Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts on shaping the character of generation Z towards a golden Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The character of Generation Z is facing a significant decline in moral values, presenting the impression of being increasingly unruly. As the next generation responsible for advancing the nation toward a Golden Indonesia, this degradation affects various aspects, including speech, behavior, lifestyle, and education. Character education is currently in decline due to the dominance of media and the rapid progress of science and technology. The challenges facing Generation Z, characterized by the aspiration for a Golden Indonesia, demand a thoughtful approach to address these issues an approach found in the ideas of Ki Hajar Dewantara. This study aims to explore Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts on shaping the character of Generation Z in alignment with the vision of a Golden Indonesia. The research adopts a literature review methodology, gathering data from various sources. The data collection technique involves documentation, specifically collecting relevant library resources. The study is conducted systematically, processing and synthesizing the data to provide conclusions based on the literature. The findings reveal that Ki Hajar Dewantara's ideas focus on character development through the consideration of educational patterns, teacher and student roles, and methods for instilling character education values in future leaders aligned with the vision of a Golden Indonesia.

Keywords: character, generation Z, golden Indonesia, Ki Hajar Dewantara

INTRODUCTION

The decline in the character quality of Generation Z, which is the next generation tasked with guiding the nation toward a Golden Indonesia, is evident across multiple aspects,

including speech, behavior, lifestyle, and education, all of which are experiencing deterioration [1], [2]. Character education is particularly in crisis, largely as a result of media hegemony and the revolution in science and technology [3], [4]. Achieving balance in education addressing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains is essential for ensuring that education fosters the necessary changes, beginning with addressing the root causes and working toward the desired outcomes.

Education plays a pivotal role in raising, nurturing, and developing citizens into moral and dignified individuals. It is crucial for humanizing individuals, cultivating emotional, spiritual, and intellectual intelligence to form a well-rounded person. Integrity can be instilled through formal, informal, and non-formal education, contributing to the development of Generation Z with strong character, aligned with the vision of a Golden Indonesia [5], [6].

The formation of a character-driven Generation Z, working towards a Golden Indonesia, represents a historic milestone for the Indonesian nation. Although the journey to this momentous goal is still long, it is essential to begin preparing for it in a thorough and mature manner. The aim is to create superior, creative, and human-centered human resources with strong character. Previous studies have highlighted several key points: (1) Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy remains relevant today. His approach, which integrates the Tri Education Center system and promotes freedom of thought, supports the development of creativity in students, in line with the implementation of the 2013 curriculum. Ki Hajar Dewantara's teachings, emphasizing values such as religion, discipline, honesty, and responsibility, offer a solid foundation for moral education in the 21st century [7], [8], [9]. (2) The management of character education programs aimed at enhancing the social attitudes of participants in the face of the disruptive era is carried out through four stages: planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision.

The stages of planning, organizing, and implementation are managed through functional management. However, the supervision stage has not been effectively implemented. Program evaluation and accountability mechanisms are also lacking, which hinders the identification of areas that need improvement and refinement [10], [11]. (3) The development of religious character in students is reflected through their obedience in worship, sense of responsibility, self-belief, honesty, love for knowledge, discipline, and

respect for others. The contextualization of Islamic education values is applied through madrasa activity programs and contextual learning. This contextualization has a positive impact on the development of religious character in students [12].

This study delves into the methods of shaping the character of Generation Z towards a Golden Indonesia, particularly through the educational ideas of Ki Hajar Dewantara. The issues facing Generation Z, especially regarding their character development in the context of a Golden Indonesia, require a thoughtful approach to provide solutions. Ki Hajar Dewantara, an activist in the Indonesian independence movement, columnist, and a key figure in the field of education, has made significant contributions to the history of education in Indonesia. He believed that the goal of education is human independence, achieved through physical, mental, and spiritual development. Therefore, this study aims to explore Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts on shaping the character of Generation Z in line with the vision of a Golden Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employs a bibliographic research method. The research was conducted using literature sources, including books, research notes, and reports from previous studies [13], [14]. Data collection in this library research was carried out through documentation, which involved gathering information about specific topics or variables from sources such as books, articles, journals, and other relevant materials. The research instruments used included a checklist for classifying research materials, writing schemes or maps, and formats for research notes. The primary data source for this study was *The Struggle of Ki Hajar Dewantara: From Politics to Education* [15]. Data analysis was performed through data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions or verification [16], [17].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The thoughts of Ki Hajar Dewantara on shaping the character of Generation Z towards a Golden Indonesia can be understood through the following key principles:

Table 1. Ki Hajar Dewantara's Philosophy for Shaping Generation Z

No	Ki Hajar Dewantara's Thoughts		Form of Thinking in Shaping the Character of Generation Z Towards a Golden Indonesia
1	Educational Patterns and Approach	1.	National in nature while respecting local culture.
		2.	Involves the roles of family, school, and community through the Tri Education Center.
		3.	Holistic approach.
2	Learning Design	-	Methods based on building, maintaining, and educating with love and affection.
3	Role of the Teacher	1.	1. Serve as a role model or central figure (Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha).
		2.	Inspire students to learn (Ing Madya Mangun Karsa).
		3.	Encourage the development of students with a full-hearted approach (Tut Wuri Handayani).
4	Role of the Student	1.	1. Position students at the center of the educational process.
		2.	View education as a dynamic process.
		3.	Prioritize a balance between creativity, emotions, and will in the development of children.
5	Educational Methods	1.	Leading by example.
		2.	Habituation.
		3.	Teaching.
		4.	Orders, coercion, and punishment.
		5.	Behavioral modeling.
		6.	Physical and spiritual experiences.
6	Character Education Values	1.	Social responsibility.
		2.	Sense of nationalism.
		3.	Empathy.
		4.	Independence and ethics.
7	Leadership Teachings	1.	Lead by example for subordinates (Ing Ngarso Sun Tulodo).
		2.	Inspire or motivate subordinates to work (Ing Madya Mangun Karsa).
		3.	Support and uplift the morale of subordinates from behind to ensure they fulfill their duties responsibly (Tut Wuri Handayani).

Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts on shaping the character of Generation Z towards a Golden Indonesia can be viewed through his educational principles and methods.

First, Dewantara emphasized that national education must align with a unified pattern while still respecting local cultures. This means that while education should be national in scope, it must not disregard the cultural diversity inherent in Indonesia's many ethnicities, races, and religions. A shared educational framework is essential for the development of national character and for mitigating the potential conflicts arising from cultural differences. Dewantara's educational vision proposed a shift from a colonial educational system to a national one based on local cultural values. This approach is a collective effort that requires the involvement of all parties, not just one group.

Second, Dewantara's concept of the Tri Education Center advocates for the involvement of the family, school, and community in the educational process. This concept is highly relevant in the modern era, as collaboration between these three elements plays a crucial role in building the character of children. In practice, character education should not be the sole responsibility of schools but must also engage parents and the broader community to create a supportive environment for character development. Furthermore, Dewantara's educational system places the student at the center of the learning process, promoting a more active and participatory form of education.

A strong synergy between the family, as the first environment for nurturing a child, and the school, as a formal institution, is expected to instill lasting positive values in the child before they enter the school system.

1. The family, school, and community environments collectively contribute to the development of student character. This requires effective collaboration and mutual support among these three environments to achieve greater success in fostering positive character traits such as religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, patriotism, peacefulness, and social responsibility [18].

2. The family environment plays a critical and positive role in shaping student character. The relationship between students and their parents, as well as between siblings within the family, significantly influences character formation. Families that implement values of goodness and integrity provide strong support for the development of positive character traits, such as religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, patriotism, peacefulness, and social care.

3. The school environment also has a positive and significant impact on the formation of student character. The interactions between students and teachers, as well as between students and their peers, are vital to character development. While studies generally show that schools contribute less than other environments, such as the family and broader society, schools alone are not sufficient for developing positive student character traits. A supportive and conducive public environment, such as the broader community, also plays a key role. Social relationships between students and their neighbors, as well as peer group interactions, are crucial for character development. A positive community environment fosters character traits like religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, patriotism, peacefulness, and social responsibility [19].

Third, Ki Hajar Dewantara advocates for a holistic approach to education. His values of character education, including social responsibility, nationalism, and empathy, are essential in addressing the challenges of the digital era, where individuals are exposed to vast amounts of information from diverse sources and cultures. Dewantara's character education places a strong emphasis on independence and ethics, which are crucial for today's generation. In an era marked by rapid social changes, a solid moral foundation is necessary to navigate these transitions. The implementation of these principles is particularly relevant in modern curricula, which focus not only on academic achievement but also on the development of attitudes and behaviors. This approach is in line with a holistic educational model that integrates character development into every aspect of learning, providing a solid foundation for character education in the current era [20].

In relation to the vision of a Golden Indonesia, Dewantara's approach to learning emphasizes methods that build, maintain, and nurture with love and care. This concept, which originated in the "Taman Siswa" (Students' Garden), was designed to prepare Indonesian society to become resilient and to help achieve independence from colonial rule. The educational approach in "Taman Siswa" emphasized non-violence and fostered students' independent spirit. The distinctive features of the "Taman Siswa" education are encapsulated in the five principles: (1) Sunnatullah (natural law), (2) Culture, (3) Freedom, (4) Humanity, and (5) Nationality. Through this educational concept, Ki Hajar Dewantara adopted the motto *Ing Ngarso Sun Tulodho, Ing Madya Mangun Karsa, Tut Wuri Handayani*, which reflects his philosophy of guiding students with love, leading by example, and inspiring them from behind to achieve their goals [21].

Ki Hajar Dewantara's thoughts on shaping the character of Generation Z towards a Golden Indonesia can be understood through his views on the role of teachers, the position of students, and educational methods.

From the perspective of the teacher's role, Dewantara emphasized that a teacher should be a role model and a central figure for students (*Ing ngasa sung tuladha*). Teachers must also have the ability to inspire students' enthusiasm for learning (*Ing madya mangun karsa*) and encourage their full-hearted involvement in the educational process (*Tut Wuri Handayani*). This means that a teacher must not only guide by example but also motivate students to develop an interest in learning and grow into individuals with strong character.

Regarding the position of students, Dewantara believed that students should be at the center of the educational process. He viewed education as a dynamic process and emphasized the need for a balance between creativity, emotions, and willpower in the development of the child. For Dewantara, education is not merely about transferring knowledge but is a transformative process that shapes the character and values of the individual. In other words, education is a means of developing a well-rounded human being.

In terms of educational methods, Dewantara outlined several key approaches: (1) setting an example (*voorbeeld*), (2) establishing habits (*pakulinan, gewoontevorming*), (3) teaching (*leering, wulang-wuruk*), (4) issuing commands, coercion, and punishment (*regeering en tucht*), (5) cultivating self-discipline (*zelfbeheersching, zelfdiscipline*), and (6) encouraging both physical and spiritual experiences (*nglakoni, ngroso, beleving*).

Dewantara's method of education aligns with the Tri Nga approach, which integrates the cognitive (reasoning), affective (feeling), and psychomotor (action) aspects of learning. Education should be tailored to the developmental stages of the child, which Dewantara categorized into four levels: (1) Syariah (early childhood education) focused on habituation and role modeling, (2) Fitrah (adolescence) involves understanding and realizing goodness, (3) Tarikat (young adulthood) emphasizes practicing goodness, even when it is difficult, and (4) Ma'rifat (adulthood) involves fully understanding goodness and acting in accordance with moral values [22].

Ki Hajar Dewantara's approach to shaping the character of Generation Z towards a Golden Indonesia places significant emphasis on essential values such as social responsibility, national pride, empathy, and the cultivation of independence and ethics. His thoughts on character education are rooted in a vision that addresses the broader goals of moral and personal development in students.

From a leadership perspective, Ki Hajar Dewantara's philosophy can be summarized through three central principles: (1) Ing Ngarso Sun Tulodo - the leader must serve as a role model for their subordinates. (2) Ing Madyo Mangun Karso - the leader must inspire and motivate subordinates to work with enthusiasm and commitment. (3) Tut Wuri Handayani - the leader must provide moral support and encouragement from behind, ensuring that subordinates can carry out their duties effectively and with responsibility. These principles aim to create a positive and productive work environment where leadership

is characterized by guiding and nurturing individuals to perform to the best of their abilities [23], [24].

The first motto, Ing Ngarso Sun Tulodo, highlights the importance of leading by example, where leaders must demonstrate good behavior and set a positive example for those under their guidance. Ing Madyo Mangun Karso stresses that a leader should inspire initiative and creativity, fostering an environment of collaboration and motivation. Tut Wuri Handayani, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of leaders in providing moral encouragement, supporting their subordinates from behind, and helping them achieve their responsibilities with confidence and efficiency [25], [26].

Leadership is defined as the ability to influence individuals or groups towards achieving a common goal. A leader must possess the skills to inspire, motivate, and unite people to work collectively, ensuring the achievement of organizational objectives and success. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara's teachings, a leader must embody all three principles to effectively guide their subordinates, serve as an exemplary figure, and support the achievement of collective goals [27], [28].

Therefore, a leader must also be capable of fostering innovation within their work environment by creating a more conducive and dynamic atmosphere that promotes safety and comfort. Similarly, Tut Wuri Handayani which means providing moral encouragement suggests that a leader should inspire and motivate their team from behind. This implies that a good leader is not only someone who serves as an example or role model for their subordinates but must also possess the ability to awaken their spirit and provide support to boost morale, allowing subordinates to fulfill their duties and responsibilities effectively and completely, without coercion, pressure, or threats from their superiors [9], [29], [30].

The character developed within the educational environments of the family, school, and campus will be further strengthened if supported and encouraged by the broader social environment. For example, a single stick may have the power to push trash away from a yard, but if supported by hundreds of other sticks, it will be much more effective in removing it. Similarly, a character will be reinforced when it is supported and motivated by the educational and social environments in society [31], [32], [33].

Educational institutions play a crucial role as agents of social change in shaping the character of a nation's generation, as they instill values such as sincerity, simplicity,

independence, freedom, and Islamic brotherhood [34]. The Indonesian education system must embrace a concept that is intelligent, broad, deep, creative, innovative, integrated, comprehensive, and forward-thinking, fostering not only responsibility but also contributing to the goal of commemorating Indonesia's 100th year of independence in 2045, known as the Golden Indonesia era. Public programs focused on character development can contribute to the growth and progress of Generation Z.

The distinctive characteristics of Generation Z include: first, being born around the millennial era; second, growing up in a world where the internet is ubiquitous; third, utilizing the internet and social networks extensively; fourth, possessing global connections, being flexible, intelligent, and tolerant of diverse cultures; fifth, viewing social networking sites as the primary communication platform; sixth, playing the role of both consumers and providers of information; seventh, being proficient with digital devices; eighth, maintaining thousands of online contacts; ninth, engaging in multitasking (such as blogging, listening to music, and writing emails); tenth, making decisions quickly; eleventh, not being tied to one location; twelfth, learning while making friends and having fun; thirteenth, lacking awareness of legal sensitivities, such as those related to downloading or file sharing; and fourteenth, demonstrating a deficiency in emotional intelligence [35].

Public programs aimed at character development and the growth of Generation Z towards a positive direction include initiatives that emphasize competence, care, and continuous supportive relationships, such as those provided by mentors, coaches, or teachers. These programs focus on life skills development (for instance, enhancing skills related to selecting positive life goals, optimizing methods to achieve these goals, and fostering resilience in the face of failure). They also provide opportunities for teenagers to participate in leadership roles and engage in valuable activities within their families, schools, and communities [36].

Character formation occurs within the realm of education. Education serves as a conscious effort to shape individuals holistically, based on intellectual abilities and faith, so that their potential is developed in an organized and directed manner. Shaping an individual's character through education is a challenging task. The formation of quality character requires specific methods and efforts to ensure that individuals possess the right competencies, enabling them to develop and grow independently. Character formation is not an

instantaneous process; it takes time and requires continuous, sustained efforts that reflect ethical decisions, which must be followed by real actions [37], [38].

Character building consists of three main components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The explanation of these three components is as follows: (1) Moral Knowing refers to the knowledge aspect of morality, where individuals are educated and provided with understanding about universal values, which will, in turn, shape their personality and character. This includes moral awareness, understanding moral values, moral reasoning, decision-making, perspective determination, and self-knowledge. (2) Moral Feeling pertains to emotions, sympathy, and concern for others. This moral component encompasses aspects such as conscience, humility, self-belief, love for truth, and self-control [39], [40]. (3) Moral Action is the practical expression of moral knowing and moral feeling. It is the real-world manifestation of these two components and involves three key aspects: competence, desire, and habits [41], [42].

The implementation of character-based education for Generation Z in schools can be carried out through several methods: (1) Establishing and communicating core values to all stakeholders in the school community via various media channels [43], [44]. (2) Teachers, educational staff, and all school members, including cleaning and safety officers, should discuss and embody the values that characterize the school as true values. (3) Teachers and students should foster and cultivate the character values upheld in each classroom [45], [46]. (4) Presenting dilemmas related to values, such as those about honesty, as part of the learning process. 5) Implementing value-based habits during every opportunity. (6) All school members must address the issues arising from violations of ethical standards. (7) Building strong relationships between the school and parents [47], [48].

Ki Hajar Dewantara is recognized as a pioneer in the field of education for the Indonesian nation. Throughout his life, marked by struggle and service to the nation, it is no surprise that his contributions have had a significant impact on the dream of Indonesia becoming a free nation, particularly in the area of education. For Ki Hajar Dewantara, education was a means of achieving the broader goal of an independent Indonesian society, both physically and spiritually [49], [50]. A child's character development is influenced by various environmental factors, ranging from the family environment to the broader society [51], [52].

CONCLUSION

This article offers valuable insights into Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy for shaping the character of Generation Z in the context of a "Golden Indonesia." Ki Hajar Dewantara's approach to character formation emphasizes an educational pattern that honors national values while incorporating local culture. It also involves the roles of family, school, and society through the Tri Education Center, using a holistic approach. The educational framework he implemented aimed at character development through guidance, nurturing, and a love-based teaching philosophy. Furthermore, Ki Hajar Dewantara positioned teachers as central figures (Ing ngarsa sung tuladha), individuals who inspire a spirit of learning (Ing madya mangun karsa), and encourage students to engage in education wholeheartedly (Tut Wuri Handayani). He also viewed students as the focal point of education, advocating for a dynamic process that balances creativity, emotions, and willpower in the learning process. The methods Ki Hajar Dewantara employed to shape character included leading by example, habituation, teaching, orders, discipline, behavioral expectations, and both physical and spiritual experiences. Additionally, his values-based education fosters a sense of social and national responsibility, empathy, independence, and ethics. This enables individuals to become leaders who not only set a positive example but also inspire their subordinates, motivating them and offering support to ensure they can carry out their duties effectively and responsibly. In conclusion, this article provides a foundation for future research on character education, serving as a reference for further studies on how to educate the next generation of Indonesians with strong character. As educational institutions play a crucial role in nurturing future generations with character, this research highlights the importance of such frameworks in shaping a Golden Indonesia.

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