

Management of National Defense Character Education at Sman 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java

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ABSTRACT

Character education integrated with the spirit of defending the country plays a vital role in shaping a young generation that is not only intellectually superior, but also noble in character. This study aims to examine in depth the implementation of state defense character management at SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa Jawa timur, a school that combines an academic curriculum with the development of semi-military discipline. This innovation is implemented through a systematic education management approach, including the planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluation stages on a regular basis. The implementation of this program targets the entire education ecosystem, with the main focus on students, and involves the active role of teachers, dormitory coaches, parents, and strategic partners such as the Indonesian Air Force and the Education Office.

The results of the implementation showed a significant positive impact, where students became more disciplined, had a strong sense of nationalism, and showed an increase in responsibility and leadership. The school environment has also become much more orderly, safe, and conducive, which also encourages the improvement of students' academic and non-academic achievements. This success also has an impact on increasing public trust in the quality of education at the school. Although there are obstacles in its implementation, such as students' difficulties in adapting to strict rules and limited facilities, this has been successfully overcome through a shift in strategy towards a more persuasive, dialogical, and personal coaching approach. Overall, planned, consistent, and collaborative character management has proven effective in making the value of defending the country a real and sustainable school culture.

Keywords: Character Education, Defense of the State, School Management, SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa, Discipline.

INTRODUCTION

Character education plays a vital role in shaping the identity of Indonesian citizens. Through this process, education is expected to produce a generation that is not only intellectually excellent but also possesses a noble character and morals. In this context, taruna-based (cadet-style) schools emerge as a foundational reference for values that guide students toward constructive actions, reinforcing the premise that character education is an urgent necessity for the nation. This aligns with the mandate of the National Education Law in Indonesia, which emphasizes that education must continuously evolve and adapt to changing times to achieve designated national objectives. The regulation asserts that the essence of education is to develop the potential of learners so they grow into individuals who are faithful, devoted to God Almighty, noble, capable, creative, independent, and responsible democratic citizens.

Furthermore, within the framework of nationhood, character education is inextricably linked to the spirit of national defense (bela negara). This concept is constitutionally regulated in Article 27 Paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Law Number 3 of 2002 concerning National Defense. SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java occupies a strategic position in internalizing these national defense values, as the school combines the national academic curriculum with specialized character building that emphasizes semi-military discipline. However, to prevent these values from becoming mere artificial ceremonial routines, a well-planned, systematic, and measurable management framework is required to transform them into a

manifest school culture. Given these conditions, this article is designed to thoroughly examine how the management of national defense character education is implemented at SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java.

Integrating national defense values into the school management system is a vital strategic step. The objective is not solely to pursue academic achievement, but to empower student character in a tangible manner. Values such as love for the homeland, national awareness, discipline, and the spirit of devotion must be internalized through systematic school program planning, execution, and evaluation. In practice, this culture is reflected in the consistency of school management, ranging from the enforcement of code of conduct, routine flag ceremonies, to the scope of extracurricular activities and student leadership. Teachers and staff must also serve as role models in performing their duties and maintaining high ethical standards. All of these elements form a cohesive school culture centered on the spirit of national defense.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design to explore the character management system in a deep and contextual manner. The research focuses on the managerial activities applied in internalizing national defense values within a boarding school ecosystem.

Research Subjects and Location: This research was conducted at SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique to gather credible data from key actors. The primary informants in this study include the Principal as the chief manager, the Vice Principal of Student Affairs as the field coordinator, the Vice Principal of Curriculum as the evaluation lead, Cadet Instructors from the Indonesian Air Force (TNI AU) personnel, Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers, Homeroom teachers, and representatives of the Student Council (OSIS) and Cadets (Taruna/Taruni).

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques: Data were gathered using three primary techniques to ensure the depth of scientific analysis:

- **In-depth Interviews:** Conducted in a semi-structured manner using interview guides to explore annual planning, organizational task allocation, program execution mechanisms, and operational constraints in the field.

- **Participant Observation:** The researcher directly observed the school climate, culture, daily interaction patterns, boarding house supervision routines, and cadet activities (such as morning and evening roll calls, flag ceremonies, and leadership training).

Documentation Study: Collecting and reviewing formal school legality documents, boarding curriculum guidelines, the School Action Plan (RKS), cadet rules and regulations, attitude assessment instruments (character report cards), and external partnership Memorandums of Understanding (MoU).

Data Analysis Techniques: The data analysis process followed the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which consists of three concurrent streams:

1. **Data Condensation:** Selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data from interview transcripts and field notes to align with the research focus.

2. **Data Display:** Organizing the condensed information into narrative texts and matrix tables to map out the management flow clearly.

3. **Conclusion Drawing and Verification:** Interpreting the meaning of the displayed data and verifying it through cross-checking in the field to ensure validity.

Data trustworthiness was secured through triangulation techniques, including source triangulation (comparing information from the principal, instructors, and cadets) and method triangulation (aligning interviews with document facts and field observations).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Organizational Structure and Managerial Innovation Mechanisms

The implementation structure of this innovation at SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java is arranged systematically to guarantee the effectiveness and sustainability of character development. This governance structure distributes roles collaboratively across all components of the educational ecosystem, as detailed in the following table:

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPONENT	PRIMARY ROLE AND FUNCTION IN CHARACTER MANAGEMENT
Principal	Holds absolute executive control as the chief officer, directs strategic policies, serves as the ultimate decision-maker, and conducts general supervision over all school programs.
Vice Principal of Student Affairs	Acts as the program coordinator; manages planning, technical execution, field control, and facilitates cross-departmental communication.
Vice Principal of Curriculum	Leads the periodic evaluation team to assess the effectiveness of innovation implementation and compiles recommendations for continuous quality improvement.
Cadet Instructors (TNI AU Personnel)	Fully responsible for character building, enforcing strict military-style discipline, and training student leadership through physical and dormitory cadet activities.
Counseling Teachers & Homeroom Teachers	Provide psychological guidance, intensive behavioral tracking of individual student growth, and ensure consistent moral guidance in classrooms.
Student Council (OSIS) Board	Represent the student body in supporting programs and act as peer models for other cadets to foster positive student compliance.

The operational mechanism of this character-building program moves circularly through four main integrated stages within the school management framework:

1. **Formulating the Annual Plan:** The baseline stage where the school sets measurable targets, success indicators, types of activities, and implementation timelines that strictly align with the institutional vision.
2. **Perception Alignment (Socialization):** Focused on transparent communication with teachers, instructors, and students to build a shared vision, collective commitment, and clarify mandatory roles.
3. **Integrated Value Implementation:** Translating national defense values into concrete actions. Character is not taught as an isolated subject, but seamlessly embedded into academic teaching, extracurriculars, mental coaching, and daily boarding routines.
4. **Routine Monitoring and Evaluation:** Periodic oversight to ensure activities stay aligned with the initial plan. Operational challenges and achievements discovered during evaluations serve as substantive feedback for the next cycle.

B. Character Building Dimensions and Target Ecosystem

This management innovation program is comprehensively designed to reach all components of the educational ecosystem with explicit target definitions:

- **Students (Cadets):** Serving as the central focus of character internalization and behavioral development.
- **Teachers and Education Staff:** Carrying a dual role as program executors and primary role models. Through pedagogical approaches and exemplary conduct, educators ensure moral values are consistently delivered.
- **Dormitory Supervisors:** Acting as strategic partners for independent character building outside formal school hours by establishing ordered routines.
- **Parents:** Crucial external partners. Synergy between the school and families ensures that the values instilled at the dormitory are reinforced at home, creating continuity.

The substantive material of national defense character building concentrates on four core pillars: discipline, nationalism, responsibility, and leadership. Discipline is forged through strict adherence to school regulations and meticulous time management. Patriotism is nurtured by introducing national history and honoring state symbols. Responsibility is trained by habituating students to fulfill academic and organizational duties, while leadership is honed through student council involvement, group collaborations, and self-development programs that demand initiative.

The boarding school system plays a vital role in this internalization process through ordered, independent, and structured living. The specific strength of this school lies in the integration of national defense and aerospace learning, taught directly by active Indonesian Air Force personnel. This synergy offers empirical experiences for students to comprehend national insights, military discipline, and community service through a blend of theory and field practice.

C. Achievements, Field Obstacles, and Solution Analysis

Indicators of Success and Impact: The implementation of this innovation has yielded measurable impacts on student behavior and school culture. The effectiveness of discipline management is evident from the uniformity, neatness, and punctuality of the cadets. Improved behavioral scores on character report cards prove that integrity, accountability, and social awareness have taken root. The learning environment has become more conducive due to a shared moral commitment among all school members. Long-term impacts are manifest in the rise of academic and non-academic student achievements, accompanied by strengthening public trust from parents and the community.

Analysis of Obstacles: Field realities indicate that the cadets' adaptation process encounters socio-behavioral frictions. The primary barrier arises from the initial resistance of some new students who struggle to adjust to rigid semi-military discipline due to diverse socio-economic backgrounds, regional cultures, and domestic parenting styles. Additionally, technical factors such as capacity limitations of dormitory infrastructure and physical training facilities present minor operational bottlenecks.

Constructive Alternatives and Solutions: To address these challenges, the management of SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java repositioned its strategy by prioritizing a persuasive and humanistic approach. The focus shifted from rigid rule enforcement to creating dialogue spaces, emotional understanding, and individual mentoring. Operationally, this is achieved by strengthening counseling services, persuasive communication by boarding staff, and active modeling by educators. This human-centric approach successfully lowered student resistance without compromising the targeted national defense character standards.

D. Strategic Collaboration and Innovation Sustainability

The sustainability of this innovation relies on formal collaborations (MoUs) between the school and three pillars: Parents, the Indonesian Air Force (TNI AU), and the Department of Education. The Air Force provides instructional legitimacy for tactical discipline training, while the Department of Education provides the regulatory umbrella to ensure that innovations align with the national curriculum framework. This partnership manifests in joint leadership training, integrated national seminars, and community service programs.

To guarantee that the program remains permanent rather than temporary, a three-year implementation roadmap was designed:

- **Year One (Foundation Phase):** Focuses on program socialization, resource mapping, and drafting policy frameworks, technical guidelines, and organizing core committees.
- **Year Two (Diffusion Phase):** Full program deployment across all academic and non-academic sectors, accompanied by initial formative evaluations to map operational bottlenecks.
- **Year Three (Maturity Phase):** Centered on refinement, scaling up good practices, and introducing adaptive sub-innovations based on longitudinal evaluation feedback.

Institutionally, the national defense program has been formally codified into the School Action Plan (RKS). This integration guarantees that the innovation possesses a solid medium-term legal foundation and a definitive operational budget allocation. Backed by professional management, routine digital monitoring updates, and continuous teacher capacity building, this program holds strong potential for long-term sustainability and benchmarking across Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the management of national defense character education at SMAN 3 Taruna Angkasa East Java has been implemented in a systematic, structured, and integrative manner through a complete managerial cycle comprising annual planning, perception alignment, integrated execution, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. The tripartite strategic collaboration formalized through MoUs between the school, the Indonesian Air Force (TNI AU), and parents serves as the core pillar of this program's success, particularly in internalizing the four core values of discipline, nationalism, responsibility, and leadership.

Although field operations encountered sociological hurdles in the form of adaptive resistance from new cadets due to heterogeneous cultural backgrounds and domestic parenting styles, the school management successfully mitigated these challenges by pivoting from a coercive approach to a persuasive-humanistic model based on individual mentoring and optimized guidance counseling. The long-term sustainability of this educational innovation is institutionally secured through its formal integration into the School Action Plan (RKS) and definitive budgetary backing. This cadet-based governance model has not only enhanced student behavioral quality and public trust but also holds high urgency and potential to serve as an exemplary model (benchmarking) for character education restructuring in secondary education institutions throughout Indonesia.

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