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Developing Democratic Culture through Civic Education

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ABSTRACT

Since the reformation era, socio-political realities of the life of the nation within the frame of democracy in Indonesia have not shown people's intelligence and awareness for real democracy. An important agenda would be to build school as *a laboratory of democracy* and *the microcosmos of democracy*. This research employed a qualitative approach through the case study method. The data collection is through interviews, observation, and document analysis. The findings of this study indicate: (1) democracy education is perceived as effort to teach the understanding of rights and obligations to improve students discipline; (2) the planning and the implementation of civic learning refers to systematic democratic learning; and (3) Student Council activities and extra-curricular activities provide a real experience of democracy and socio-cultural values. In conclusion, the research indicates that the Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara Bandung, West Java, adopts a pattern of disciplinary education that is aligned to the National Education System, religious education, military discipline, and boarding care.

Keywords: Civic education, culture, democratic, dicipline, school-based

INTRODUCTION

The reality of the socio-political life of the nation (within the frame of democracy of Indonesia since the reformation era), has not shown the intelligence and public awareness of nationhood that is expected of in a renewed democracy. Protests and unruly behavior at election events in various regions are forms of deviation that destroy the joints of the nation's democratic life. This fact, according to Sumantri (1984), is called "undemocratic democracy," a

national and state structure of which its democratic structure exists, but the spirit and manifestation are still far from the ideals of democracy.

Based on the above conditions, the upcoming agenda of the government is to develop a constitutional democracy aligned to religion and intellectual superiority in Indonesia (as mandated by the 1945 Constitution and Law No.20 of 2003). The agenda is multidimensional and handled professionally because it is believed that democracy cannot teach itself and it is not inherrited – as it is learned as a life-long learning process (Gandal & Finn, 1992). In addition, Alexis de Toqueville (Branson, 1998) suggested that democracy was not a machine that would go on itself, but must be consciously reproduced, one generation after another. Hence, democracy education is not conducted through trial and error or taken for granted, but systematically designed to foster and develop the principles, values and culture of citizens, develop participatory, and civilized society, and nurture the state of Indonesia.

According to Azra (2001), there are two reasons why the teaching of democracy is an urgent and important need in building democratic culture. First, the rise of the symptoms of "political illiteracy" shows that it happens when people do not know the workings of democracy and its institutions. Second, the increase of political apathism shows the lack of citizen involvement in political processes. Thus, civic education is one of the systemic efforts to seed the

concept, principles and values within democratic cultural behavior.

Democray education is inherently substantive and subordinative civic education at school. In this context, Winataputra (2005) argued that civic education had a strategic role in realizing the development of a democratic civic culture, since civic education was one of the basic modalities in realizing a civilized society. For that purpose, the curriculum and learning process need to be pursued in order to be more directed towards the development goals of the nation's character embodied in the form of civic knowledge transformation, civic disposition, and civic skills that can support the development of civic culture.

In relation to the above statement, Gandal and Finn (1992) suggested that the development of democracy education appeared in two major settings. First is the school-based democracy education model, a model of school-based democracy education in the context of formal education. This model was developed to bring the learning material closer to the real object of the study of social phenomena directly (Suhartono, 2007). The development of this model is carried out through the form of intra and extra curricular learning activities with democratic nuances. Second is the society-based democracy education model where democracy education is within the context of community life.

Both models of teaching democracy should be systematically designed into the

national education system as a whole. This will hopefully create functional-pedagogical interactions within the socio-cultural climate in school and outside school. Classroom learning is developed as a "democracy laboratory", a school environment as a "micro cosmos of democracy", and the wider community as "open global democracy" (Winataputra, 2001). Thus, the students will be directly involved as subjects and objects for the purpose of democracy. This insight by Winataputra and Budimansyah (2007) is called "learning democracy, throughout; in democracy and for democracy".

The Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara Bandung became the setting of this case study because this school implements the education system with four disciplinary approaches, namely: National Education System (UUSPN), authoritarian (military), religious, and dormitory discipline. The objective of this research is to investigate the scholastic-based democracy education at the Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara in Bandung.

The Research Questions are as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of the principal and teachers about the concept of democracy education and the democratic school community?
2. How effective is the use of Civic Education in schools for the learning of democracy?
3. What are the constraints in democracy education in Intra-School Student Organization, extra-curricular activities and boarding school programs?

METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach. According to Creswell (1998) qualitative research is a holistic approach that involves discovery. Qualitative research is also described as an unfolding model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experiences. Qualitative research builds its premises on inductive, rather than deductive reasoning. It is from the observational elements which pose questions that the researcher attempts to explain things. Creswell (1998) also suggested the structure of a case study should be the problem, the context, the issues, and the lessons learned. The data collection for a case study is extensive and is drawn from multiple sources such as direct or participant observations, interviews, archival records or documents, physical artifacts, and audiovisual materials. The researcher must spend time on-site interacting with the cases being studied. The report would include lessons learned or patterns found that connect with theories.

The collection of data and information was done through interviews, participant and non-participant observation, document analysis, and library research. Meanwhile, the source of data for the purpose of analysis was divided into two categories: first, the source of the printed material (bibliography); second, the source of respondents (human resources). Purposive sampling was utilized to choose the respondents for interview. The data analysis techniques are from Miles and Huberman (2007) which consists of

three interactive processes, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion / verification. Table 1 shows the data collection procedure:

Participants

The principal, teachers and students of the Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara Bandung were chosen for the interview (via purposive sampling) as this sampling method allows for the intentional selection of the sample, which possess certain qualities in accordance to the research objectives (Koerber & McMichael, 2008). The number of subjects was determined according to the requirements of purposive sampling, namely, one principal, three civic education teachers in the three classes X, XI and XII; one vice principal (for curriculum), one vice principal (for student affairs and facilities), extracurricular coaches for dormitories, and one student from each of the three classes, X, XI and XII.

Research Setting

The Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara is one of the boarding schools, located in the city of Bandung, West Java. Indonesia. It has three pillars of education in a comprehensive-holistic way, namely academic-based, skill-based and religion-based disciplines. These three pillars of education are developed in three groups of subjects, namely the general subjects (referring to those that have content based on the national curriculum), skills and religion (referring to the local content curriculum).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research (following the order of the Research Questions) are reported in the following sections.

Table 1

Data collection

No.	Research Questions	Interview
1	What are the perceptions of the principal and teachers about the concept of democracy education and the democratic school community?	principal teachers students
2	How effective is the use of Civic Education in schools for the learning of democracy?	principal vice principal for curriculum teachers of Civic Education
3	What are the constraints in democracy education in the intra-school student organization, extra-curricular activities and boarding school programs?	vice principal of the student affairs boarding school counselors Students

Perceptions about the Concept of Democracy Education and the Democratic School Community

The interview and the library research indicated that democracy in education is perceived by the principal, teachers, and students as providing free space for students to develop their interests and talents. Democracy in education is not only considered important, but according to the Principal of the school, there is also a need to build a life together among the citizens of the school. Thus, students will understand what their rights and obligations are within the framework of discipline in schools.

In the context of formal education in Indonesia, the urgency of democracy in education is reflected in the *UUSPN* No. 20, 2003, chapter II article 3, which states that the goal of national education is for the people to "become democratic and responsible citizens." Hence, schools need to build conducive environments, implement social order-pedagogies and provide the atmosphere for the growth of various personal democratic qualities. In short, schools should be built as democracy laboratories.

The data from interviews (of management and teachers) also shows that people believe that the effort to promote democratic values is not only through subjects like civic education. There is a need to have the same vision to make democratic principles as the soul which gives colour for the learning activities in any subject. Civic education is also not understood by teachers as an isolated subject which is taught only in scheduled time only, but should be attributed to many things learned by the students, including many things that happen outside school.

According to the Principal, there are two strategic aspects that need to be put forward in order to establish the democratic school community. First, it concerns that of the pattern and policy of school management which is based on the participation of many parties. Second, it deals with innovative learning practices (democratic teaching), thus further stimulating intellectual curiosity, social awareness, and life skills of the learner community in a school. From the perspective of implementation, democratic schools require a spirit of democracy in the plan, management, and evaluation of education. In this context, Apple and James (1995) suggested that implementing democratic patterns in school management generally included two aspects of organizational structure and work procedures within the structure, and a curriculum design that could lead learners to have various experiences of democratic practices.

In addition, the Principal and teachers believed that democracy in education should give strong attention to human rights at school. They believed that students cannot be treated unfairly. In this context, Apple and James (1995) explained that the condition that needed to be developed in the effort to build a democratic school was that the school needs to provide an open channel of ideas so that everyone could receive information optimally, gave trust to individuals and groups with the capacity

they had to solve school problems, convey criticism as a result of analysis in the process of delivering evaluation of school ideas, problems and policies, show concern for the welfare of others and of public affairs, have a concern for self-esteem, individual rights and minority rights, provide an understanding that the developed democracy has not reflected an idealized democracy, so democracy must continue to be developed and be able to guide the life of humanity; and have an institution that can continue to promote and carry out democratic ways of life.

Effectiveness of Using Civic Education in Schools for Learning Democracy

The interviews and the observations by the researcher indicated that civic education planning includes the development of materials, methods, media, and assessment. Material development follows the basic competency and competency standards formulated in the Content Standards (Permendiknas RI No 22 of 2006), and includes the development of methods, media and assessment aimed at the development of civic knowledge, civic skills and that of civic disposition. The assessment in civic education of democracy should also refer to the achievement of all competency areas of citizenship. So, the assessment by the teacher is not only oriented to the product or result, but done at the beginning, during and the end of learning. Based on Permendiknas RI No 20 Year 2007 with regards the Assessment Standard, the assessment based on this model can be (1) Test: written, oral,

practice and performance, (2) Observation of attitude and behavior (attitude scale), (3) Assignments (home and project duties), and (4) A collection of tasks and student work (portfolio).

The analysis of documents and interviews reveals that the implementation of civic education at the *Integrated High School Krida Nusantara Bandung* applied the model of democracy in education developed by Joyce et al. (2009), namely (1) systematic initial conditioning, conceptual formation, formation of multicultural groups, group work discussion, presentation, reflection and reinforcement, (2) social system: mutual respect among students and teachers, intimacy between students and teachers, the existence of model agreements applied, respect for religious, ethnic, and cultural differences, warm communication in learning, (3) principles of management, in that the teacher has acted as a good facilitator, mediator, counselor, and critic, (4) support system: "moving class" system equipped with a set of LCD, computer, audio and representative libraries, and (5) instructional impact: there is focus on the learning outcomes as opposed to the minimum achievement criteria, where learners are able to answer oral questions, learners dare to question the concepts learned, learners are able to explain concepts; there is impact accompaniment which includes tolerance to differences, politeness, cooperation, helping each other to complete tasks, and learners listen to the opinions of others.

This democratic learning process is important to make the class a miniature

model of democracy that can develop in learners the knowledge and skills in solving social problems through effective cooperation. Democratic teaching strategies and approaches are needed, and according to Winataputra and Budimansyah (2007), it is a movement to make the school the center of democracy through democratic processes in learning. This democratic learning is built in an open, intimate, and respectful atmosphere, and it is opposed to the rigid learning environment, which is full of stress and tension, and loaded with instructions and prescriptive teaching that make learners passive. Tacman (2006) said that "the democratic attitudes of the classrooms are important for improving people's democratic behaviors".

In relation to the ideals of democratic learning as described above, David Kerr's study (1999) on the conception of continuum civic education (Citizenship Education Continuum) is an important contribution. Each continuum according to this study displays different characteristics. The characteristics of the Minimum are thin content, exclusive, elitist, civic education which has formally led content, which is knowledge-based, taught through didactic transmission, and which is easier to achieve and measure in practice. Meanwhile, the characteristics of the Maximum are thick content, inclusive, activist-based, includes citizenship education, has lessons which are participative, process-led, value-based, has interactive interpretation, and is difficult to achieve and measure in practice.

Constraints in Democracy Education

The interviews and the observations pertaining to the research question above, indicated that the activities of the School's Student Organization at the Integrated High school of Krida Nusantara, were just like the activities of Intra-school student organizations in other regular schools. The election mechanism is conducted entirely by the students. What makes it different is that the School's Student Organization provided a more realistic experience in democracy, because it consists of diverse students, in terms of religion, ethnicity, language, and cultural backgrounds. Hence, mutual respect and tolerance became more important to build. The plurality of students in the Intra-School Student Organization becomes a challenge in the process of assimilation, but on the other hand can be an opportunity for communication and integration among culturally diverse students.

Reinforcing the review of the above description, Gandal and Finn (1992) argued that schools might provide a forum for democratic activities and learning outside the classroom, and that in the development of this democratic culture, schools could facilitate an event for students to learn and engage in democratic activities outside the classroom. This democratic learning activity can be done by students in the school's Student Organization and extra curricular activities. The school's Student Organization and extra-curricular activities are organizations developed by students and for students, which can be used as a vehicle

for learning to develop democratic values in real life. According to Gandal and Finn (1992), these activities give students the opportunity to learn to practice democratic norms in school, where they must work together in achieving common goals, and choose leaders, and make decisions about their hobbies and other co-curricular activities.

The development of democratic culture in the socio-cultural environment of the dormitory at the Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara takes place in an atmosphere of familial harmony. The dormitory, according to the teachers in the school, is a symbiotic-mutualism ecosystem, which can build a sense of kinship through the pattern of living together, so it can resemble nationalism and belonging. The head of the dormitory is in charge of ensuring the harmony of life in the dormitory. The pattern of seniority in communications (juniors need to show respect to seniors) is more apparent in the life and activities of this dormitory. This relationship is understood as something that is consistent, is considered to have existed through generations, and is considered "hereditary". However, it is less likely they (seniors) resort to physical contact, because, once that happens, they will be subject to existing school sanctions, or even dismissal. All the teachers in charge of the dormitories agreed that the nature of atmosphere (which was unique because of the students' multi-ethnic, multi religious backgrounds) provided the ultimate challenge – that of preserving and maintaining harmony. This was wonderfully achieved by all the students in the dormitories.

On observing such atmosphere of

boarding schools in Indonesia, Muslimin (2008) claimed that there were 3 features: religious, nationalist-religious, and nationalist. The religious pattern is divided into three sub-patterns, which are fundamentalist, moderate, and liberal. These were the representations of the religious patterns in Indonesia. There are influences of the military (the symbol of nationalist leanings) in this boarding school, the goal of which is to show the seriousness of the teaching of discipline within democracy. Meanwhile, the nationalist-religious style takes up the position of semi-military education combined with religious nuances in its guidance in school. This too, according to the teachers revealed no hitches and problems. Harmony was maintained throughout.

CONCLUSION

The development of a democratic culture through civic education from the perspective of the school-based democracy education in the Integrated High School of Krida Nusantara Bandung adopts a pattern of disciplinary education that is closely associated to the Nasional Education System (UUSPN), religious education, military discipline, and boarding care. The conclusions of this study are as follows : (1) democracy education is perceived as efforts to teach the understanding of rights and obligations with a set of sanctions for students to improve on their discipline, (2) the planning and the implementation of civic learning follows the Standard of Content and the Standard of Process, and within certain limits refers to the norms of democratic

learning (Joyce et al., 2009); (3) Student Council activities and extra-curricular activities provide a real experience of democracy within the differences that exist – that of religion, ethnicity, culture, and socio-cultural context of the dorm. This unique environment in the dorm is able to build the intensity of intercultural, interethnic, and interreligious communication, thus it is able to form symbiotic-mutualism harmony. Dormitory tradition is still maintained and seniority and the priviledges that come with it are mainatined.

The development of democratic culture through civic education within the perspective of "school-based democracy education" at the high school adopts the pattern of education with the application of discipline that refers to the National Education System (UUSPN), religious education, authoritarian discipline (military), and the pattern of parenting. This study recommends that the stakeholders of the high school maintain and strengthen the implementation of democratic learning, and keep progressing with the creation of a democratic school culture which will make it a model school for Indonesia.

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