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TQM Implementation in Character Education:
Lessons Learned from Pesantren Gontor

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Abstract

Due to its significance, character education implementation at Indonesian educational institutions including the Indonesian Islamic Boarding School *(pesantren)* is compulsory. However, the quality of its implementation within *pesantren* needs to be developed. This research was conducted to investigate the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in the character education process as an endeavour to create Indonesian good citizens. To achieve the research objectives, a qualitative case study design at Pesantren Gontor was employed. The research found that the process of character education at this *pesantren* is based on the core values of Gontor. There are some core characters inculcated at Gontor comprising sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, care, freedom, religiousness, tolerance, discipline, and responsibility. Those characters are inculcated through the dynamic totality of campus life which contains a wide range of activities aimed at creating good citizens for Indonesia. The methods of character education are role model, creating a conducive milieu, directing, giving assignments, habituation, instruction, and training. Those methods are underpinned by the implementation of the basic concept of TQM that emphasises customer satisfaction which is limited by Gontor values. Based on the research findings, *pesantren*-based character education which is underpinned by TQM could be adopted by other models of educational institutions.

Keywords: TQM, Character Education, *Pesantren,* Gontor

Introduction

A recent study suggested that educational institutions in Indonesia need to implement qualified character education.[1] This is due to the increasing problems within the country such as student brawls and bullying, misuse of addictive drugs, and a considerable number of corruptions. However, research showed that many educational institutions only produce alumni who have not met the demand of the community since they do not have good emotional quotient, social interaction skills and good character.[2] This leads to a pessimist attitude toward the efficacy of schools in creating good citizens who have a good character. As a result, formal schools are considered an institution that limits the freedom and development of the human being. Therefore, scholars should develop the process of de-schooling society.[3]

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[1] Muchlas Samani & Hariyanto, M.S., *Konsep dan Model Pendidikan Karakter,* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011), p. 1.

[2] Maurice J. Elias, et. al., Social-Emotional Learning and Character and Moral Education in Children, *Journal of Research in Character Education, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 178.

[3] See: Ivan Illich, *Bebas dari Sekolah,* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan-Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1982).

Regardless of the negative attitude toward school efficacy in developing students' potential, character education is still considered an effective tool to create good citizens. This is because character education enables students to develop their emotional quotient and social interaction skills which are beneficial for them to contribute to their community.[4] Moreover, character education enables students to develop their knowledge, internalise democratic values and actualise them in their behaviours.[5] Thus, education institutions could produce good citizens for the Indonesian multicultural society.

Despite the urgent need for character education, many principals of schools still do not have a proper understanding of how character education is implemented.[6] They are also still in doubt about when the character education should be carried out; whether at the level of primary, secondary, or high school.[7] Nevertheless, specific programs and systems which are chosen for the implementation of character education in an educational institution may not be as important as the implementation process. Since each society has different needs and goals, the design of character education has to be based on those needs and goals.[8] As a result, character education could be developed in various models[9] through many strategies and programs.[10]

From the Islamic perspective, character education should be based on Islamic doctrines that prevail in al-Quran and As-Sunnah (the prophetic tradition). The early Muslim thinkers noted the importance of character education. Ibn Miskawaih (932-1030 M) was a classical scholar who studied philosophy of ethics and became known as the father of Islamic Ethics. In his book *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq,* he noted the importance of cultivating good characters *(akhlaq karimah)* and applying them in the actions spontaneously. According to him, the character is a state of the soul that causes people to act without thinking first. He mentioned two prominent properties in the human soul: bad nature (coward, arrogant, and deceitful), and good nature (fair, brave, generous, patient, true,

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[4] Michael W. Corrigan, et. al., The Importance of Multidimensional Baseline Measurements to Assessment of Integrated Character Education Models, *Journal of Research in Character Education, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 103.

[5] E. Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter,* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011), p. 9.

[6] Marvin W. Berkowitz & Melinda C. Bier, What Works in Character Education, *Journal of Research in Character Education, vol. 5, No. 1, 2007,* p. 29.

[7] Ronald B. Jacobson, Public Spaces and Moral Education, *Journal of Research in Character Education, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2009,* p. 63.

[8] Gary Skaggs & Naney Bodenhorn, Relationships Between Implementing Character Education, Student Behavior, and Student Achievement, *Journal of Advanced Academics, Vol. 18, No. 1, Fall 2006,* p. 112.

[9] According to Marvin W. Berkowitz, some of effective character education programs are character education through hidden curriculum, subject oriented approach, Life Skills Training, and other programs conducted by school. See, Marvin W. Berkowitz & Melinda C. Bier, *Op. Cit.,* p. 42.

[10] JoAnne Ferrara & Eileen Santiago, Crossroads: Where Community Meets Character in the Pursuit of Academic Excellence, *Journal of Research in Character Education, vol. 5, No. 1, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 100.

resignation/*tawakkal* and hard work). Character education in this case is to develop a good nature.[11] Accordingly, Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 M) stated that character should be settled in the soul and actions without any deep thought before. Character is not an action, power, and not deep knowledge. It is the state or condition of the soul which is inward (Al-Ghazali, 2000).*[12]*

Research by Mardiyah (2012) highlighted that one of the Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia that consistently implements character education and successfully contributes to creating good citizens for Indonesia is Darussalam Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren Gontor). As one of the oldest *pesantren* in Indonesia, Gontor strives to improve the quality of its education including character education. In this *pesantren,* character education is not only carried out in the classroom, but through the dynamic totality of campus life, which is always coloured by the values, spirit, and philosophy of *pesantren*.[13] The dynamic of campus life as a model of character education in *pesantren* requires a powerful managerial approach. Pesantren Gontor employs Total Quality Management (TQM) in the practice of character education. This managerial approach is chosen by the headmaster due to his desire to manage boarding schools in a modern way. Therefore, the quality of education could be guaranteed.[14]

Many scholars believe that TQM which originated in the business and corporation world can be implemented in the education field. In the education context, TQM is defined by Sallis (2002) as, *"...creating a quality culture where every member of staff aims to delight their customer and where the structure of their organisations allows doing so".*[15] Meanwhile, according to Joseph M. Juran, TQM is compatible to be applied in education because the principal basis of school quality is developing programs and services that meet students' and society's needs.[16] Similarly, Burhanuddin et al. (2004) considered TQM as the basic concept of management which focuses on efforts to develop and empower human resources.[17] Although TQM can be applied in the education field, it must be modified to accommodate the uniqueness of the education which is different from the industrial world. This is because education is a service that produces a product that cannot be

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[11] See. Ibn Miskawaih, *Tahdzib al-Akhlak*, (Beirut: Dar el Kutb al-Taymiyyah, 1405H/1985M).

[12] Al-Ghazali, *Ihya Ulumuddin*, 2nd Volume, (Qairo: Daar al-Taqwa, 2000), p. 599

[13] Mardiyah, Kepemimpinan Kiai dalam Memelihara Budaya Organisasi, *Tsaqafah: Jurnal Peradaban Islam, Vol. 8, No. 1, April 2012*. p. 72.

[14] Interview with the headmaster of Gontor.

[15] Edward Sallis, *Total Quality Management in Education, Third Edition,* (London: Kogan Page Ltd, 2002), p. 3-4.

[16] Jerome S. Arcaro, *Pendidikan Berbasis Mutu : Prinsip-Prinsip Perumusan dan Tata Langkah Penerapan,* Terj. Yosal Irianta,(Yogyakarta, Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), p. 9.

[17] Burhanuddin dkk, *Manajemen Pendidikan*, (Malang : Universitas Negeri Malang, 2004), p.5.

sensed.[18] The implementation of TQM in education typically involves several important elements of leadership at the top-level management, teamwork, focus on the customer (in this case students), employee involvement, training, and tools needed for continuous improvement.[19] Therefore, with TQM, an educational institution puts itself in a position that is subject to accountability and strives towards new learning.[20]

Although many studies on the implementation of TQM in educational institutions have been conducted, it is hard to find research on its application in the character education process at *pesantren*. Therefore, this research was done to fill that literature gap and to find the model of TQM implementation at full boarding system Islamic educational institutions. This article will describe and analyse the practice of character education at Pesantren Gontor as an endeavour to create good citizens for Indonesia, and the implementation of TQM in it. The data within this article was obtained through field work with a qualitative case study approach at Pesantren Gontor from 2016 to 2020.

Core Characters Inculcated at Pesantren Gontor

Based on my fieldwork at this *pesantren*, it seems that Gontor is an educational institution that employs a boarding school system and implements a distinct character education. It can be seen from the process of character building that is based on basic values of Gontor derived from religious teaching, the value of humanity and nationality since the early years of Gontor history. The basic values that shape the character at Gontor are in line with the national curriculum. The national curriculum stated that character which is developed and educated in an educational institution should be based on religious teaching, Pancasila, culture, and the objective of national education.[21]

However, religious teachings are the main foundation of character education in Gontor. They are catalysts in forming students' character and personality. The belief in God, holy books, the hereafter *(yaum al-qiyamah),* and moral teaching in religion, will positively influence character building such as religiousness, sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, care, Islamic brotherhood, freedom, discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence. This notion distinguishes character

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[18] Murad Ali and Rajesh Kumar Shastri, Implementation of Total Quality Management in Higher Education, *Asian Journal of Business Management, 2(1), 2010,* p. 15.

[19] Mete B. Sirvanci, Critical Issues for TQM Implementation in Higher Education, *The TQM Magazine, Vol. 16, No. 6, 2004, pp. 382-386,* p. 386.

[20] Sunil Babbar, Applying Total Quality Management to Educational Instruction, *International Journal of Public Sector Management, Vol. 8, No. 7, 1995,* p. 38.

[21] Pusat Kurikulum, *Pengembangan dan Pendidikan Budaya & Karakter Bangsa: Pedoman Sekolah,* (Jakarta: 2009), p. 9-10.

education in Islamic educational institutions like Gontor from the character education in western countries which is based on relativism.

At Gontor, those basic values are interpreted in the core values of *pesantren* consisting of Five Spirits, mottoes, philosophy, and the orientation of education. Those are the basis of the dynamics of boarding school life. Through the dynamics of campus life which is coloured by those core values, Gontor has educated good citizens who have definite characters such as religious, sincere, hard worker, responsible, tolerant, fair, discipline, care, critical, self-reliance, honest, communicative, careful, diligent, and self-confident. These characters are in line with the thesis of Lickona (1991) and Davidson (2014) which stated two essential and interconnected parts of character: performance character and moral character. Performance character consists of diligence, hard work, a positive attitude, ingenuity, and discipline. Meanwhile, moral character consists of integrity, justice, caring, respect, and cooperation.[22] Moreover, they are also suitable with the rules of the Indonesian government in the guidelines of character education in an educational institution which contains religious, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, self-reliance, democratic, curiosity, the spirit of nationalism, love of country, respect to achievement, communicative, love of peace, love to read, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility.[23] However, some characters have been the trademark and become the distinctiveness of Gontor: religiousness, sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, care, Islamic brotherhood, freedom, discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence. It seems that sincerity is the unique character of Gontor which is not found and has not been developed by Lickona and the Indonesian government.

The Methods of Character Education

Principally, character education at Gontor is carried out in many boarding school activities (daily, weekly, monthly, and annual activity), from waking up in the morning to the time to sleep at the night. A wide range of activities that shape the dynamics of boarding school and involves all elements of boarding school, becomes a core medium in educating character. This kind of method is suitable with the idea of Berkowitz and Melinda (2007) who saw that character education could be done through school programs entirely (inside and outside the classroom).[24] Moreover, this research finding also emphasizes the result of research done by Anwar Fatah (2011) which stated

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[22] Matthew Davidson, Thomas Lickona, Vladimir Khmelkov, Smart and Good Schools: a New Paradigm for High School Character Education, *Hand Book of Moral and Character Education,* p. 373-374.
[23] Ministry of Education of Indonesia, *the Guidelines of Character Education Implementation,* (Jakarta: 2011), p. 3.
[24] Marvin W. Berkowitz & Melinda C. Bier, What Works in Character Education, *Journal of Research in Character Education, vol. 5, No. 1, 2007,* p. 42

that successful character education could be performed through the Whole School Development Approach which requires the involvement of all school's elements (headmaster, teacher, student, and staff). Also, by educating character through various boarding school programs and activities, it means that boarding school gives social experiences to students because they are involved in social interaction during their lives on campus. This method of character education is in line with the thesis of Elias (2007) who proposed the Social Emotional Learning Model.[25]

Characters are instilled and educated through several methods: role model method *(Uswah Hasanah),* creating a conducive milieu, directing method, giving assignments/tasks, habituation, instruction, and training. These kinds of methods are implemented in Gontor a long time ago (before the independence of Indonesia) and are suitable for the methods proposed by H. E. Mulyasa (2011) later.[26] However, a role model is one of the important methods to use, because the value of sincerity, discipline, self-reliance, responsibility, self-confidence, etc., can be effectively educated. Based on the finding of my research, it seems that the headmaster of boarding schools and teachers positioned themselves as the role model for every activity on the campus. Educators should be role models for their students in every aspect of life; spiritually, emotionally, morally, intellectually, and in their productivity. They should be role models for students; in the way of wearing a dress, conduct, speech, and so on. This finding of research clarifies the result of Babbar's research (1995) which stated that character education will be effective if educators positioned themselves as a role model.[27]

Another method used by Gontor to build students' character is creating a conducive milieu. The milieu of education at Gontor contains headmasters, teachers, managers of organisations, and students who live together on an integrated campus. The students' characters are developed during their lives in this milieu. Therefore, everything seen, heard, spoken, felt, and done by students on campus is aimed at educating them. Creating a conducive milieu in character education and involving all elements of boarding school that has been done by Gontor is suitable with 11 principles of effective character education that consist of promoting core ethical values; an understanding of developing character; developing intentional, proactive, and comprehensive approach; creating conducive school community; providing the opportunity for moral action; making a meaningful connection with the academic curriculum; attention to intrinsic motivation; involving all members of the school community; improving collective leadership; involving all stakeholders, and

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[25] Maurice J. Elias, et. al., Social-Emotional Learning and Character and Moral Education in Children, *Journal of Research in Character Education, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 178.
[26] See. H. E. Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter,* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011).
[27] Sunil Babbar, Applying Total Quality Management to Educational Instruction, *International Journal of Public Sector Management, Vol. 8, No. 7, 1995,* p. 52

evaluating school development continuously.[28] It is also reinforced by the idea of Corrigan (2007) who suggested that creating a school environment based on morals and ethics is necessary because the school environment theoretically and empirically influences the character development of students.[29]

Gontor also employed the briefing method to build students' character. In this context, every activity on campus always begins with directing and briefing from the person in charge. The briefing should be focused on the value and philosophy of every activity. Thus, students will understand why they should do the activity, what they do, and know how to do that. By giving briefing and direction before doing some activities, educators can promote core ethical values of boarding school such as sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, Islamic brotherhood, and freedom. This finding is also suitable with 11 principles of effective character education Proposed by Ferrara & Santiago (2007).[30]

Giving the tasks/assignments is another method to educate character in Gontor. On campus, all students are given many tasks and responsibilities such as keeping the cleanliness and security of the campus, managing the organization, organizing the funding, etc. Hence, they have a lot of activities to do and will spend the most time doing positive work. As a result, all students will get social experience during their lives in boarding school.

Another method of character education at Gontor is habituation. In this context, students are accustomed to doing the activities with strict discipline. From easy activities to hard ones, from simple tasks to complicated ones, and so forth. They are accustomed to praying together five times a day, waking up at 03.30 a.m. every day, entering the class on time, to speak with Arabic and English language, wearing dresses according to the code, helping each other, etc. By this method, the boarding school provides an opportunity for moral action and creates a conducive school community as stated by Ferrara & Santiago (2007).[31]

The last method of character education at Gontor is training. This is an important method to develop the quality of teachers and students. So that, they can do many activities and task well. Moreover, according to the result of observation and interviews with informants, in this boarding

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[28] JoAnne Ferrara & Eileen Santiago, Crossroads: Where Community Meets Character in the Pursuit of Academic Excellence, *Journal of Research in Character Education, vol. 5, No. 1, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 98.

[29] Michael W. Corrigan, et. al., The Importance of Multidimensional Baseline Measurements to Assessment of Integrated Character Education Models, *Journal of Research in Character Education, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 105.

[30] JoAnne Ferrara & Eileen Santiago, Crossroads: Where Community Meets Character in the Pursuit of Academic Excellence, *Journal of Research in Character Education, vol. 5, No. 1, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 98.
[31] JoAnne Ferrara & Eileen Santiago, Crossroads: Where Community Meets Character in the Pursuit of Academic Excellence, *Journal of Research in Character Education, vol. 5, No. 1, 2007,* Information Age Publishing, Inc., p. 98.

school, all students are trained to have many responsibilities in a student organisation. They are also trained to do many tasks, live with many friends with different cultural backgrounds, and respect others.

The Strategies of Character Education

According to my fieldwork in Pesantren Gontor, character education in this *pesantren* is developed by strengthening the orientation of education, providing qualified educational institutions, empowering teachers' capacity in leadership and their personality, and involving all elements of *pesantren* in creating a conducive milieu. This could be done by enhancing the cooperation between the school, students' parents, and the community, as mentioned in the blueprint of character education that has been issued by the Ministry of National Education.

The strategies of character education at Gontor consist of three aspects; strategy related to curriculum, figure, and method. Related to curriculum, character education at Gontor is not considered a separate subject/lesson, but it is integrated into the teaching of all subjects. It means that all teachers are character educators and have the same responsibility in building students' character. This research finding is suitable for the strategy proposed by H. E. Mulyasa.[32] However, based on the data of this research, there is no certain syllabus and teaching plan to educate character in all subjects in this boarding school, even the director of Islamic Teachers Training College (ITTC) always requires the teachers to instil character in their teaching. Therefore, the process of character building through teaching the subjects in the class may be not effective.

Besides being educated through the teaching process in the class, the character is also inculcated through students' activity on the campus. But it does not mean that Gontor adopts Supplement Model as Mulyasa proposed in educating character since character at Gontor is not educated only through extra-curricular activities, but through the dynamics of campus life during 24 hours. Boarding school is a miniature of society, all activities and elements in it are media of character education. In this case, character education is carried out by transforming Gontor cultures into students in their daily lives. The cultures that have been the character of this institution should be transformed by students by accustoming them to do every activity and program on the campus based on the value of boarding school. It is suitable with the blueprint of character education that has been designed by the ministry of national education. The blueprint stated that character education should be implemented through social interaction between all elements in an educational

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[32]H. E. Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter,* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011), p. 59.

institution. The interaction is limited by the value of the institution. Hence, there is a cultural transformation in students' life on the campus.

Concerning the figure, the strategy of character education is implemented by involving all elements of boarding school (headmaster, director of school, chief of all organisations, managers, staff) in the process of character education. All of them are role models for students in many aspects (conduct, way of speaking, dress code, discipline, etc). This research finding clarifies the idea of Muchlas Samani & Hariyanto (2011).[33]

The Implementation of TQM in the Character Education Process

Based on the results of the interview, observation, and written document, it can be concluded that Gontor has been focusing on the quality of all programs and activities to build students' character. The *pesantren* considers students as the focus of attention. The headmaster of Gontor and teachers stay with students in an integrated campus, accompany them, and supervise them in every activity. They keep the values of Gontor as the basis of all programs and activities. Thus, *pesantren* has become a quality (TQM) institution because it has created a quality culture and focused on students in organising every activity to build their character. It is suitable with the idea of Edward Sallis about TQM in the world of education.[34] It also clarifies the thesis of Burhanuddin who considered TQM as the basic concept of management which focuses on efforts to develop and empower human resources.[35] Gontor in this case has been developing students' character to be fully human beings and qualified human resources.

The finding of this research states that Gontor has implemented TQM in the character education process. The implementation of TQM in the process of character education can be explained as follow:

1. The Implementation of TQM Core Principles

1.1. Customer Satisfaction

According to Edward Sallis, a customer in the world of education is a stakeholder.[36] Teachers as internal stakeholders and students as primary external stakeholders are the subject of character education. At Gontor, they got tremendous attention from the institution. It can be seen from the

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[33]Muchlas Samani & Drs. Hariyanto, M.S., *Konsep dan Model Pendidikan Karakter,* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011), p. 144.

[34]Edward Sallis, *Total Quality Management in Education, Third Edition,* (London: Kogan Page Ltd, 2002), p. 119.

[35]Burhanuddin dkk, *Manajemen Pendidikan,* (Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang, 2004), p. 5.

[36]Edward Sallis, p. 22.

commitment of the headmaster of Gontor to keep the values of boarding school as the foundation of every program and activity on the campus. This research found that all potency and resources in boarding schools are used as much as possible for the benefit of the character education process. All activities on campus focused on educating them and inculcating their character. However, during the process of character education, the headmaster and teachers work together to keep the values of Gontor as the basis. Every program and activity to build students' character should not deviate from them. It means that, although students' talent, interest, and potency are given the media to develop, they are under the control of the core values of Gontor. They are supervised and guided by teachers to keep those values as the basis of character education, so that, not all students' wants and needs are met by boarding school. This is in contrast with the idea of Edward Sallis who said that the primary mission of a TQM institution is to meet the needs and wants of its customers (students).[37]

1.2. Respect for Everyone

All elements of the boarding school (headmaster, director, chief of organizations, managers, staff) are considered human resources of the institution. Therefore, all of them are involved in students' activities. They are role models for the students and supervisors for many student organisations. They are also involved in making the policy and determining the planning of many programs. It is suitable with the idea of Fandy Tjiptono and Anastasia Diana who said that the quality education organisation considers each person as the most valuable organisation's resource. Therefore, all of them are treated well and allowed to participate in decision making.[38]

It can also be seen that the teachers as an important element in the process of character education in Gontor, are always guided and supervised directly by the headmaster. The headmaster of Gontor pays close attention to enhancing teachers' integration into the values, idealism, philosophy, and system of Gontor. Thus, they can promote the core ethical values of Gontor as a requirement to effectively educate students' character as JoAnne Ferrara stated.[39]

1.3. Fact-Based Management

The model of decision making in Gontor is bottom up, not top down. It means that teachers who are the most frequent person to be involved in character education, have much data concerning the process of character education. The data should be delivered to the headmaster to be the basis and consideration of every decision. The headmaster of Gontor also tries to master every problem

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[37]Edward Sallis, p. 27-28.

[38]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, *Total Quality Management – Edisi Revisi.*(Yogyakarta: Andi, 2003), p. 14.

[39]JoAnne Ferrara & Eileen Santiago, p. 98.

related to the character education process. Besides receiving a lot of data from teachers, he also checks the data immediately. Because according to him, the successful leader is the one who can identify the problems of the organisation, understand them, master them, and solve them.

Therefore, management and organisation can focus on the efforts to certain important situations and conditions. Moreover, according to Fandy Tjiptono and Anastasia Diana, by relying on data, management can predict the result of every decision and action done by a member of the organisation.[40] Hence, the decision and policy of the organisation will be suitable for the goal.

1.4. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

The quality of the character education process at Gontor is improved by designing good planning for it. The whole character education programs that have been planned are always implemented consistently. During the process of each program implementation, all elements of the boarding school study how the result of the action plan is. Is it suitable for the plan or not? If there are deviations from the standard in an activity or program, then the supervisor will investigate why it happened. This finding of research clarifies the idea of Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana that a TQM organisation should investigate and fix the causes of deviation from the particular program. The manager should look for the main causes of the problem, not just solve the problem.[41] The collected data about the deviation of a particular program will be used as consideration to take the next policy, design a better program, and fix the system. It means that boarding school has applied the Deming Cycle of PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action)[42] to continuously improve the quality of character education.

The PDCA Cycle is an effective technique to continuously improve quality. It means, firstly, the leader/manager should plan every activity carefully. In Gontor, it is done by the Waqf Board every six months and done by managers of a student organisation in Ramadhan month with the supervision of teachers and the Guidance and Counselling Department. Secondly, he has to do the planning consistently. Thirdly, he ought to study and check the result, whether it is suitable for the plan or not. And the last, he must make the policy related to the result obtained; he should identify the suitability of activity and planning, use the scientific approach, develop the quality improvement planning, and repeat the step in the cycle.[43]

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[40]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, p. 15.

[41]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, p. 266.

[42]Edward Sallis, p. 7.

[43]Dale H. Besterfield, *Total Quality Management*, (New Jersey: Prantice Hall, 2003), hal. 133-134.

2. Implementation of TQM Main Elements

According to Goetsch & Davis (1994), some key elements distinguish TQM as a management approach from other approaches. In conducting character education, Gontor applies the following key elements of TQM:

2.1. Focus on Customer

According to Edward Sallis, the customer in the world of education is usually called by stakeholders which are divided into four groups; primary external customers (students) who directly received educational services, secondary external customers (students' parents, head of government, worker), tertiary external customer (job market, government, community), and internal customer (teacher or educator and staff).[44] In the TQM approach, internal and external customers receive equal attention because the quality of the product (educational service) is largely determined by external customers, while the quality of the process and environment related to products or services is largely determined by internal customers.[45] In line with this idea, teachers and students in the process of education in Gontor are the focus of attention. Students and teachers can enjoy all activities done on campus. This is because they can find media to actualise their talents and interests, and to involve in the process of character education.

2.2. Obsession with Quality

In performing character education, boarding schools have a great obsession with the quality. It can be seen from the speech, guidelines, and direction of the headmaster on various occasions, that the whole elements of Gontor should do their best in carrying out their duties and obligations concerning the process of character education. Teachers who are becoming a supervisor and responsible for student activities are committed to keeping and enhancing the quality of the character education process. By participating in and overseeing each program, teachers are well aware of student activities on the campus. Therefore, they can master the problems and can maintain the quality of the program they are handling. This condition is suitable with the idea of Goetsch and Davis (1994) about quality obsession as a key element of TQM because headmasters of boarding schools, teachers, and students are doing their best to meet or even exceed the quality standards that have been set for every activity and program of character education.

The movement to always maintain the quality of each activity can also be seen in the campus atmosphere that is designed to support the process of character education. In the corners of the campus and on the walls of buildings, there are the writing of values and philosophy of Gontor as

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[44]Edward Sallis, p. 22.

[45]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, p. 266.

the basic foundation of character education implementation. Five spirits of Gontor, the motto, the verses of the Qur'an, and the wise words of the founding father and headmaster of Gontor are decorating the boarding school campus. This is done to create a conducive school community, promote core ethical values, and involve all stakeholders to take part in the process of effective character education as stated by JoAnne Ferrara.[46] This is also intended to give an understanding to the students and teachers about the importance of maintaining and enhancing the quality of education by basing it on the Islamic values and philosophy of Gontor.

2.3. Scientific Approach

In implementing and managing programs of character education, the headmaster of Gontor has a big effort to master every problem of it by directly involving himself in the student activities, or by requesting information from teachers. It means that accurate data concerning the process of character education is used to make a decision, design the next plan, and solve the problem. It is suitable for one of the key elements in TQM namely by Scientific Approach.[47] The approach emphasizes the use of data in preparing benchmarks, monitoring performance, and implementing improvements.

Moreover, based on the data of this research, teachers as responsible for student activities, making the data a critical thing in managing every activity. To determine whether a student is a good achievement or not, they use real data to consider. The effort to make the valid data as a reference in a policy making can be seen in the Job Deliberation Program of a student organization, the meeting of director and teachers in discussing the result of the examination, and the meeting of Guidance and Counselling staff with ITTC staff to determine students' reward or punishment.

2.4. Long-Term Commitment

On many occasions, the headmaster of Gontor always says that there is still a long way to reach the objectives of boarding school. One of the targets is to spread the Gontor civilisation. This point should be begun from Gontor itself by strengthening the organisational culture on the campus. This effort requires qualified human resources, so that, the headmaster of Gontor is very concerned to recruit cadres who will do their best for boarding school throughout their life. At the same time, the headmaster also does his best to integrate the cadres into the values of Gontor. It means that boarding school has a long-term commitment to the quality of the educational process. As one of

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[46]JoAnne Ferrara & Eileen Santiago, p. 98.

[47]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, p. 16.

the key elements of TQM, long-term commitment is very important to manage cultural change to successfully implement TQM.[48]

2.5. Teamwork

In Gontor, character education is an institutional responsibility with support from the community and the parents. There is collaboration and teamwork between the headmaster, teachers, staff, manager of a student organisation, and all students. The headmaster, with support from Guidance and Counselling Department staff, organise and manage all student activities for 24 hours on campus.

According to Goetsch and Davis (1994), a TQM organisation should have teamwork, partnership, and relationships to improve quality.[49] Hence, character education in Gontor took place in a conducive milieu that involves all elements of boarding school.

2.6. Controlled Freedom

Although freedom is one of Boarding School Five Spirits, it does not mean that teachers and students have absolute freedom. According to the headmaster, freedom in boarding school is freedom with certain limitations. The freedom in actualising talent and creativity in the process of education is limited by the standard, value, and system of Gontor. Even though all students and teachers have the freedom to self-actualise, the values, standards, and system of Gontor must remain a priority.

It means that there is a standard set to control freedom in the boarding school during the process of character education. It is suitable for one of the key elements of TQM implementation.

2.7. The Involvement and Empowerment of Teachers and Students

In Gontor, the whole teachers and students are involved in all character education programs. Through existing organizations, they actualize their creativity and ability to build the character of students. More than that, they also continue to receive guidance and direction from the headmaster of Gontor to increase their capacity and capability. According to Goetsch and Davis (1994), there are two benefits of teachers' and students' involvement and empowerment during the process of character education. First, it allows the production of better decisions, better planning, and more effective improvement concerning the process of character education. Second, it improves the sense of belonging and responsibility among boarding school components (headmaster, teachers, and students).

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[48]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, p. 16.

[49]Fandy Tjiptono & Anastasia Diana, p. 16.

Conclusion

Based on the finding and data analysis of this case study, it could be concluded that the implementation of character education in Gontor is based on basic values of boarding school which is sourced from religious teaching, the value of humanity and nationality. Those values are manifested in the Five Spirits of boarding school, motto, philosophy, and orientation of Gontor Institution. Gontor has educated students to be good citizens who have good characteristics such as religiousness, sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, care, Islamic brotherhood, freedom, discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence. These characteristics are needed by Indonesian good citizens to deal with the challenge of Indonesian multicultural society. This thesis confirms the idea of Lickona and Davidson which stated two essential and interconnected parts of character: Performance Character consists of diligence, hard work, positive attitude, ingenuity, and discipline; Moral Character consists of integrity, justice, caring, respect, and cooperation. They are also suitable with the regulations of the Indonesian government in the guidelines of character education within the educational institution which contains religious, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, self-reliance, democratic, curiosity, the spirit of nationalism, love of country, respect to achievement, communicative, love of peace, love to read, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility. Those characters should be attributed to Indonesian people to be good citizens.

Meanwhile, the strategies of character education in Gontor are containing three aspects; strategy related to curriculum, figure, and method. Related to curriculum, character education in Gontor is not considered a separate subject/lesson, but it is integrated into the teaching of all subjects in the class even though there is no certain syllabus for that. Moreover, character education is also implemented outside the class through the dynamics of campus life. This process plays an important role more than in the class. In this case, all teachers are character educators and have the same responsibility in building students' character. Concerning figures, the strategy of character education is implemented by involving all elements of boarding school (headmaster, director of school, chief of all organizations, managers, staff) in the process of character education. All of them are role models for students in many aspects (conduct, way of speaking, dress code, discipline, etc). Concerning the method, the strategy of character education is implemented by giving the direction and briefing to students before doing activities on the campus, applying rewards and punishment, and enforcement of discipline.

The implementation of TQM in the character education process in Gontor is limited by the implementation of TQM core principles and TQM main elements. The core principles which are implemented in the process of character education are; customer satisfaction, respect for everyone,

fact-based management, and continuous quality improvement. Meanwhile, the main elements of TQM which are implemented in Gontor are; focus on the customer, obsession with quality, scientific approach, long term commitment, teamwork, controlled freedom, unity of purpose, and the involvement and empowerment of teachers and students. This indicates that the implementation of TQM in certain educational institutions will vary with other institutions.

However, the implementation of TQM in the character education process in Gontor is limited to the basic concept of TQM which contains core principles and the main element of TQM. By implementing the basic principles and key elements of TQM, the educational institution has a never-ending effort to continually increase the quality of education. It is a necessity of every educational institution because it gets the same demands with the world of industry in terms of quality of product or service. In this case, it seems that Gontor implemented the basic principle and key element of TQM to enhance the quality of educational service and achieve high-quality products (educational service).

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