

Christian Character Building for Police Cadets: A Community Service Program at SPN Polda Sulut, Manado

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ABSTRAK

This community service program aims to strengthen Christian character building among police cadets at SPN Polda Sulut, Manado, as an integral component of ethical formation and professional preparedness. Police cadets face complex moral challenges in contemporary law enforcement, including integrity dilemmas, public accountability, and pressure-filled decision-making environments. Grounded in Christian values such as integrity, discipline, compassion, responsibility, and servant leadership, the program was designed to support the development of moral character alongside technical and physical training. The program employed a participatory and educational approach through a series of structured activities, including character-building seminars, reflective Bible-based discussions, group counseling sessions, and interactive case studies relevant to policing contexts. These activities were facilitated by academics and religious practitioners and were aligned with the institutional vision of producing professional, ethical, and community-oriented police officers. The implementation stages consisted of needs assessment, program socialization, delivery of learning modules, and evaluation through observation and participant feedback. The results indicate positive outcomes in enhancing cadets' awareness of ethical responsibilities, strengthening moral reasoning, and fostering attitudes of empathy, self-control, and accountability. Participants demonstrated improved understanding of how Christian values can be practically applied in law enforcement duties, particularly in serving the community with fairness and respect. Moreover, the program contributed to creating a supportive moral environment within the training institution. In conclusion, Christian character building through community service programs plays a significant role in shaping the moral foundation of police cadets. This initiative is expected to have a sustainable impact on personal integrity and professional conduct, thereby supporting the realization of trustworthy and humane policing in society.

Keywords: Christian character building; police cadets; community service program; ethical leadership; moral development.

INTRODUCTION

Police education is not only concerned with physical discipline and legal knowledge but also with the moral and spiritual integrity required in public service. In Indonesia, especially in North Sulawesi, Christian values play a significant role in shaping ethical behavior, compassion, responsibility, and leadership in society. Police cadets, as future law enforcement officers, must possess strong character foundations to perform their duties with justice and humanity. This necessitates a curriculum that integrates spiritual formation, cultivating not only professional competence but also the civic virtues essential for upholding public trust and acting as agents of positive change within their communities (C. Apandie and K. Karolina, 2021).

SPN Polda Sulut, located in Manado, provides professional training for future police officers. However, the challenges of modern law enforcement such as increasing social complexity, ethical dilemmas, and public expectations—require additional reinforcement of moral and spiritual values. Character building rooted in Christian education helps strengthen cadets' internal motivations, decision-making frameworks, and empathy toward the community. This approach ensures that cadets develop a comprehensive understanding of their roles, extending beyond mere enforcement to encompass service, integrity, and ethical leadership in diverse societal contexts (N. Zuriah and H. Sunaryo, 2018). Indeed, character education, which encompasses aspects of personality learned through experience, training, and socialization, is critical for transforming students into intelligent and virtuous individuals who can drive change in society, leading to a more just, humane, and improved national life (D. B. Arif, (2018). Such educational frameworks recognize the necessity for individuals to embody qualities like honesty, empathy, self-discipline, and perseverance to contribute effectively to society (S. Sarwi, A. Alim, S. Fathonah, and B. Subali, 2020).

Based on this context, a community service program was implemented to support the spiritual formation of police cadets. The program seeks to integrate Christian character principles into daily practices, reinforce ethical conduct, and encourage cadets to serve with integrity and compassion. This initiative underscores the national policy emphasizing student character development which, though crucial, often requires concrete procedural implementation to yield intended results (N. Silalahi, E. J. Simarmata, and R. Samosir,2024). Specifically, this program focuses on cultivating a range of moral attributes, including honesty, respect, responsibility, and empathy, aligning with the core tenets of Christian pedagogy (S. Rahmelia and C. Apandie,2023). This is achieved through a structured curriculum and experiential learning opportunities designed to foster both personal conviction and practical application of these values in their prospective careers (J. N. D. Juanto, S. Telaumbanua, K. S. Mangero, and D. Sianipar,2022). By prioritizing character education early, such programs aim to mitigate societal problems caused by human interventions and equip cadets to become agents of positive change within their communities (E. Nusantari, R. Utina, A. S. Katili, Y. Tamu, and I. Damopolii,2020).

METHOD

The community service program was implemented through several structured and systematic stages to ensure alignment with the objectives of Christian character formation among police cadets.

Program Location and Participants

The program was conducted at **SPN Polda Sulut**, Manado. The participants consisted of approximately **300 police cadets** who took part in Christian worship services and character formation activities. The high level of participation reflects strong institutional commitment to holistic cadet development, integrating spiritual and ethical dimensions alongside physical, academic, and tactical police training. The selection of police cadets as program participants was based on the understanding that moral integrity and ethical character are foundational competencies for future law enforcement officers. Previous studies emphasize that character education plays a crucial role in shaping ethical awareness, discipline, and social responsibility among young adults preparing for professional service roles. Therefore, SPN Polda Sulut provided a strategic and relevant setting to directly engage future police officers in structured Christian character-building activities that support professional ethics and public service values.

Activity Design and Implementation

The community service program was designed using a participatory and reflective approach and consisted of four main components:

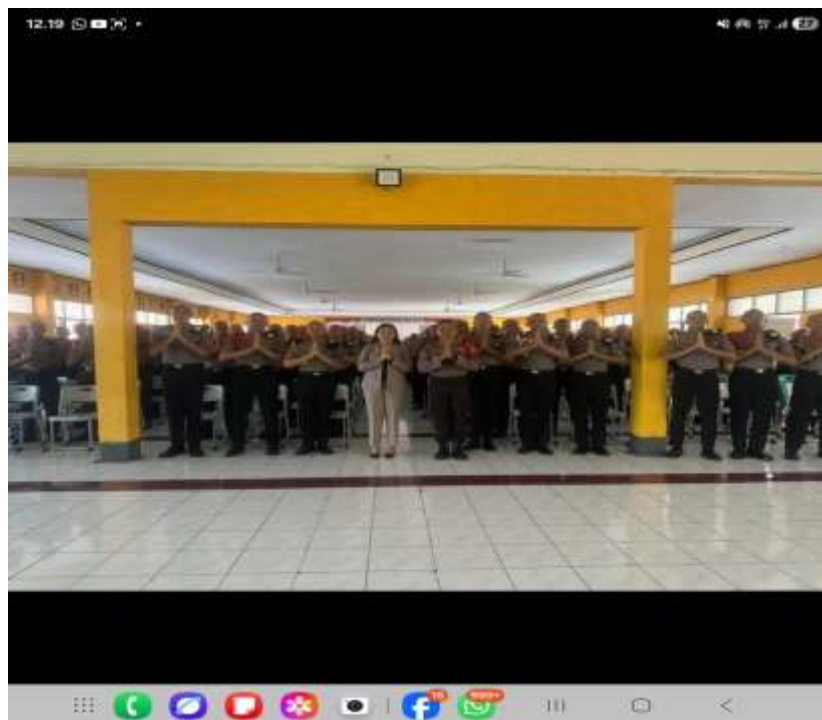
Christian Worship Sessions

Christian worship sessions were conducted in the chapel of SPN Polda Sulut and included praise and worship, communal prayer, Scripture readings, and sermons emphasizing biblical values related to justice, integrity, servant leadership, compassion, and responsibility. These sessions aimed to nurture spiritual awareness and moral accountability among cadets, reinforcing the alignment between personal faith and professional ethics. Following worship activities, guided discussions were held to encourage cadets to reflect on the practical application of Christian principles in real-life policing situations. This reflective process supported the development of ethical discernment and moral reasoning relevant to law enforcement duties.



Fixture 1 Character-Building Seminars

Character-building seminars focused on core values such as integrity, discipline, honesty, service, empathy, and responsibility. The seminars employed interactive learning methods, including case studies, scenario analysis, and group discussions, allowing cadets to critically examine ethical dilemmas commonly faced in policing contexts. This interactive approach encouraged active participation and facilitated deeper internalization of Christian values, strengthening cadets' capacity for ethical decision-making and emotional self-regulation in complex operational environments.



Group Reflection Activities

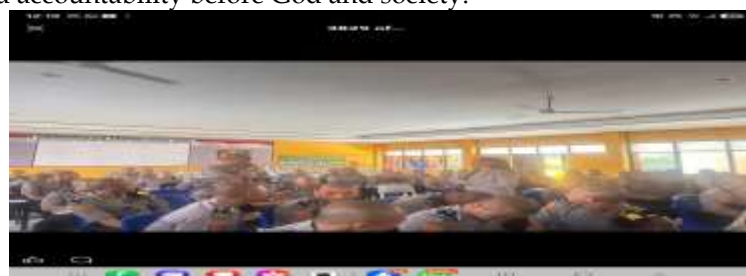
Cadets were organized into small discussion groups to share personal experiences, moral challenges, and commitments related to their future roles as police officers. These group reflections

fostered peer support, mutual accountability, and collective learning, reinforcing the communal dimension of ethical and spiritual development. Facilitators guided discussions to enhance self-awareness and spiritual insight, helping cadets articulate how Christian character values can inform their professional conduct and interactions with the community.



Guided Prayer and Motivation Sessions

Guided prayer and motivational sessions were conducted to encourage cadets to commit themselves to ethical law enforcement practices grounded in Christian faith. These sessions included moments of personal prayer and collective declarations of integrity, emphasizing policing as a vocation rooted in service, justice, and accountability before God and society.



Data Collection and Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness of the program, a **qualitative evaluation approach** was employed. Data were collected through:

- Direct observation during worship, seminars, and reflection sessions
- Focus group discussions with cadets
- Individual interviews with selected cadets and facilitators
- Written feedback and reflection notes collected after each session

These data sources provided comprehensive insights into participants' perceptions, spiritual reflections, and perceived changes in ethical awareness and character development. The triangulation of multiple qualitative methods ensured a holistic assessment of the program's impact on Christian character formation among police cadets.

CONCLUSION

1. The level of awareness and understanding among some police cadets regarding the importance of Christian character formation in supporting professional policing was initially varied, indicating the need for continuous and contextual character-building programs to ensure deeper internalization of spiritual and ethical values.
2. Police cadets demonstrated a generally positive response to worship activities, character-building seminars, and group reflection sessions; however, some participants still perceived spiritual activities as supplementary rather than as a fundamental foundation for integrity, discipline, and moral responsibility in law enforcement.
3. One of the main challenges in implementing the program was scheduling, as activities had to be adjusted to the intensive and structured police training timetable, highlighting the need for strong coordination with institutional stakeholders to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of character development programs.

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