

# **CULTURE-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION IN NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION COURSES<sup>1</sup>**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Character education in History Education Study Program, Social Science Faculty, UNY uses monolithic approach, it means that the character education is presented as a stand-alone course and is not integrated into other relevant courses by the name of National Character Education.

National Character Education courses held in History Education Study Program is developed with activity-based means that learning process in order to planting, practicing, and habituating these values is conducted through selected and designed activities, in addition to the presentation of concepts via lecture, question and answer, and other learning methods. Lectures is started by (1) stipulation of lecture contract by building hope and commitment; (2) find and determine prioritized words of wisdom which is obtained from community figures of Yogyakarta and put it in classroom and strategic places in campus; (3) students observe and tell goodness in the surrounding environment (story telling); (4) lecturers note goodness in their environment and tell it; (5) develop appreciative atmosphere; (6) improve cleanliness and tidiness of the classroom; (7) start the lecture by praying; (8) concerned with society problem and disaster victims; (9) watching film together with Charater Education; (10) reflection to build habit of doing introspection or self-examination, encourage all class member to improve virtue, improve honesty to ourself.

Key words: character education, culture

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<sup>1</sup> Presented on The 2nd INCOTEPD 2017 (International Conference on Teacher Education and Professional Development), 21-22 October 2017, Eastparc Hotel, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia education post-independence experience many changes and developments. Education that was previously colonial centric, prioritizing the interest and needs of colonial government, changed its orientation and aimed to educate the nation as the mandate contained in the preamble of Undang-Undang Dasar 1945. In the Act No. 20 of 2003 on National Education System (Sistem Pendidikan Nasional/ Sisdiknas) Article 3 asserts that "National education functions to develop capability and form character and dignified nation civilization in order to educate the nation, aimed to the development of students' potential so that the students become human beings who believe and be cautious of God Almighty, be noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizen". From the formulation, it can be seen that national education carrying not light mission, which is build a whole human beings who has great character values, in addition to have faith and devotion. Therefore, education becomes an agent of change which must hold national character improvement.

Nowadays, character education has become the priority of national policy. Government, through the Ministry of National Education has proclaimed the implementation of character education for all education level, from elementary school to higher education. The development of character education which consist of moral and religious values is increasingly recognized as an urgent need given that cognitive intelligence alone does not guarantee someone's success.

Building a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects continuously is the highest education values. In Zamroni's view (2002: 81-82), education is a process regarding efforts to develop three aspects on oneself's life which is life view, life attitude, and life skill. Education is

civilizing or "enculturation", which is a process to make someone to be able to live in a certain culture. Then Zamroni (2002: 88) stated that education is a process that takes place in certain culture. There are many values of culture and its orientation which can inhibit and encourage education. Even, there is many culture values that can be utilized consciously in the education process. Ki Hadjar Dewantara (1977: 15) also reminded that in addressing this culture, guarded attitude is needed in selecting which is good to add life glory and which one is disadvantageous.

Character education in higher education particularly in History Learning Study Program, Social Science Faculty, UNY is needed in order to instill self-concept and personality as well as equip students prospective teacher with learning insight through integrating character education. With regard to the integration of character education into history learning, the history itself is a subject included historical contents as a study object for the students to learn and explore more various historical stories of the process of NKRI (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia) formation. The development of appropriate character education integrated model in history learning can provide alternative solution to restore the spirit of nationalism, love the homeland, fighting spirit/ unyielding, confidence, the spirit of unity and entity.

## **B. Education and Culture**

According to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, culture is result of human mind. Culture is the result of human efforts toward two strong influences, which is nature and times (nature and society). In culture, there are evidence of human life glory to overcome various obstacles and difficulties in life and living in order to reach safety and happiness which is basically orderly and peaceful (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 1977a: 342). As the result of human life struggles who live in one same nature, one same age, and one same society, thus the

culture is always nationality (national) and manifest nation's personality (independence of nationality).

The means and purposes of the culture itself is actually to preserve and advance human life toward civilization. Culture in its existence sometimes experiences cult (worship), often experience "frozen life" in the sense that it does not develop. Therefore, Ki Hadjar Dewantara reminded so that people have culture which consider several important things such as (1) maintain culture with the aim to promote and adjust culture with every turn of the nature and the times; (2) "exile" (isolation) of culture causes decline and death, thus there must be a connection between culture and society; (3) the renewal of culture also need the connection with other cultures that can develop (promote, perfect) or enrich (add) our own culture; (4) put in other cultures which are not appropriate with the nature and the times, even until on the replacement of culture that violate the demand of nature and society will always endanger; (5) cultural progress must be a direct continuation of its own culture (kontinuitet), move towards the unity of world culture (convergence), and continue to have personality traits within the world humanitarian environment (konsentrisitet).

Indonesian culture, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara (1977 a: 344), is originally a collection of regional culture, therefore we must mobilize to become a unity of culture for all people. Local cultures in Indonesia is not impossible to be raised into cultural unity because basically the areas in the archipelago has the same nature, history, society, and the times, hence according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the unity of culture in Indonesia is only the matter of time. The efforts to build unity of culture is needed every "peak culture" exist in all areas in Indonesia as its substance.

The meaning of cultural education according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara (1997a: 323) is organize the growth of best

character, among mind, feeling, and will; those three must be educated. For mind or intelligence education is obviously clear, even until now become the main priority in our education system, however the one that often be forgotten is feeling and will education.

### C. Education and Decency

Teaching activity according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara does not generate difficulty because there are many science books and a teacher usually has his own scientific knowledge. Otherwise, many teachers feel difficulty when they are intended to educate because of the lack of preparation and the lack of usable books as guidance. Therefore, teaching about manners and decency needs to be understood by the teachers first.

Character teaching is related to the levels of mental development that exist in the lives of children, from childhood to adulthood. Otherwise, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara (1997a: 485), the content of teaching is conducted comparison with the tradition of religious education (Islam), which has long been known by the method of "*shari'ah, hakikat, tarikat, and ma'rifat*".

Shari'ah education is used for young children and should be interpreted by habitual behavior and doing according to general rules or habits. In shari'ah phase, children must get used to all that is good, so that teachers need to constantly reprimand when children do something indecent, by always considering the nature of children which is spontaneous (unintentional beforehand).

The next phase is *hakikat*, which means "Reality "or" truth "and which have the intent of giving understanding to children, so that they become" *insyaf* "and" conscious "about all the good and the opposite. The teaching of *hakikat* is used for children in the period of its *balig*, that is, when the intellect or the power of reasoning develops.

The next phase is *tarikah* level that means behavior, which is the act that we intentionally do with the intention of training ourselves to carry out various good, though it is difficult and hard. This phase is an exercise for adult children to compel and suppress or rule and control themselves. In religion, the activities of this *tarikah* is done in the form of fasting, walking to distant places, reduce sleep and eat, suppress the various passions in general. This is actually the core content contained in the character education. In the modern educational setting, the exercises are not only related to the intent of *kebatinan*, but can also be manifested as an exercise of art, sport, community and state exercises, starting with scouting and youth movement, social movements and so on. The activities of these exercises are aimed to train young people to practice all their abilities to help the public interest.

The last phase after *tarikah* is *ma'rifat* method used in character education for children who has become adult. *Ma'rifat* means really understand. This phase is a good time to inculcate in order to keep those who are adult not to be empty or hesitant, vacillated by circumstances they have never experienced before. They have to understand the existence of the relationship between the order of birth and inner peace, have enough practice and control himself and put him in the lines of *shari'ah* and *hakikat*. They are considered to have understood all desires and possibilities. If they still make wrong decision, at least they can think responsibly, so they will not be swayed by inner contradictions.

*Ma'rifat* phase is an education for children whose age is approaching adulthood, 17-20 years old. In this phase, they have entered the phase of "understandability", are used to doing good and realize the means and purposes. Character education given in this phase is in the form of science and knowledge which are rather deep and broad in which they are introduced to the teaching of

"ethics", the law of decency, which deals also with its basics such as nationality, humanity, religion, philosophy, science, state, politics in its general nature, culture, customs, others. In that phase, it is also necessary to teach the character of morals listed in the lessons given at certain times and when possible by inviting experts in the field (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 1977:489).

#### **D. Method and Implementation of Culture-based Character Education**

As a stand-alone course, the procedure and method of character education implementation in History Education Study Program are similar to other courses. The procedure are:

1. Stipulation of lecture contracts agreed along with the student and then formulated in the course syllabus (attached);
2. Explanation of system / method of lecturing to be conducted;
3. Explanation of tasks that will and should be done by students;
4. Explanation of the scoring system to be conducted;
5. Implementation of lectures as planned; and
6. Implementation of evaluation.

National Character Education course held in History Education Study Program is developed in the basis of activities. It means that the learning process in order to planting, practicing, and habituating these values is conducted through selected and designed activities, in addition to the presentation of concepts via lecture, question and answer, and other learning methods.

The implementation of activity-based National Character Education as stated above is conducted in accordance with the character education concept of Ki Hadjar Dewantara by doing some adjustment and development. The activities include:

1. Stipulation of lecture contract by building hope and commitment, with purpose to:

- a. Develop personal responsibility of students to build good habits.
- b. Develop introspection habits in order to make improvements.
- c. Develop power to control oneself.
- d. Develop social intelligence.

Description of Activity:

- a. At the beginning of the meeting, it is discussed lecture contracts between lecturers and students. In the course contract is discussed about the applicable provisions and become a reference lectures such as: the number of attendance, presence, class entry requirements, clothing, assignment execution, assessments and so forth.
- b. Although what is discussed is already written in the college's book or academic guidance, the contract is made to build commitment from students, because they are involved and feel that the rules are organized and made together, for the common good.
- c. In the initial meeting, students are also invited to discuss what characters will be developed during the lecture (one semester) and the desired things towards the class or class characteristics that make them proud to be class citizens (such as ethics / courtesy, Environment, discipline, etc.). The characters developed are based on the culture-based values of society that have been there all along. Each student is given an opportunity to submit his proposal. Once collected and directed by the team of lecturers then agreed on what characters will be developed together in the classroom in accordance with the agreed cultural values. That's when lecturers and students are committed together to carry it out.

- d. The profile of characterized human, expected class characteristic and mutual commitment then made in the form of a frame and installed in the classroom as a driver as well as a reminder of the things that should be achieved by all class members

2. Find and determine prioritized words of wisdom is obtained from community figures of Yogyakarta and put it in classroom and strategic places in campus, the purpose of this activity are to:

- a. Introduce the students to the local wisdom of Yogyakarta
- b. Inspire students to develop local wisdom and goodness that is common in people's perceptions
- c. Recognize the importance of good character
- d. Develop leadership
- e. Develop social intelligence.

Description of activity:

- a. Each student is given the task to look for words of wisdom that can inspire and give motivation to anyone who reads it.
- b. Each student enters and joins into groups of 3 -5 people.
- c. Each group combines a number of words of wisdom that they like best and then compiles a list of these words of wisdom.
- d. Each group presents the words of wisdom they have chosen in front of the class, and recounts the process they did in discovering and declaring who the person said those words of wisdom (Emphasized to take local figures of Yogyakarta to bring up the character of local culture).
- e. The group creates a beautiful or interesting format for displaying those words of wisdom and installing them in classrooms and other strategic places.

- f. Classes compile books for words of wisdom.
3. Students observe and tell goodness in the surrounding environment (story telling); the purpose of this activity are to:
    - a. Increase student attention to good habits that exist around them.
    - b. Grow the desire to develop observed good habit.
    - c. Grow conviction that they can become a better person.
    - d. Train students for caring and sharing.

Description of activity:

    - a. At the beginning of each meeting, several students take turns doing story telling that is the story of virtue, in which there are values of life that can give inspiration and motivation to everyone who listens to become a better person.
    - b. After the story telling, it is followed by a discussion of the virtues contained in the story and about the virtues that can be developed by everyone in everyday life.
    - c. At the end of the story telling, the lecturer resumes and underlines the results of the discussion.
  4. Lecturers note goodness in their environment and tell it, the purpose are to:
    - a. Increase attention to virtue.
    - b. Inspire students to do good things and become a better people.
    - c. Increase the willingness of students to care and share.

Description of activity:

    - a. Lecturers note good behavior seen in the community or read in books, radio, newspapers or on television.
    - b. The lecturer tells the virtues to the students in the class briefly at the beginning of the lesson, done before or after the students' telling story.
  5. Develop appreciative atmosphere, the purpose are to:
    - a. Develop virtue through the power or strength owned by a person or group.
    - b. Develop optimism and confidence.
    - c. Develop good behavior to become a good habit.

Description of activity:

    - a. Lecturers pay attention to good behavior or good things done by students, no matter how small the goodness is.
    - b. Lecturers then appreciate the goodness.
    - c. This appreciation can be conveyed by thanking for the kindness done, giving personal praise or mentioning the goodness in front of others, or giving praise in front of others, or mentioning, giving praise or awards in front of public.
  6. Find Idol Figures, the purpose are to:
    - a. Find or identify good-characterized local figures who have been meritorious in the progress of society, the progress of the nation, or the progress of the world.
    - b. Contemplate the strong character or the kindness that is admired.
    - c. Inspire and cultivate motivation to emulate the kindness shown by the admirable figure.
    - d. Students believe that there is no success without kindness.

Description of activity:

    - a. Each student is asked to determine the successful person as their idol.
    - b. Students are asked to mention the characteristic of the idol that is believed to produce success, or asked to write briefly in a few sentences about the privilege of an admired character.
    - c. One by one the students are asked to publicly mention their chosen character.
    - d. Lecturer compiles all the characteristics mentioned by the

- students which is believed as the source of the idol's success.
- e. The lecturer resumes and affirms that the idol's success is due to the good traits (good character) he has.
7. Improve cleanliness and tidiness of the classroom, the purpose are to:
    - a. Build and strengthen responsibility of students as good campus residents
    - b. Build a clean life habit
    - c. Build a habit of living neatly
    - d. Build and strengthen self-discipline
 Description of activity:
    - a. Lecturers at the beginning of each lecture meeting always remind students to look around the classroom, whether it is clean and neat or not.
    - b. Lecturers at the beginning of each lecture meeting always remind students to look around the classroom, whether it is clean and neat or not.
    - c. All the class members take the garbage that is still in the classroom and throw it into the trash that is outside the classroom, then tidy up each seat.
    - d. Lecturers give appreciation to the effort and creativity of students in improving the cleanliness and tidiness of the class.
    - e. After the classrooms are clean and tidy, the lectures begin.
  8. Start the lecture by praying, the purpose are to:
    - a. Establish the habit of being grateful for all the mercy, gifts and grace given by God according to the cultural basis of our religious society.
    - b. Encourage all class members to improve the goodness.
    - c. Increase the faith and devotion to God.
 Description of activity:
    - a. After the classroom looks clean and tidy, before the lecture begins, the lecturer gives the students opportunity to over their own willingness to lead the prayer together.
    - b. Students who are willing to lead the prayer come to the front of the class then invite everyone to pray.
  9. Concerned with society problem and disaster victims, the purpose are to:
    - a. Develop and strengthen empathy, sympathy and caring for others especially for people who are experiencing difficulties or disaster
    - b. Develop a sense of responsibility, honesty, teamwork and leadership skills.
    - c. Develop pride to contribute.
    - d. Train and develop the ability to manage activities
 Description of activity:
    - a. Students are divided into several groups (each group up to 5 people), assigned to make a humanitarian project. This project can be any kind of activity, using effective and efficient principles.
    - b. This project is carried out outside the learning activities in the classroom, but the execution time remains in the semester where the course is followed.
    - c. Ask the student involved in the activity to responsible for all activities or donations obtained in writing, neatly and honestly
    - d. Communicate or declare all activities or donations gained and distributed or used to all members of the community and in front of the class.
    - e. Lecturers appreciate the attempts or efforts that have been done by students and the results that have been achieved in an opportunity that involves the public.
  10. Watching film together with Charater Education theme based on the values of Yogyakarta society local culture,

the history of struggle and humanity, the purpose are to:

- a. Inspire students or viewers to develop good character based on Yogyakarta cultural values, such as ethics or *unggah-ungguh*, respect older people, courtesy, and so on.
- b. Develop students' insights on the history of the nation, the culture of the archipelago, the culture of nations, and human civilization.
- c. Develop an appreciation of diversity.
- d. Develop a love for the values of truth and justice, homeland, and humanity.
- e. Develop the spirit and sense of togetherness.

Description of activity:

- a. Choose movies that inspire or motivate the audience to develop good character such as persistence, courage, honesty, caring, affection, justice, and leadership.
- b. Lecturers and students watch movies together in the classroom.
- c. A brief discussion of the characterizations from the characters in the film, or the theme of the movie they watched together.

11. Working in groups, the purpose are to:

- a. Develop the habit of sharing, appreciating, mutual support, mutual respect and leadership potential.
- b. Train students to be responsible.

Description of activity:

- a. Lecturers plan the section of lecture materials that will be taught through the learning process in a team (cooperatif learning).
- b. Formation of groups that will perform specific learning tasks.
- c. Each group member conveys or recounts the role and contribution to the group results.
- d. Presentation the result in the group.

12. Reflection, the purpose are to:

- a. Build habit of doing introspection or self-examination
- b. Encourage all class citizens - lecturers and students - to improve the virtues.
- c. Increase honesty to ourself.

Description of activity:

At the end of the course, all members of the class community do introspection and write down in a piece of paper specifically provided for it about:

- a. The goodness they have done, to others and for their own good, during the semester they has been through.
- b. Less good things they done consciously or unconsciously.
- c. The things they will do in the future to add to their good characters and reduce the development of things that are less good.
- d. Everyone signs his introspection sheet.
- e. Students are asked to give their impression during the course of character education, the benefits they receive and the things that are judged to be lacking and their suggestions for future improvement.

## E. CONCLUSION

Character education in History Education Study Program, Social Science Faculty, UNY uses monolithic approach, it means that the character education is presented as a stand-alone course and is not integrated into other relevant courses by the name of National Character Education. National Character Education courses is held on second semester students with two credits. Culture-based character education becomes the basis of National Character Education courses implementation. Cultural base means culture of society exist in Yogyakarta.

National Character Education courses held in History Education Study Program is developed with activity-based means that learning process in order to planting, practicing, and habituating these values is conducted through selected and designed activities, in addition to the presentation of concepts via lecture, question and answer, and other learning methods. Lectures is started by (1) stipulation of lecture contract by building hope and commitment; (2) find and determine prioritized words of wisdom which is obtained from community figures of Yogyakarta and put it in classroom and strategic places in campus; (3) students observe and tell goodness in the surrounding environment (story telling); (4) lecturers note goodness in their environment and tell it; (5) develop appreciative atmosphere; (6) improve cleanliness and tidiness of the classroom; (7) start the lecture by praying; (8) concerned with society problem and disaster victims; (9) watching film together with Charater Education theme based on the values of Yogyakarta society local culture, the history of struggle and humanity; (10) reflection to build habit of doing introspection or self-examination, encourage all class member to improve virtue, improve honesty to ourself.

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