

## CHARACTER CONTENT AND LOCAL EXCELLENCE IN VOCATIONAL CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN TABALONG REGENCY

Heri Susanto<sup>1</sup>, Ersis Warmansyah Abbas<sup>2</sup>, M. Zaenal A. Anis<sup>3</sup> and Helmi Akmal<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Lambung Mangkurat University, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

This study is conducted based on the view that the curriculum as a product of the times and a reflection of the values that live in the community should be able to accommodate national and regional interests. Regional interests in this concern are character values and local excellence in Tabalong Regency. One of the ways that can be used to accommodate those interests is through curricular internalization, extra-curricular activities, and a hidden curriculum making. The results of this study show that the implementation of the vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency is generally carried out with the principles of integrated, relevant, continuous, and applicable. Character building is carried out in curricular activities (planned and listed in curriculum documents), extra-curricular (being part of supplements or coaching outside the provisions of the national curriculum but supporting the implementation of the national curriculum).

**KEYWORDS:** character, local excellence, vocational curriculum

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In general, vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency is a curriculum that adopts dual system education. This curriculum model combines theory in the classroom and laboratory practices and field practice [1]-[2]. In accordance with the function of the vocational school as a place for vocational education that must prepare ready-to-use workers at the basic to medium level, the implementation of the curriculum in vocational schools involves various agencies, namely the business world and or the industrial world.

The implementation of the vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency is generally carried out with integrated, relevant, continuous, and applicable principles. The principle of integrated is seen from the applied curriculum is as a training package aiming to form work competencies in full in accordance with the level of education required in the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (KKNI). Thus, the entire education and training subjects must be directed to form these competencies and complement one another.

According to Taba [3], a curriculum as a plan for learning is something that is planned to be studied by students. Meanwhile, another view states that a curriculum is a written document that contains plans for students while at school. At least there are several aspects that must be considered in the preparation

of the curriculum; these aspects include the interests of national education in general, learning objectives in accordance with the level of education and development of students, and the usefulness of curriculum content for students in the future. The first aspect is the domain of the central government as the stakeholder of the regulation of education. The second aspect is the shared responsibility between the central government as the policy maker and the school and the teacher as the executor. Whereas the third aspect, since the School Based Curriculum in 2006, regions in this case the education office, schools, and teachers have been given a big role to determine the curriculum content to be taught.

Referring to the curriculum terminology as a teaching plan, the three aforementioned aspects must work together to produce a curriculum that is in accordance with the policy and science. The implementation of the curriculum is at least burdened by the development of knowledge in the community and policy development in a country [4]-[5]. The vocational curriculum as part of the education system that directly prepares ready-to-use workers at the middle level responds to these two things with character content and local excellence.

Various previous studies on curriculum enrichment with character and local excellence include Agung [6], Anggraini and Kusniarti [7], Mungmachon [8], and Ratana-Ubol and Henschke [9] emphasizing the importance of internalizing character values in general and local characteristics more specifically.

To answer these challenges, the curriculum content must be directed to be able to accommodate various interests, not only national interests but also local and regional interests. Thus, the curriculum used should contain character content and local excellence that can be developed for regional development. It aims to minimize the negative impact of the influence of westernization. In addition, national character values also need to be strengthened to fend off the negative impacts of globalization [8]. In this regard, there are at least two important issues to be studied; the first, how is the character content and local excellence in the Vocational Curriculum in Tabalong Regency; the second, how to develop the character content and local excellence in the Vocational Curriculum in Tabalong Regency.

## **2. Research Method**

This study was conducted through three strategic stages, namely (1) data collection, (2) data analysis; and (3) presentation of the results of data analysis (reporting). The data was collected by using the interview method, curriculum document study and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This FGD one of the qualitative research methods using a focused discussion from a group to discuss a particular problem, in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. The parties involved in the FGD and research informants were stakeholders in the education sector consisting of the principal, deputy principal of the curriculum division, Tabalong Regency Education Office and other related parties.

The data collected from the interview method is data about the implementation of the curriculum in each sample school. The data collected by the document study method is the curriculum data and

development methods in the sample schools. Meanwhile, the data collected through the FGD method is data on shared constraints and challenges faced in incorporating the character content and local excellence in the vocational curriculum.

In this study, purposive sampling technique was used. This technique is used to develop detailed understanding [10], namely the schools that are the sample of the research are all ten vocational schools in Tabalong representing various aspects that are considered important in this study. These aspects include differences in the departments they have, the urgency of the department in accordance with the conditions of the district, the status of the school and a number of other things that are considered by researchers to answer the formulation of existing problems.

### 3. Finding and Discussion

#### 3.1. Character Content and Local Excellence in the Implementation of Vocational Curriculum in Tabalong Regency

Vocational curriculum content includes a number of subjects, local content, and self-development. Referring to the character values developed by the Center for Curriculum and Bookkeeping, the Ministry of Education and Culture can identify the values of character education that have been seen both in school culture and in the patterns of learning interactions in Tabalong Regency Vocational School as follows.

**Table 1. The Identification of Character Content in Implementation of Vocational Curriculum in Tabalong Regency**

No.	Character Value	Coaching Program	Percentage of school running this program	Method
1.	Religious	Dzuhur prayer in congregation	100%	Performed routinely, take turns
		Habsyi Group	40%	Extracurricular activities
		Morning tadarus	80%	Conducted the morning before study in the first hour
		Prayers of Dhuha	60%	Implemented scheduled and in rotation
		Hajat prayer	20%	One school carried out the other scheduled incidents

No.	Character Value	Coaching Program	Percentage of school running this program	Method
2.	Honest	Honesty Canteen	60%	Performed in each class or each department
3.	Tolerance	-	0%	There are no special and planned programs
4.	Discipline	Application of the point system	100%	Points in the form of giving positive and negative points
5.	Hard work	-	0%	There are no special and planned programs
6.	Creative	Debate group	100%	Debate in English
		Wall magazine group	40%	There are wall magazines in each class or department
		Extracurricular broadcasting	20%	Directed on radio broadcasts
		Art group	80%	There are traditional dance groups, modern dance, hadrah, etc.
7.	Independent	Entrepreneurship development	50%	The form of activities is in the form of intra and extra-curricular
8.	Democratic	-	0%	There are no special programs yet
9.	Curiosity	Youth scientific work program	50%	Guided by the appointed teacher
10.	Spirit of nationality	Flag ceremony	100%	It is held regularly Monday morning
11.	Love the country	Flag honors every morning	10%	Conducted by all school members

No.	Character Value	Coaching Program	Percentage of school running this program	Method
12.	Appreciate achievements	Achievement rewards	30%	The reward form is an achievement pin or puts it in a positive point
13.	Friendly/communicative	Foreign language speech program	70%	Routinely every Monday
14.	Love peace	-	0%	There are no special programs yet
15.	Like to read	Morning tadarus	80%	Conducted the morning before study in the first hour
16.	Environmental care	Waste Bank Program	30%	All school members can participate
17.	Social care	Donations of condolence	100%	Incidental
18.	Responsible	Intra-school students organization	100%	Structured under the vice principal of student affairs
		Scouting	100%	Conducted routinely with the guidance teacher

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that almost all character values exist in the school activities, both in the form of intra-curricular activities and extracurricular activities. Systematically, the difference in method and grouping of these programs is similar to that proposed by Oliva [11] that the curriculum is a construct of ideas so that in its implementation it can differ between one school and another. The design of the program created in the internalization/fostering of character values can be categorized in a design that is centered on a more flexible problem [12]-[13]. The method chosen in the internalization of character values in the vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency follows a dual focus pattern [14] because the content involves a variety of problems.

The value that has not been programmed guidance is tolerance, hard work, democracy, and peace-loving. However, implicitly some values have actually been shown through the implementation of the

school curriculum, for example; the value of tolerance is shown through the provision of teachers for non-Moeslem students so that in terms of religious formation students get the same portion. The model developed in this aspect is subject-centered design with a focus on subjects [13]. Whereas if viewed based on curriculum documents, the character values explicitly listed in the vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Character Value Integration in Subject Competencies**

No.	Training Subject	Competence	Character Value
1.	Islamic education	Competency groups: Al-Qur'an Aqeedah, Morals, Fiqh and Tarikh	Religious, honest, disciplined, hard work, independent, caring for the environment, caring for the social and responsible
2.	Christian education	Competency group: Christian values	
3.	Catholic religious education	Competency group: personal learners, Jesus Christ, Church, Society	
4.	Hindu religious education	Competency group: Leadership, Yadnya, Susila, Sradha, Universe, Culture, Weda	
5.	Buddhist education	Competency group: Saddha, Tripitaka, Sila, Panna, Samadhi	
6.	Civic education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the nature of the nation and The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia;</li> <li>- Show a positive attitude towards the national legal and judicial system;</li> <li>- Show participation in efforts to promote, respect and protect human rights;</li> <li>- Respect the equality of citizenship in various aspects of life;</li> </ul>	Tolerance, democracy, the spirit of nationality, love the country, social care

No.	Training Subject	Competence	Character Value
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyze the culture of democracy towards civil society;</li> <li>- Show an attitude of openness and justice in the life of the nation and state;</li> <li>- Show a positive attitude towards the Pancasila as an open ideology;</li> <li>- Evaluate the role of the press in a democratic society.</li> </ul>	
7.	Indonesian Language	Communicate with Indonesian is equivalent to the level of <i>semenjana, madia dan unggul</i>	Friendly/ communicative
8.	Art and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appreciate artwork</li> <li>- Express themselves related to art</li> </ul>	Creative and appreciating achievement
9.	Mathematics	Solve problems related to mathematical concepts	Hard work
10.	English	Communicate with English at the level of a Novice level, Elementary, and Intermediate	Friendly/ communicative
11.	Natural Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the symptoms of nature through observation;</li> <li>- Understand pollution and its effects on humans and the environment;</li> <li>- Understand ecosystem components and the role of humans in maintaining environmental balance and EIA.</li> </ul>	Environmental care

No.	Training Subject	Competence	Character Value
12.	Social Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand human social life</li> <li>- Understand the process of national awakening</li> <li>- Understand social structures and various actors that cause conflict and social mobility</li> <li>- Describe social groups in a multicultural society</li> <li>- Understand cultural similarities and diversity</li> </ul>	Tolerance, democracy, love for the country, friendship, peace and love, social care
13.	Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actualize entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors</li> <li>- Apply the soul of leadership</li> <li>- Plan a small/micro business</li> <li>- Manage small/micro businesses</li> </ul>	Creative and independent
14.	Productive training subject group (vocational)	Understand work procedures and carry out work with right	Discipline and responsibility

Whereas, the local excellence that has been seen in curriculum documents and learning activities is still very limited. Most of the local excellence shown is religious reinforcement identified as part of the personality of the Tabalong community at large. The point of focus of this aspect conceptually is using the Concern-Based Adoption Model/CBA Model [13] where the main focus is on individual students [14] which in this case are placed on religious aspects.

The local excellence in the form of natural, cultural, historical, regional and geographical resources is still not explored in the praxis of learning. This local excellence that has received attention is limited to mining resources and consumption economic developments. This can be seen from the development of expertise programs that work market orientation to these companies/agencies.

Overall, the weaknesses of the vocational curriculum of all Vocational Schools in Tabalong Regency are not yet explained in detail and clearly of the aspects of local excellence that will be taught to



students. Most of the descriptions given in curriculum documents related to the local excellence are only normative and have not included substantial material that will be internalized in learning activities.

**3.2. The Development of Character Content and Local Excellence in the Vocational Curriculum in Tabalong Regency**

In general, the development of character content and local excellence in Vocational Schools in Tabalong Regency can be classified into several forms of activities:

**a. Programmed activity**

Programmed character development activities are carried out within the scope of curricular and extra-curricular coverage. In its scheme based on the results of the FGD. It is known that character development and local excellence are designed to involve school committees and stakeholders from the business world/industry.

**b. Programmed activities within the scope of creativity**

Conducted through extracurricular activities, namely scouts, student council, religious/ethics and moral education, sports, youth scientific work, and English Club/ Debate Club.

**c. Programmatic activity**

Unprogrammed character development activities can be carried out through:

- 1) Spontaneous activities are unscheduled activities in special events such as; home visits (home visit), the formation of greeting behavior, throwing garbage in its place, queuing, overcoming crossing opinions (quarrels).
- 2) Exemplary activities are activities in the form of daily behavior such as; dress well, speak well, diligently read, praise the good and or success of others, arrive on time.
- 3) The mechanism of life skill coaching is an activity which aims to practice the skills in living his life. Based on the study of documents and FGDs, aspects of life skills can be identified which are developed in the vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency that is in harmony with the values of national character as follows.

**Table 3. Indicators and Programs for Character Building and Local Excellence**

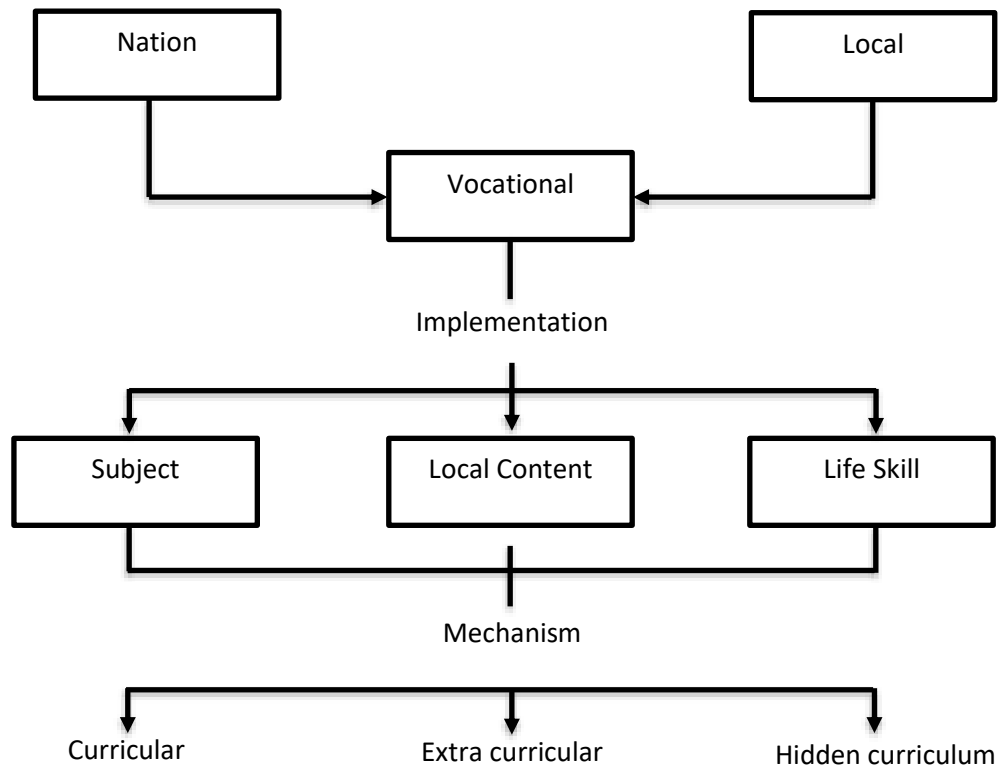
Indicator of the Developed Competencies	Sources of the Information and Developed Programs
Self-existence	
Hard working, independent, tough, disciplined, honest, responsible, confident, aware of their	Information sources: curriculum documents, FGDs

Indicator of the Developed Competencies	Sources of the Information and Developed Programs
weaknesses, open, faithful, piety, tolerance, serve others well, care to the environment	Programs developed: scheduled spiritual guidance programs such as religious lectures and incidental guidance programs through disciplinary enforcement teams
Awareness of self-potential and how to develop it	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognize self-deficiency</li> <li>▪ Recognize the strengths</li> <li>▪ Not ashamed of the lack</li> <li>▪ Overcome weakness with hard work</li> <li>▪ Do something according to choice</li> <li>▪ Take advantage of abilities according to opportunities</li> <li>▪ Not easily satisfied with the results achieved</li> </ul>	<p>Information sources: curriculum documents, FGDs</p> <p>Programs developed: career coaching programs and the establishment of special job exchanges</p>
Skill on information-gathering	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open to change</li> <li>▪ Identify/ determine the type of reference source</li> <li>▪ Prioritize ratio in working</li> <li>▪ Master the use of information tools</li> <li>▪ Have high curiosity</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>The program developed: scientific papers</p>
Skill in information processing and making decisions correctly	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make consideration</li> <li>▪ Observe the impact that will arise</li> <li>▪ Make decisions in emergencies</li> <li>▪ Identify various alternatives</li> <li>▪ Make multi-aspect considerations</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>The program developed: basic training in leadership.</p>
Skill in solving a problem creatively and wisely	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do not panic in a stressful situation</li> <li>▪ Work properly and calmly in stressful situations</li> <li>▪ Prioritize the ratio in work</li> </ul>	Information source: curriculum documents

Indicator of the Developed Competencies	Sources of the Information and Developed Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify problems</li> <li>▪ Able to think of causation</li> <li>▪ Look for solutions without causing new problems</li> </ul>	<p>The program developed: basic training in leadership</p>
Skill in listening	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pay attention to the ideas of group members</li> <li>▪ Don't blame the opinions of others</li> <li>▪ Recognize the role of others in the group</li> <li>▪ Express empathy</li> <li>▪ Pay attention to speech</li> <li>▪ Shows statements on the topics discussed</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>The program developed: basic training in leadership</p>
Skill in speaking	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Convey arguments cordially</li> <li>▪ Strengthen arguments with data</li> <li>▪ Respond to objections positively and politely</li> <li>▪ Do not force other people to acknowledge their arguments</li> <li>▪ Speak sign language to acknowledge the opinions of others</li> <li>▪ Speak softly and carefully</li> <li>▪ Speak expressions according to conditions</li> <li>▪ Nodding his head in agreement</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>Coaching program: speeches in foreign languages, lectures take turns, the formation of debate teams</p>
Skill in reading	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read messages correctly</li> <li>▪ Understand the contents of the message correctly</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>The program developed: provision of reading material in the school library</p>
Skill in writing ideas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make the message written correctly</li> <li>▪ Produce clear written messages</li> <li>▪ Write using correct and polite language</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p>

Indicator of the Developed Competencies	Sources of the Information and Developed Programs
	Programs developed: integrated into Youth Language and Scientific Work (KIR) subjects
<b>Skill as a pleasant friend</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognize mutual help</li> <li>▪ Often and like to exchange ideas</li> <li>▪ Feel happy to hang out and always expand relationships</li> <li>▪ Open to the presence of new friends</li> <li>▪ Greet each other and visit</li> <li>▪ Know their friends' special days</li> <li>▪ Does not offend others</li> <li>▪ Like to cooperate and respect each other</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>Program developed: fostering organizational culture</p>
<b>Skill as an emphasize leader</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide opportunities fairly</li> <li>▪ Discuss conclusions together</li> <li>▪ Willing to sacrifice and help each other</li> <li>▪ Willing to be a pioneer or be guided</li> <li>▪ Support good ideas</li> <li>▪ Not discriminatory</li> <li>▪ Respect initiative</li> <li>▪ Can work in heterogeneous environments</li> </ul>	<p>Information source: curriculum documents</p> <p>The program developed: basic leadership training (LDK)</p>

In general, the characterization model of local character and excellence applied in implementing the vocational curriculum in Tabalong Regency looks like the chart below.



**Figure 1. Chart of Character Development and Local Excellence in the Vocational Curriculum in Tabalong Regency**

Based on Figure 1, it is seen that the internalization of national character and local excellence in the vocational curriculum can be implemented through relevant subjects, local content, and life skills development. Meanwhile, the mechanism that can be used to accommodate all three is through curricular internalization, extra-curricular activities, and making it a hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum is done through fostering school culture [15]. The praxis can be seen in various moral and spiritual fostering activities carried out in vocational schools in Tabalong Regency.

The pattern of character development and local excellence shown in Figure 1 is school culture-based character education [16]. This pattern uses various moments that exist for the development of character education. Structural moments are used through subjects and learning tools. Polisional moments are carried out through incidental incidental activities. Meanwhile, eventual moments are carried out through activities at school. The pattern is holistic which does not only contain character building programs, but also involves setting regulations [17] so that values are internalized in various aspects of the educational process, both curricular, extracurricular, and hidden curriculum. The mechanism of the hidden curriculum is carried out through the application of good practices of discipline

development, educational interaction, and other school habits that trigger the formation of students' character [18]-[19]. This mechanism was chosen with the aim of students not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually intelligent.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this present study, the conclusions can be formulated as follows; first, character development is carried out in curricular activities (planned and listed in curriculum documents), extra-curricular (being part of supplements or guidance outside the national curriculum provisions but supporting the implementation of the national curriculum), and non-curricular or hidden curriculum (not listed in curriculum documents, it can be in the form of applying a school culture that is in line with the school's vision and mission and more hidden curriculum / hidden curriculum). Overall, the weaknesses of the vocational curriculum of all Vocational Schools in Tabalong Regency are not yet explained in detail and clearly on the aspects of local excellence that will be taught to students. Second, in general, the development of character content and local excellence in Vocational Schools in Tabalong Regency can be classified into several forms of activities: programmed activities, programmed activities within the scope of creativity, and non-programmed activities that are routine, spontaneous, and exemplary.

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## Author Profile

**Heri Susanto** received the M.Pd. (Magister of Education) degrees in History of Education from Sebelas Maret University in 2012. Since December 2008, he currently works at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Lambung Mangkurat University. Heri does research in Teaching Methods and History of Education.