THE DESIGN OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC COLLEGE

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Abstract

Character education in college plays an important role to the state wellbeing. It is because nearly all areas in community need good character. College as one of education institution should organize character education corresponding to the culture and mutually approved strategy. Islamic college with strong Islamic culture should have character education design emphasizing on Islamic values. The embedment of Islamic values into character education can be done through: (1) role modeling, (2) learning implementation, and (3) evaluation on students' character through applying good character to job practice. Those three programs of character education should be taught sustainably to obtain the optimum result. To design an appropriate character education to Islamic College, the author employed the result of collaborative research conducted on two colleges in Surakarta. This result was expected to be the character education design that could be the example in Islamic colleges in Indonesia.

Keywords: character education, islamic education, islamic character, character education in college.

1. Introduction

In 21st century, life has been dominated with technology, thereby affecting college students (thereafter called students) considerably. Ironically, technology development instead plunges students into behavior staying away from good norms in community. Many students that have been served with technology ease instead misuse the information to behave fraudulently through plagiarism and cheating. Other technology misuses are the circulation of videos breaking moral norms, more students addicted with game online, and students' freedom of expressing themselves through social media, so that many students are found cursing (saying with vulgar language) in some internet sites.

To deal with such problems, education is required to change the students' habit. Character education becomes an alternative to change an individual's habit. It is because character education emphasizes more on the habit practiced continuously (Lickona, in Siswanto, 2011). The importance of character education has been supported by Indonesian government since 2010. Ministry of National Education launches the application of character education to all levels of elementary school education to college. This program implementation aims to deliver the nation's next generation to be dignified persons (Mansur, 2014). Government supports the application of character education in education unit for some reasons.

Government applies character education because the result of some studies show that success and failure are not always assessed from human knowledge. However, personality and attitude factors are two main things needing to take into account. A study conducted by Carnegie Technology Institute found that in 10,000 successful persons, 15% of their success is determined by technical ability, while the rest of 85% is affected by personality they have (Hartiti: 2013). Another study conducted by Dr. Albert Edward Wiggam revealed that in 4000 persons losing job, 400 of them are due to technical ability, while the rest of 3600 due to personality factor (Kurniawan; 2010).

The facts above lead character education to be a popular one currently. The popularity level is manifested into the implementation of character education by educators in some areas, schools, classes, and their environments (Berkowitz & Bier: 2005). One of comprehensive character education implementations is conducted by determining superior character as the objective of formal education (Lapsley & Narvaez: 2006). The objective of formal education, as confirmed in Law No.20 about National Education System, is to develop the students' potency to be human beings believing in and with piety to the One and Only God, having noble character, healthy, having knowledge, competent, creative, independent, and becoming democratic and responsible citizens. The objective of national education implies that national education aims to build a person having knowledge

that can improve technical ability, and create strong personality and character (Farida, 2012).

College is one of education institutions aiming to result in graduates having good character. As such, mission of high education is not only to learn, but also having main objective related to ethical values (Tilaar, 2012). However, in fact, character education in colleges is now still becoming controversy. Schwartz's (2000) study suggested that an individual's character has been created before they enter into college. Thus, it will be difficult for colleges to implement character education to students whose character has been created in previous education. Nevertheless, Asyanti (2012) said that colleges cannot show hands-off attitude to character education for their graduates.

It is consistent with the objective of high education included in RI's Law No.12 of 2012 point C, mentioning "… to produce intellectual graduates, scholars and/or professionals who have culture and are creative, tolerant, democratic, and have strong character…". The objective included in RI's Law above means that character education is one of important aspects in high education. Character education can run optimally, when education program and technique used are appropriate. Considering this, the author is interested in observing character education in two colleges in Surakarta. The result of author's observation will be compared and produce a design of character education in Islamic colleges.

2. Method

This study was a qualitative research. Qualitative research is a type of study emphasizing more on data elaboration measured from entity quality, process, and meaning aspects, contained in the research (Denzin and Lincoln: 2000). Considering the definition above, it can be interpreted that qualitative research searches for the meaning of certain object widely and in-depth. The objects of research used were two colleges in Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University (UNS) and Surakarta Muhammadiyah University (UMS). The subject of research employed was some of civitas academicas in UNS and UMS selected using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was used by the author to determine the subject of research based on their own skill in answering the problem of research.

Techniques of collecting data used in this research were interview, observation, and document analysis. Interview technique employed was in-depth interview, the interview conducted in-depth to explore the data of research. Observation

technique used was participatory observation. Technique of analyzing data used was Spradley's data analysis, consisting of domain, taxonomy, componential and cultural themes analysis. Originally, the author will analyze domains used in determining the focus of problem searched for. Having found domains needed, the author needs interview guideline. Interview guideline would be used in taxonomy stage. The author would use interview guideline in interviewing the subject of research in more detail and in-depth. Data from the result of interview, observation, and documentation was tested using triangulation method. Having found some valid data and conducted triangulation test, the author looked for the contrast discrepancy between one domain and another. The data resulting, according to Faisal, was analyzed to find the link integrating the existing domains (Sugiyono, 2012).

3. Results
3.1 Basic Concept of Character Education

The terminology of character education was developed first by Thomas Lickona in 19900s. Lickona defines character education into three principal elements: recognizing kindness, loving kindness, and doing kindness (Dalmeri: 2014). An individual's noble character, according to Lickona, starts with teaching knowledge about kindness, and then generating commitment to (intention to do) kindness. After students love kindness, they tend to do kindness.

From Lickona's argument above, it can be interpreted that character cannot be taught instantaneously, but it needs a sustainable process. Similar argument about character education is suggested by Asyanti (2012) stating that character education is not an education aiming to determine the right and the wrong. Character is human activity occurring spontaneously and inherent to the self (Soestyo, Trisnawati and Wulandar: 2015). To realize the character inherent to human beings, an interaction is required between individual and environment (Kohlberg, 1994). Kohlberg defines this interaction with environment as the process conducted sustainably. Thus, it can be said that character education should be taught sustainably.

Sustainable character education is programmed by Ministry of Education through some strategies: (1) role modeling, (2) learning, and (3) empowerment and culturing (Ministry of National Education's Directorate General of High Education; 2010). Role modeling program can be applied through behavior example reflected on teacher, staff, and civil servant figures having excel character. Through this program, students are

expected to recognize the character they should imitate. Learning program is used as the students' guideline to find out the right and wrong character types. The last program is empowerment and culturing; an institution that has applied role modeling and learning should develop a culture leading to role modeling and learning concerning good character. It means that character education is not a simple education, but it needs habit and sustainability that in turn will be a culture in an education institution.

3.2 Character Education in Islam Perspective

The term closest to character in Islam perspective is *akhlak*, constituting plural form of *khuluk* (Hairuddin, 2013). Imam Al Qurthubi Rahimahullah mentioned that *akhlak* is a culture or etiquette an individual holds on tightly, so that it becomes his/her creation. Hairuddin (2013) suggested the factors affecting the successful character education, among others: (1) educating with role model, (2) educating with habituation, (3) educating with advice, and (4) educating with evaluation.

To achieve the successful implementation of character education in Islamic education institution, a proportional dynamic curriculum is required. Proportional-dynamic curriculum, according to Rahmawati (2013), has five principles: (1) philosophical; in which curriculum content should reflect on the moral message of religious-nuanced scientific value, (2) integralistic psychological; curriculum content should be connected to positive mentality values, (3) sociological; curriculum content should teach the students to be social creature, (4) material coverage should be harmonious with human disposition including psychical, physical, social, cultural, and intellectual aspects, and (5) curriculum should be realistic and operationalistic, meaning that the curriculum used should be implemented according to students' ability and condition.

3.3 Character Education in Colleges

Mursitho (2010) classifies character education in college into three steps. The first step is preparing input; in this step, students are believed as having gotten character education in previous education level. Thus, college should repeat a little about character education the students have obtained before. The form of character education repetition in colleges, according to Mursitho (2010), can be done through implementing character education into all courses. The second is a process. In this process, an education is needed to require the students "to inquiry (to find out)". Thus, this process can be defined as an education process including planning, organization, coordination, and control. Students will acquire good character through all activities conducted during the learning process in college. The third step is final process (output). In this last process, students are expected to benefit from the knowledge transferred by lecturer. To determine the usefulness of knowledge, learning in the classroom is not enough, but character education should be implemented in all activities in college. Through the usefulness of knowledge owned, the students are expected to change their attitude into the better one.

Character education process runs gradually, as suggested by Chrisiana (2005). Chrisiana divides character education into three stages. The beginning stage mentions that character education should start with showing the example of character portrait performed by civitas academica of college (Berkowitz and Bier, 2005). However, the introduction of character portrait has not been able to lead the students to good character. It is because not all students acquire knowledge about good standard character. Thus, civic education or religion education is required to equip the students to determine the good standard character to be applied in life.

Intermediate stage is the one emphasizing independent learning process to students on students, as the form of socialization training and improving sensitivity to others. The sample character education applied to special course is entrepreneurship education and civic education. The final stage, according to Chrisiana, is character development to create students to be graduates according to work realm's need. To meet the need of work realm, students should recognize the condition of work realm, so that when they have graduated they will be equipped to enter it. Character education improving the students' competency to enter work realm can be implemented through apprenticeship activity.

4. Discuss
Character Education Design in Islamic College

Character education design that will be explained is composed of the result of collaborative character education used in Sebelas Maret University (UNS) and Surakarta Muhammadiyah University (UMS). Sebelas Maret University is a college teaching character to all civitas academic through ACTIVE culture applied. ACTIVE culture consists of Achievement Orientation, Customer Satisfaction, Team Work, Integrity, Visionary, Entrepreneurship (Millady, 2016. www.uns.ac.id).

Considering the six principles above, it can be found that UNS Surakarta has vision and mission to create entrepreneur students or students with entrepreneurial spirit. Thus, the form of education taught leads to the improved entrepreneur character. It is in line with the result of interview conducted by the author with several lectures, finding the fact that Rector of UNS targets to produce at leas 5000 entrepreneurs annually. Considering the objective, the character education optimized by UNS Surakarta is oriented to creating the students with entrepreneurial character. Several programs are implemented by UNS Surakarta to implement ACTIVE culture:

1) New Student Orientation Period (is optimized through Achievement motivation training and Business Motivation Training activities.
2) The implementation of character education in all courses.
3) The implementation of character education through special courses, such as Citizenship and Entrepreneurship.
4) Training for Entrepreneurship programs (Entrepreneurship Students, Business Incubator programs, and etc).
5) Training for non-entrepreneurship programs (Student Creativity Program, Seminars).

Character education applied in Surakarta Muhammadiyah University (UMS) is not far different from that in UNS. UMS applies character education by emphasizing on scholarship and Islamism elements becoming the vision of this college. In scholarship, UMS has vision to create students that are competitive in the society with the science or knowledge they have. Meanwhile, in Islamism vision, the students are expected competitive within society can do their job based on Islamic character. Through those two visions, UMS has the following character education programs:

1) New Students Orientation Period (manifested into New Students Orientation Program and Taaruf Period (MASTA) activities.
2) The implementation of character education in all courses.
3) The implementation of character education in special courses (Islam Religion and Citizenship educations).
4) Holding Short Boarding School Program (Pesantren Kilat) in Darul Arqam for twice in two first semesters, each of which lasts for 4 days.
5) The implementation of Islamic character through inculcating the habit of reading Al-Qur'an before the course, teaching disciplined behavior in sholat and etc.

Character education should be formulated according to the main program of college as included in the Article 5 o f Law No.12 about High Education. In that article, it can be concluded briefly that high education aims to create graduates that master knowledge and technology to meet the national interest and to improve the nation's competitiveness. It means that high education is expected to create graduates that can establish their own business (entrepreneur) or become professional. Particularly for Islamic college, the graduates are expected to be entrepreneurs or professionals who have piety to Allah SWT. Thus, through the objective aforementioned, character educator in Islamic College can be manifested in three sustainable stages as illustrated in Figure 1:
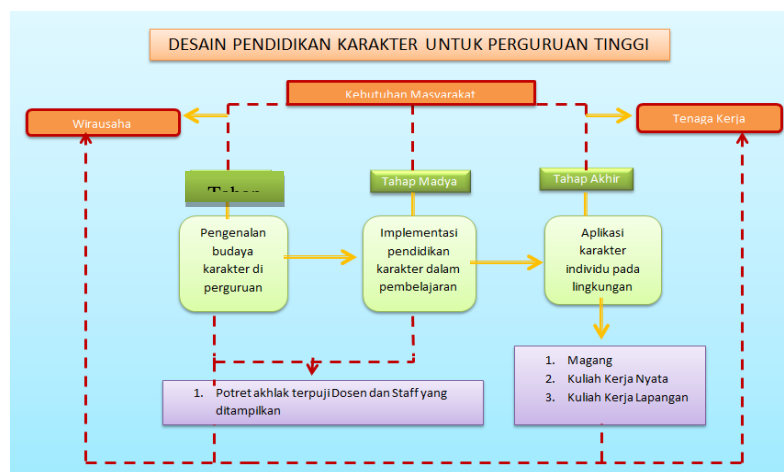

Figure 1. Design of Character Education in Islamic College

Sustainable of character education

1) Beginning Stage

In this stage, students are introduced with college's culture through New Students Orientation Program (POMB). To confirm the students' duty and obligation, motivation program is needed. Motivation activity conducted can be AMT (Achievement Motivation Training) and BMT (Business Motivation Training). As adult learners, students should understand the etiquette of having intercourse and interacting with people surrounding, so that a program of introducing Islamic character is required. It means that in new student orientation, Islamic college should hold two programs: formal character education and Islam-based programs. It is line with Kohlberg (1994), that character education can be implemented through the process of interaction to the environment.

Furthermore, in this beginning stage, students should be given first impression making them interested in exerting their best effort and maintaining the Campus's good reputation. This interesting impression can be accomplished through the portrait of character shown by lecturers, employees, and staffs in the college. It is in line with Berkowitz and Melinda (2005) mentioning that lecturers and staffs become role model of character that will be imitated by students.

2) Intermediate Stage

In this stage, students are practiced to understand better their role as social creature. This stage requires the students to understand the difference between good and bad characters. The process of introducing good and bad character can be implemented through the learning process in special course. It is in line several researchers who suggesting that learning is a form of character values implementations in college (Hasanah, 2013; Directorate General of High Education, 2010). A form of special learning that can improve character education includes civic education, entrepreneurship, and Islam religion education courses.

Civic education can be accomplished through learning in the class imposed into two credit points (SKS). Entrepreneurship education can be implemented through special course in certain semester. However, it can be held through entrepreneurship programs (Entrepreneur Student Program, Student Creativity Program, Business Incubator, and other activities). To emphasize more on Islamic character, an activity is required improve

the students' faith and piety. The improvement of students' piety can be accomplished through implementing character education in the class or through establishing special program. The implementation of Islam education in the class can be accomplished through reading Al-Quran verses before or after the course, prioritizing more Islam religion's obligation then others. The measure to be taken to habituate the implement such the obligations is to make lecturing schedule not on sholat early times. Meanwhile, special program can be accomplished through holding short boarding school (*pesantren kilat*) program to improve the students' faith and piety, thereby impacting on noble character (*akhlak*).

3) Final Stage

In this stage, according to Chrisiana (2005), a program requiring the students to practice character they have in working environment is needed. Chrisiana suggests that work practice conducted becoming a stage to evaluate the students and the lecturer in relation to the achievement of character owned. Thus, the evaluation can be used as a material of observation related to the competency needed in job realm. Work practice implemented can be OJT, Apprenticeship, Student Community Service, Student Study Service, and Field Practice Programs. Those programs can be selected by the university according to the need to be met by each of study programs.

5. Acknowledgement

Character Education in Islamic College aims to create graduates that can meet the community's need. To realize character resulting from habituation, a sustainable education is needed. The sustainable character education can be used as the continuous training for students, so that the students will be accustomed with it. It is this habit that will result in good character inside the students.

The pattern that can be implemented in character education held in every collage has its typical characteristics. However implicitly character education in all colleges is implemented with the same objective: to produce graduates that can be competitive within community. Thus, the application of character education design for Islamic College is not far different from that in state university. But that in Islam College focuses more on Islam-based characters.

The result of research is still simple, so that the elaboration of character education design is still far from perfectness. Thus, further studies should be conducted related to the evaluation on character

education design offered by the author, to achieve the optimum character education.

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