

## **Student Dormitory as a Character-Based Education in Higher Schools (A Case Study at Telkom University Dormitory – Bandung)**

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### **Abstract**

*Dormitories can be utilized as a place to build students' characters and principles, in the same way as boarding schools. This research is a qualitative research using Grounded Theory method in order to gain the description of dormitory supervision which used as the character based education at Telkom University. The research finding shows: dormitory's supervision and activity developed the aspects of adaptive, spiritual, academic and social (ASAS); assessment method to gain Student Activity Transcript point or Transkrip Aktivitas Mahasiswa (TAK) point; well-organized policy and program on the level of institution, supervision, and program organizer. In order to achieve a maximum result, the structure and infrastructure, dormitory regulation, as well as the evaluation and quality assurance system are required.*

**Keywords:** dormitory, character building, higher schools/ education

### **1. Introduction**

Dormitory generally not only as a place to live, but can be used as a place to educate and to foster students' characters or morals. Boarding education is not something new in the context of education in Indonesia. We knew the concept of boarding education in the form of "Pondok Pesantren", both the traditional one and the one that now has transformed into a modern boarding school, which not only enrich the students' knowledge but also improve morale, respect spiritual values and humanity, teach honest attitudes and behavior, and familiar with religious ethics. Pondok Pesantren can be said to be the embryo of boarding education and become the society's choice of education type in Indonesia. In subsequent development, many formal schooling institutes at the secondary school level equipped their facilities with dormitory or now known as 'boarding school', where students, teachers and school managers live in the dormitories within the school in a certain period of time. The concept of boarding school is based on the consideration to achieve a more complete education, multiplying the materials in affective and psychomotor aspects, as the social environment that helps to shape the personality of the inhabitants. There are many benefits and advantages with the existence of boarding schools. Purnama (2010, p. 63-65) explains that boarding school education have advantages such as teaching the importance of independent living, tolerance, regularity of life, self-control, discipline, food control and security. This is reinforced by Zahra (2008, p. 150) that there are benefits of boarding school education system such as quality, interaction between students with teachers interwoven more freely, communication between students with teachers is much more friendly, forming students to become self-reliant, diligent, tenacious, disciplined, have empathy, and obedience to worship God. Meanwhile, according to Jampel (2016, p.30), boarding school can develop academic ability as well as social skills through a process that is natural and not artificial. This is reinforced through a research by Rizkiana (2012, p. 18), which states that the correlation reality between the boarding school system (variable X) on the character formation of students (variable Y), shows a very high category. By looking at the benefits and advantages of boarding school as described above, nowadays several levels of higher education both private and public universities are also beginning to prepare dormitories for their students, one of them is Telkom University-Bandung.

Studies on dormitory benefits and effectiveness in Higher Education, as a basis for character development and education, have been widely practiced in Indonesia for at least this one last period in different focus and loci as follows. First, research conducted by Sujarwo (2012), qualitative research with multi case design study, the focus in this research is the school dormitory management based on character education. The results of this research related to the process of making a work program done by doing phasing; organizing through departmentalization steps, allocating labor, and student's coaching; performance improvement with motivation, formal and non-formal communication; supervision is done by the determination of academic and non-academic standards, monitoring and student's assessment. Second, research conducted by Irena (2014), qualitative research with Grounded Theory method, focusing to reveal and formulate the whole human concept through character education based on nurturing in the College of IPDN (Institute of Public Administration). This study resulted in the finding that character education through nurturing in the dorms enables students to adapt for living in diverse environments. The success of human formation is wholly influenced by the method and stage of nurturing dimension and time, as well as natural and divine phenomena. It is explained that to build the cooperation character between students in IPDN is not instant, but requires adaptation and habituation process. Third, research conducted by Utari, et al (2014, p. 23), qualitative research, focusing on the establishment of a socio-academic climate model at FIP UNY-Yogyakarta Student Dormitory. This research shows that dormitories contribute in shaping the social and academic climate among students, because in practice there is a natural cross-cultural interaction reinforced by the guidance and nurturing system. There are at least five aspects that become a major component in the development of social-academic climate of students in dormitories, they are; occupants, caregivers, coaching systems, facilities, and organizational aspects.

Fourth, research conducted by Noveliza (2016, p.99), research development model that aims to produce a specific product and to test its effectiveness, the focus of this research is to design a boarding school management strategy at Sekolah Tinggi Theologi Sangkala (STTS). The results confirmed that learning boarding system is more refers to education holistically. Therefore, it is necessary to have a management strategy that includes qualified, innovative and student-based curriculum factors; on the management factor of students, it requires the strategy of 'dormitory parents', in parenting dormitory system; on management factor of educators, it needs strategy of recruitment team and focus on quality of the educators; while the leadership factor strategy is to maximize the role of each leader as well as to increase the sensitivity and agility in dealing with the problems. Sujarwo's study of dormitories focuses more on dormitory management; Utari is more focus on establishing a socio-academic climate model in dormitory; while Noveliza is more about designing a boarding school management strategy. Besides, the researchers used qualitative method with case study and development approach. There are crucial issues that have not yet been revealed if using a pattern of approaches or methods that have been developed through case-study, development and qualitative methods. The complexity of dormitory issues related to the behavior is mainly related to the system of character values. The life and the activities in the dormitory will be easier and can naturally be explored by doing research model with Grounded Theory method. Considering these matters and realizing the importance of the dorm as a forum for character building, Telkom University-Bandung, since 2013, requires all new students to enter the dorm during the first year or during the first two semesters. The average number of new students entering the dorms per year is around 6,000-6,500 students. With a large number of students to join the dormitory program, Telkom University requires arrangements and strategic management; programs and activities; and support dormitory facilities and infrastructure.

The question is whether Telkom University's decision to use the dorm as a media for character development and education has or has not followed the management principles as mentioned above. From interviews and observations on the dormitories management at Telkom University, it can be said to be good enough, but there are some things that are still lacking and thus inhibit the achievement of vision, mission and objectives of the dormitories formation as an education place to build student's characters. Some of the things experienced by researchers include the characters values adopted in the dorms, curriculum and dormitory programs, organizational structure management governance, assessment system, as well as support facilities and infrastructure.

## **2. Research Methodology**

This research uses qualitative research design with Grounded Theory method. By using qualitative research, researchers can be more freely in reviewing and analyzing various phenomena encountered in the field.

As Straus & Cobin (2015, p. 5) explains that qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand something behind a phenomenon that has not at all been known. The choice of Grounded Theory (GT) method aims to create data theorizing, that is a method of theory preparation that action-oriented or interaction-oriented of the research area, therefore it is suitable for research on social life including behavior and character of students in dormitory. The analysis in GT is done by 'coding' which consist of three main parts, namely: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. As Strauss and Cobin (2015, pp. 51) point out, the process in GT research involves data break down, conceptualizing and rearranging concepts in new ways. Participants in this study consisted of those who were considered able to provide an adequate description of the problems studied in the research. Prospective participants selected using theoretical sampling approach commonly used in GT research, where sampling based on concepts that proved to be related theoretically to the theory that is being compiled. There is no standard to specify the number of samples or partitions required in the GT method. The number of samples is considered adequate if there has been data saturation, i.e. no new categories, concepts and coding of information obtained from the participants. According to Cresswell (2013), to be able to build and produce a good concept in GT research, it requires between 20 and 30 participants involved in the data retrieval process.

The initial criteria of prospective participants can refer to the objectives of the study and refer to the relevant issues of the phenomenon under study. Participants identified in this study are: (1) college students who have undergone the must stay program in the dormitory for the first year, (2) policy makers of the dormitory program, arrangement and rules, (3) dormitory managers both male and female dormitories whose daily housekeeping and overseeing dormitory activities, (4) Boarding supervisors who accompany student's livelihood and student's mentor in dormitories such as Senior Resident (SR). GT-based research model involves collecting data with various methods compiled through a coding system, such as initial observation of participants, interviews with participants, documentation and triangulation data techniques to obtain data validity. The data analysis in qualitative research is an activity that includes data reduction, data display and withdrawal of conclusions or verification.

## ***2. Finding and Discussion***

The research results include phenomena, core dimensions, conceptual categories and main dimensions or frames in constructing the reality regarding the implementation of character education based on dormitory on the students of Telkom University. The results of observations and field findings in Telkom University are some management patterns that have not been fully done such as

### ***1. Uncertainty of character values to be instilled in the dorm***

There are various opinions, theories and concepts of character values that can be embedded in the context of education, whether through education, environmental and dormitory activities. Lickona (1992) recommends the ten essential virtues needed to shape a good character: wisdom, justice, fortitude, self-control, love, positive attitude, hard work, integrity, gratitude, and humility. Megawangi (2007, p. 24) explains that there are nine values worth of characters to be taught to learners in the context of character education, they are: 1) Love for God, 2) Independence and responsibility, 3) Honesty, trustworthy, and wise, 4) Respectful and polite, 5) Generous, helpful and cooperative, 6) Confident, creative and hardworking, 7) Leadership and justice, 8) Good and humble, 9) Tolerance and peace as well as unity. On the other hand, the Ministry of National Education (2010, p.99) formulates eighteen characters from four important points inherent in the Indonesian nation, which are religion, Pancasila, culture and national education objectives. Eighteen of these are as follows: Religious, Honest, Tolerance, Discipline, Creative, Independent, Democratic, Curiosity, Spirit of nationality, Love the homeland, Appreciate achievement, Friendship / communicative, Love peace, Love to read, Care for the environment, Care for the community, and Responsible.

The results of interviews with some residents of the dormitory state that the required character values: courtesy, mutual respect, possession of expertise, principles and stance, easy to receive suggestions, and firm and meticulous in every step. Telkom University, which requires all new students to stay in the dormitory for one year, also has defined the values held during their living in the dormitory.

The character values are leadership, cooperation, competition, tolerance, and never give up. So many value-added systems are developed by experts, policy-makers and dormitories, thus the selection of appropriate character values needs to be established, which will facilitate the preparation of dorm programs and dorm management policies.

## 2. Policy and implementation of dormitory's living programs and activities

Activities program in the dormitory need to be formulated in a curriculum, which is a derivative of the Vision-Mission and described in a structured, gradual and sustainable manner. Thus the Directorate of Student Affairs and Dormitory, Telkom University, has the task to design the policies and the student management programs, improve student quality, improve soft skills, and also character development through dormitories. The design of the program is designed as a vehicle to coach the students since they become a new student until they become alumni. There are at least 4 (four) main pillars of character building that implemented by Telkom University, they are:

- a. Campus orientation : PKKMB (Introduction to college life for new students) - *"To Know about University"*
- b. Telkom University Dormitory (Using Framework "ASAS") - *"To Build the Character"*
- c. Student Activity Units (UKM) - *"To Practice about Organization"*
- d. Useful Competitions and Activities (*Valuable Activity*) - *"To Show the Quality"*

From the 4 pillars above, the researcher focuses more on the second pillar of Telkom University that is Telkom University Dormitory. Refer to the dormitory pillars, dormitory's programs and policies then arranged as guidelines for the implementation of dormitory's life and activities. Dormitory programs and policies are conducted through four main fields, namely Adaptive, Spiritual, Academic, and Social (ASAS), and then a program of scheduled and targeted activities is planned. The description of the program of activity by field is described as follows:

**Table 2: Dormitory's Life and Activities Programs of Telkom University**

No	Program	Period (month/s)	Activities number
<b>Field : Adaptive</b> "learn and train oneself to adapt with new environment and new life"			
1	Dorm team	3	4
2	Dorm sport & fun games	3	4
3	Dorm clean up	6	2
4	Dorm id	12	1
<b>Field : Spiritual</b> "learn and understand their own belief and religion"			
1	Dorm comic religion	3	4
2	Dorm spiritual discussion	1	12
3	Dorm percussion	3	4
4	Reading A-Qur'an and do Dawn Pray together in dorm	For national events	
<b>Field : Academic</b> "learn and improve academic ability in college"			
1	Dorm response	3	4
2	Dorm academic week	12	1
3	Dorm tutor	3	4
4	Dorm academic competition	12	1
<b>Field : Social</b> "learn and build awareness of the community and the environment"			
1	Dorm saving trash	3	4
2	Dorm environment	6	2
3	Dorm pattimura ranger	3	4
4	Dorm food festival	12	1

The effectiveness and smoothness of the dormitory program is strongly influenced by the assessment and evaluation process of the program, the support of the structured personnel with the clear job descriptions, and the supporting facilities.

### ***3. There is method of assessment and graduation in the dormitory***

As a proof that students have lived the dormitory of Telkom University, the student will be given the certificate of Student Activity Transcript (TAK), which is a parameter of student activity assessment in non-academic activities. Furthermore the TAK certificate received can serve as a requirement for the final session, consideration and added value for submitting scholarship and as an attachment to SKPI (Certificate of Diploma Companion). The assessment is based on the level of attendance at each activity. From the recapitulation result of the presence will effect on the assessment and the amount of TAK points, which will be given after one year stay in the dorm. TAK points of 30 will be earned if the dormitories attend all scheduled activities. The attendance level in each activity will be conducted by the dorm guardian or Senior Resident (SR), as the supervisor of the activity. From above explanation it can be said that as evidence that Telkom University students have attended the one-year program in the dormitory, it is entitled to get the Student Activity Transcript (TAK) points by 30 points. Until here, the assessment is still based on aspect of dormitory activity, not yet entered on assessment of dorm life competence (HA) such as personality competence (obedient to religion, honest), as well as social competence (tolerant, caring, etc.). Besides, the assessment is still done by senior resident or dorm guardian only, not yet involved the assessment by the boarding manager and colleagues.

Refer to the benchmark result by the researcher to the dormitory of IPB (Bogor Institute of Agriculture), which conducts the assessment pattern in a more complete dormitory life, every graduate of the TPB (first year in college) stage, will be given Academic Transcripts of courses taken in first year lectures, which the GPA Program earned also based on attendance of activities and Certificate of Dormitory Graduation. The results of literature studies on PPG Boarding Guide (2016), it can be used as a reference method of assessment of dorm life. Assessment is not only from the aspect of activity, but also mentioned the need for assessment aspects of personal competence and social competence. Assessment on each aspect of Dormitory's Life and Activity (KHA) is done on a Likert scale (1-5), which is done on monthly period or monthly accumulative (HA) and / or per activity or activities accumulative (GA). Assessment is done by the boarding manager (PA), Activity's Person in Charge (PK) and Colleagues (SJ).

### ***4. Organizational Structure and Governance (SOTK) of dormitory management***

In the management of education in dormitory, there needs to be clarity about organizational structure, task and authority of the manager (job description), governance (dorm guardian and dorm guardian assistant). In Telkom University, the management of dormitory is done in stages and divided by authority, job and task area. In organizational structure there are three groups of units that perform dorm management duties that are managers at the level of institutions or universities that are structural units, units of facilities and infrastructure management, and the organizer unit of dormitory activities program, which daily interact with the dormitory residents. Basically Telkom University is very serious in the effort to produce characterized human beings and graduates through the development of boarding life. This is proofed by the formation of structural units in institutions that focus on the development of character and dormitories. In stages, the structural units established to handle character building and boarding are from Vice Rector IV, Director of Student Affairs & Dormitory, Manager of Character Building & Boarding, and Head of Dormitory Affairs.

The management of facilities and infrastructures is done by a subsidiary of Yayasan Pendidikan Telkom (YPT) or better known as Building Management Team. Building Management Team has roles and responsibilities: physical management of dormitory buildings, facilities and infrastructure; maintaining cleanliness and safety of the dormitory buildings and the environment; provide services related to physical complaints of buildings. Building management team consists of management officer, helpdesk officer, cleaning service officer, mechanical engineer officer and security officer. On the other hand the management associated with the implementation of the dormitory program has been designed as it needed by the dormitory guardians which are the Senior Resident (SR). Life at Telkom University dormitory was accompanied by these SRs who served as supervisor, guardian, and mentor. SRs have a high intensity of meetings with the dormitories, both in routine and daily activities because they also live in the dormitory. SR can be said to be an extension of the character development field at Telkom University, assuming that SR makes the dormitories and the companions closer. In the management of dormitory activities, SR is assisted by the dormitory residents, which has been arranged in the Senior Resident management structure, consisting of the Leader, oversees the Planning & Event Division, the SR Division of the Male & Female Dormitory Building, and the Administrative Division. Besides that there is still an organization formed which consists of dormitory residents, called Tower Structure.

This organization consists of the Leader, Vice Leader, Secretary, and Treasurer who oversees the Division of Hygiene, Security & Order, Spirituality, Caring, Health and Sciences. From the findings above it appears that there is already an organizational structure and governance that handles dormitory programs at Telkom University. In the institutional management structures there are Character Development Manager and Dormitory Head, in the managerial level there is Building Management Team, while in the program operational level there is SRs. However, when we viewed from the organizational structure at the institution level, the handling of the dormitories is handled by the unit in the level of an Affairs Head under the Manager. As for SRs, they handled quite a lot of residents where each of them is in charge of guiding, fostering and supervising 96 students. As comparison materials and data comparisons about dormitory management, the Bogor Institute of Agriculture (IPB) dormitory is managed by the unit in the level of a Director under Vice Rector I, while for the dormitory management unit in the institution handled by the Assistant Director unit. The same thing in President University, the dormitory managerial structure is handled by the unit in a Director level which divided into Director of male dormitory and Director of female dormitory.

### ***5. Support for the success of the student dormitory program***

Successful management of the dormitory will be greatly influenced by the availability of good facilities/ infrastructure, the provision of clear order and rules, as well as a good system of evaluation and quality assurance. In institutions that implement boarding education, it should have basic facilities that include private space or rooms, public spaces and other supporting facilities. Basically the facilities and infrastructures provided by Telkom University are good enough, but not yet sufficient in quantity and quality. Some facilities that have not provided or less is such as: the availability of prayer room for the minority religions do not yet exist; the space for discussion between the dormitories is not representative; the sports facilities and infrastructures especially just for the dormitories still do not exist; there is no library in the dorm so students have to go to the university library when they want to read and need reference book. This needs to be noticed by the University for the Sustainability of dormitory development as one of the pillars of character education to run optimally. To develop the discipline attitude of the dormitories during the boarding program, Telkom University has had the rules of boarding life that must be obeyed by the dormitories. The rules applied to the dormitories, such as: curfew, study time, discussion time, duty to clean the dormitory, and others. But in practice those rules has not been done properly and there are still some violations. It happened due to the low awareness of the dormitories in obeying the existing rules, as well as the weak enforcement of the dormitory rules disciplinary and the limitations in the number of supervisors. It is the university's obligation to keep the rules or regulations to run effectively, where the regulated object is aware of its obligations in obeying rules and the regulator subjects is able to perform its duties and responsibilities in overseeing the implementation of the rules.

Other support that is not less important is the quality assurance system of boarding education, which includes: minimum standards of boarding education and also monitoring and evaluations. Institutional level has basically conducted program evaluation activities by holding the agenda of boarding meetings on Tuesday every week, but meetings with Senior Resident and Building Management are not yet scheduled and more on case handling or when there is a program submission. Ideally the management and the boarding education are guaranteed in the quality assurance system. And a program evaluation is one of the activities that must be implemented. The goal is to reflect and to follow up on activities that have been implemented for future improvement. Evaluation includes the planning process, the implementation of the work program, including communication and coordination between the parties involved so that the future becomes better.

### ***3. Conclusion***

Based on the results of the discussion and analysis as has been revealed, researchers can conclude some things related to character education at Telkom University dormitory, as follows:

1. Education through the dorm as a place and alternative character education development is based on considerations: lack of boarding college, positive implications of boarding college for both institutions and students, trust and awareness of parents to send their son/ daughter to a boarding college.
2. The results of this study recommend the life management model and dormitory activities that must be considered the following elements:
  - a. The existence of the character values developed,
  - b. Planned policies and programs,

- c. Establishment of assessment methods to measure output outcomes during the boarding,
  - d. Clear organizational structure and governance.
3. To obtain maximum results, it is necessary to pay attention to the support facilities/ infrastructure, rules of the dormitory, and the existence of evaluation and quality assurance system.

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