

Character Education Management Through the Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul

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ABSTRACT

This study examines character education management through the Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul. The focus is on the program's effectiveness in shaping the character traits of discipline, responsibility, and independence in early childhood. A qualitative approach with a case study method was used. Data collection techniques included direct observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. All data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's analysis model. The study found that systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation processes contributed significantly to the program's success. Supporting factors such as school commitment and partnerships with the police, as well as inhibiting factors such as limited time and resources, were identified. Positive impacts were observed in the improvement of children's discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence.

Introduction

Instilling character values in early childhood is a crucial foundation for shaping personality, which will significantly impact their future

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development. Early childhood is known as the golden age—a critical period in children's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development (Ananda, 2017; Hasan et al, 2023; Harahap, 2021; Billah, 2016). Character education at this age should not only focus on teaching moral values but also on habituating positive behaviors in daily life (Lickona, 2021). Although character education is already part of the national curriculum, its implementation at the kindergarten level often faces challenges related to consistency and effectiveness (Suherman, 2021). Many educational institutions still rely on less contextual approaches that do not directly engage children in real-life experiences capable of shaping character optimally.

One innovative approach implemented to enhance the effectiveness of character education in early childhood education is the Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program. This program aims to develop discipline, responsibility, and independence in children through enjoyable, discipline-based activities such as marching, saluting, and collaborative games (Rachmawati & Arifin, 2022). The Pocil program involves collaboration between the school and the police institution, not only to educate children about discipline but also to provide them with real-life experiences of essential social values. This program is considered an engaging and applicable approach to fostering positive character traits in early childhood.

Although many studies have explored the implementation and impact of the Pocil program on children's character, in-depth research

on the management of character education through this program remains limited (Widananda, 2023), particularly regarding systematic planning, implementation, and evaluation (Isnani, 2019). Most existing studies focus on the impacts and implementation, such as the study by Lasari (2023), without addressing the managerial factors that affect its effectiveness. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by thoroughly examining how character education management is applied through the Pocil program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul.

This study aims to analyze the Pocil program management, covering the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation, to determine its effectiveness in shaping early childhood character. It also identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors in the program's implementation and evaluates its impact on students' character development at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul. Hence, this study is expected to contribute meaningfully to the design of more optimal character education models, especially through activities that instill discipline values in early childhood educational settings.

The main objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive overview of character education management through the Little Police Officer program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul and to analyze the program's impact on children's character. The study is also expected to provide recommendations for managing similar programs in other early childhood education institutions so that character education programs can be conducted more effectively and practically.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method (Fitrah, 2018) to analyze character education management through the Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul. Data were collected using three main techniques (Achjar et al., 2023): direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted during the Pocil program to directly observe the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. In-depth interviews were conducted with various related parties, including the principal (P), Pocil teachers (T), to obtain comprehensive perspectives on the program's success and challenges. Additionally, documentation containing activity reports and evaluation notes was analyzed to support the data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data analysis referred to the interactive analysis approach by Miles and Huberman (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024), consisting of three main steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the first stage, the researcher sorted and organized information directly related to the research focus, namely the management of the Pocil program and its contribution to character development. The filtered information was then arranged into thematic narratives, tables, and diagram visualizations to aid understanding and interpretation. Conclusions were drawn through data triangulation from various sources such as interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure the validity of the findings.

This study also followed applicable research ethics guidelines by obtaining permission from relevant parties, namely the principal of TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul and the students' parents. The research did not involve medical intervention or procedures requiring special ethical approval, as it focused solely on observation and interviews. All data obtained were stored in a database accessible to relevant parties using an identification code provided after verification.

Results and Discussions

This study aims to evaluate the management of character education through the Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul. Based on the results obtained, this program has proven to have a positive impact on children's character development, particularly in the aspects of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence.

"We see the importance of instilling the values of discipline, responsibility, and independence from an early age, and Pocil is a fun and effective method for that." (P)

The planning process involved various parties, including the school principal, Pocil teachers, and the police, all of whom played key roles in the design and implementation of the program. The main objective of this program is to foster good character in children through various physical and social activities that emphasize discipline, such as marching drills, saluting teachers, and introducing traffic rules using mini traffic signs as learning tools. However, certain challenges were

acknowledged:

"The main issues are the limited time and resources. The children's schedule is already quite full, and we still lack sufficient Pocil equipment, such as mini traffic signs and complete uniforms." (P)

The implementation of the activities adopted a joyful learning approach, utilizing play-based methods appropriate to the developmental stage of early childhood. Children were highly enthusiastic in participating in every activity, as reflected in their active engagement in physical drills and collaborative tasks. Observations indicated that the program successfully created a supportive environment for optimal character development. The children became more active, confident, and cooperative in group settings.

"They were extremely enthusiastic. Even the previously shy children became more confident and active. They learned to cooperate, take turns, and follow rules with joy." (T)

Monthly evaluations conducted to monitor children's character development revealed significant improvements across various aspects. Before joining the Pocil program, only a small number of children demonstrated good discipline and responsibility. After participation, nearly all children showed positive development in both areas. In addition, the children also became more independent, as reflected in their ability to complete simple tasks without continuous assistance from teachers. The program also enhanced cooperation among children, as seen in the collaborative activities carried out during the sessions.

(Figure 1. Interview with teacher)

Despite these positive outcomes, the study also identified several obstacles in implementing the Pocil program. One of the primary challenges is the limited time available, due to the children's already full schedule. Furthermore, there were also limitations in available facilities, such as inadequate marching equipment and a lack of mini traffic signs for traffic simulation. These challenges need to be addressed to ensure the Pocil program can be implemented more optimally and effectively.

Nevertheless, despite the challenges, the Pocil program has successfully achieved its main objective of shaping positive character traits in early childhood. The findings of this study are in line with previous research indicating that activity-based and collaborative approaches, such as those used in the Pocil program, can accelerate the internalization of character values in children (Rachmawati & Arifin, 2022). This program has proven effective in enhancing children's discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence—all of which are essential components of character education in early childhood.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that similar programs be implemented in other early childhood education institutions, with adjustments to existing conditions such as more flexible scheduling and improved facilities to support activities. Moreover, further research is needed to investigate the long-term impact of this program on children's character development and to explore how the program can be adapted to schools with different characteristics. It is expected that the results of

this study can serve as a guide for educational institutions in implementing effective and practical discipline-based character education programs.

Conclusion

The Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul has proven effective in shaping children's character, particularly in terms of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence. Good planning and consistent implementation have successfully enhanced children's positive character traits. Despite challenges such as limited time and resources, this program has had a significant impact on children's character development. This study contributes to the development of discipline-based character education models in early childhood education.

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