

Character Education Management in SMA Kakaskasen Seminary Catholic and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon

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ABSTRACT

Character education in Indonesia has been a crucial issue for more than two last decades. It has become the state priority in the national education policy for its character education reinforcement programs. This study aims to investigate the character education management in SMA Catholic Seminary Kakaskasen and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon. This is a multi-site study to examine and describe the planning (designing), actualization (implementation), and evaluating and monitoring procedures of their character education model. This study applied a descriptive qualitative approach. The findings indicate effective measures to manage their character education programs.

Keywords: Character Education, Core Values, Management of Character Education, Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Character education in Indonesia has become one of the top priorities in its national education policy for the last two decades. Character education deals with instilling values from knowing, feeling, and doing (Polii, Tangian, & Lumettu, 2020). The public is engaging in its discussion especially when they believe that the underlying issue of our moral and ethical degradation lies in the poor character and behavior of the younger generations. They expect that character education in educational institutions is strengthened on more positive characters to build future generations. This explains why President Joko Widodo commenced the Nawacita Program, building Indonesia's golden generation in 2045 with the Character Strengthening Program (PPK) in elementary and middle schools through Presidential Regulation no.87 of 2017.

We assume that the character education program in secondary schools, especially senior high schools, fails to get to the heart of the matter comprehensively as schools are unable to implement proper management of character education. On paper, it is compelled to a complete and comprehensive application (integral-holistic) in all school programs (curricula) through good and professional management (Albertus, 2015a, p. 2). On this basis, the management of character education calls for rapt attention from the education world to realize ideal Indonesia's future golden generation.

Strengthening the character education base by creating professionally and accountably managed character education programs is one way to improve the education quality in senior high schools (Suparno, 2015, pp. 85-87). Professional and accountable management of character education in schools presupposes adequate resources, the availability of which would be one of the priorities (Mulyasa, 2014, pp. 14-15). By way of explanation, schools must apprehend issues within character education management,

especially the managerial procedures. In this research, we assigned a priority to the procedures or managerial steps: planning, actualizing, evaluating and monitoring.

Within this frame of reference, we were interested and called upon to conduct research on the character education management of senior high schools (SMA) in SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen dan SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon. They both are the best private schools in Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province. SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen is under the Catholic Education Foundation (YPK) of Diocese of Manado, while SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon is managed by Lokon Education Foundation (YPL).

Our preliminary observation underlined several issues. In the planning stage, SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen compiled and determined the core values as the reference for its character education model by not involving the foundation and other competent parties. In the actualizing stage, SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon made inconsistent policies to deal with troubled students due to teachers' or dormitory administrators' ambiguous or permissive attitudes. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, workshops on character education programs appeared to be exclusive internal evaluation meetings of the principal, teachers, and dormitory staff. Its monitoring and evaluation were simply on the performance of daily pickets or homeroom teachers in the absence of systematic standard operating procedures (SOP). In addition, They apparently did not have counseling teachers to cope with troubled students in need of spiritual and practical mentoring.

On these bases, we brought our focus into the aspects of their character education management, by formulating three research problems:

1. How is the planning of character education at SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon formulated?
2. How is the character education at SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon implemented?
3. How are monitoring and evaluating of character education at SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon carried out?

This study aims to describe how SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon the plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their character education programs. This study provides theoretical benefits to enrich our repertoire of character education management and practical benefits as input and consideration for the schools in the preparation of a higher quality character education program.

The English 'character' is derived from the Greek '*karasso*' which means a blueprint, basic format, fingerprint, or permanent stamp (Albertus, 2015b, pp. 80-81). This explains that 'character' is closely related to something unique, specific, and permanent.

A clearer understanding comes from Mounier in Suparno (2015, p. 27) who divided character in the following two senses:

- (a) Character as a collection of what inside us that is natural, innate, and given from the beginning of its existence (given or gifted character),
- (b) Character as a set of conditions a person possesses as it is intentionally or consciously desired, designed, and built (willed or driven character).

The increasingly educative-pedagogical description of character comes from Lickona (Lickona, 1991, p. 12; Ryan & Lickona, 1992, pp. 15-17) suggesting that character is the integration process between knowledge of good deeds (moral knowing), feelings or wills about good deeds (moral feeling or desire), and acts following good values (moral acting or doing).

The basic concept of character education was pioneered by Frederik Foerster, an 18th-century German pedagogist (Arthur, 2005, pp. 239-241), defining character education as the building process of human character through the cultivation of the following four core values: (1) inner order, (2) coherence, (3) autonomy, (4) constancy or loyalty. The core values are applied in school educational programs and student development to form one's identity and personality achieving personal maturity. The basic concept of Foerster was later developed in Europe as the basic idea of the character education model to date.

In the United States, Thomas Lickona developed the basic concept oriented towards student ability to understand good deeds, want good deeds, and finally take actions based on their good knowledge and will (with positive values). In Indonesia, the basic concept of character education was developed by Albertus (2015a, p. 55), a character education staff of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. He proposed that character education is an educational model aimed at the sustainable and gradual development of humanity as a whole through various dimensions of life (e.g., religious, moral, personal, social, cultural, and institutional dimensions). This basic concept was one of the references for the government in developing a model framework for character education for elementary and secondary schools based on 18 character values issued by the National Curriculum Center at the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia several years ago.

Character education management is the effort of relevant educational institutions in managing or regulating character education programs according to the main functions of management, namely planning, implementation, and supervision or control (monitoring and evaluation) (Mulyasa, 2014, p. 7). Therefore, it must be carried out systematically and gradually, starting from the early stages of human cognitive development from basic education to higher education levels, even into the development of human life onwards. Another important element to add to the framework of basic understanding of character education management is the description of what to do in each managerial stage (Suparno, 2015, p. 6). The very basic of the planning stage is a self-evaluation of each educational institution to determine the priority scale of values determined as core values. The core value determination is then used as a reference of character education program preparation in each educational institution. Furthermore, the management is described in a more concise manner along with explanations.

The planning is the initial process of developing a character education program. According to Mulyasa (2014, p. 77), this stage is to design a model through the establishment of basic values that characterize an educational institution. The basic values are described in the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of education through curriculum and personality development.

Lickona (1991, pp. 22-25) proposed steps to take in the planning procedure. They are:

- (1) Making a self-evaluation within the institutions in which a map of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) is clearly drawn, to recognize the concrete needs of schools in the preparation of the program,
- (2) Determining the nature and main objectives of education/school development based on core values or school mottos,
- (3) Describing the real needs or conditions based on the previous points,
- (4) Paying attention to the development and progress of the latest science and technology.

If the steps are closely followed, Lickona believed the schools could establish proper character education planning.

The procedure of implementing deals with the process of phasing out the implementation of the character education program. The responsibility rests not only on one person or

one party but also several parties, such as parents, schools, communities, private and state institutions (Suparno, 2015, pp. 85-86). Although schools as formal educational institutions were chosen as the basis for implementing character education due to their functional support, the main responsibility lies on parents or families with whom students live. This explains why Lickona (1991, p. 54) emphasized that schools shall simply give assistance to parents rather than take over their roles.

The planning procedure begins with organizing a workshop to determine the rules and policies and share the tasks. The next stage is internal and external outreaches. It is the habituation and inculcation of character values (cultivation) of the learning and character development programs in school dormitories. The last stage is giving motivation or encouragement to the implementers and beneficiaries of the program (teachers, employees, and students) ensuring the values are continuously maintained.

The monitoring and evaluation procedures are the main part of the quality control system of character education (Albertus, 2015b, p. 199), in which schools must observe and supervise the entire character education program. The reason is that monitoring and evaluation (monev) is one management standard to measure the extent to which a program has been correctly carried out (Mulyasa, 2014, p. 191).

The parties involved in this process are those appointed or stipulated in school rules or policies. The parties concerned should indeed be given special authority to ensure the objectivity of the assessment according to the applicable standard operating procedures (SOP). This is to guarantee the control and supervision in the form of an assessment (evaluation) of the program.

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper is a multi-site study applied with a qualitative approach in this study by a descriptive methodology in the context of a natural research setting (Gay & Airassian, 2000, p. 7-8; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 10-12; Sugiyono, 2008, p. 205). We applied the qualitative approach since it pursues to obtain in-depth information in a longer time. The multi-site study is used to find in-depth data on the research topic in more than one school in pursuit of enriching comparative material for the discovery of new theories of character education management.

We conduct the study at SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen and SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon. Both of them are private Catholic schools managed by their respective foundations (board or foundation), located in Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province. The data used are descriptive data obtained from interviews, supported by observational data and necessary documentation studies. The procedures of data collection were orientation, exploration, and member check. As for the validity analysis, we carefully read the research results, reduced them, and provide the interpretation. To examine the validity, we conducted credibility, transferability, and dependability tests (Sugiyono, 2008, pp. 270-275). Lastly, we drew conclusions and provided suggestions based on the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The two schools had the same planning procedures as they initiated the program with workshops or special meetings to discuss the design by determining the priority scale of core values as the basis for the preparation of the character education program. Furthermore, these core values are instilled in the school's vision and mission and made as a part of the school motto. The core values are determined based on its objectivity and clarity (specific), measurability (standardized values for measuring), affordability (all values can be understood and implemented), and realisticness (based on concrete

needs). Additionally, at SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, external parties such as foundations are not consulted on the school planning procedure. At SMA Lokon St Nikolaus, the foundation and other competent parties were involved despite the absence of local socio-cultural aspects.

In the implementation stage, the two schools began with workshops or joint meetings to share the tasks before conducting internal outreach programs and the cultivation stage. For consecutive cultivation, school principals or other appointed parties provide advice and directions to encourage proper execution in occasions such as morning assemblies, conferences, meetings with teachers and students, and student counselling. One drawback in SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen is that they do not have counselling teachers. The implementation essentially requires joint commitment of all components reflected in service integrity and exemplary life.

The two schools accomplished their monitoring and evaluation procedures based on their existing rules or policies. Their common methods are observation (direct observation and attendance) and supervision (by the principal or representative). The results are specifically recorded and used as evaluation material and recommendations for student promotion or graduation. We found nothing significant in SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen monitoring and evaluation as both simultaneously brought about with their daily teaching and learning processes. Meanwhile, at SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon, this procedure is more clearly performed in a structured manner within the dormitory life by the teachers (character coaches or companions).

Our study underlines that the planning procedures were started with determining core values compiled based on joint decisions in meetings or workshops. They made the core values a motto which was then described in their organizational vision, mission, goals, and objectives. They also jointly formulated and defined the core values as the basis of reference for their character education programs objectively, clearly, measurably and affordably on their concrete need basis as stated in their school vision, mission, goals, and objectives.

It is evident that the two schools occupy the same understanding of the first function in management that planning is the foremost. This is in line with the basic concept of management according to George R. Terry, the father of modern management, who put planning as the first main function of the four management functions which he described in his book *The Principle of Management* (Sukarna, 2011).

Also, both schools started the implementation procedures from workshops or joint meetings proceeded with outreaches. At this stage, they have different models and methods. The difference lies in the authority implementing the character education programs. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, the principal, doubling as the chancellor of Kakaskasen Seminary, holds absolute authority in determining and dividing the tasks without the involvement of the foundation or other parties. While at MA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon, it comes from the foundation (YPL) assigning principals and teachers at schools (as academic assistants) and dormitory supervisors (as character companions).

In the cultivation and habituation stage integrated into school and dormitory programs, they have their own characteristics according to the policies and conditions of each school. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, the implementation goes hand in hand with the school education and learning program and the daily coaching program of the seminary dormitory. While at SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon, the implementation is executed jointly with the foundation program for schools and dormitories.

The implementation procedure is theoretically comprehended as the effort to implement a system or model of character education and learning in schools by the guidelines (Mulyasa, 2014, pp. 129-138). The process must refer to the plans to facilitate the implementation.

The final stage of the implementation procedure is motivation provision. This is to ensure that the habituating character values are maintained through the provision of advice, guidance for teachers, staff, and students. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, this stage is carried out through school principal coaching in joint meetings, morning assemblies, flag ceremonies, and special coaching for students in seminary dormitories. At SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon, this stage is carried out by the principal through morning coaching or on other special occasions, such as school mass, graduation day, meetings with teachers or parents, and special coaching in school dormitories.

We underlined the need for educators and coaching staff expertise in personality psychology as counseling teachers or coaching assistants. This helps boarding schools to deal with problems among students. Since character education is an integrated and holistic education model, in a particular sense, its application must be interdisciplinary.

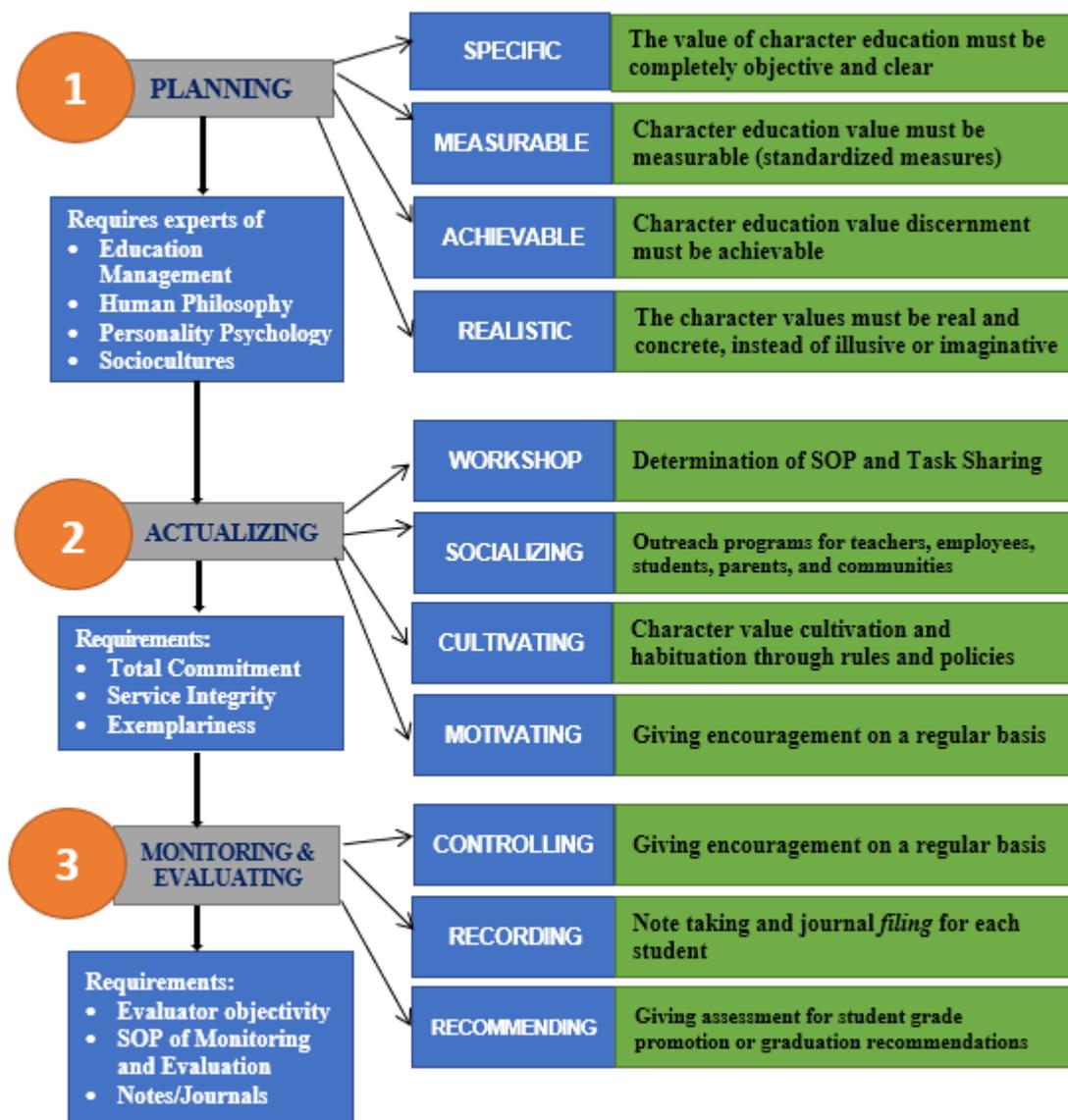
Besides, they have different characteristics in their monitoring and evaluation procedures. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, the monitoring and evaluation procedures are directly executed by the principal in collaboration with the teachers. In daily school life, the procedures are unitedly carried out. When teachers have their turn to supervise the teaching and learning process, they make notes and ultimately make evaluations and recommendations as required. At SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus, the monitoring and evaluation procedures are conducted under the SOP issued by the foundation in collaboration with the school (principal) and the dormitory (dormitory head).

We also found that they used the same method of direct observation and direct supervision (by the principal or deputy principal) either in classrooms or in particular situations. The results are recorded as evaluation material to provide recommendations for students in the joint meetings student grade promotion or graduation.

The monitoring and evaluation procedures are an integral part of the character education implementation strategy within the framework of education management (Bush, 1995). It is to ensure the programs point to the intended purposes. Managerially, the procedures will attain success if carried out by competent parties, and adjusted to the guidelines in the SOP.

Our study underlined that the most significant factor of the implementation is the sustained effort to create a transformation of positive character culture within school life rather than its proper implementation (Saptono, 2017, p. 15). Also, we found a new concept of character education management. We suggested that to enhance the character education model, the schools should raptly pay attention to the objectivity of the monitoring and evaluation under the rules or SOPs. The results of the monitoring and evaluation should be used as input or recommendations to improve the quality of character education. To clarify the new concept of character education management based on its basic functions we propose the following conceptual chart (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. New Concept of Character Educational Management



CONCLUSIONS

Our discussions lead to conclusions that the procedure for planning character education at SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon and SMA Catholic Seminary Kakaskasen applied similar strategies; they start with determining core values as the reference for the preparation of the character education model. The core values are integrated into the school program through the vision, mission, goals, and objectives. The only difference lies in the party who composes the planning procedure. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, the planning procedure was carried out by the preceding teachers and supervisory staff (predecessors) and followed by the current teacher and supervisory staff. At SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus, the planning procedure was initiated by the foundation and school educators (Kel. Korompis-Mewengkang). Their core values determination was designed based on realism, affordability, measurability, and objectivity. One of the weaknesses in the planning procedure at this school is that they do not accommodate local wisdom or socio-cultural aspects.

The procedure for implementing character education at the two schools was conducted according to their respective stages. The initial stage begins with internal workshops, then continues with the outreaches/socialization to introduce the model in new student

admissions and student orientation week (MPLS). The next stage is the inculcation and habituation of character values (cultivation) in school learning programs by academic trustees (PA), dormitory personal coaching by character builders (PK) of civil servants, or coaching staff (formators). Similarly, the stage of providing motivation was carried out by the principals or the deputy.

The monitoring and evaluation procedures at both schools were put through under the school rules and policies. The differences lie in which party issues the authority for the monitoring and evaluation system. At SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen, the authority is the schools' and the dormitories' without special intervention from the foundation. On the other hand, at SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus Tomohon, the authority comes from the rules and policies of the foundation passed down to the schools and dormitories. The weaknesses of the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation procedures are SMA Lokon St. Nikolaus does not have professionals in personality psychology while SMA Katolik Seminari Kakaskasen does not have a counseling teacher.

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