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# Pursuing The Spirit Of The Culture Of Care In Catholic Schools

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## Abstract

*A concern that is often found in many schools or educational institutions is the lack of "the culture of care". What is meant by "the culture of care" in schools is that schools or educational institutions should create warm, safe relationships and encourage students to become qualified in all aspects holistically (mind, heart, hands) rather than just emphasizing the curriculum when formulating the vision and mission of the institution. Most of the schools or educational institutions are only a place to transfer knowledge or shape students into "success", as a result only the intellectual aspect (mind) is emphasized. Education is about the whole person (the whole being of the students). Educators focus only on compiling materials and teaching rather than building relationships with their students. There is no deep and intimate attention among teachers and students or students among students. This situation hampers the cultivation of values and character building.*

*Schools are actually an extension of parents to take care of their children. Therefore, the spirit of "the culture of care" which naturally and fundamentally already exists in the family as stated by Pope Francis in his Message for the World Day of Peace on December 8, 2020 should also be continued in schools. The relationship among educators and students, among students themselves, educators, employees, the school and the parents of students, and also the relationship with all creation is continuously fostered to become closer so that an atmosphere of brotherhood is created. School is an educational environment where everyone involved in it and especially students may grow, learn how to live, become more mature, be able to walk on the path of their lives. It helps students not only with their intellectual abilities, but also with the full development of their whole personality. It is gratifying that the Congregation for Catholic Education, in its document "The Identity of Catholic Schools for a Culture of Dialogue", article 36, reaffirms "The culture of care" that Pope Francis has said should be implemented in Catholic schools to instill a system of values based on the recognition of the dignity of every person.*

*In this document in the same article it is also emphasized that "the culture of care" becomes a guidepost at the local and international levels to form a society dedicated with patience to listen to each other, constructive dialogue and mutual understanding of each other. By implementing "the culture of care" in schools, expected that an atmosphere of brotherhood, care for each other strengthen mutually can be created. The school environment becomes cool and pleasant. The school is not just an institution but truly a community or a family. Such an atmosphere will make value cultivation, character building and learning more effective.*

**Keywords:** *education, catholic school, culture of care, teacher, student*

## Introduction

The Covid 19 pandemic has opened many veils about the reality of Indonesian education. During 2020-2021 the Indonesian education world is worried about *Learning Loss*. *Learning Loss* is a decline in learning ability. The main factors that can lead to *Learning Loss* are overloaded curriculum, tedious and uncreative learning process, incompetent and unprofessional teachers, limited facilities and infrastructure, ineffective assessment system and so on. Responding to concerns about *Learning Loss*, Ratih D. Adiputri, a lecturer at Jyvaskyla University, Finland, revealed in an Opinion article in the Kompas daily newspaper dated 21 March 2021 entitled *Learning Loss during the Pandemic*, that Indonesia's concern about *Learning Loss* during the pandemic is clear evidence that the main thing about education in Indonesia is still about transferring knowledge and pursuing curriculum targets. Whereas education is not about transferring knowledge but also showing real human communication, namely compassion and mutual respect. This *learning loss* also occurs because the role of

educating children is still very dependent on school institutions. In fact, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara's Tripusat education (family nature, teacher nature, and youth nature) and *Gravissimum Educationis* article 3, it is said that parents are the first and main educators in educating children.

What Ratih D Adiputri revealed about the purpose of education which is communication of affection - love is certainly in line with the educational objectives of Catholic schools mandated by the Second Vatican Council Document on education, namely *Gravissimum Educationis* (GE); article 8:

Catholic schools also pursue cultural goals and organise the humane education of young people. But its distinctive feature is to create an environment of communal life in the school, imbued with the Gospel spirit of freedom, charity ..."

The urgency to create an educational environment filled with love and mutual care - respect is actually not an urgency due to the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic on 20 February 2020, Minister of Education and Culture, Research and Technology, Nadiem Anwar Makarim, in a joint working meeting with Commission X of the House of Representatives at the Parliament complex, Senayan, Jakarta, revealed 3 (three) major sins in Indonesian education, namely intolerance, sexual violence, and *bullying*. Therefore, to overcome various educational problems in Indonesia such as education that only transfers knowledge and the emergence of the three big sins of education conveyed by Nadiem, new habits and spirits are needed.

If after the pandemic, people became familiar with the term *new normal* or new habits, so now is the time to promote new habits in the world of education. The new habit is to apply the values of *the culture of care* in the world of education. The purpose of writing this journal will discuss how important it is to seek the spirit of the *culture of care in* instilling values and character building in schools. The spirit of *the culture of care* itself is found in the latest Vatican document issued by the *Congregation for Catholic Education* in 2022 with the title "The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue". In various international journal articles, such as the journal written by Tom Cavanagh, Angus Macfarlane, Ted Glynn & Sonja Macfarlane (2012) with the title "Creating peaceful and effective schools through a culture of care, Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education," 33:3, 443-455, as well as Dr Eva J. Allen and Dr Anne Marie FitzGerald's "Cultural Care and Inviting Practices: Teacher perspectives on the influence of care and equity in an urban elementary school" with the American context, many educational institutions in America have implemented the spirit of the *culture of care* and brought significant impact in the learning process. This journal will specifically look at whether the spirit of the *culture of care* whose inspiration is taken from the two church documents

mentioned above has also inspired two educational foundations in Yogyakarta, namely Yayasan Kanisius Cabang Yogyakarta and Yayasan Pangudi Luhur through historical research.

## Research Methods

The research methods used for writing this journal are literature study method and qualitative method with *deep interview*. In relation to the literature study, two main sources were used, namely the official documents of the Catholic Church entitled *Gravissimum Educationis* (1965) and *The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue* (2022). Other additional documents are historical records from Yayasan Pangudi Luhur and Yayasan Kanisius Yogyakarta. In addition to using the library method, the writing of this journal also uses a qualitative method with *deep interviews with the* chairman of the Pangudi Luhur Foundation Yogyakarta and the Head of the Kanisius Foundation Yogyakarta Branch.

## Results and Discussion

From various studies that have been conducted previously on the practice of *culture of care* in schools or educational institutions, it is found that the spirit of *culture of care* is very urgent to be applied in educational institutions whose students and students have diverse cultural backgrounds. This diversity can exist because of different ethnic, religious, racial, or ethnic backgrounds. It can even happen that diversity exists if it is based on differences in economic backgrounds. The urgency to create a *culture of care* is also reinforced by a *research* in America which states that minorities (immigrants, black people, people of colour) are under pressure and feel fear due to the polarisation that occurred in America due to the 2016 presidential election. The school environment became uncomfortable, and the learning process was disrupted. Dr Eva J. Allen experimented with applying *Inviting Practices* and *Cultural Care* in the classroom. The results were very positive.

So, what do we mean by *creating a culture of care* and *Inviting Practices*? *Creating a culture of care* is creating a culture of care that focuses on learning in classrooms where teachers and students can learn to co-operate, care for each other safely and comfortably? *Cultural Care* is a theory of learning practice that takes a social-emotional approach to school development. *Cultural care* considers that race and culture are fundamental in improving the quality of all students. *Inviting Practises*, on the other hand, is a theory of practice that facilitates a positive learning environment and encourages individuals to develop their full potential. *Inviting Practising* and *cultural care* positively influence the

climate of the learning environment, and affirm the importance of teachers listening attentively to students, and highlight the need for educators to recognise students' basic and academic needs. Both learning systems enrich each other. *Inviting Practises* which is a learning system to create a comfortable atmosphere in the school environment is strengthened by the *Cultural Care* system which is very attentive to the race and culture of each individual. By being recognised, respected and valued for their race and culture, every child and educator feels comfortable. They feel empowered to interact with others and have the power to develop themselves to the fullest.

Based on the findings regarding the implementation of the spirit of *culture of care* that is so positive, it seems that in the Indonesian context, the spirit of *culture of care* is increasingly urgent to be implemented. Indonesia is a country whose society is pluralistic when viewed from ethnicity, race, religion. Based on data collected from the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2013 Indonesia consists of 1331 tribes and according to the Language Agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture Indonesia has 652 languages/dialects. Of course, the data on Indonesia's plurality can still be added to the diversity of religions and beliefs of its population. With this fact of plurality, the education system in Indonesia should immediately implement the spirit of *culture of care*. However, ironically, the education system in Indonesia is still struggling with the transfer of knowledge and has not focused on fostering the character of students. As a result, during a pandemic, where educational institutions or institutions in Indonesia should be able to do many new things or even create new creativity, what is more worrying is the issue of *Learning Loss*. Even though Nadiem A. Makarim as the Minister of Education and Culture in early 2020 has emphasized that there are 3 big sins of education that must be combated by all educational institutions, namely intolerance, sexual violence and bullying. So it has become an urgency for education in Indonesia to include elements of *culture of care*.

In previous *research* findings, the foundation of *culture of care* is mostly based on psychological analyses or approaches. However, in this journal the author offers the spirit of *culture of care* from two church documents on education. The first document is *Gravissimum Educationis* (1965) which is a document of the Second Vatican Council on education. The second document is the most recent document issued by the *Congregation for Catholic Education* in 2022 with the title "*The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue*". The author has conducted literature and qualitative research on the history of the establishment of two Catholic education foundations, namely the Pangudi Luhur Foundation managed by the FIC Brothers and the Yogyakarta branch of the Kanisius Foundation managed by the Jesuits. These two foundations were chosen by the author because they are close to where the author lives. Then the two foundations are well known to have a strong tradition in the management of educational institutions throughout Indonesia.

## Gravissimum Educationis and The Identity of Catholic School's Views on Education

Pope Francis in his message on the World Day of Peace on 8 December 2020 stated that schools are actually an extension of parents to care for their children. Therefore, the spirit of "*the culture of care*" that already exists in the family should also be continued in schools. Just as parents in the family not only educate their children to be good at knowledge but also educate their children to develop in personality, attitude, religiosity, schools should do the same. Therefore, schools are not only a place for children to acquire knowledge but also a place for character development.

In the document *Gravissimum Educationis* it is said that education is the responsibility of everyone. Of course, parents have the primary responsibility. The government, through schools or educational institutions, provides facilities to parents so that their children can receive proper education. The church, which is part of society, has the duty to participate in education. The church participates in education because it has the responsibility to proclaim the way of Christ's salvation to all mankind, preach the life of Christ to those who believe, and, help humans to be able to achieve the fullness of this life. The Church is like a mother who is ready to give her children an education through which their whole life can be imbued with the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, the Church, through its Catholic schools, helps parents to educate their children. It is clear that this participation in educating children is the primary vocation of Catholic schools. For this reason, what should Catholic schools do?

As Pope Francis urges that schools are an extension of parents to educate their children, Catholic schools should bring a family atmosphere to the school. In the Church document "*The Identity of Catholic School*" issued by Pope Francis, it is said that a Catholic school is not just an institution but a community or family. Therefore, the relationship within the school between staff, teachers, and students is a family relationship. This is where the spirit of the *culture of care* mentioned in "*The Identity of Catholic School* (IC 6)" continues to be created and developed continuously in every Catholic school.

What is meant by a *culture of care* in the school environment according to these two Church documents? **Creating a culture of care is creating a culture of caring like a mother, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia* (GE 3 & IC 8 ) who is very loving, loving and responsible, generous and even willing to sacrifice for the sake of her children.** Not only that, a mother has the role of being able to show the way to her children (IC 9). Then how is it concrete? The concreteness is that the learning atmosphere in the classroom where teachers and students can learn to work together, to care for each other in safety. Schools and classrooms that embody a culture of caring, understand safety not only as freedom from harm but also having the freedom to be oneself, with one's inherent

identity. Being oneself in a school environment means being able to maintain and enhance one's ethnic and cultural knowledge and identity, values and beliefs and at the same time being able to interact peacefully with students and teachers from different ethnicities and cultures. In doing so, they achieve full maturity and stature in accordance with the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

Based on the experience of the researchers in the various studies that have been referred to, it can be shown that by creating "*the culture of care*", a family atmosphere in schools will be created. In schools, there will be an atmosphere of brotherhood that cares for each other, affirms and strengthens. The school environment becomes cool and pleasant. The school is not just an institution but truly a community or a family. Such an atmosphere will make value cultivation, character building and learning more effective.

#### Culture of care in the history of Yayasan Kanisius and Yayasan Pangudi Luhur

Has the spirit of *culture of care* been incorporated into Catholic schools in Indonesia? To date, there has been no specific research to see if Catholic schools in Indonesia have implemented the spirit of *culture of care in* their education system. However, in this article, we will look at two Catholic foundations that are engaged in education. Firstly, the Yogyakarta branch of the Kanisius Foundation. This foundation is a Catholic education foundation owned by the Archdiocese of Semarang whose management is handed over to the Society of Jesus. The foundation manages schools from Early Childhood Education (ECE) to high school level. For the Yogyakarta Branch of the Kanisius Foundation, the schools managed include PAUD up to junior high school.

The history of the Kanisius Foundation cannot be separated from the history of its founder, Father van Lith SJ. The beginning of the Kanisius Foundation was based on Father van Lith's concern for public education in Java. The goals to be achieved by establishing Catholic schools are: Sowing the Word of Christ in the Javanese community through self-educated teachers. Father van Lith was convinced that through education in Catholic schools the development of faith would run more effectively and successfully, especially in the hearts of students. But schools can also have an influence on parents and society. Providing learning opportunities to the children of the little people in the villages and towns, who are deprived of learning opportunities. Father van Lith was concerned about the backwardness of Javanese education, which at that time received little attention from the Dutch East Indies Government. While the children themselves have a desire to get the opportunity to gain knowledge and knowledge, which can alleviate the shackles of backwardness. To realise these two goals, on 31 August 1918 the *Canisius Vereniging* was established in Muntilan.

Father van Lith established Catholic schools not just to give children knowledge but also to guide and educate these children into individuals of character. Therefore, he mentored the teachers first and only then established the Catholic schools. The teachers not only taught the children knowledge but also taught them behaviour and character building. Some even lived in the dormitories with them. Father van Lith had the view that children could be as intelligent as Europeans in terms of knowledge but not lose their identity as Javanese. From this, we can see that Kanisius has been implementing the *culture of care* since its establishment.

Yayasan Pangudi Luhur (YPL) and the FIC Brothers are like two sides of a coin because the existence of YPL which is engaged in education is the vocation and work of the FIC Brothers in Indonesia. The foundation takes care of educational institutions from Play Group, Kindergarten, Elementary School, Junior High School, High School and Vocational School, as well as a special school for deaf children in Jakarta. Through this work, the FIC Brothers dedicate themselves to the work of education and Christian formation.

Talking about the forerunner of the Pangudi Luhur Foundation cannot be separated from the great service of the Jesuit Order (SJ) which collaborated with the mother monastery and the subordinate monasteries of the FIC to manage schools that had been established in Yogyakarta and Muntilan by Jesuit Fathers, such as Frater van Lith and van Driessche. At the request of Fr Hoeberechts SJ as Superior of the Mission that some of the existing schools be managed by FIC Brothers. Then Brother Bertholdus, Superior General of the FIC, sent his members to manage the schools that had been established by the Jesuits. Finally, the first five Brothers were sent to Indonesia, namely Br August, Br Lebuinus, Br Eufirius, Br Constantius and Br Ivo. They left on 14 August 1920 on board the ship Wills which departed from Rotterdam (Netherlands) and arrived in Batavia on 19 September. The next day, they travelled to Yogyakarta and were picked up by the Superior of the Mission, Fr Hoeberechts. A few years later, some FIC brothers were again sent to Indonesia to strengthen the mission. The period of their work was Yogyakarta (1920), then to Muntilan (1921) and to Solo (1926).

The educational work of the FIC Brothers grew not only in Yogyakarta, Muntilan and Solo, but also in Ambarawa and Semarang. Until the 1950s, the work of the FIC Brothers in education was still under the auspices of the Canisius Foundation. Around 1952, the schools of the Canisius Foundation increased in number, including the schools handled by the FIC Brothers. The increase in the number of students was due to the higher awareness of the community to get an education. However, the Foundation experienced difficulties in management, especially in terms of finance. The method taken at that time was that a number of schools and dormitories were covered by the FIC Congregation. This situation is the first step towards independence. The next step on 6 October 1954, YPL



was established with a notary deed named Tan A Sioe to oversee the schools already managed by the brothers. The separation from the Kanisius Foundation on the one hand eased the burden on Kanisius. On the other hand, the FIC Brothers could manage the schools independently. The Brothers can also determine the direction and policies as outlined by the congregation. The spirituality of the congregation is applied in managing the educational work and realising the distinctiveness of the educational community based on Christian values.

YPL organises education for the formation of the whole person, so that students become intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually intelligent including character education and love for the environment, in collaboration with partners and all people of good will. In addition, YPL builds a school and dormitory culture based on love so that the school becomes a family where students develop their quality of life, ethical quality and morality. In addition, YPL, which is managed by the Brothers of FIC, pays special attention to the poor, weak, excluded, disabled and special needs. Thus, YPL becomes the work of the FIC Brothers to proclaim the Word of God, present the Kingdom of God, and develop human life as the image of God. It appears that the spirit of *culture of care* has been there since YPL was founded.

## Conclusions

Schools are an extension of parents to nurture their children. The spirit of *culture of care* that naturally and fundamentally exists in the family is passed on in schools. Members of the school community, students and parents, teachers and staff, and school leaders have a shared responsibility to create the spirit of *culture of care*. By implementing a *culture of care* in schools, it is expected that the atmosphere of brotherhood, strengthening each other can be felt by students. The school environment becomes a safe and comfortable place. This kind of atmosphere will make value inculcation, character building and learning more effective.

From the history of the founding of the Kanisius Foundation and the Yogyakarta branch of YPL, it can be seen that the spirit of *culture of care* has been implemented in schools. Educators do not only teach and instil knowledge but try to shape children's character. The educational process will make children experience and realise a common life full of brotherhood, friendliness and familiarity, as well as a spirit of independence and responsible freedom.

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