

## CHRISTIAN VALUES-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY IN BANDUNG

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**Abstract:** One of the objectives of National Education in Indonesia is to develop the skills and to build the characters of an esteemed nation to educate the people. Character building is inseparable from the role of the schools in building the characters of the students, since school is like a second home for the children. A school should be able to instill and develop the values of good characters in each child studying there. Through education institutions, it is expected that the students will become Indonesian with high intelligence and integrity. However, it is not the situation in SMPK (Catholic Junior High School) 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung. Considering this, the researcher intends to investigate character education in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung. The present study aims to find an overview of the programs, implementation, and evaluation of Christian Values-Based Character Education at SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung. It is designed using qualitative approach, implementing the case study methodology. Data collection techniques include observation, interview, and document study. The findings show that SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR considers the values of honesty, hospitality, and integrity as the values that need to be taught and habituated in all members of school community. The school also implements the value of compassion as its primary value; consisted of three values: humility, loyalty, and self-control.

**Keywords:** National Character, Character Education, Christian Values.

### INTRODUCTION

Law No. 20/2003 on National Education System formulates the functions and objectives of national education to be implemented in education development in Indonesia. Article 3 of NES (National Education System) Law states that “National education serves to develop skills and to build the character and civilization of esteemed nation to educate the people, to develop the potentials of the students so that they become individuals who are devoted to God, of noble characters, healthy, knowledgeable, skillful, creative, and independent; as well as become democratic and responsible citizens.” The aim of national education is a formulation of the quality of Indonesian people, which every school needs to develop. Therefore, the formulation of national education’s objective is the basis for the development of character education.

The objective of national education represents the quality that all citizens of Indonesia must have, developed by many schools in various educational levels and paths. The objective of national education contains many values of humanity that Indonesian people must possess. Therefore, the objective of national education is the most operational source in the development of character education (Indonesian Ministry of National Education, 2010: 7).

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In line with the function of national education, character education aims to develop skills and build character and civilization of an esteemed nation, to educate the people. Specifically, character education serves three main functions. The first is the formulation and development of potentials. Character education serves to shape and develop the potentials of Indonesian people so that they have good mind, good heart, and good behaviors in accordance with the principles of Pancasila. The second function of character education is for improvement and strengthening. Character education serves to improve negative character of Indonesian people to be better, as well as to strengthen the roles of family, school, society, and government to participate in and take responsibility of the development of citizens' potentials; in order to build an advanced, independent, and prosper nation with good character. Thirdly, character education serves as a filter. It serves to separate the values of Indonesian culture and to filter the positive values of other nations' cultures; so that the people of Indonesia can possess good character and can be an esteemed nation.

The 2013 Curriculum, which bases the education in three aspects (cognitive, affective, and motoric/behavior), contains several values in its Core Competencies and Basic Competencies that can be integrated through learning in each subject matter. These values are in line with those commonly used in character education in developed nations.

For instance, Thomas Lickona (2012: 23) states that without these three aspects (cognitive, affective, and behavior), character education cannot be effective. The implementation of character education should be systematic and sustainable (continuous). The values to be demonstrated in teaching-learning activities include moral knowing and moral reasoning. Marvin Berkowitz (1970: 32) mentions that the improvement of students' motivation to pursue academic achievement is more apparent in schools that implement character education.

Character education becomes hot topic of discussion when the Ministry of National Education (2010: 52) emphasizes its implementation in primary and secondary schools. Character education has been, indirectly, implemented and experienced by everyone in the course of their life. The general values of noble behavior, such as honesty, hospitality, kindness, and obedience, have been developed even before a child is enrolled in schools, because these values are implemented in the family.

Character education is an improved moral education; i.e. moral education that involves the aspects of cognitive, affective, and behavior. Substantially, character consists of three operative values or values in action; three values that are interrelated, including moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior (Lickona, 1991: 51).

In Christian education, there is a framework or approach that covers all values of Christianity; i.e. compassion. This value (compassion) consists of the main values

of humility, loyalty, and self-control; developed through culture-based education (cultural activities), classroom-based education (integration in teaching-learning activities), and community-based education (synergy among family, church, and society).

Comparing the expectation and reality, it is found that the aim of character development in BPK PENABUR schools in Bandung is not fully realized. The failure of education system to develop human resources with strong character, noble moral, good responsibility, and independence makes it very urgent for BPK PENABUR to implement (Christian) Value-Based Character Education.

Considering the existing gap between expectations and reality, BPK PENABUR has identified several potentials to solve the problems through a design of strategic character education that covers the national objectives of education based on Pancasila and Christian values. The strategic design will be implemented, theoretically and practically, by BPK PENABUR through three bases of character education: culture-based education, classroom-based education, and community-based education.

For this purpose, BPK PENABUR integrates Christian Values-Based Character Education (PKBN2K) into its curriculum; in order to develop a culture of Christian character in the school. Through PKBN2K, the students of BPK PENABUR are expected to be able to face future challenges with strong Christian identity.

## **THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

### **Definition of Character**

Character is a term originated from Greek, meaning ‘to mark’; i.e. marking or characterizing one’s action or behavior. One can be said as a person of character if his behaviors are in line with moral values and principles (Megawangi, 2007: 3).

In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Dictionary of Bahasa Indonesia), character is defined as disposition, behavior, psychological nature, character, or moral that differentiates an individual from another. Character (disposition) in *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia* is defined as human mind that affects all actions and behaviors, moral, basic character (Depdiknas, 2005: 1270). Character is a way of thinking and acting that becomes unique characteristics of each individual to live and cooperate with others, in the family, society, and nation. Individual with good character (a person of character) is an individual that is able to make decisions and ready to be responsible for everything he does (Hamzah, 1988: 123). Lickona (1992: 237) mentions that “Reputation is the shadow. Character is the tree.” Character is not the actions that emerge because there are witnesses; character means actions that will still be performed even if there is no one to see. People with good character will perform good deeds.

Character is one's behaviors demonstrated in a good way in accordance with the principles of public and religion; and, in a broader sense, in accordance with the principles of absolute and universal values; repeatedly until it becomes the individual's characteristic. Lickona define character as "value in action" (1989: 51). Good character means knowing what is good, wishing for something good, and performing good habits in acting, feeling, and thinking.

### **Christian Education**

According to Yudowibowo Poerwowidagdo (2003: 112), the objective of Christian Education is to aid students to develop their faith towards, and their knowledge of, God's words as written in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, as well as to improve their knowledge and experience in their daily life so that they will be capable of self-actualization as God wishes in creating them. Christian Education involves three aspects, the Bible, the Church, and the World. The Bible is the comprehensive or integrated Old Testament and New Testament; both have to be seen as a holistic and inseparable unit. The Church is the congregation of individuals who have been called and believed in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, a universal body of the Christ; i.e. the congregation of people who have faith in Jesus Christ. The World in the sense of Christian Education is the study of the aspects of human life, including science, politics, economy, and others.

The aim of Christian Education as stated above can only be achieved if the education is returned to the church (synod). This is in line with Robert R. Bohlke (1960: 250) who states in a paper entitled "Christian Education as an Academic Discipline" that:

"Religious education provides invaluable contribution towards the services that return the education to the church. Under its influence, education departments are developed by synods, and religion major is no longer a strange thing ..."

It can be concluded from the excerpt that Religious Education is Christian Education. In the church there are theology experts who understand about Christian Education.

Since Christian Education will be performed at schools, it will not only be based on the Bible but also on other academic approaches, such as sociology, ethics, or psychology. In the practice, Christian Education can take various forms, depending on the vision and mission to be achieved by the school/institution.

### **Christian Values**

Christian Values in the schools of BPK PENABUR foundation has been taught to all members of BPK PENABUR community since the beginning. These values

are integrated in Christian Education or are taught indirectly in various occasions during the education process.

The values are implemented in deliberate, structured, and binding ways on all members of BPK PENABUR community when BPK PENABUR formulated its vision and mission in 2001. This deliberate and structured teaching is strengthened when the Christian Values are integrated in the third paragraph of the Preamble of BPK PENABUR Education System: “BPK PENABUR, with all families and community, develops students’ potentials optimally through quality education based on Christian Values.”

Christian Values are defined in Article 1: 2b of BPK PENABUR education system: “Christian Values in BPK PENABUR are the values that become the basis for organizational policies and BPK PENABUR community members’ attitude and behaviors, originated from God’s words in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible as understood and acknowledged by Indonesia Christian Church for West Java Synod (GKI SW Jabar).”

Christian Values have been integrated to BPK PENABUR Education System (SISDIKBUR) and there have been efforts to implement them by local BPK PENABUR and Education Department of PENABUR. The Christian Values Program Formulation Team has socialized the values to all institutions of BPK PENABUR by deciding that the values of Honesty, Hospitality, and Integrity as the values that need to be taught and habituated to all members of PENABUR community and by determining Compassion as the primary values of the institutions.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology implemented in the present study is case study, using qualitative approach. Sugiyono (2007: 176) states that qualitative study is performed when the research aims to describe and explain the phenomena (objects) found during the course of the study. The present study utilizes case study because it is related with in-depth investigation concerning comprehensive and in-depth character development (Winarno, 1999: 67).

Case study method is implemented to describe the actual findings in the field that are related with the research problem; i.e. how is Christian Values-Based Character Education implemented in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR. The method is selected based on the consideration that the present study aims to gain deeper comprehension of a unique phenomenon or event related with the implementation of “Christian Values-Based Character Education in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR.” The data setting for this study is based on the following characteristics of the study: (1) private Christian Junior High School (SMPK) has different characteristic, in terms of institutional climate, than other public Junior High Schools (SMP), (2) the data collected are descriptive data, i.e. words (utterances) and actions of the subjects of interview or

observation, (3) the present study provides factual overview on Christian Values-Based Character Education in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR, (4) the present study aims to discover natural phenomena and events without any engineering or manipulation, (5) the aspects investigated in the study can be analyzed in deep and in detail.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### **Integrated Learning Activities of Christian Values-Based Character Education Program**

Integrated Learning Activities of Christian Values-Based Character Education Program in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR include the integrated curriculum of Christian Values-Based Character Education, the integrated framework or approach of Christian Values-Based Character Education, the learning methodology of character education, the learning model of character education, and the Classroom Teaching-Learning activities.

The integrated curriculum of Christian Values-Based Character Education is a combination of the 2006 School-Based Curriculum (KTSP), the unique character education based curriculum of BPK PENABUR, and the Local Content Curriculum (*Muatan Lokal*). In KTSP, there are even principles of development: focusing on the potentials, development, needs, and interests of the students and their environment; varied and integrated; receptive toward the development of science, technology, and art; relevant with current life needs; comprehensive and continuous; life-long learning; and balanced, in terms of national and local needs.

There are seven principles of curriculum implementation: (1) students must have quality education, and opportunities to express themselves in free, dynamic, and fun ways; (2) upholding the five pillars of learning (i.e. learning to be devout and have faith in God; learning to understand and comprehend; learning to implement knowledge and act effectively; learning to live together with, and be useful for, other people; and learning to develop and determine one's identity), through active, creative, effective, and fun learning process; (3) students must receive education services in the forms of improvement, enrichment, and acceleration; (4) the relationship of the students and the teachers is based on mutual acceptance and respect, intimate, open, and warm; (5) implementing multi-strategy and multi-media approach, sufficient learning resources and technology, and utilizing the surrounding environment as learning resources; (6) utilizing natural, social, and cultural resources, as well as local resources; and (7) is implemented in balanced, interrelated, and continuous way which is suitable and sufficient for all classes, types, and levels of education.

The special character education based curriculum of BPK PENABUR implemented in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR is characterized by Christian Values

that underlie it. The most prominent value is Compassion. The primary values of this curriculum include humility, loyalty, and self-control. The values covered in the curriculum include humility, kindness, loyalty, honesty, diligence, devotion, courage, care, self-sacrifice (altruism), self-control, patience, and generosity.

The Local Content Curriculum (*Muatan Lokal*) is formulated by several parties, including the principal, teachers, school committee, education institutions, and Education Department. The local content subjects that are delivered in the school are Sundanese and Mandarin.

In the framework or approach of integrated learning activities of Christian Values-Based Character Education, there is a framework or approach that implements the Christian value of Compassion; with its primary values of humility, loyalty, and self-control, through three basis of education: (1) cultural based education (cultural development), (2) classroom based education (integrated teaching-learning activities), and (3) community based education (synergy among parents, church, and community).

Character education methodology is a teaching methodology that has the following elements: the teaching of certain values, exemplifying, development of conducive culture, and reflection/evaluation.

Character education learning model in the present study is a combination of several character education learning models; including value-instilment learning model, moral reasoning development learning model, value analysis learning model, value clarification learning model, spiritual and cultural based learning model.

In classroom teaching-learning activities, the development of values/character is embedded in all subjects being taught (embedded approach). Particular for Christian Religion and Civic Education subjects, character development is instructional effects and nurturant effects of the teaching-learning activities. The technical implementation of Christian Values Based Character Education emphasizes students' spiritual education through several activities: Christian Study is delivered for two hours in a week, focusing on the practice and implementation in daily life; morning contemplation is performed every morning before the classes start; students' prayer alliance/congregation and students' services are provided every Thursday; *Kebaktian Penyegaran Iman* (KPI/Faith Refreshment Service), retreat/ Refreshing Course for IX grade; and Growing Together Congregation in the form of Bible Study.

### **Central Principle of Education in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung**

The central principles of education in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung are: (1) Learning to Think Critically and Creatively: the students will learn to ask questions, interpret, and distinguish information so that they will be able to develop logical and imaginative thinking. They will learn to explore, analyze, and evaluate

information, and use it in problem solving. They will also be challenged to articulate, revise, and defend their opinion. (2) Learning to communicate: students will learn to listen, speak, write, read, and interpret effectively, as an individual and as a group. They will realize how culture, art, music, dance, play, and sports serve as tools to express themselves in communication. (3) Learning to develop skills and integrate technology: the students will develop appreciation of values, such as technology restriction. They will learn to evaluate the effects of technological advancement on human life in social, cultural, and environmental aspects. (4) Learning to interpret personal and social values: the students will develop personal skills, including how to implement personal goals, self-discipline, self-motivation, self-control, and time management, which will contribute towards their personal development. (5) Learning to develop global awareness and understanding: the students will possess global way of thinking through cultural awareness (sensitivity) and interpersonal understanding. (6) Learning independently: the students will be trained to improve their independency through various activities.

Students' activities related with their character development and spiritual education consist of Students' Character Development and Leadership Character Development. Students' character development is implemented through PKBN2K (Christian Values Based Character Education) delivered to the students, both in the classroom; through religion study and character formation, and in their daily life; in which the students are trained to perform positive habits and remind each other, and influence each other positively through the classroom PKBN2K team.

Leadership characteristic development is implemented through Students' Basic Leadership Training, Flag-Raising Ceremony Team and Boy-Scout extracurricular activities, and students' involvement in Bethani OSIS (students' body) management. The Students' Body consists of several divisions: (1) Devotion to God division, (2) National Life division, (3) Patriotism Education division, (4) Noble Personality and Moral division, (5) Political Organization and Leadership Education division, (6) Business Skills and Entrepreneurship division, (7) Physical Health and Creativity division, and (8) Art Appreciation and Creation division.

### **The Implementation of Christian Values-Based Character Education (PKBN2K) Program in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR**

Christian Values-Based Character Education program, with the theme of WHWCO (With Heart We Care for Others), is implemented in school programs through various students' activities. Each activity is performed based on appropriate fields to be implemented in school program. The basis (fields) are classroom, culture, community, implementation of Christian Values-Based Character Education, formulation of education administration (syllabus and lesson plans) of Christian Values-Based Character Education, welcoming students with 4s principles (*senyum*,



*sapa, salam, santun* or smile, greetings, well-mannered), teaching-learning implementation based on Christian Values-Based Character Education, friendly services, and exemplifying of behaviors.

Each base (field) has its own activities related with Christian Values Based Character Education (PKBN2K). In the following section, the researcher will describe the types of PKBN2K activities that suit each base/field.

Classroom base; the activities are teaching learning activities. It is related to PKBN2K through the primary materials in Christian Study subject, guidance and counseling, and embedded materials in other subjects.

Culture base; the activities include Students' Orientation Program for new students, selecting classroom representatives and the head of students' body and Students' Basic Leadership Training, commemorating the Independence Day of Indonesia, new students' welcoming, Christmas' and Easter's social activities, boy scout jamboree and camping, inter-classroom sports competition, 7K competition, students' creativity week (students' art performance), study tours to museums and other historical sites in Bandung, extracurricular activities, peer mentoring program, Peer-support program, bazaar, flag-raising ceremony, and participating in schools competition. The entry point of these activities, in its relation with PKBN2K, is that the members of the students' body become mentors for new students in school orientation program. In these activities, many values are developed; including awareness, hospitality, responsibility, cooperation, mutual assistance. These activities also develop students' skills in cooperation, leadership, independency, and democracy. They also improve students' patriotism and respect towards the nation; showing gratitude that the nation is independent from colonial influences. Students' teamwork, obedience, and respect towards national culture are also developed. The members of Students' Body take turns each morning to welcome students, teachers, and guests of the school; which improves their hospitality, good manner, and responsibility. Other aspects of students' behaviors that are developed through these activities include students' gratitude, devotion, faith, caring for the environment and other people, teamwork, awareness, independency, obedience, diligence, sportsmanship, classroom harmony, togetherness, talent and interest in arts and performance, experiences of organizing events, patriotism and nationalism, altruism, sharing, discipline, and appreciating achievement.

Community-based activities include Easter's and Christmas' social services, anti-obscenity movement, and Students' Basic Leadership Training. The entry points of community based activities related with PKBN2K are that students are taught to care for and share with those in needs; that students are encouraged not to use obscene language, including in social media; the implementation of social awareness in the forms of spontaneous assistance provided to the people in surrounding society.

The basis of academic administration (syllabus and lesson plans) of Christian Values-Based Character Education includes the activities of formulating complete administrative documents of a subject in Christian Values-Based Character Education by the teachers, individually or collectively. It is related to PKBN2K through the existence of administrative documents (syllabus and lesson plans) of Christian Values-Based Character Education in accordance with certain criteria.

The activities in students' welcoming with 4s principles (*senyum, sapa, salam, santun*) involve teachers welcome students every morning with smile, greetings, and good manner. The principles of 4s are in line with the characters in Christian Values.

Friendly service basis is comprised of several activities in which teachers and staff provide friendly services to the students and parents, and put up motivational posters of Christian Values Based Character Education. The entry point related with PKBN2K in these activities is the friendliness, hospitality, warm relationship, and comfort at school. The students enjoy their lessons; they are also motivated by the posters.

Exemplifying of behaviors as the focus of Christian Values-Based Character Education involves the following activities: all teachers and staff become good examples/role models for the students; all members of Students' Body become good examples for their peers; and all administrators of Boy Scout become good role models for Boy Scout members. Through these activities, the character of the school community is improved in accordance with Christian Values-Based Character Education. In other words, Christian Values-Based Character Education becomes the culture of the school.

### **Evaluation of Christian Values-Based Character Education Learning in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung**

The success of the implementation of Christian Values-Based Character Education in SMPK 5 BPK PENABUR Bandung is inseparable from the roles and participation of all members of the school community. In the series of process, performed together at the school, evaluation becomes an important part; to discover the smallest development and achievement.

Evaluation on the implementation of Culture and Community Bases is performed using data of observation, students' responses, teachers' responses, and parents' responses. The data are gathered through direct observation, interviews, and questionnaires.

Evaluation of Classroom Basis is performed by considering the materials delivered in the classroom and the teachers who deliver them. The aspect of lesson materials includes the conformity of the materials with the main topic of the lesson, the timing of delivery, and the conformity with students' situation, condition,

and needs. The aspects of teacher include the appropriateness of methodology implemented and the teacher-student interactions.

## CONCLUSION

The key of success for the implementation of Christian Values in BPK PENABUR is exemplifying. Without good examples, the Christian Values of BPK PENABUR will become ordinary lesson that are easily forgotten; even before they can shape students' character and spirituality. Exemplifying of good characters will be more apparent if it is performed naturally and spontaneously, comes from the heart, and becomes personal work-ethics and spirituality.

Christian Values-Based Character Education, in the effort of developing a person of character, needs to be supported by clear planning and good quality program; including vision, mission, goals, comprehensive and integrated strategy, integrity of teachers, adequate facilities, schedule, and complete administrative documents.

The implementation of Christian Values-Based Character Education can improve students' abilities and skills in all aspects of their development and character through educational practices that integrate all subjects and optimize students' potentials.

The practice of Christian Values-Based Character Education, to achieve the objectives of national education, should be supported by the implementation of curriculum and lessons which are integrated with character basis, approaches, and contextual learning methods in an active, creative, and fun learning. It also needs to be supported by adequate structures and facilities, appropriate learning media, as well as extracurricular activities and partnership with parents and the church.

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