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Character Education (PPK) and the Dynamics of Christian Character Development Among Students: A Case Study at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya, especially through the role of Christian Religious Education Teachers, as well as describe the dynamics of students' Christian character development in the context of PPK implementation. This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study research. Research data was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. The research informants consisted of a Christian Religious Education Teacher, the Vice Principal for Student Affairs, Homeroom Teachers, and six students in grades X-11 and XI-7. Data analysis was carried out through data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn, and was strengthened through triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study show that the implementation of PPK at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya is carried out through the integration of character values in Christian Religious Education learning, habituation, teacher examples, religious activities, coaching, school support, and evaluation. The implementation of PPK takes place through various educational activities at school and does not stand as a separate activity. The dynamics of students' Christian character development show that there is a development in the values of love, honesty, discipline, responsibility, and involvement in religious activities. Students have shown an understanding and application of these values in daily life, but their application has not always been consistent. Some students have been able to manage themselves and apply character independently, while others still need direction, reminders, and coaching. Students' character development is influenced by internal factors, such as awareness, motivation, willingness, self-control, and emotional control, as well as external factors in the form of support from teachers, friends, family, and the school environment.

Keywords Character Development, Character Education, Students.

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INTRODUCTION

National education has an important role in shaping Indonesian people who are not only superior in intellectual aspects, but also have good character. This is affirmed in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 3 which states that national education functions to develop abilities and form a dignified character and civilization of the nation in order to educate the life of the nation. In addition, national education aims to develop

the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. These provisions show that education is not only oriented to mastering science, but also to forming the character of students as an important part of the educational process. Character formation is one of the important challenges in the implementation of education in Indonesia. The increasingly rapid development of science and technology brings various changes in people's lives, including in the lives of students. Ease of access to information, the development of digital media, and changes in social interaction patterns provide great opportunities for the development of students, but at the same time can also cause various problems related to attitudes, behaviors, and character. Therefore, schools as formal educational institutions have the responsibility to develop the character of students in a planned, systematic, and sustainable manner through the educational process that takes place in the school environment.

As an effort to strengthen the character formation of students, the government established the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) through Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning the Strengthening of Character Education. This program is an educational movement that aims to strengthen the character of students through the harmonization of heart, taste, thinking, and sports by involving schools, families, and the community. In its implementation, PPK is integrated into intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities so that character values are not only taught theoretically, but also habituated in the daily lives of students. The implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program in schools cannot be separated from the role of teachers as the main implementers of the educational process. Teachers have the responsibility to integrate character values into the learning process, provide examples to students, and create a learning environment that supports character formation. Through interactions that take place every day, teachers become one of the influential figures in helping students understand and apply character values in their lives.

In the context of Christian Religious Education, character formation has a very important position because learning not only aims to provide knowledge about the teachings of the Christian faith, but also guide students to live Christian values in daily life. Values such as love, honesty, responsibility, discipline, humility, and concern for others are part of Christian character which is expected to develop through the educational process. Therefore, Christian Religious Education Teachers have a strategic role in helping students understand, appreciate, and apply these values in real life (Putnarubun, 2022). In Palangka Raya City, there are various high school (SMA) level education units consisting of public schools and private schools. Based on official data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Palangka Raya City Central Statistics Agency, there are eight public high schools and eleven private high schools operating in Palangka Raya City. The diversity of these educational units shows that the implementation of character education takes place in various conditions and different school characteristics.

This research was carried out at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya. The selection of the school was based on several considerations. First, SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya is a public school that implements the Character Education Strengthening Program in accordance with national policies. Second, this school has a pluralistic environment so that it provides an interesting context to examine the implementation of character education in school life. Third, the researcher has carried out a Field Introduction Program (PPL) at the school so that it has an initial understanding of the school culture, learning process, and characteristics of students. In addition, the results of initial observations show that there are various dynamics related to the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program and student character development that deserve further research. Based on initial observations made on September 8, 2025 and observations during the period September to November 2025, the Character Education Strengthening Program at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya has been implemented through various learning activities and school activities. Christian Religious Education teachers have also tried to integrate character values in the learning process carried out in the classroom. Various religious activities, character habituation, and other school activities have become part of the school's efforts to shape the character of students. These initial findings are also strengthened by the records of the Guidance and Counseling (BK) process at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya. Based on the records of BK class X-7 on November 27, 2025, there are problems with student attendance in the form of frequent harps and several illnesses. These problems are followed up through summoning students and parents, coaching with homeroom teachers, and making commitments in the BK room. The record shows that coaching on student discipline and attendance is also carried out through BK services by involving homeroom teachers and parents.

However, in its implementation, various dynamics were still found that showed that the character formation process had not taken place optimally in all students. Some students still showed behaviors that did not reflect the expected character values, such as lack of focus during learning, using mobile phones during the learning process, postponing assignment collection, and lack of consistency in participating in spiritual development activities. This condition shows that the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program has been underway, but the process of internalizing character values in students has not been completely evenly distributed. These findings were strengthened through an initial interview with a Christian Religious Education Teacher who stated that there are still students who lack discipline, lack focus on learning, and lack of consistency in participating in spiritual development activities. This condition shows that the development of students' Christian character is a process that does not take place simply. Character development is influenced by various interrelated factors, such as teachers' learning strategies, school environment, social culture, and students' readiness to accept and live the values taught.

Based on these conditions, there is a need to examine more deeply how the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program is carried out by teachers, especially Christian Religious Education Teachers, as well as how the dynamics of the

development of students' Christian character in the context of the implementation of the program. This study is important because it not only provides an overview of the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program in schools, but also provides an understanding of various factors that affect the development of students' Christian character in the context of pluralistic public schools. Based on this description, the researcher conducted a study entitled: "Implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) and the Dynamics of Student Christian Character Development: A Case Study at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya." This study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program by Christian Religious Education Teachers and the dynamics of the development of students' Christian character at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to deeply understand the implementation process of the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) and the dynamics of students' Christian character development in a real context at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore the meaning, experience, perception, and social dynamics that occur in the school environment comprehensively. The type of research used is a case study. The case study was chosen because this research focuses on one specific location, namely SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya, as a case unit that is studied in depth.

The data collection techniques in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique in this study uses a qualitative data analysis model as explained by Sugiyono (2019), which includes several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawn, and triangulation. Data analysis is carried out continuously from the time the data collection process takes place until the research is completed so that the data obtained can be understood in depth and systematically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion of the results of the research was carried out by relating the findings obtained at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya with the theoretical and research foundations that have been described in Chapter II. The discussion was prepared based on two formulations of research problems, namely the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) by teachers, especially Christian Religious Education Teachers, and the dynamics of the development of students' Christian character. Thus, the discussion not only describes the implementation of the program based on field data, but also analyzes the meaning of the findings based on the concept of character education, PPK, Christian character, and character development dynamics.

Implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) by Teachers

The results of the study show that the implementation of the Character Education

Strengthening Program at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya is carried out through learning, habituation, example, religious activities, school policy support, and evaluation. The findings were obtained mainly from the testimony of the Christian Religious Education Teacher and strengthened by information from the Vice Principal for Student Affairs and student experience. This shows that PPK is not placed as a stand-alone activity, but is integrated into various educational activities that take place in schools.

The findings are in line with the concept of character education according to Zubaedi (2011) which places character education as a process that is carried out consciously and planned to help students understand and practice moral values in daily life. In this study, the concept can be seen from the efforts of teachers to connect character values with students' learning and habits. Thus, the theory is used to explain the findings that character strengthening in schools is not only carried out through the delivery of material, but also through the process of habituation and the application of values in daily life.

In addition, the implementation of PPK at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya is also in accordance with the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education which places PPK as an educational movement that is carried out in an integrated manner through intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. In this study, this form of integration can be seen through the learning of Christian Religious Education, religious activities, discipline habituation, school activities, as well as support for school policies and programs.

Although the form of implementation of PPK in schools has been integrated in various activities, the results of the study show that the existence of these programs and activities has not automatically resulted in the application of the same character in all students. The research data shows that some students have been able to apply character values in their daily lives, while others still need reminders and coaching. These conditions show that there is a difference between the availability of character strengthening processes and the level of consistency of students in applying the values that have been learned. This difference is important to note because the success of the implementation of PPK can not only be seen from the existence of activities, policies, or learning that contain character values, but also from how students live and apply these values in various situations. In this study, the discovery of students who are less consistent shows that the process of internalizing character is still ongoing and has not been completely completed. Thus, the implementation of PPK at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya has been carried out in an integrated manner, but the results of its implementation still show different dynamics in each student.

These findings show that there is a gap between the implementation of the program at the school level and the level of internalization of values in students. Learning, habituation, example, religious activities, and coaching have been available as part of the implementation of the PPK, but the existence of various forms of reinforcement has not resulted in the same level of behavioral consistency in all students. These differences show that the success of program implementation is not only determined by the availability of activities, but also by

the ability of students to appreciate and apply character values in different situations.

In this study, the difference can be understood from the data of students and homeroom teachers. Some students still face obstacles in the form of laziness, difficulty controlling emotions, ego, stubbornness, and the influence of friends and the environment. At the same time, homeroom teachers found that students' levels of awareness and self-regulation skills are different so that some students still need directions and reminders. Thus, the inconsistencies found do not indicate that the PPK is not implemented, but rather show that the process of internalizing grades at the individual level is still ongoing and influenced by the conditions of each student.

The findings are in line with the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 87 of 2017 which places PPK as an educational movement that is carried out in an integrated manner through intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. The findings are also in accordance with Zubaedi (2011) regarding the importance of learning, habituation, example, and the environment in character education.

Thus, the implementation of PPK at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya cannot be understood only based on the activities of Christian Religious Education Teachers in the classroom. The implementation is a process that involves teachers, schools, students, families, and the social environment. At the same time, data shows that the implementation of PPK has been carried out in various forms, but the process of character formation still needs continuous strengthening because the consistency of student behavior is not completely the same.

Dynamics of Student Christian Character Development at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya

The results of the study show that the development of students' Christian character takes place as a continuous development process and is not completely uniform for each student. Students have demonstrated an understanding and application of the values of love, honesty, discipline, and responsibility in school life, but there are still certain situations when students have difficulty applying these values consistently.

These findings can be seen from the statement of the Christian Religious Education Teacher who assessed that the development of students' character had gone well. The homeroom teacher also saw a change in student behavior, such as students who previously did not do assignments to do assignments, did not cheat, and spoke more politely to friends. Meanwhile, the experiences of the six students showed that the application of character did not always take place in the same way. These differences in experience are an important part of understanding the dynamics of Christian character development.

Desmita (2014) explained that student development is influenced by individual and environmental characteristics, while Santrock (2012) sees adolescence as a period of development and identity search. In this study, the theory helps explain why students who are in the same school environment can show different experiences and levels of character consistency.

These findings also show that the understanding of Christian values has not always resulted in consistent application in every situation. Thus, the character dynamics in this study do not indicate a completed or fixed state of character, but indicate a process of development that is still ongoing. Overall, there is a relationship between the implementation of PPK and the process of developing students' Christian character. The implementation of PPK through learning, habituation, example, religious activities, school culture, and environmental support provides an educational context for students to recognize, understand, and apply character

values. At the same time, the dynamics of character development show how students experience development, face obstacles, gain support, and try to apply Christian values in daily life.

Therefore, based on research data, the implementation of PPK at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya can be understood as one of the educational contexts that supports the process of developing students' Christian character. The process has shown progress in various aspects, but it still requires coaching, habituation, example, environmental support, and strengthening in an ongoing manner so that the application of character values can become more consistent in students' lives.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research on the implementation of the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) and the dynamics of Christian character development of students at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya, it can be concluded that the implementation of PPK by Christian Religious Education Teachers is carried out through learning, habituation, example, religious activities, coaching, and support of the school environment. In Christian Religious Education learning, character values are integrated into the learning process through the delivery of God's word, providing examples of good attitudes, discussions, reflections, and encouragement to students to apply character values in daily life. The implementation of PPK is also supported by religious activities, the application of discipline, habituation in carrying out duties and obligations, as well as school policies and programs related to character formation. Thus, the findings of the study show that the implementation of PPK is part of various educational activities at SMA Negeri 4 Palangka Raya and is carried out through the involvement of teachers, schools, and students.

The dynamics of students' Christian character development shows that the values of love, honesty, discipline, responsibility, self-control, and respect for others are developed through learning, habituation, religious activities, examples, and interactions in school life. The application of these values shows a development in student behavior, but the level of development and consistency differs between students. Some students are able to apply character values in daily life, while others still need direction, reminders, habituation, and mentoring. Obstacles in character development come from internal factors, such as awareness, willingness, motivation, laziness, and the ability to control themselves, as well as external factors such as friends, family, teachers, and the environment. Therefore, the development of Christian character in the context of the implementation of PPK is a gradual process that requires habituation, example, strengthening, and mentoring on an ongoing basis.

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