

## Indonesian Character Education and Its Role for Academic Optimism

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**Abstract:** This article aims to analyze the importance of character education for the growth and development of education quality in Indonesia. The key of quality education lies in the creation of benchmarks of the output quality of educational process itself in this case is the task of educational institutions such as schools and other similar institutions. Consequently, these institutions require an appropriate strategy in order to obtain a quality education. The strategy comprises how to promote and develop optimism among the learners in the process of education. This can be done by applying character education among the learners. Since the character is built early and becomes a mindset and pattern of action of the students or learners, optimism in learning process will be easier. Ultimately, academic success will be easier to achieve. More than that, Indonesian character education is believed to be the right formula in order to attain quality education in Indonesia. The preceding character education is Indonesian character education, a strategy of educational concept formula sourced from the treasury of Indonesian wisdom.

**Keywords:** indonesian character education, ITS, role for academic, optimism.

## INTRODUCTION

An education has become an essential aspect which cannot be separated from the process of human life. Before the modern human civilization institutionalize the system of education, an embryo concept of education has in fact existed since human were born. In this case of course, the concept of education in a broad sense. When human were born for the first time there was nothing covering their bodies and people started to think of covering their bodies. Later, they tried to create cloth through natural thinking processes. When life needs food, through similar processes they seek the way to find food such as hunting, collecting fruit, and further developed into farming activity such as seeding seeds which ultimately they understood how to survive. The condition of the changing weather such as hot, cold and rain, had made them started to make a place for shelter which ultimately they built houses.

The explanation above stated that education in a broad sense had existed since human were born as a part of the concept of life. This process was continuing to morphed and become perfect as the times progress and the development of human civilization as well. The process of thinking which involves human's thought, sense and intention is actually an education that functions as a humanitarian system in order to prove that human is provided by brain and mind as a

differentiator with other creatures. By his brain and mind human broaden reason and sharpen senses to invent civilization of how to stay alive in the right way. Started by habitual activities, and developed into custom and culture, then emerge management of civilization. This civilization then produces an education which continues to process itself and ultimately manifested into a complete system as what we see at present.

Furthermore, the term education which cannot be separated from human's life is a fact. Aristoteles, one of the world's largest philosophers stated that education is an ornament in prosperity and a place of shelter in the misery. Hence, since human were born they actually experienced learning naturally. A baby is crying immediately after birth to show that he is alive, as well as he feels uncomfortable so parents know what to do, baby learns to communicate. Children are learning how to walk, eat, get dressed and more. All parents always want their children get good education and learning. Both physical education such as a study about the importance of health or psychic education such as a study about the role of values ethics, courtesy and the role of divine value. Parents would expect their children grow up and develop, becoming person with pleasant attitude and behavior. From this expectation, all human being require education or process of learning. Further, this process continues to produce learning system in

order to achieve the best quality of life system and this effort can create institutionalized education system.

Nowadays, educational institution, in this case school or other similar institution has become essential part of life system. Education becomes the basic needs of human being and function as a mean to pursue the best quality of life. In this educational system, human gain various knowledge through school institutions or other similar ones. School institution becomes a place to train and a mean of learning for learners in order to get knowledge for the purpose of providing activities in educational system.

The content of this article comprises education in Indonesia. It states that Indonesian people give high respect to the importance of educational aspect. At the time of colonial era, the spirit to possess freedom was very tempestuous among all the people of Indonesia. Their desire to be an independence human being was inspired by desire to realize an independence and sovereign country. At that time, the youth of Indonesia as well as the movement figures realized that Indonesia has to revolt and be able to realize an independence country, free from colonialism as well as ignorance and poverty. The people of Indonesia must be resourceful and literate education. This awareness then will emerge movements of Indonesian resurrection particularly in educational aspect. For example, the birth of a youth oath (Sumpah Pemuda) on October 28, 1928, the Muhammadiyah movement or the birth of Muhammadiyah mass organization on 18 of November 1912, the establishment of Budi Utomo mass organization on May 20, 1908 and other movements. These movements were formed based on the spirit to achieve freedom and independence. The intellectuals at that time attempted to rise up and spreading the spirit to the whole people of Indonesia to be united, more educated and more empowered.

After the independence of Indonesia the commitment of the importance of education was monumentally set forth in the preamble of 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia the fourth paragraph. The constitution states that 'Pursuant to which, in order to form a Government of the State of Indonesia that shall protect the whole people of Indonesia and the entire homeland of Indonesia, and in order to advance general prosperity, to develop the nation's intellectual life, and to contribute to the implementation of a world order based on freedom, lasting peace and social justice,'. Furthermore, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia contains education in article 28C paragraph 1 which states that every person shall have the right to develop him/herself through the fulfillment of his/her basic needs, the right to get education and to be benefit from science and technology, arts and culture, for the purpose of improving the quality of his/her life and for the welfare of the human race. In 1945 Constitution of the State of

Indonesia article 31 paragraph 1 states that every citizen has the right to receive education. In the second paragraph at the same article, it is written 'Every citizen has the obligation to undertake basic education, and the government has the obligation to fund this'. Whereas the third paragraph states that the government shall manage and organize one system of national education, which shall increase the level of spiritual belief, devoutness and moral character in the context of developing the life of the nation and shall be regulated by law. Furthermore, paragraph 4 states that the state shall prioritize the budget for education to a minimum of 20% of the State Budget and of the Regional Budgets to fulfill the needs of implementation of national education. Finally in the last paragraph the government shall advance science and technology with the highest respect for religious values and national unity for the advancement of civilization and prosperity of humankind.

The analysis above shows that since Indonesia stands as a nation, it is clear that Indonesia has a commitment to educational aspect. The statement of 'to develop the nation's intellectual life' can be realized by establishing an advanced education system. Once an advanced education system is achieved the general prosperity will be easier to realize. The achievement of advanced and prosperous Indonesia is not only for the benefit of Indonesia but also its broader role in international circles. It is stated in the sentence 'and to contribute to the implementation of a world order based on freedom, lasting peace'.

Consequently, about what formula and strategy shall be applied to realize the better and prosperous Indonesia becomes the goal of education in Indonesia. An advanced education becomes the proper formula to answer the question above. Concerning the question of 'How to determine target of advanced education', this article will offer and analyze the way or strategy to present progress for education which is capable to produce quality students. The strategy is the implementation of Indonesian character education. The reinforcement of this character education is based on Indonesia's original treasure values. Since this kind of character education has been implanted early and become the pattern of thinking and behavior, the learning process, academic quality and finally the quality education system will be easier to achieve. Basically, each learner or generation in this context possesses optimism in every field of life, study hard to pursue academic achievement, tough, resilient and persistent, and respect knowledge. In conclusion, Indonesian character education and its role in learners' optimism become two interrelated and influencing aspects.

### **Short History of Education in Indonesia**

The topic of analysis of this article is Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism. Further, in the context of educational system in Indonesia the explanation of historical background of education in Indonesia become essential to put forward. The history encompasses how education in Indonesia was born and developing hitherto. The analysis of education history in Indonesia is also discussed in order to seek the exemplary values inherited by the founding fathers. These values of course have close relation with Indonesian character education. It means that the treasure of value itself has inspired the education system. This value is adopted from the same treasure of wisdom thinking of Indonesian people.

Furthermore, it is known that Indonesia is a country of multiethnic and multiculturalism. This condition implicates the existence of cultural treasures. Indonesian culture covers educational wisdom values derive from cultural civilization of Indonesia. Indonesian character education includes a huge number of moral teachings, ethnics and life values. In order to fathom these teachings in more detail, it is urgent to discuss the history of education itself.

This article particularly searches the history of education in Indonesia in the context of its benefit. In order to strengthen the previous argument, the following list describes the benefit of history:

- According to C.P. Hills history has some benefits to us. They are:
  - Give us satisfaction to know particular person such as patriots who have evoked a sense of nationalism or figures who have inspired us.
  - History may inherit cultural treasures such as arts of dance, traditional clothes and custom homes.
  - History can build a sense of love the homeland of Indonesia which usually called nationalism.
- 1. Herodotus stated that history has a benefit to narrate the life figure, community or civilization.
- 2. Based on Nugroho Notosusanto:
  - History is helpful to give us a teaching about success in the past (educative).
  - History has benefit to give idea or useful inspiration for the present progress (inspirational).
  - History is useful to provide direction through messages contained in historical events (instructive).
  - History may give pleasure (recreational). (Source: [www.wikiwik.com](http://www.wikiwik.com))

This section will discuss the short history of education in Indonesia in the time span of colonial era/before independence, the early era of independence, and the present time.

- Education of Indonesia in the colonial era/before independence

In the era of both the Dutch and the Japanese colonization the condition of education in Indonesia is not evenly as it is now. Moreover, in the era of Dutch colonization the access to receive education was very discriminatory. The people of Indonesia were under the pressure of the invaders and live underdeveloped and isolated. Many people could not go to school or get education. If any of Indonesian people (usually called *pribumi*) who went to school, they just finished at the lowest level of education. Those who had an access to receive education came from certain circles such as the noble class or 'priyayi'.

Many published literature about history had written the Dutch colonization in Indonesia. The colonization lasted for 350 years. Beside exploited abundant crops from Indonesia, the invaders had also been leaving trauma for the people of Indonesia. The indigenous people ought to perform forced labor, became slaves and got limited access to receive education.

In the era of Dutch colonization the education in Indonesia was divided into two periods of time. The first is VOC (reenigde oosindische Compaigne) period and the period of Netherlands Indie Government.

- **The VOC period**

In this period, the Dutch arrival at first was not colonizing but purely to trade. However, since Indonesia had abundant crops they intended to take control of Indonesian natural resources. Afterwards, the Dutch government was transporting the crops to the Netherlands and this went on for several years. Then the Dutch government built their commercial office in Indonesia. After going through war in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Indonesia fell in the Dutch government and officially became the Dutch colony. At this era the Dutch government did not give any chance for the indigenous people to pursue better life as well as receive education.

- **The Dutch East Indies Government**

After the VOC dissolution, the aspect of education in Indonesia started to be updated entirely. The reason was because the education system set by the VOC was considered as unsuccessful by the Dutch officials. Through the liberal idea and the Enlightenment, the Dutch government expected to develop education system which would lead to social and economic progress. The Dutch fresh system of education can be shown by the formation of the first school specialized for the Dutch descent in 1817. This school then pioneered the formation of other schools in various regions in Indonesia.

A Dutch governor had instructed his subordinates to build a special school for the indigenous people. However, the school could not work well because of the unstructured system. After undertaking various painful experiences in the form of forced labor and forced cultivation the Dutch government created a law of education for the indigenous people which was called *Indisch Staatsblad* in 1893. The regulation managed the school divisions included class 1 for the noble and rich people and class 2 for the commoners.

- **Class 1**

Class 1 is a school division specialized for the people who would be placed as the government officials or as company employees. This school was undertaken for 5 years with school subjects comprised reading, writing, counting, science, history, geography, geometry and drawing.

- **Class 2**

Class 2 was built to teach all the indigenous people. The period of study was 3 years with the subject of reading, writing and counting.

Class 1 was usually called *Hollands Inlandse School* (HIS) which used Dutch language as a mean of instruction, whereas class 2 was called *Verlvolg* or secondary school.

The next section will discuss the short history of education in Indonesia in the era of Japanese colonization. Ultimately, Japan officially took control over Indonesia in 1942 after the Dutch chief commander surrendered. In this period the education system which had been built by the Dutch colonization was stopped totally. All school were closed and reopened after the implementation of the new education system which were different from the Dutch system. The new system was arranged in order to attract sympathy of Indonesian people. The Japanese education system comprised several divisions.

- **Basic Education (Gokumin Gakko)**

The elementary school or common school was used for basic education. This school was undertaken for 6 years, addressed to all the people without exception. This system gave huge benefit for Indonesian people since they had an opportunity to receive formal education particularly those who came from the lowest class of society.

- **Secondary Education (Shoto Chu Gakko)**

The secondary education was taken for 3 years. This education level in which is called Junior High School (SMP) at this time, gave advanced education for those who had finished their elementary school.

- **Middle Education (Chu Gakko)**

Middle education or Senior High School (SMA) was undertaken for 3 years. The middle education gave more focused learning based on learning outcomes in the secondary education

- **Vocational Education (Kogyo Gakko)**

Vocational education was a middle education which had more specific learning subjects. This education prioritized life skill so that the students could be ready to live in society after graduated.

- **Advanced Education**

The university level of education was not enforced in the era of Japanese colonization. This level of education was replaced by advanced education. Advanced education in the Japanese colonization consists of the academy of medicine and the academy of engineering of Bandung.

Besides changing the system of education Japan also started to attract Indonesian people's sympathy through teacher training. The training contained subjects or materials as follow:

- Instilling ideology *Hakko Iehiu*, a fraternal slogan created by the Japanese in the area of *Asia Timur Raya*.
- *Nippon Seisyin*: teacher training militarily and spirit training of the Japanese in teaching the students.
- Provide training about Japanese language, the history of Japan and the Japanese cultures.
- Performing Japanese physical exercise activity and was able to sing the Japanese songs.

In addition to providing training for the teachers the Japanese government also performed coaching for the students. The training and coaching were performed in order to shape discipline and obedience of the students toward their responsibilities at school. The responsibilities are:

- Was able to sing the Japanese national anthem (Kimigato) in every morning.
- Flying Hinomura or the Japanese flag while looking down towards the east to honor Tenno Haika the emperor of Japan in every morning.
- Asseverate to be loyal to the aspiration of Asia Raya (Dai Toa).
- Performing Japanese physical exercises (Taiso) in every morning.
- Performing physical training of Japan military.
- Using Bahasa Indonesia as the language of instruction other than Japanese.

In conclusion, the system had been built by the Japanese government were some still applied by Indonesian government today. (Source: adapted from [www.websitependidikan.com](http://www.websitependidikan.com))

An apprehensive condition as the result of colonization either by the Dutch or the Japanese eventually made Indonesian people started to resist the subjection almost in every part of the region. The spirit of nationalism among Indonesian people became stronger and nurtured since their homeland was trampled by the invaders. The sense of nationalism and the condition under the same fate had made Indonesian people unite to resist colonization in order to pursue the independent nation. These events ultimately were recorded in gold ink within the history of Indonesia. This history then inspired the youth particularly the system of education in Indonesia until now. In this context, the fire of resistance among Indonesian patriots against the invaders becomes the ultimate reference of the people's character in Indonesia. These heroic values had inspired the development of education and rekindled Indonesian character education in which is now campaigned again by the government through education system.

The resistance performed by Indonesian people to drive out the invaders is described as follow:

- The battle against the invaders led by Diponegoro in Java in the years of 1825-1830.
- The battle against the invaders led by Hasanudin in Gowa, South Sulawesi in 1666.
- The battle led by Cut Nyak Dien and Teuku Umar in Aceh in 1880s.
- The battle against the invaders led by Pattimura in Maluku in 1817, and other resistances over the whole area at that time. The next resistances were performed in the early independence time.
- The rebellion of PETA (February 12, 1945).
- Bandung Lautan Api (March 23, 1945).
- The battle of Surabaya on November 10, 1945. This heroic battle was performed by the people of Surabaya and the youth of East Java. At present, this event is served as the national day, Hero's Day.
- The incident of the tear of flag in Surabaya (September 19, 1945).
- The battle against AFNI and NICA (September 29, 1945).
- The battle of Ambarawa (December 12, 1945).
- The war of Puputan Margarana (November 18, 1946).
- The General Attack (1 of March 1947) and other resistances done by Indonesian people in order to drive the invaders away from the beloved homeland of Indonesia.

The aim of this discussion is to confirm that the value of struggle in the heart of Indonesian heroes will monumentally become the guideline value of the implementation of Indonesian character education. These historical events continue to be socialized in the field of education in Indonesia through school teaching process until now.

The basis of exemplary is the best strategy of education for the students or learners at school institutions. The exemplary in a heroic story will build a sense of nationalism, make people struggle hard for the freedom of Indonesia by betting body and soul. Many figures such as Pangeran Diponegoro, Hasanudin, the figures of revolution such as Sukarno and Panglima Sudirman are worth to emulate for their character and heroism.

Consequently, this article is inspired by the spirit of heroism in the past so that the current generation shall utilize the independence by reaching their goals and gaining positive things. A brilliant achievement becomes an absolute requirement in realizing the progress of Indonesia.

### **Education of Indonesia in the era of early independence, Orde Lama, Orde Baru and present time**

After the independence day of Indonesia on August 17, 1945, the field of education in Indonesia was entering a new stage. As an independent country Indonesia has the right to determine its own fate and future. The goals of Indonesian independence were reflected in the spirit of Proklamasi which inflames a sense of nationalism among the whole people of Indonesia who had desire to be independent. Indonesia had started to improve itself after its independence day under the governance of Presiden Sukarno. This form of government was known as Order Lama. The Orde Lama government had been lasting from 1945 until 1968.

The purpose of independence of Indonesia contained in 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia [2] among others is to develop the nation's intellectual life. Early after Indonesia announced its independence as well as in the era of Sukarno government, the access of education was attempted to be spread evenly for the whole people of Indonesia. Beside the creation of UUD 1945, the national principle was also born on June 1, 1945. Both of them became references to the development of education in Indonesia until now.

The dynamics of education development in Indonesia which were imbued by Pancasila and UUD 1945 had given basic reference that receiving education is the right of all group of community without exception. The presidential decree No. 145 year of 1965 stated that the purpose of national education and its implementation was performed by both the government and the private sector. President Sukarno called his government era as the era of Revolution, which had a purpose to resurrect Indonesia to become a great nation. This spirit then had made people called Sukarno as the Father of Revolution of Indonesia.

In 1953 and 1960, the number of children enrolling school had increased from 1.7 billion to 2.5

billion. At this period many school institutions for advanced education were built either by the state government or the private sector. In the time spans of 1945 up to 1968 the field of education in Indonesia experienced dynamics and development.

The aspect of education in the era of Orde Lama under the leadership of Ki Hajar Dewantara who was later more recognized as the Father of Education of Indonesia made significant progress. He created a slogan “ing ngarso sung tuladha” (a leader shall stand in front of his subordinates), “ing madya mangukarsa” (a leader shall put himself in the middle his subordinates to rekindle the spirit and motivation), and “tut wuri handayani” (a leader shall motivate his subordinates from behind). In 1950, a regulation about education was set. The regulation comprises UU No 14/1950 about the basis of national education and was refined to UU No 12/1954 about the basis of education and school learning system. The next regulations were UU No 14/1965 about the assembly of national education and UU No 19/1965 about the principals of national education system of Pancasila.

After the era of Orde Lama was over, a new government era under the governance of President Suharto was rose up which was called Orde Baru government. This government era had been lasting from 1968 up to 1998. This era was known as the era of national development era. Consequently, President Suharto was also known as the Father of Development. In this era the field of education experienced development particularly after the president gave an instruction about basic education. The target of the program was creating as more graduated students as possible.

In the era of Orde Baru, the aspect of education had a motto of developing the whole people of Indonesia. The curriculum used in this era comprised the curriculum of 1968, 1984 and curriculum of 1994. These curriculums had been refined in order to pursue effective and efficient education. Since Orde Baru government was recognized as authoritarian and centralistic, the education only spread in Java Island. Consequently, the other regions such as the island outside Java did not receive education similar to those in Java.

After the end of Orde Baru government in 1998, the era of reformation was born. This era started by the implementation of more broaden policies. The policies included the shift of government system from centralistic to decentralize which was marked by regional autonomy. The government policy was not always controlled by the central government but the local government was given broader authority. The policies of education which was more reformative and visionary and put more emphasis on the quality and competence, were inflamed throughout all local

governments in Indonesia. In this reformed era, the priority budget for national education was attempted to realize based on the message of UUD 1945 which stated that the education budget reaches 20% of the total of the state budget (APBN).

The era of regional autonomy started by the issuing of UU No. 22/1999 in which it was influenced by the decentralized education system. Afterwards, the government introduced a school base management model and had been developed into competence base curriculum.

Up to now, the system of education in Indonesia continues developing. The government’s policies about education system are being strengthened, the quality and competence base teaching process is being fixed and well prepared. The government also builds facilities and infrastructures concerned education aspect in the whole regions of Indonesia. Furthermore, various policies to promote quality human resources are made. Hence, the education system nowadays gives more emphasis on the importance of character education in order to promote qualified Indonesian human resources.

### **Education Purpose in Indonesia**

The previous section has explained a brief history of education in Indonesia. Next section will discuss the purpose of education in Indonesia since it is the essential part of writing of this article. The purpose of education has a close relation with the theme of discussion of this article. By exploring education purpose we can understand the best formula or strategy in achieving this purpose. By analyzing the relationship between education purpose and the theme of discussion of this article we may find the red thread of the two. In relation to the analysis of Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism, the following part will discuss the definitions of education and the purpose of education in Indonesia.

The word ‘education’ was derived from the word pedagogi ‘paid’ which means child and ‘agogo’ which means to guide. Hence, *pedagogi* means a science to guide, in this case a science to guide children. By term, the definition of education is a process of changing attitude and behavior of an individual or group of individuals for the sake of maturing human being particularly learners through the process of learning and training. The explanation below includes several definitions of education according to experts.

According to Prof. H. Mahmud Yunus, education is deliberate efforts which are chosen to influence and improve knowledge, physically and mentally so as may lead to the achievement of goals gradually. Besides, these efforts may give benefit for the learners themselves, the community, their country and their religion.

Prof. Dr. John Dewey defined the word education as the process of experiences. Since life is a process of growing, education means an assist in developing inward side of human being without age restrictions. The process of growing is an adaptation towards each level of development in order to improve skill by means of education.

Based on M.J. Iangeveld, education is an effort to guide immature to a mature individual. Education as well is one effort to assist children in performing the tasks of life so that they become independent and responsible morally. Other than that, education can also be defined as an attempt to pursue determination and sense of responsibility.

Another definition is stated by Prof. Herman H. Horn. He defined education as a process of more complex adaptation among creatures that have physically and mentally developed and are mentally free and conscious of God as manifested in the surrounding nature, intellectuality, emotional and human will.

The definition of education suggested by Driyakarya is an effort to humanize people or a levitation of people to the human level.

Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) defines education as a process of learning of each individual to obtain knowledge and deeper understanding of certain and specific object. The knowledge obtained formally may influences individual to have pattern of thinking, behavior and moral in accordance with education they get.

According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, education is guidance to the development of children's life. It means that education guides the entire power of nature within the learners in order that as human and members of society they have the right to pursue safety and happiness in life.

Furthermore, Prof. Dr. Made Pidarta in his book 'Landasan Kependidikan' stated that the stimulus of Indonesian style of education science basically divides the definition of education into three parts, they are:

- Education,
- General Theory of Education, and
- Science of Education.

The first definition refers to general education which means an education enrolled by general community. This kind of education had existed since human were born. In ancient times, most people treated their children by instinct, their innate nature in order to survive. Human instinct is an innate nature since people were born, a character without prior learning. Human instinct includes protecting their children from enemy,

loving their children, baby cries and feeds naturally, baby can feel mother's warmth. Such kind of education was soon followed by thinking and experience base education. People were able to create ways to educate their children because of their thinking improvement. Such education continues until the emersion of various ways of parenting. The activity of educating many things, include any aspect of human development. Physical development, health, skill, thinking, feeling, desire, social, and the development of faith are all addressed by educators. It means that to educate is to make human being become more perfect, to make people improve their life – from naturally become culturally. In conclusion, to educate means civilizing humankind [1].

Based on the definitions above, we can draw conclusion that education is a very important point people need. In the context of education purpose in Indonesia, the goals of education are stated in 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. These purposes are written in the preamble and clarified in article 28 and 31. Furthermore, the purpose of education in Indonesia and its strategy to attain this goal were also written and explained in the National Education System and other government programs. Either the central government or the private sector are altogether make policies and synergize each other in order to realize the quality and character base education in Indonesia. According to A. Hanif [3], there are four quality principals the stakeholders shall provide in order to rebuild national character to meet the requirements of high quality and civilization in the future. These principals are listed as follow:

- Commitment of quality, means courage and sincerity to perform the tasks in order to meet the quality requirements,
- Fulfill the requirements of quality (conformance by requirements),
- Focus and severity on the running process. Focus means severity in term of quality specification and superiority (focus and directed to specification and its excellence). This thought was adapted from the Japanese Taguchi.
- Produce targeted and goal fit output based on quality specification and excellence has been set (product output on target and goal).

The basis of quality and character of national education purpose is a target in order to realize national progress based on qualified human resources. Education aspect becomes reference or guideline and is considered to be able to prepare the young generation with integrity, capability and mature intellectually and spiritually. In the context of this discussion, character education becomes the key factor to achieve the purpose of education in Indonesia as what has been confirmed by the Presidential Decree No. 87/2017 about the reinforcement of character education.

The Regulation No 20/2003 about the system of national education formulates the function and purpose of national education that shall be applied in developing educational effort in Indonesia. Article 3 of this regulation states that national education functions to develop character and civilization of the nation for enhancing its intellectual capacity, and aims at developing learners' potential so that they become person imbued with human values who are faithful and pious to one and only God, who possess morals and noble character, who are healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent and as citizens are democratic and responsible. The purpose of national education is the formula of human resources quality that shall be developed by each level of education. Consequently, the formula of national education purpose becomes the basis of development of national character and cultural education. Currently, the purpose of National Education of Indonesia which has been refined in every line is to realize the Golden Indonesia of 2045.

#### **An Indonesian Character Education Model and Its Role in Academic Optimism**

Currently, character education becomes the central discourse in the field of education in Indonesia. The character education is recognized and believed to be the strategic formula in order to produce qualified learners or better generation of the nation. The character education discussed here refers to the building of Indonesian original character. There is a value system lies within Indonesian people which then incarnates in education of Indonesia in the form of the character values of Indonesian people.

Before further discussing the theme of this article, it is better to elaborate the definition of character education. There are various arguments suggested by the experts as well as the relevant references. Based on the Indonesian Wikipedia, a character education is a form of human activity in which contains an educational action for the next generation. The purpose of character education is to shape individual enhancement continually and to train self-ability in order to lead to a better life. While according to Lickona a character education is defined as any efforts to influence the learners' character. According to Thomas Lickona, character education is an effort deliberately performed to assist a person to understand, concern and perform the core of ethics values. Then, Suyanto defined character education as the way of thinking and behaving that is characteristic of each individual to live and work together, both within the family, community, nation and state. Furthermore, Kertajaya defined character education as the hallmark of which is owned by an object or individual. Characteristic is genuine and rooted in personality or individual object, as well as an "engine" that drives how an act, behave, say and respond to something [4]. Based on the Dictionary of

Psychology, the meaning of personality character is to be reviewed from the standpoint of ethical or moral.

The previous definition of character education has made a clear understanding that character education mainly contains an education of moral, how an individual obtain mature personality because of maturity of the soul, thinking and behavior. The character education not only teaches of what is right or wrong, more than that, it is also instilling good habits (habituation), promoting learners understanding (cognitive) about what is right or wrong, making learners feel (affective) good value and wanted to perform this value (psychomotor). In other word, a good character education involves not only the aspect of good knowledge (moral knowing) but also good sensing (moral feeling) and good behavior (moral action). Character education gives emphasis on habitual action which was performed continuously [5]. Other than that, character education can also be defined as an education of value, character, moral and personality in order to develop ability among the learners to make decision of good or bad, to maintain good things for the sake of implementing those good things in life [4,5].

In the present context and the theme of this discussion, an Indonesian model of character education means that education in Indonesia shall be imbued by Pancasila values. Not only Pancasila functions as National principle, but also becomes life views and guidelines for the people of Indonesia. Pancasila was excavated from cultural treasures and civilization value of Indonesian people. Each of its principals was excavated from the personality of Indonesian people. The long historical range and multicultural condition have created Indonesian value system. Hence, the value within the principals of Pancasila becomes the reference of the birth of Indonesian character education concepts.

The first principal of Pancasila is 'Belief in the one and only God'. If spelled out in the context of character education, Indonesian education then shall be ideally imbued with religious zeal and divine value. This is in accordance with the teachings of religion and belief in Indonesia which always voice the message of peace kindness as well as positive value in interpreting education imbued by the first principal of Pancasila.

The second principal of Pancasila reads 'Just and civilized humanity'. If spelled out in the context of character education, Indonesian education then shall be ideally imbued with the spirit of humanity. An education shall be performed with regard to the rule of humanity. Good education shall be attempted to humanize human, glorify humanity and useful for the benefit of mankind.

The third principal is the unity of Indonesia. If spelled out in the context of character education, Indonesian education then shall produce generation



which posses a sense of nationalism. It also means that unity is a must for all people of Indonesia. This unity can only be achieved by nurturing the spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance. The character of cooperation with the spirit of unity shall be implanted in order to improve the character education which is expected to produce the character of nation generation that imbue the third principal of Pancasila.

The fourth principal is democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives. If spelled out in the context of character education, the value of education it possesses teaches the importance of deliberation and puts forward the value of democracy.

The fifth principal reads 'Social justice for the whole people of Indonesia'. If spelled out in the context of character education, this principal implies that education shall be spread equitably for the whole people of Indonesia. Education shall be able to produce social-spirited human or generation and person with self-concept of justice or for other community.

According to the Ministry of Education, there are five main values of character education: religious value, nationalism value, independence value, integrity value and cooperation value. The following will serve those five values:

- Religious value is the first value in the character education which reflects the belief in one and only God. This value contains education value which teaching tolerance, love peace, friendship, strung determination, sincerity, confidence, anti-bullying and violence, not obtruding, love the environment, cooperate with people from different religion, respecting others' religion and belief and protect small people.
- Value of nationalism places the nation and state interest above self-interest. This value reflect the value of law abiding, discipline, nationalism, respect multiculturalism. Appreciation of the national culture, maintaining the treasures of national culture, willing to sacrifice, superior and achievement.
- Independence value a character building that is not depend on other people and utilize whole energy, mind, and time to achieve hope, dream and goals. This independence value of character education contains the meaning of education about work ethic, tough and resilient, struggle, professional, creative, bravery and endless learning.
- Integrity value is a character education value which contains efforts to make himself can be trusted in his say, action, and occupation. This integrity value contains education about the value of honesty, justice, exemplary, loyalty and respect individual dignity (particularly for disable person).

- Cooperation value is a value of character education which reflects the action of respect, spirit of cooperation in solving shared problem. This value of cooperation contains education about the importance of mutual respect, inclusive, cooperation, solidarity, empathy, commitment of shared decision, deliberation, mutual help, anti-discrimination, anti-violence and voluntary attitude.

The previous explanation and brief analysis of the character education main values, ultimately creates a character education dimension. The main value of character education has four dimensions:

- Olah Hati, associated with ethic, an individual has a spiritual depth, faithful and cautious.
- Olah Pikir, associated with literacy. An individual who has academic achievement as the outcome of learning and endless learning.
- Olah Rasa, associated with aesthetics. An individual who has moral integrity, sense of arts and culture.
- Olah Raga, associated with kinesthetic. A healthy individual who is able to participate actively as a citizen (source: Kemdikbud RI).

The similar discussion addresses values that shape character has been identified. There are 18 values sourced from religion, Pancasila, culture and from the goals of national education. These values are religion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, work ethic, creative, independence, democratic, curiosity, spirit of nationalism, love the homeland, respect achievement, communicative, love peace, like reading, environmental care, caring community and responsibility (Pusat Kurikulum: Pengembangan dan Pendidikan Budaya dan Karakter Bangsa; Pedoman Sekolah[4,5].

Based on the above analysis, there is a strong correlation between the history of education, the definition of education, the purpose of education and Indonesian model of character education and its role in academic optimism. The past history had contributed inspiration and exemplary for Indonesian people. The pieces of historical events eventually crystallize into national purpose which is contained in the ideals of Indonesian independence in the preamble of 1945 Constitution. In accordance with this, the commitment of the Founding Fathers had been inherited in a relay to the following generation from times to times. The statement of 'to develop the nation's intellectual life' becomes the soul of education in Indonesia. Hence, the Indonesian model of character education imbues historical aspect, the purpose of education and the national goals of Indonesian people. Further, the character of optimism is imbued by the values of character education which has been ingrained and exemplified by the Founding Fathers of Indonesia in the past. Therefore, Indonesian model of character education can be recognized as Indonesian Wisdom.

Once Indonesian character becomes the pattern of thinking and action and has been integrated into whole personality among every child of Indonesia, the process of academic in order to achieve quality education in Indonesia will be easier to achieve. This quality is eventually the final result of achievement as the product of academic optimism.

The context of Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism becomes the process of the development of Indonesian people. While development is a process related to future times, there are three main aspects: propensity, good events created by human and nature, volition and intelligence [7]. It means, in order to fulfill the requirement of quality academic process achievement it requires crystallization of implementation of Indonesian character education. There shall be a desire to learn, try, self-training and habituate good things from the values of Indonesian character education.

The problem then arises concerning who shall play the central role of the implementation of Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism. If it refers to academic aspect, then it has a close relation with school institution. The central role of school institution lies in educators or teachers. The implementation purpose of Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism is pursuing maximum achievement of the learners or students. The educators or teachers are facing many challenges to improve their quality, capacity and capability. Who is the key of the renewal of national education system? The answer is not lying in the cost or the curriculum reform but in the quality of educators who conduct the process of education itself [7]. Consequently, professionalism amongst educators or teachers becomes an absolute requirement for the process of educational progress. These challenges shall be made by the people of Indonesia in this case the government, about how to make policy strategy in preparing qualified teachers.

The determinant of success of education goal achievement in Indonesia lies in the hands of teachers or educators. They will guide and conduct teaching includes the values of Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism. Instill character education and harvest academic optimism among the students or learners. If this happens, the achievement is easier to attain. Just as what Bung Karno said, every learner is basically the future leader. He may become a political leader, economical, social, a leader of science and also a leader of himself. As a leader of himself, he is able to direct his ability, potential, and talent for the sake of happiness of himself and his society. These are

the Pancasilaist persons who embody the shared values within the multicultural Indonesian community [7].

#### CONCLUSION

Character education plays an important role in order to produce high quality of nation generation. In this context, in relation to education or academic aspect, Indonesian model of character education plays essential role for the success of the academic achievement amongst students or learners at school.

The peak of the purpose of Indonesian character education and its role in academic optimism is that Indonesian character education becomes the main foundation for the students' optimism in their academic process. This academic optimism is required by the students or learners in order to attain achievement and the best quality in the context of school environment, the scope of education or in order to produce qualified Indonesian generation as a whole.

The strategy of Indonesian character education is a philosophy of life extracted from the values of wisdom of Indonesian people in order to prepare qualified graduates and learners in the context of school environment. Generally, it is a strategy to prepare Indonesian generation who are ready to answer the current and future challenges of either local, national or global dimension. Furthermore, the strategy assists Indonesian people in attaining achievement with Indonesian personality, trait and character.

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