadership and character building. One of the studies on student problem solving is research from [7]. The study suggests that The direct effect of self-directed learning on problem-solving ability was statistically significant. The serial multiple mediation technique predicting problem-solving ability from self-directed learning, academic self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning was significant, explaining 40% of the variance in problem-solving ability. Then research [8] reveals that integrating SVVR into exploratory scientific practice instructions has a significant effect on students' learning outcomes and problem-solving abilities. Then, research [9] said that structured, semi-structured, and free problem-posing activities improve students' problem-solving skills and metacognitive awareness. Still in touch with problem-solving, [10] said that the problem-solving ability of students taught by experiential learning was different from the ones taught by direct instruction, the student's problem-solving ability differed between high and low adversity quotients, and there were interactions between experiential learning and adversity quotients that improved students' problem-solving ability as for according to research [11] that It encourages students to develop skills that can be useful for their future and in practical life within a team environment.

B. Servant Leadership

The results of this research on servant leadership are many, depending on what field the researcher got. According to [12] leadership is conferred upon a person who is naturally a servant (Valeri, 2007). Let's take a look at the results of the study [12]. He explained that this study also suggests that organizational commitment, trust, employee performance, and organizational culture are impacted by servant leadership. Then according to [13] said that servant leadership is a proactive predictor of employee performance and the relationship is strengthened when tested with religiosity. [14] that the functions of servant leadership, the values people subscale became statistically significant. Then according to the results of the study [15] Using the ten characteristics of servant leaders developed by Spears (2010), the characteristics and behaviours of teacher leaders and servant leaders are compared. Let's take a look at what are the characteristics of servant leadership

according to Spears in [12] Greenleaf's writings (Russell and Stone, 2002, p. 146) state that leaders are expected to have qualities and skills in listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to people's growth, and building community. This idea is further reinforced by Spears (1995). In 2002, Barbuto and Wheeler identified 11 potential dimensions of servant leadership that confirm the work of Spears (1995). Then according to [16] an influence of Servant leadership, compensation, and professional development as variables on teacher performance. He explained that servant leadership can affect teacher performance.

C. Character Building

In a study conducted by [17], He said that teaching-learning process preparation, teaching learning process, and teaching learning process closing are positively correlated with character building in teaching learning process. Then on research [18] said that the students seem to have gained the soft skills they need to face their future. As for research [19] said that character education was very much needed in learning, The character education that was implemented in the elementary school sample includes religion; discipline; responsibility; leadership; tolerance; cooperation; love cleanliness; neatness; courtesy; perseverance; bravery; self-confidence; economical; independence; honesty; acceptance diversity; nationalism; Justice; creativity; and reward achievement. Mathematics can also use character building, as well as research [20] said that The high level of completeness is due to students being able to study independently through material that has been uploaded by the lecturer and if students are not clear they can directly ask the lecturer through the chat facilities provided without waiting for the next meeting. Then, character building at the boarding school In research [21], the implementation of learning activities at boarding schools combined with character building has a significant impact on improving student character. Learning at boarding school consequently applies to general learning and Islamic education. So, every student must have an honest attitude and all these activities are also reflected in the daily life of students in the dormitory.

Then the most memorable is the research conducted by [22] explained that religious character has a big influence on the lives of students both in the world and in the hereafter. The results showed that Islamic religious education has an important role in character building, more specifically, the religious character which is rooted in the learning of faith.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach and aims to investigate the character-building program at

a school. The research involves a population of 1 principal, 15 educators, 5 administrative staff, and 154 students. Out of them, the researchers selected the principal and one teacher as participants. The data collection technique involves observation, interview, and documentation. The researchers observed the school environment and collected photos of student activities related to character-building programs. They conducted open interviews with the participants, which were recorded using a mobile phone. The data analysis technique used is triangulation, which helps to strengthen the study's results by creating a mutual connection between participant statements, observations, and activities.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of Servant Leadership in Student Character Building Program: Teachers as Leaders

Why it should be servant leadership as an approach. According to Greenleaf (1970) [14] they coined the term servant leadership, which means supervising people more by serving them rather than directing them. Servant leadership is how you give attention to others. Also, still According to Al-Mahdy et al. (2016) in [14], servant leaders see people as a whole: body, heart, mind, and spirit, and work to unleash their full creative potential.

Servant leadership has characteristics that teachers should implement to help students. Greenleaf's writings (Russell & Stone, 2002, p. 146) in [12] state that leaders are expected to have qualities and skills in listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to people's growth, and building community, this idea is further reinforced by Spears (1995).

As teachers and parents, we are concerned about the issues that many elementary school students face. This concern prompts school leaders to think about ways to prevent and promptly address these problems. The schools are responsible for developing practical solutions and programs to overcome these issues.

I visited an elementary school located in Kabupaten Cirebon called SDIT Irsyadur Rahman. The school was surrounded by greenery and had a friendly environment. The teachers were amiable, and the students greeted each other warmly. A large banner read, "STOP BULLYING, STAND UP, SPEAK OUT." The flag also had a quote from a Hadith of Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam, which said, "SEMUA ORANG BERHAK UNTUK DIHARGAI (EVERYONE DESERVES TO BE RESPECTED)".



Figure 1. Posts supporting to Stop Bullying



Figure 2. School environment

During an interview with Mr. Candra Alexander, principal, and Mr. Mujaddid, a teacher who is a participant at SDIT Irsyadur Rahman, he explained the school's approach to preventing and solving student problems through student character-building programs. The school applies a servant leadership approach to achieve this goal. As a researcher, I asked the principal about the effectiveness of using servant leadership in schools. He said:

"For me, as a leader in this school, servant leadership is very effective because we can know the problems of the teaching staff, children, and students. We can know what kind of needs then things that must be fixed and what it looks like; of course, it also involves parents at home."

The headmaster said confidently that the school had successfully implemented the program. Additionally, the teacher responsible for its implementation is considered a leader for their students. This aligns with the response I received from a teacher Mujaddid; I interviewed regarding their thoughts on applying servant leadership in schools. He said:

"In my opinion, with the characteristics of servant leadership like that including serving, listening and improving equality together, one of them can pay attention or listen to students about forming characteristics and also increase motivation for students."

During the teacher's presentation, he elaborated on the characteristics of servant leadership in great detail.

According to him, implementing this leadership style in schools is highly appropriate as it helps teachers understand their students better, pay attention to their behavior, and cater to their needs. The headmaster also shared similar views on this topic.

After asking about servant leadership, I inquired about the student character-building program. During my interview with the principal, Mr. Candra Alexander, I asked him to provide more information on this program. He explained:

"So at SDIT Irsyadur Rahman school, we give direction and also regularly to students, because we are full day from 7 o'clock to 4 o'clock in between the time after finishing the asar prayer, our students here are made into small groups, where each group has a name for its mentor. The purpose of this advisor is to provide direction and also find out what happened during this one day to the student or group."

The description of the implementation as illustrated in the concept of Figure 3

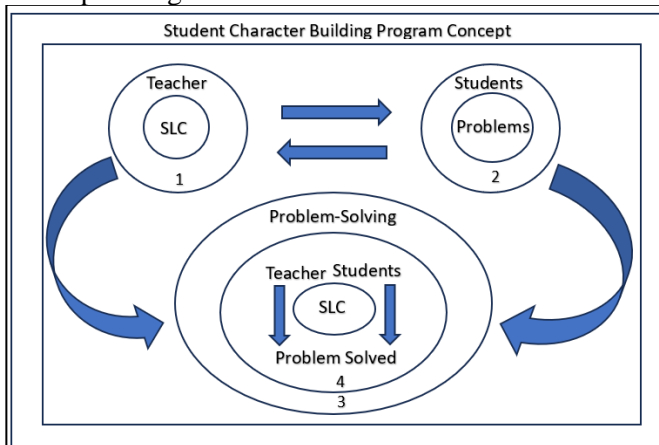


Figure 3. Student Character Building Program (SCBP) Concept

1. Before (SCBP) starts, teachers ask a little questions using the SLC (Servant Leadership Characteristic) approach
2. Then, students responded simply
3. Afterwards, it proceeds to the core and closing activities, specifically in the problem-solving loop, using the SLC approach. During this session, the teacher delves deeper into students' problems, while students feel more comfortable disclosing them.
4. Teachers provide solutions to student problems, giving quick and appropriate answers and advice.



Figure 4. Documentation of Student Character Building Program Activities

During the activity, the participants were asked to explain the program's purpose: to provide direction and advice and gather information about events during the day. They were also tasked with describing the technical aspects of the program, which involved creating small groups, each with one supervisor, who would play a vital role in implementing a character-building program for students using a servant leadership approach.

Following this, the principal explained the program's process and sequence, including opening, core, and closing activities. To make it easier for everyone to understand, the principal presented the information in a table that outlined the order in which each action would occur.

Tables 1 and figure 3 tell us about the implementation sequence of the student character-building program at SDIT Irsyadur Rahman, from the opening core activities to the closing activities that researchers will discuss in the discussion chapter. With this data, it is answered that teachers as leaders have a significant role in implementing the program by applying a servant leadership approach.

2. Solving Student Problems Quickly Through the Student Character Building Program at SDIT Irsyadur Rahman

According to the research on implementing the student character-building program, teachers play a vital role in fostering student character, care, and empathy and being a healer of their complaints. The results showed that the program has numerous benefits for students, including being a safe space to express their feelings being honest, patient, and straightforward. During the research, a teacher named Mujaddid was asked about the case studies that occurred during the program's implementation. Then he recounted:

"The cases that occur are mostly about mocking each other. Because I happened to hold a group in grade 4, there were often cases of mocking each other when I asked what happened to this; this mocked me like that, and thank God for the program; with the program that we have run, this problem did not reach home. So we finish here, sir, according to the procedure: by giving advice first to those who mock him, we give good advice, try and remind adabs, especially about Adab Adab making friends, because they need to be reminded, sir."

Even though the program has limited time, it presents an outstanding opportunity to address students' issues swiftly. Offer guidance and remind them of the rules of making friends. This will help students reflect on their mistakes and encourage them to apologize to their friends immediately and forgive them. These steps align with the implementation instructions outlined in Table 1.

Discussion on Quickly Solving Student Problems: the Implementation of the Student Character Building Program at SDIT Irsyadur Rahman

Researchers will begin by analyzing the participants' statements, namely Mr. Candra, the principal, and Mr. Mujaddid, the teacher, followed by the data from Table 1 above. The program's purpose is to enable teachers and students to interact, communicate, explore information, listen, and share information about students' activities in school during a full day (full-day school).

Servant leadership has characteristics that teachers should implement to help students. Greenleaf's writings (Russell & Stone, 2002, p. 146) in [12] state that leaders are expected to have qualities and skills in listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to

No	Event Name	Forms of Activity	Time
1	Opening Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greetings 2. Ask how you are doing 3. Afternoon praying 4. Muroja'ah memorization of the Qur'an 1 surah 	10 minutes
2	Core Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask about what you have learned today 2. Exploring understanding of the Lessons learned today 3. Ask if anything happened today 4. Ask if anyone is bullying, taunting, cursing, hitting, excessively nosy, indecent/inappropriate behavior, or violating other school rules. 5. Ask if anyone hurt his friend today. 6. Teachers apply the characteristics of servant leadership 	15 minutes
3	Concluding Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers give advice 2. The guilty student apologizes and then promises not to repeat it again 3. Students forgive their friends and befriend each other again in kindness 4. Shaking hands with each other 5. The teacher thanked them and praised their good behavior. 6. Do'a karakul ceremony and closed with greetings 	5 minutes

people's growth, and building community, this idea is further reinforced by Spears (1995).

Let us discuss the data from Table 1. The activities are divided into opening, core, and closing activities. During the opening activity, the teacher begins by greeting the students and asking how they are doing. This is done to establish familiarity between the students and teachers. The next activity is evening dhikr, praying, and reciting the Quran, even if it is just one surah. The aim is to calm the students' hearts and minds to be more open, honest, and receptive during the core activity session. The teacher provides advice and is prepared to answer any questions discussed during the core activity. The students are encouraged to be honest with themselves, their friends, and their guidance teacher, to admit their mistakes, and to strive to improve themselves.

The core activity session involves the teacher asking the students about their activities for the day, how they studied, what they learned, and what they did not understand. This shows that the teacher wants to hear the students' complaints and appreciate their enthusiasm. The

teacher also asks about any problems that the students may be facing so that they can provide the necessary support. The teacher uses a servant leadership approach and brings a sense of empathy to the students' problems. The teacher encourages the students to be honest and open and to provide healing for their problems.

The closing activity session involves the teacher providing advice and information about civility, mutual respect, and forgiveness. The teacher encourages the students to apologize to anyone they may have hurt and to promise not to repeat the mistake. The students who have been injured are encouraged to forgive their friends. The teacher and students shake hands and praise each other for their kind attitudes before closing the activity with prayers and greetings.

The case study provided by Mr. Mujaddid revealed that his 4th-grade male students used to mock each other. However, this behavior was quickly addressed during the character-building activities. Mr. Mujaddid advised the students on civility, forgiveness, the dangers of hostility, and the sins of mocking others. The students realized their mistakes, apologized, and forgave each other, promising not to repeat the behavior. Mr. Mujaddid also emphasized that bullying is often triggered by ridiculing each other, which can escalate into physical violence. He believes the program can help students become more self-aware and careful in their actions.

V. CONCLUSION

Teachers have incorporated Servant Leadership values into their Student Character Building Program. This was demonstrated when they provided quick and appropriate solutions to student problems during an introduction session. The program has three main benefits: (1) it serves as a preventive measure, (2) it helps solve problems, and (3) it includes planned follow-up actions. I have conducted a series of studies in the program with some limitations. One of the main limitations is insufficient time, which limits the depth of the research. Additionally, the studies were quite general, making it challenging for some introverted students who find it difficult to open up in public. In the future, I plan to explore these limitations and find solutions to overcome them. I also encourage readers to research this topic further and provide solutions.

References

- [1] H. STAI Rasyidiyah Khalidiyah Amuntai Kalimantan Selatan and S. STAI Rasyidiyah Khalidiyah Amuntai Kalimantan Selatan, "National Standards of Education in Contents Standards and Education Process Standards in Indonesia," *Indones. J. Educ. (INJOE)*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 257–269, 2022.
- [2] B. S. Wangsa, S. Suyanto, and E. T. Sulisty, "A Study on Noble Values of Tembang Macapat Kinanthi in Serat Wulangreh by Pakubuwono IV," vol. 279, no. 1, pp. 170–174, 2019, doi: 10.2991/icalc-18.2019.24.
- [3] M. B. Simanjuntak, "the Educational Values of the Main Character in Beautiful Mind Film," *J. Adv. English Stud.*, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 1, 2020, doi: 10.47354/jaes.v3i1.83.
- [4] O. Arifudin, H. Raza Ali, and C. Author, "Teacher Personality Competence In Building The Character Of Students," *Int. J. Educ. Digit. Learn.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 5–12, 2022, [Online]. Available: <https://ij.lafadzpublishing.com/index.php/IJEDL/article/view/3>
- [5] J. Pendidikan and S. Dan, "TEACHER ' S STRATEGY IN PREVENTING ACTS OF VIOLENCE THROUGH THE CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOL PROGRAM," vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 248–259, 2023, doi: 10.26418/j-psh.v14i2.66532.
- [6] K. Rigby, "How teachers deal with cases of bullying at school: What victims say," *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, vol. 17, no. 7, 2020, doi: 10.3390/ijerph17072338.
- [7] Y. Hwang, "The relationship between self-directed learning and problem-solving ability: The mediating role of academic self-efficacy and self-regulated learning among nursing students," *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 1–9, 2021, doi: 10.3390/ijerph18041738.
- [8] J. Wu, R. Guo, Z. Wang, and R. Zeng, "Integrating spherical video-based virtual reality into elementary school students' scientific inquiry instruction: effects on their problem-solving performance," *Interact. Learn. Environ.*, vol. 29, no. 3, pp. 496–509, 2021, doi: 10.1080/10494820.2019.1587469.
- [9] N. Akben, "Effects of the Problem-Posing Approach on Students' Problem Solving Skills and Metacognitive Awareness in Science Education," *Res. Sci. Educ.*, vol. 50, no. 3, pp. 1143–1165, 2020, doi: 10.1007/s11165-018-9726-7.
- [10] M. Hulaikah, I. N. S. Degeng, Sulton, and F. D. Murwani, "The effect of experiential learning and adversity quotient on problem solving ability," *Int. J. Instr.*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 869–884, 2020, doi: 10.29333/iji.2020.13156a.
- [11] S. S. Ali, "Problem Based Learning: A Student-Centered Approach," *English Lang. Teach.*, vol. 12, no. 5, p. 73, 2019, doi: 10.5539/elt.v12n5p73.
- [12] Retno, M. Setiawan, Surachman, and Dodi, "Servant Leadership Characteristics, Organisational Commitment, Followers' Trust, Employees' Performance Outcomes: A Literature Review," *Eur. Res. Stud. J.*, vol. XXIII, no. Issue 4, pp. 902–911, 2020, doi: 10.35808/ersj/1722.
- [13] A. Abbas, M. Saud, I. Usman, and D. Ekowati, "Servant leadership and religiosity: An indicator of employee performance in the education sector," *Int. J. Innov. Creat. Chang.*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 391–409, 2020.
- [14] H. Gultekin and M. Dougherty, "The relationship between servant leadership characteristics of school teachers and students' academic achievement," *J. Ethn. Cult. Stud.*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 276–295, 2021, doi: 10.29333/ejecs/698.
- [15] C. Crippen and J. Willows, "Connecting Teacher Leadership and Servant Leadership: A Synergistic Partnership," *J. Leadersh. Educ.*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2019, doi:

- 10.12806/v18/i2/t4.
- [16] E. Larasati, N. Karnati, and S. Muhab, "The Effect of Servant Leadership, Compensation, Professional Development on the Performance of State Elementary School Teachers in West Jakarta," *Int. J. Soc. Sci. Res. Rev.*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 260–270, 2022, doi: 10.47814/ijssrr.v5i3.220.
 - [17] A. Marini, A. Maksum, E. Edwita, O. Satibi, and S. Kaban, "School management on the basis of character building in teaching learning process," *J. Phys. Conf. Ser.*, vol. 1402, no. 2, pp. 0–6, 2019, doi: 10.1088/1742-6596/1402/2/022067.
 - [18] E. K. Elbes and L. Oktaviani, "Character Building in English for Daily Conversation Class Materials for English Education Freshmen Students," *J. English Lang. Teach. Learn.*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 36–45, 2022, doi: 10.33365/jeltl.v3i1.1714.
 - [19] Aningsih, M. S. Zulela, A. Neolaka, V. Iasha, and B. Setiawan, "How is the Education Character Implemented? The Case Study in Indonesian Elementary School," *J. Educ. Soc. Res.*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 371–380, 2022, doi: 10.36941/jesr-2022-0029.
 - [20] D. Sulistyaningsih, P. Purnomo, and A. Aziz, "Development of Learning Design for Mathematics Manipulatives Learning based on E-learning and Character Building," *Int. Electron. J. Math. Educ.*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 197–205, 2018, doi: 10.29333/iejme/3996.
 - [21] Hanafiah, A. Tentrem Mawati, and O. Arifudin, "Implementation Of Character Strengthening In Boarding School Students," *Int. J. Educ. Digit. Learn.*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 49–54, 2022, [Online]. Available: <https://ij.lafadzpublishing.com/index.php/IJEPD/index>
 - [22] E. Susilawati, H. Lubis, S. Kesuma, and I. Pratama, "Antecedents of Student Character in Higher Education: The role of the Automated Short Essay Scoring (ASES) digital technology-based assessment model," *Eurasian J. Educ. Res.*, vol. 2022, no. 98, pp. 203–220, 2022, doi: 10.14689/ejer.2022.98.013.