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## Research Article

### BUILDING NATIONAL CHARACTER THROUGH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY IN SMP "X" BANDUNG

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#### ABSTRACT

The high number of crime among children and youngsters, drugs abuse, bullying and cheating habit have been an unsolved social problem which further become a moral crisis for this beloved country. One of the solutions to overcome this crisis is to educate Indonesians' character especially for the youth generation in which the country looks forward. In other words, education is the beginning of character building represented in positive activities in a form of extracurricular activity that allows character to empower itself. The research aims to describe the characteristics of extracurricular activity as a research finding which is further analyzed to find information of excellence in supporting the development of learner's character education. The result shows the school conducts dissimilar activities in undertaking character education by presenting Supercamp and Homestay program to students. In Supercamp, students are taught about discipline, self-sustaining, teamwork and code of behavior while they are trained by National Army of Indonesia. On the other hand, Homestay program where students are compelled to stay in another family teaches students to work as a team and be interactive to new society (the new family).

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#### INTRODUCTION

Currently, this country, as any other country, faces many social problems that are relatively difficult to solve. The problems comprise juvenile delinquency, free sex, drug abuse, pornography, bullying, the destruction of property, the habit of cheating and many more. If these problems continue, they will bring moral crisis in this country.

One of few solutions to overcome the crisis is the inclusion of character education for the community, especially the young people. Various efforts have been taken to overcome the crisis either through scientific activities or seminars at the local, national and even international levels.

Education is considered as a preventive alternative because education builds a new generation for a better nation, especially through education at schools. Although the results of the education will not be immediately visible impact in short term, it will endure and eventually bring an impact in the community in the long term.

As a preventive alternative, education is expected to enhance the quality of the youth in various aspects. This is believed to be able to reduce the causes of various moral crises arising in the community.

Education through school is deemed to be a foundation of character building of the country's next generation that can strengthen the foundation of nationalism. School is an educational institution suited to build and strengthen students' character. One of the means to foster students' character building is the implementation of extracurricular activities at schools.

Noting the importance of education and school activities, this current research study aims to identify and analyse the characteristics of extracurricular activities to supports the development of students' character building.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### Concept of Character

Tilaar (2008) defines 'characters' as disposition, i.e., a nature of trademark of a person, community or a nation that is recognisable. Meanwhile, Budimansyah (2012) states that character is a relatively stable personal nature of an individual which becomes the basis for his/her standard behaviour corresponds to social values and norms. The term 'Personal nature' can be defined as personal characteristics which manifested in behaviour. Moreover, the term 'Relatively stable' is formed and established conditions that will not be easily changed. Character is the basis that dominantly influences

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standard behaviours-either personal, filial or communal-in many areas of life such as economics, culture/art, religion, science and technology, law, politics, defence and security, and global life. The standard behaviours are reflected in everyday life. These behaviours are deeply influenced by rules of religion, science and technology, law, customs and habits are reflected in everyday life.

Therefore, a well-built character is highly desirable; that is a life that follows the straight path with the rules and in accordance with the human nature oriented to truth and nobility (Prayitno and Khaidir, 2011).

In the context of Indonesia, however, there is a similarity of meaning among the concept of characters such as moral, ethical, *akhlak*, and manners. To take a case in point, there is a strong bond between character and morality, which is inseparable. Character is a person's attitude and habits that leads to moral action (Corley and Philips, 2000). In other words, character is the moral quality of a person. If a person has good morality, then the person will have a good character embodied in his/her attitudes and behaviour in everyday life.

### **Concept of Extracurricular Activity**

Extracurricular activities are non-subject educational activities to help student develop themselves according to their needs, potentials, talents and interests. The activities are specifically designed and organised by authorised and capable teachers and education personnel at certain school (Anifral Hendri, 2008: 1-2).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research applies a descriptive qualitative design; thus, the research tries to describe current problems based on data, analysis of the data and interpretation (Nasution 2003: 44). In addition, Bondan and Taylor (cited in Moleong, 2010) explained that descriptive qualitative design produces holistic analysis of descriptive data in the form of human words, either written or spoken, and behaviour observed from a person from any background.

The research obtains some of the data from an interview with the head of the school (policy maker) and the teacher in charge of the extracurricular activities of "x" Junior High school. The subjects of the research are deliberately determined and selected because they are key persons to provide important information necessary for the research, especially related to the implementation of extracurricular activities in the school.

The data obtained in the research comprises primary and secondary data. The primary data is obtained from the first source through in-depth interview. Meanwhile, the secondary data is acquired indirectly from the analysis of problems. The secondary data is obtained through observation and examination of documentation as well as achievements, such as awards and championship trophies resulting from the extracurricular activities.

Data collection in the research is described as the following steps: (1) planning on the conduct of observation activities, including obtaining information on the extracurricular activities schedule and implementation; (2) conducting in-depth observations and interviews with the subject of the research regarding extracurricular activities essential in students'

character building; (3) examining audiences' behaviour through observation of teachers and students, who are involved in the activity; (4) discussing the results of the observations with the audience to find out the relevance; (5) maintaining good rapport with the audiences; and (6) making a final note for report writing.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The school emphasises process instead of the result of the extracurricular activities. The school encourage the students to be able to take part in various extracurricular activities based on their talents and potential. In addition, the school expects the students to keep good conduct and be discipline.

Types of extracurricular activities developed in the school are: (1) Basketball, (2). Futsal, (3) Table Tennis, (4) Karate, (5) Choir, (6). Modern and Traditional Dance, (7) *Angklung* Club, (8) Japan Club, (9) Badminton, (10) *Zufa*, (11) Theatre, (12) *Qira'at and Rahfidz*, (13) Volley Ball, (14) Cooking Club, (15) Taekwondo, (16) *Pencak Silat*, (17) Scouting, (18) Red Cross, (19) Flag Hoisting Troop Organisation, (20) Mosque Club, (21) Science Club, 22) School Security Patrol, and (23) English Club.

The extracurricular activities are carried out for 3 days in a week. The implementation is categorised into two activities: performance and leadership. The extracurricular activities are coached by professional trainers and teachers of particular field of study; for example, basketball, swimming and taekwondo are coached by professional trainers. Meanwhile, extracurricular activities on a particular field, can also be handled by teachers with certain competence and skills. The school is difficult to accommodate several extracurricular activities since certain facilities and infrastructure are not available, such as swimming pool, futsal field and badminton court. However, the school took the initiative in providing the facilities for the students by cooperation with other parties, such as Indonesia University of Education to utilise futsal field. In addition, the school also use public or private facilities such as badminton court and swimming pool by renting. The head of school and the extracurricular management are eager to support the implementation of these extracurricular activities. As the matter of fact, the school propose the Foundation (its shareholder) to hire an extracurricular coach.

Each extracurricular trainer or coach is required to report the progress of the program to the Vice-Head of the school responsible for Student Affairs to be further evaluated and monitored. The report includes performance results of the students participating in the activities. The report is in the form of recapitulation of the students' attendance and engagement in the form of score and note. This report is then included in the report of the results of students' overall score. Subsequently, the students' progress will be discussed with their parents for input and direction for the following extracurricular activities. Other activities that emphasise students' character building are Supercamp and Homestay programs. In Supercamp program, the students are taught the value of discipline, independence, and cooperation and obedience. The students are taught and trained by the national Army. In addition, the school also implements Home stay activity. This is an activity that focuses

on the importance of cooperation and synergy in the harmony of living with the community.

### **Analysis of the Finding**

Extracurricular activities, as mentioned in the decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 62 Year 2014, are essential in students' character building. The research categorises a means of students' character building through: (1) religious extracurricular activity, which is carried out collective prayer every morning before the teaching/learning process begin, daily and weekly *Dhuha*, *Dhuhr* and *Ashar* prayer every Friday and *tadarus* of Quran collectively; (2) extracurricular activities for discipline character building, which includes activities such as futsal, badminton, traditional dance, *angklung* and *zufo*. These types of activities require high level of discipline before, during and after the activity, which means that students are accustomed to be present on time and prioritise when they decide to take part in one of these extracurricular activities. Considering that these extracurricular activities such as sports and arts are participated by the majority of students, time management is a mutual agreement. This idea is supported by Lismadiana (2006: 63) who states that sport is one of the means to improve the quality of human resources. Moreover, according to Wikipedia (2008: 2), generally, sport is an activity to train one's body, not only physically but also spiritually; and (3) extracurricular activities that foster care for the environment and others, which includes many clubs and organisations, one of them is Red Cross. Red Cross is training and skills building available for students in elementary, junior and senior high school levels. This activity aims to provide first aid and help emergency patient, administer a school healthcare effort for disaster victims, take care home-patients, console orphans, elderly or people with special needs, and establish relationships with other Red Cross both within and beyond national borders. The supervision and guidance of the members of the Red Cross are conducted collectively by the Office of Education, Sport and Youth for West Java province.

Besides implementing extracurricular activities, the school also provide several programs. As mentioned before, the school implement a Supercamp program. The progress is firstly introduced to respond the social dynamics in the modernisation and globalisation amidst the advent of technology. It is believed that this era becomes a critical era in the formation of modern human. This can be whether better or worse for the development human civilisation in the near future. Also, this era brings potential for personal and social conflicts. Therefore, it requires anticipation of a generation that is competent in using technology but lack of nationalism.

The new generation is considered to possess less nationalism sense. Therefore, it is necessary to provide them national insight so that they can strengthen their sense of nationalism. This sense of nationalism should be foster through programs such as Supercamp.

Supercamp was implemented by this Junior High School to provide students with mental guidance so that they can have better insight and possess high sense of nationalism, which are highly essential to realise the golden age of Indonesia.

The program aims to: (1) provide insight and values of nationalism, (2) instil the character of discipline from early age

as the basic of the development of national character, (3) provide insights and foundation of leadership, (4) provide students with insights and patriotism, (5) develop students' awareness on the importance of living in synergy, (6) embed in them confidence and responsibility, (7) foster the spirit of unquivering nationalism, and (8) develop discipline living habits.

Aside from Supercamp, this school also introduces Homestay program to build students' religious and social character. This program aims to improve students' social sensitivity toward community and environment. Through this program, students are invited to directly observe social environment and directly engaged with the local community. The place where this program is established is in line with the theme discussed by the committees. This program is held for 3 days and 2 nights and is available for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders (second Junior High school graders). In this program, students will stay at the local community house while the teachers will only monitor them within the perimeter. The students are required to attend and participate in various activities conducted by their respective 'new' families; for example, if they work as farmers, the students have to help them in the farm; or if they are traders, the students are also required to experience being traders. Prior to participating in this program, the students are equipped with entrepreneurial insights. During program, they are introduced to various things that are managed by the communities such as livestock and agribusiness sector.

The school emphasises more on the process rather than the result. Teaching-learning process is targeted to build students' character aiming to develop a paradigm which focuses on the process. The students are taught to do a maximum effort based on ethical and polite ways. This is in accordance with the vision and mission of the school, i.e., to develop a superior person in academic, social and religious.

Although the program implementation has not displayed optimum results, the students have optimally striven to achieve the objective of the program. Therefore, it can be considered that the process to reach the program's objective is excellent. In the evaluation process, the school invites all participated students to discuss the program implementation and action taken to achieve maximum result. Also, the school has set rules and regulations for the trainers and coaches of extracurricular activities to show exemplary attitudes to the students emphasising values of discipline, consistency and commitment. Scouting as an extracurricular activity, based on the decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 63 Year 2014, is a means to develop students' personality, life skills and noble characteristics. In the 2013 Curriculum, scouting is a mandatory extracurricular activity. This implies that scouting, as an extracurricular activity, systemically serves as a means to reinforce students' psychological, social and cultural aspects. In addition, the embodiment of the attitudes and skills of the aforementioned curriculum psycho-pedagogically is coherent with the development of students' competence and skills through scouting.

Referring to the decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 63 Year 2014, there are three types of scouting models, namely: (1) Block Model

with the characteristics of (a) a mandatory extracurricular activity conducted at the beginning of the new school year, (b) is subjected to all students, (c) is carefully scheduled, and (d) can be conducted both inside and outside the school; (2) Actualization Model, with the characteristics of (a) a compulsory extracurricular which is held once a week, (b) is conducted regularly and scheduled, (c) applies to all students in all classes, and (d) can be conducted inside and outside the school; (3) Regular Model with the characteristics of (a) an obligatory extracurricular which is carried out voluntarily in each *gugus depan* (group), (b) is implemented based on the students' interests, and (c) is fully managed by the scout groups in educational units.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

The "X" Junior High school, in an attempt to build students' character, implements several extracurricular models, namely, (a) extracurricular religious activities, which emphasize more on collective activities, such as the teaching and practice of sacrificing a livestock animal, (b) extracurricular activities for discipline character building, such as sports activities, (c) extracurricular activities that foster care for the environment and others such as Red Cross (d) extracurricular creative activities, (e) scouting extracurricular activity, (f) a kind of activity in the context of fostering the sense of patriotism and environmental adaptation through Supercamp and Homestay programs, as well as (g) extracurricular activities that emphasise more on the process rather than the result.

Numerous actions are taken by the extracurricular teacher/trainer/couch to facilitate students' activities in an attempt to build and strengthen their character. One of the action is to initiate a cooperation to provide several extracurricular activities such as the ones related to sports facilities and infrastructure. The cooperation procures swimming pool and other sport facilities such as badminton and futsal courts.

Furthermore, for the building and/or strengthening of the students' character, the school conduct a joint program on discipline with the national Army. The head of the school has a strong concern on this and provides maximum support by implementing extracurricular activities to achieve the school's vision, mission and goals, especially on character education. All of these programs are some of the efforts to realise the school's vision, mission, and goals inherent with its name and identity.

### Recommendation

By taking into account the findings and discussion, the research recommends the school to: (1) Organise ceremonial activities involving parents as audiences to watch their children perform their skills developed and sharpened through extracurricular activities. (2) Perpetuating students' achievements into a book or periodical bulletin in order to allow their achievements get public, due to students are supposed to well manage a simple mass media. (3) Continuing the establishment of "*Warung Kejujuran* (virtuous stall)" due to students are had to earn an honest living.

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