

HUMANE EDUCATION AS A METHOD OF EMPATHY CHARACTER FOR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

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Abstract: Humane Education as a Method of Empathy Character for Children in School.

The cases of animal abuse are escalating. The highlighted issue that indicates psychopathology is because of the lack of compassion for exploiting animals. Children with lack empathy and was familiar with the abusing act become a serious problem. To deal with the problem, humane education is a solution to maintain an effective way to cut the abusing behavior emotionally and cognitively within empathy and to have manners toward animals associates with animal welfare understanding. The program may set in a school and the suitable time to apply the program starts from nursery school to elementary school. Humane education is not only “about” animals but also “for” and “with” animals. The literature review aims to provide information on the definitions and procedures of humane education, debate, and solutions for their application in the educational setting and how humane education contributes to constructing empathy for children.

Key Word: Humane Education, Empathy Character, Children.

Abstrak: Pendidikan Kemanusiaan sebagai Metode Karakter Empati untuk Anak-Anak di Sekolah. Kasus penyiksaan pada hewan terus mengalami peningkatan. Persoalan yang disoroti mengindikasikan psikopatologi yang disebabkan karena kurangnya kasih sayang sehingga melakukan eksploitasi pada hewan. Anak-anak yang kurang memiliki empati terbiasa melihat atau melakukan tindak kekerasan sehingga hal ini menjadi masalah serius bagi perkembangan psikologinya. Permasalahan ini perlu mendapat solusi, salah satunya yakni pendidikan kemanusiaan. Strategi pendidikan kemanusiaan bertujuan untuk menghentikan perilaku kekerasan secara emosional dan kognitif dengan empati sehingga memiliki pemahaman terhadap kesejahteraan hewan. Program pendidikan kemanusiaan ini dapat diterapkan di sekolah dan waktu yang tepat untuk menerapkan strategi ini adalah ketika taman kanak-kanak hingga sekolah dasar. Pendidikan kemanusiaan tidak hanya tentang hewan, tetapi hewan dijadikan sebagai sarana untuk melatih empati seseorang. Tinjauan pustaka menjelaskan tentang definisi dan prosedur pendidikan kemanusiaan melalui debat dan problem solving. Strategi Pendidikan Kemanusiaan memberikan kontribusi untuk membangun empati bagi anak-anak.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Kemanusiaan, Karakter Empati, Anak-anak.

PENDAHULUAN

“Sebuah video yang menunjukkan anak kucing diinjak-injak hingga

tewas viral di media sosial. Kabar terbaru, polisi sedang memburu para pelaku. Rekaman video yang diduga terjadi di Malaysia ini

memperlihatkan tiga perempuan melakukan tindakan kejam terhadap seekor anak kucing. Hewan mungil berbulu putih hitam ini dianiaya, diinjak-injak bergantian, dengan seutas tali yang diikat di lehernya untuk mencegah kucing malang itu kabur. Sontak anak kucing malang itu merontar-ronta kesakitan. Namun, ketiga perempuan itu tanpa belas kasihan terus menyiksanya, hingga ajal menjemput si kucing (Iswara, May 8, 2020).”

In reality, most of the people consider the animals' torture is a trivial issue and justify the act of torturing animals. The violence is not only initiated by adults but also children who also perform the same. Violence to animals generates curiosity that may affect mental behavior. In this digital era, the perpetrators who commit torture to animals frequently posting their activities through social media. From the psychological sight, what relevant background that underlies the cruel behavior, and how the perpetrator's mental health condition will discuss.

Torturing animals relates to the cruel behavior that was done for a purpose. One of the signals to be aware of is the lack of compassion and empathy. In other words, when children torturing animals and not showing any regret is a sign of the psychopathology act. Children might encounter some problems cause by a lack of empathy as they were familiar to see and perform the torture. Torturing animals

contributes to conducting disorder diagnose. Conduct disorder is the beginning of antisocial personality disorder.

Perpetrators of violence to humans and animals are related. Those who perform violence from early ages toward both humans and animals can predict as individuals with the character of cruelty, violent and antisocial. Violence toward animals is a rehearsal before committing the act to humans. Many people have knowledge of animals as weak objects and no excuses for hurting them. Animal cruelty commit by children is a signal for the needs of serious treatment.

Torturing animals is an expression of previous cruelty. Violence is a cycle that the perpetrator has experienced as a victim. Children imitate the violence they have experienced. The tendency for children whose witness violence will unleash cruelty to pets as the weaker. In some conditions, pets figured as a control tool and targeted by perpetrators of domestic violence (Alberta SPCA Director of Education, 2013). Committed violence of animals in childhood tends to be implemented to humans. (National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children [NSPCC], nd).

The lesson of moral education must be taught as early as possible as the primary preventive to break the cycle. Moral education can distribute through

microsystems such as schools. Human education is part of Animal-Assisted Education (AAE). AAE is a program with educational settings and provides training and learning that focus on developing skills and knowledge through animal presence. Humane Education considers as one of the effective ways to cut the cycle of violence by practicing empathy (emotionally and cognitively) to humans by teaching to have manners to animals based on welfare principles (Taylor & Signal, 2005). Humane education may start for nursery to elementary school.

Humane education should make a deal with parental care. In reality still found some parents who frequently let their children abuse animals such as pulling a cat's tail, chasing a chicken, and kicking birds in a cage. Both parents and educators of humane education must see eye to eye on the definition of violence on animals and be suspicious if children deliberately treat animals cruelly which indicates a behavior that must be given serious treatment.

The earlier a child's character is formed will more internalized and is expected to contribute a moral society. Therefore humane education is widely applied in several schools starting from nursery school to elementary school. Nurturing the empathy character for children is a long-term investment and is not short-lived. In some developed

countries such as Japan, India, and America Humane Education became compulsory and applied at the level of nursery school to elementary. This program helps to prepare generations with virtuous characters. Humane education aims to foster youth generation to be more humane and had compassion for others. Education is not restrained to the academic side but also moral. This program can empower youth generation for respecting others. Besides, students are taught to be critical about animal protection rights and environmental ethics.

In the early 20th century humane education is go public. Later on, the American Humane Association (AHA) set Humane Education for the curriculum in 1915. After the implementation of the curriculum, the crime rates are decreasing. However, humane education is proposing to be taught to public school students at least one hour a week (Ascione, 2005).

At this time, school in Japan is implementing humane education nationally for learning about kindness through caring for animals. They believe that raising animals will increase students' ability by performing challenges for students to complete assignments. Students are given the task to be responsible for the welfare and survival of animals (Nakajima, 2017). When this program sets, students will experience the art of caring for living things so that they are expected to be able

to acknowledge all living things around them. The expected result is the student's sense of responsibility for his duty, conscious of the surroundings, and responsibility.

India also runs a dog bite prevention program to reduce the number of attacks and dog bites on humans. This program aims to understand the dog's body language and educate students about dog habits. They better understand and raise awareness to look after themselves when they are near dogs. This is important to suppress the tendency of children's phobias towards dogs (Seligsohn, 2014).

Humane education is still yet popular in Indonesia. The 2013 Curriculum (K13) applied in national education provides a field for students to explore affective aspects. As a result, students are expected to be smart not only restricted in terms of intellectual but also have compassion. The curriculum has a main concept in the development of character education. Teachers play an important role in the formation of character education in schools. In theory character education is apart from behavioral practices. The present situation in national education is the answer. The focus is powerful at the cognitive level and the clearly view are when students who solves math or speaks foreign language are considered smart.

Character education is vigorously needed as the academic side. Schools must

take action to character education seriously as same as the effort to improve academic education. Schools that only prioritize academics and underestimate moral aspects are schools that are preparing dangerous societies (Kaimuddin, 2014). Some individuals consider the humane education program not yet a primary priority because the procedure is complicated and far from the main goal of education. On the other hand, there are school regulations that prohibit the participation of animals in an educational setting. Other reasons are costs, extended work hours, and the possibility of attacks carried out by animals and the transmission of animal diseases.

Some schools may provide other academic activities to achieve educational goals rather than apply humane education. Research conducted by Samuels, Meers & Normando (2018) set a trial, by experimenting on elementary school students. Students are divided into two groups: the experimental group (The Circle of Compassion - a treatment of humane education) and the control group (the chess club program). The Circle of Compassion program discusses prosocial attitudes to animals and the environment once meeting per week for 11 meetings face to face class. The results were found that the experimental group had a positive impact by increasing prosocial behavior compared to others that were treated playing chess.

The literature review aims to provide information on the definitions and procedures of humane education, debate, and solutions for their application in the educational setting and how humane education contributes to constructing empathy for children. The benefits of this study are aimed at broadening the idea that it is valuable to develop empathy from an early age. Empathy extends prosocial behavior and moral intelligence that can distinguish right or wrong. These skills are required to diminish violence.

DISCUSSION

Animal welfare as the main theme of humane education

Humane education has a special mission to teach kindness to animals that stimulate the growth of empathy directed at humans and have an impact on reducing violent behavior (Signal & Taylor, 2009). Other perspectives about animals are also presented. Thus, a clearer picture of animals that also have basic needs, fear, pain, and affection for others will be clearer. Starting from the simple reason that student empathy is formed. Students also need to know information that there is the name "Five (5) Freedom" that must be known. This provision requires all animals that are kept or live freely in nature by having rights or freedoms, namely: freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from discomfort, freedom from pain,

injury and disease, freedom from fear and distress, and freedom to express normal behavior (Susanto & Gandha, 2015).

Students are explained with simple cases, for example concerning news of attacks on pets in humans. Through a human's perspective, the cases look terrible. If we look at the animal welfare point of view some questions emerge as follows: What makes animals attack humans? Is the animal had prospered? Some cases of animal attacks triggered by insufficient food supply or trapped in a small cage. But the featured news is the animal's presence harm humans, so the discussion on the particular issue is decline. Animal welfare brings a direct consequence to the environment, for example, snakes roam because their habitat is disrupted by settlement. To maximize the program, teachers' forces to provide good role models for students as well as a comprehensive understanding of the perspective on animal learning.

Born (2018) states 3 things related to animal learning perspectives:

1. Education about animals is the basic knowledge and understanding of animals used as a food source and how the role of animals in nature.
2. Education for animals is learning about ethics, justice, and caring for animals. The aim is to hone empathy because animals have rights and ethically well treat.

3. Education with animals implies that animals are masters or tools, and performs as a servant to humans. Learning with animals means viewing animals as creatures that are equal to humans.

Humane education not only talking "about" animals but also "for" and "with" animals. Human education aims to broaden and shape the students' awareness through some different perspectives. Some fun activities may give a clear picture to help students understands, for example by milking, feeding, and socializing with cows. From the various activities, students learn animal education as a means for animal welfare. The activities are a sight of roughly farm life. Students taught a lesson to thank and respect the animal-being. In the present, humans are easy to arrange food for days, but the fact is the life-being sacrificed for our needs. When the students have a look at these different perspectives then the teacher guides some relevant perspective on the religious, moral, and science side.

Students are given a scientific explanation that livestock (cows) is "designed" to convert for human food. The explanation confirmed by an illustration of the food chain for every living thing, and it provides knowledge and consciousness for students to know the cow's sacrifice. Respecting animals through Islamic rules during their life and slaughter is another respecting way on the moral and religious

side. In short, from other perspectives, the benefits of animal welfare self-improve the welfare of animals, besides increasing prosocial behavior.

Implementation of humane education for national education

Many people underestimate the program in the field of education. However, interactions between animals and children contribute to the development of healthful character (Dally & Suggs, 2010). On the other hand, Policymakers must conduct scientific research to overcome find solutions. Particularly in calculating profit and loss with the presence of animals in school settings. Many researchers have proved more of the benefits of humane education than the disadvantages and it will force the policymakers to make it work.

Animal needs and welfare are the priority during animal participation in educational settings such as checking out the layout, care methods, animal characteristics (living in a colony or solitary), and sterilization. When the needs and welfare of animals are fulfilled, the program will achieve its objectives to the fullest (Gee, Griffin & McCardle, 2017). Animals that are involved in teaching must follow sets of procedures under the supervision of a veterinarian. All animals involved are required not to be over-sized to the abundance or put their safety at risk

(Hediger et al, 2019). The psychological aspect and lesson readiness are also taken for learners' and schools' consideration. It aims to see the motivation and readiness of participants, the suitable facilities, social needs, and layout (MacNamara & Butler, 2010).

Implementation of humane education involves every component of the school to carry out its duties. The teacher is responsible for the safety of students and animals during the setting. Teachers also serve as the transfer of knowledge to students using and through the presence of animals. In this program, students are responsible for their safety when interacting with animals. This can be done through the introduction of animal habits and body language. The animals are required to pass the health and behavior tests to avoid the accident. In conclusion, the highest results achieved when all procedures are carried out properly.

Some opinions state that humane education is abundant for early childhood and elementary school. Empathy in individuals has established since the beginning of birth. Babies will cry when they hear other babies cry. When children are in the first year, they are at emotional empathy stages. Children begin to notice that other people's feelings are different from them. For elementary schools are at the level of cognitive empathy. Children are understanding the problem from

another perspective, and they already have a desire to help (Juliadilla, Pakaja & Iksan, 2019). This means that empathy can be taught as early as possible. The program is adjustable and refers to the development of children's empathy (themes, media, and teaching methods). A developmental and cognitive psychologist, Jerome Bruner believes that all lessons can be taught effectively in the intellectual form to any child at any stage of development (Jalongo, 2013).

Even though in Indonesia human education is subordinate and that not hesitated to run the program. Humane education can be learned theoretically, not as well as at the practical. The teacher can use the aid of documentary films or photographs to explain to the students. The obtained understanding of the humane education curriculum resulted to students in behave more positively towards animals than those who do not.

The implementation of humane education does not always involve the presence of animals, although the presence and interaction with animals will enrich learning experiences for students. Some ways that can be used to explain humane education include small group discussions or watching videos related to animals. If the school is unable to set the classroom setting, it still has the opportunity to attach the moral value of humane education in various subjects. The following

Curriculum (K13) provide teachers in an easy way to convey the topic to several subjects. Besides that, there are also relevant themes about animals such as environmental topics. With this opportunity, teachers can use it to provide humane education. Juliadilla, Pakaja & Iksan (2020) have implemented the introduction of humane education in an elementary school in Batu, East Java. They promote humane education through integrated visual media entitle Animal Education. This innovation was welcomed by teachers so they could teach academic and moral lessons integrated.

For schools that pursue for the interaction with animal in school setting could start with animals that are easy to handle, such as fish and turtles. In principle, when conducting animal assistance programs must have a balance between "easy" and "useful" (Nakajima, 2017). No requirement says to raise animals that are difficult to handle. The most important thing is to emphasize the side effects on students regarding empathy and prosocial behavior improvement. One thing to consider in starting interactions with animals is the type of animal that is decided based on religious understanding. For example, the presence of a dog at school could replace by rabbits or other animals. Even if your topic is dogs, there are many things to observe like dog habits, preventive action to avoid dogs'

aggressive, and teach about the differences perspectives on holy and clean (especially for Muslims). At this point, it can also be taught to children when exposed to dog saliva it is necessary to purify themselves by Islamic rules. Other lessons that can be taught are tolerance and respect for others. Because students must be able to respect if there is a friend who raises dogs by not showing an attitude that hurts feelings. In essence, many dimensions of learning can be taught through humane education.

Dally & Suggs (2010) discussed the benefits of implementing humane education in schools. The respondents were teachers from nursery school to the high school level. The animals involved in this study are various such as dogs, cats, hamsters, turtles, fish, and rabbits. During the study, students were asked to interact with the selected animals by caring for, giving names, feeding, and burying when their pets died. As a result, one teacher responded after the implementation of humane education the students were more empathetic to each other and responsible for the animals they raise in the class. Students start to respect the animal's rights and grief when their pet dies. In short, the presence of fish and turtles also stimulates interaction with other students through basic conversations.

Humane education method to produce students' empathy

The reason why humane education used animals as the object just because animals are vulnerable and easy to get hurt. Besides, animals relate to children so that will attract children's attention easily. One of the best ways to teach empathy is to introduce human-animal relationships. Humane education has a circle of empathy which is described as a group of people who interact to develop empathy together. A circle of empathy in children functions as a means of self-development through self, family, and animals. (Jalongo, 2013).

Humane education is adapt to discussing prosocial behavior through lessons and activities that are specific to people, animals, and the environment. Issues to be discussed include pets, livestock, wildlife, the environment, and children. This activity is generated with discussion and exploration of issues of animal welfare, conservation, pollution, and the effects of climate change, intimidation, poverty, and child labor (Samuels, Meers & Normando, 2018). Through this program, students have also opened up their eyes and sharpen critical thinking skills. Since childhood, students must also be taught the issue of humanity so that they can be sensitive to the social problems around them.

Before providing students with the lesson of empathy, the students can

understand their emotions first. That is means how to express feelings of sadness, happiness, and anger properly. Because emotional incongruence may interrupt individuals to understand themselves. Thus, it will difficult when understanding the emotions of others. Humane education may teach us to understand the emotions of others. For example, students can learn about dogs' body language when feeling angry, suspicious, and happy. Then, students will understand when a dog is aggressive that the student does not try to hold his tail to avoid dog bites. Instead, students are taught to reduce the emotions of dogs so that dogs feel happy by treated gently.

Teaching empathy can be done by providing examples in daily life, that are adjusted to the level of student maturity. Some cases like children chasing and frightening cats or chickens to scare them. This phenomenon is still considered normal, and children are not considered to hurt animals. For someone who purposely scaring animals is indicate to the psychological violence toward animals. The sight of humane education is to break the bad habit by giving a clear understanding and reasonable question. Students are also involved to think and feel divergently from other perspectives. For example, can children imagine and feel when they become an animal?, What do

they feel? and what do they think it is appropriate for the animal?.

Another complex example, the phenomenon of the monkey mask show which is considered attractive to children. Indeed, monkey masks have been banned because they are considered to be an exploitation of animals. Through this phenomenon, students are invited to reflect and think about these animals. What can be done to decrease this exploitation? The lesson that we explain has to follow with a solution. The real action that is relevant is not giving money to the owner but giving a reward such as bananas and nuts to the monkeys.

The following examples are methods that may succeed in developing the character of empathy for students. Empathy can be identified in two ways: cognitive and affective. Cognitive performs when students are involved to think and describe the feelings of others. Affective refers to the ability to have a feeling toward others. Cultivating empathy can be done by exposing inspirational stories of animals and ending with moral value, or telling environmental crises that result in the extinction of habitat for animals. The empathy that initiates cognitively and affective will get an impact when make it work. When individuals realize to sympathize, spontaneously they will take part in reducing the others' burden. This is called compassion or

national empathy motivation (Young, Khalil, & Wharton, 2018). Prosocial action is the aim of the lesson on humane education. Things to remain are the cruel violence started by the neglect of minor violence. The idea looks simple but is crucial.

The impact provides by a circle of empathy starts from kindness towards animals and is extended around. If someone treats animals (as creatures that are vulnerable to violence) well then it is likely that he can treat each other well. Of course, for the generation exposed to humane education from an early age rise to a generation that is, conscious, empathy, compassion, and prosocial.

CONCLUSION

Humane education requires many things to be applied. This is also the reason why adults are hesitant to teach children about the goodness of all living things. Thus there is a different perspective of attitudes towards animals, is consuming beef or chicken can categorize as violence? Probably for vegans, but paying attention to animal welfare during their lives is one way to respect animals. There is an agreement that violence against animals is carried out deliberately and treated cruelly. We should not let the valuable opportunity to grow human education at an early age be ignored. Character education from an early age can begin with simple things

about empathy, courtesy, kindness, morals that are not more important academically.

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