

STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN THE TRAINING OF PROSPECTIVE NOKEN NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF THE INDONESIAN NATIONAL POLICE AT THE PAPUA REGIONAL POLICE TRAINING CENTRE

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ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Penguatan karakter kebangsaan merupakan bagian penting dalam pembinaan calon anggota kepolisian, terutama bagi peserta dengan latar belakang sosial dan budaya yang beragam. Kegiatan ini bertujuan menguatkan karakter kebangsaan calon bintara pada satuan pendidikan kepolisian di wilayah Papua melalui penerapan Experiential Learning (EL). Program diawali dengan Training of Trainers bagi 50 instruktur, kemudian dilanjutkan dengan pembinaan 273 peserta selama dua bulan dengan beban 400 jam pelajaran. EL diterapkan melalui pengalaman langsung, simulasi, role-play, dialog interaktif, refleksi, penugasan, kegiatan sosial, dan latihan kerja. Evaluasi dilakukan melalui observasi langsung, asesmen, logbook peserta, catatan instruktur, serta monitoring berkelanjutan. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa 273 peserta menyelesaikan seluruh rangkaian 400 jam pelajaran. Hasil observasi, refleksi, logbook, dan monitoring menunjukkan perkembangan dalam pemahaman dan penerapan nilai nasionalisme, cinta tanah air, kedisiplinan, tanggung jawab, kerja sama, penghargaan terhadap keberagaman, dan identitas kebangsaan selama pembinaan. Program menghasilkan pola penguatan karakter melalui tahapan pengalaman-refleksi-pemaknaan nilai-penerapan perilaku-monitoring dan penguatan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa EL dapat menjadi alternatif pendekatan penguatan karakter kebangsaan pada pendidikan kepolisian dengan mengintegrasikan kedisiplinan, partisipasi aktif, refleksi, dan pengalaman kontekstual.

Kata Kunci: *Experiential Learning*; Karakter Kebangsaan; Pembelajaran Humanis; Bintara Noken Polri; Pendidikan Kepolisian.

Abstract: *Strengthening national character is an important component of preparing prospective police officers, particularly those from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. This programme aimed to strengthen the national character of prospective Non-Commissioned Officers at a police education and training institution in Papua through Experiential Learning (EL). The programme began with a Training of Trainers involving 50 instructors, followed by two months of training for 273 participants comprising 400 teaching hours. EL was implemented through direct experience, simulations, role-play, interactive dialogue, reflection, assignments, social activities, and practical exercises. Evaluation was conducted through direct observation, assessment, participant logbooks, instructor records, and continuous monitoring. The results showed that 273 participants completed the entire 400-hour programme. Evidence from observations, reflections, logbooks, and monitoring indicated development in participants' understanding and application of nationalism, love for the homeland, discipline, responsibility, teamwork, respect for diversity, and national identity throughout the training. The programme generated a character-strengthening model consisting of experience-reflection-value interpretation-behavioural application-monitoring and reinforcement. These findings indicate that EL can serve as an alternative approach to national character development in police education by integrating discipline with active participation, reflection, and contextual learning experiences.*

Keywords: *Experiential Learning; National Character; Humanistic Learning; Noken Police Non-Commissioned Officers; Police Education.*



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A. INTRODUCTION

National character education is an essential component of police personnel development because the duties of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) require more than technical competence and law-enforcement skills. Police officers are expected to demonstrate integrity, discipline, responsibility, nationalism, communication skills, and sensitivity to social and cultural diversity. Character education therefore needs to develop not only knowledge of values but also attitudes and behaviours that enable individuals to translate those values into responsible professional practice. Lavy (2020) emphasises that character strengths can be intentionally fostered through educational interventions rather than being viewed merely as fixed individual qualities. From a broader educational perspective, Mahoney et al. (2021) also highlight the importance of systematically integrating personal and social development into the learning environment. This need is particularly relevant to the preparation of prospective Noken Police Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) in Papua. Participants come from diverse social, cultural, educational, and life-experience backgrounds, while differences in educational opportunities and previous learning experiences may influence their initial readiness to participate in police education. Such diversity requires a training approach that recognises participants' backgrounds while simultaneously strengthening a shared sense of nationalism and Indonesian national identity. Harun (2020) demonstrates that character education can be strengthened by connecting character values with multicultural contexts and community-based local wisdom. Similarly, the revitalisation of local culture has been identified as an important pathway for supporting sustainable national character building in Indonesia (Agus et al., 2021). Thus, preparing prospective Noken Police NCOs cannot focus solely on academic and physical readiness but must also connect national character formation with participants' social and cultural realities.

The partner's initial condition revealed several practical challenges in implementing such character education. Prior to the programme, specific learning resources—including curricula, syllabi, modules, teaching guidelines (*jukjar*), and teaching resources (*hanjar*)—for the National Character Training Programme for prospective Noken Police NCOs had not been adequately developed. Monitoring and evaluation instruments capable of assessing the continuity of character development at the Polsek, Polres, and Polda levels were also limited. These conditions indicated that the partner required more than a stand-alone training activity. A systematic intervention was needed to integrate learning materials, instructor preparation, implementation strategies, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. Another challenge concerned the learning process itself. Police education operates within an organisational environment characterised by discipline, hierarchy, obedience, and structured instruction. Although these characteristics are fundamental to the police profession, an overly instructor-

centred approach may limit participants' opportunities to engage actively, express their perspectives, reflect on their experiences, and construct meaning from the learning process. Character education, however, requires more than the transmission of information about desirable values. The review conducted by Lavy (2020) suggests that character development is strengthened when educational environments intentionally provide opportunities to practise and develop positive qualities. In the Indonesian context, Septiani (2020) further demonstrates the importance of designing engaging learning environments and learning resources to support character development.

For prospective Noken Police NCOs, this issue is particularly significant because national character values need to be understood within the participants' lived social and cultural experiences. Character education that is disconnected from learners' contexts risks becoming abstract and difficult to translate into everyday behaviour. Sakti (2024), for example, shows how ethnopedagogical approaches can connect local wisdom with character education, illustrating the value of contextualising character formation within learners' cultural environments. Research trends on local wisdom-based learning similarly indicate increasing attention to the integration of cultural knowledge and educational processes (Muhammad et al., 2022). These perspectives reinforce the need for an approach that respects participants' cultural backgrounds while guiding them towards shared national and professional values. Based on these needs, Experiential Learning (EL) was selected as the primary learning approach. EL is particularly relevant because it places experience at the centre of learning and systematically connects action with reflection. Kolb (1984) conceptualises experiential learning as a cycle consisting of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. Through this cycle, participants are not positioned merely as recipients of information but as active learners who experience situations, reflect on what occurred, construct meaning, and apply their understanding to subsequent actions.

This process is particularly relevant to national character education because values such as nationalism, love for the homeland, integrity, discipline, responsibility, and respect for diversity cannot be fully developed through conceptual instruction alone. They need to be experienced and interpreted in meaningful situations before becoming part of participants' attitudes and behaviour. Kolb and Kolb (2017) emphasise that meaningful experiential learning requires the integration of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. Accordingly, EL provides a bridge between knowing character values and demonstrating those values through behaviour. In practice, the programme translated EL into structured activities including simulations, role-play, reflective sessions, e-learning, social and cultural activities, problem-solving, group assignments, and community service.

These activities were designed not merely to create variety in learning but to provide concrete experiences from which participants could construct meaning. Reflection became an important mechanism for connecting those experiences with national character values. This approach is consistent with the broader argument that character development requires learning environments in which participants can actively engage with and practise positive personal and social qualities (Mahoney et al., 2021).

The approach also provided greater space for two-way communication between instructors and participants. Participants were positioned as active learners, while instructors functioned as facilitators who designed experiences, encouraged dialogue, developed reflective questions, and helped participants identify the relationship between their experiences and the values being learned. This shift was not intended to reduce the importance of discipline within police education. Rather, discipline was strengthened through awareness, responsibility, participation, and reflection. Such contextual and participatory learning is particularly relevant when learners come from culturally diverse backgrounds, as educational processes need to accommodate both shared values and participants' cultural contexts (Harun, 2020). Instructor readiness therefore became an important component of the intervention. Before the programme was delivered to prospective Noken Police NCOs, a Training of Trainers (TOT) involving 50 instructors from SPN Polda Papua, Polda Papua, and Polda Papua Barat was conducted through online and face-to-face sessions. This stage was intended to strengthen instructors' ability to move beyond the role of content providers towards becoming facilitators of experiential and reflective learning.

Following instructor preparation, the programme was implemented over two months, comprising 400 teaching hours (JP). The programme integrated conditioning and self-awareness, strengthening national identity and patriotism, introducing the police profession, and reinforcing learning through practice, problem-solving, and community service. This progressive structure allowed character development to occur through interconnected individual, group, professional, social, and cultural experiences. The integration of contextual experiences is particularly important because Indonesian character education increasingly recognises the potential contribution of cultural resources and local wisdom to the formation of national character (Agus et al., 2021). Despite growing attention to character education, culturally contextualised learning, and the use of diverse educational interventions, a practical gap remains in the application of a systematic experiential learning model for national character education within police training, particularly for prospective Noken Police NCOs in Papua. Existing studies have examined character-strength interventions (Lavy, 2020), multicultural and local wisdom-based character education (Harun, 2020), and ethnopedagogical approaches to character formation (Sakti, 2024). However, the specific integration of experience, reflection,

national values, instructor capacity building, and continuous monitoring within the distinctive social-cultural and professional context of Noken Police training remains underexplored.

The novelty of this programme therefore lies in the systematic application of an experience–reflection–meaning–application model for national character education. Experience is not treated merely as an additional activity, game, or simulation, but as the starting point of a structured process through which participants reflect on events, construct meaning around national values, and translate those values into behaviour. The programme further integrates this learning cycle with instructor capacity building, contextual social and cultural activities, reflective logbooks, and continuous monitoring. In this way, the intervention combines experiential learning principles with the cultural characteristics of Papuan participants and the professional demands of police education. Accordingly, this community service programme aims to strengthen the national character of prospective Noken Police NCOs at SPN Polda Papua through the application of experiential learning. Specifically, the programme seeks to (1) strengthen instructors' capacity to facilitate experience-based character education, (2) increase participants' active engagement and reflective learning, and (3) foster nationalism, love for the homeland, discipline, responsibility, integrity, respect for diversity, and Indonesian national identity through meaningful experience, reflection, and application.

B. IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

Activities to strengthen national character education were implemented through a participatory approach based on Experiential Learning (EL) as part of the Training and Development Programme for Prospective Noken Non-Commissioned Officers of the Indonesian National Police at the Papua Regional Police State Police Academy (SPN Polda Papua) in Jayapura. The programme was designed not merely as the delivery of instructional material, but as a structured learning process in which participants engaged in direct experience, reflection, interpretation, and the application of national character values. The programme was implemented over approximately two months, beginning on 12 September 2020, with a total duration of 400 teaching hours (JP), each equivalent to 45 minutes. The programme involved two main groups. The primary beneficiaries were 274 prospective Noken Police Non-Commissioned Officers who had been selected to participate in preparatory training before entering formal Non-Commissioned Officer education. One participant withdrew before the training began because participation was based primarily on parental encouragement; therefore, 273 participants completed the programme. The second group consisted of instructors and mentors who acted as learning facilitators throughout the programme. Their involvement was essential because experiential learning requires facilitators who are capable of designing learning experiences,

guiding reflection, encouraging interaction, and helping participants connect their experiences with the national character values being developed.

Before the main training programme commenced, the first stage focused on instructor preparation through a Training of Trainers (TOT). The TOT involved 50 instructors from SPN Polda Papua, Polda Papua, and Polda Papua Barat. It was initially conducted online for five days and subsequently reinforced through face-to-face preparation at SPN Polda Papua before the implementation of the participant training. The activities included orientation to the programme, introduction to experiential learning principles, facilitation techniques, preparation of reflective questions, discussion of learning scenarios, and coordination of teaching roles. The method combined online instruction, discussion, simulation, practice, and facilitator reflection. The main output of this stage was a group of instructors with a shared understanding of the programme objectives, EL procedures, learning scenarios, and their roles as facilitators rather than solely as providers of instructional content. The second stage consisted of 10 days of conditioning and self-awareness activities for the 273 participants. This initial phase was intended to prepare participants psychologically and socially for the learning process. Activities included orientation, group-building exercises, self-awareness activities, discipline-building tasks, introductory reflection, and activities designed to develop trust and interaction among participants. Experiential methods such as group exercises, simulations, guided reflection, and discussion were used to encourage participants to recognise their personal strengths, attitudes, motivations, and responsibilities. The expected output of this stage was increased readiness to participate in the programme, greater self-awareness, stronger group cohesion, and an initial understanding of the attitudes and behaviours expected from prospective members of the Indonesian National Police.

The third and longest stage comprised 40 days of national identity and character-strengthening activities. All 273 participants took part in structured learning experiences designed to develop nationalism, love for the homeland, discipline, responsibility, integrity, respect for diversity, and Indonesian national identity. Learning activities included classroom discussion, role-play, simulations, e-learning, individual and group assignments, cultural activities, interactive dialogue, and reflective exercises. Rather than presenting character values only as abstract concepts, instructors created situations in which participants were required to experience, discuss, and interpret those values in relation to their own social and cultural backgrounds. Reflection sessions were conducted after major activities so that participants could identify the meaning of their experiences and relate them to national and professional values. The main outputs of this stage were stronger understanding and internalisation of national character values, improved active participation in learning, and greater ability to relate those values to everyday behaviour. The fourth stage consisted of a three-day

introduction to the police profession. This stage connected the character values developed during the previous phase with the participants' future professional responsibilities. Participants were introduced to the roles, duties, ethical responsibilities, and behavioural expectations of members of Polri. The learning process used contextual explanations, discussion, professional scenarios, question-and-answer sessions, and reflective dialogue. Participants were encouraged to analyse how discipline, integrity, responsibility, nationalism, and respect for diversity should be demonstrated in police duties and interactions with the public. The expected output was a clearer understanding of the relationship between national character and professional police conduct.

The fifth stage comprised seven days of reinforcement through practical activities, problem-solving, and community service. Participants were placed in learning situations requiring them to apply the values and competencies developed during the previous stages. Activities included practical exercises, group problem-solving, social interaction, community-oriented activities, and collective assignments. The method emphasised direct experience followed by facilitated reflection. After each major activity, participants discussed what occurred, identified challenges, evaluated their responses, and considered how the experience related to discipline, leadership, responsibility, teamwork, nationalism, and social sensitivity. The principal output of this stage was participants' ability to translate character values from conceptual understanding into observable actions in practical and social contexts. Reflection and monitoring were integrated throughout all stages rather than being conducted only at the end of the programme. Individual and group reflection was used to help participants interpret their experiences, while logbooks were used to document learning progress and behavioural development. The logbooks enabled instructors to observe changes in participants over time and allowed participants to recognise their own progress. Interactive dialogue and assignments were also used to assess participation, responsibility, independence, discipline, and creativity. In this way, evaluation functioned not only as a summative assessment but also as part of the experiential learning process itself.

At the completion of the programme, evaluation focused on participants' engagement, changes in attitudes and behaviour, and the extent to which national character values were demonstrated during training. All 273 participants who entered the programme completed the training and were declared to have passed. However, completion and pass rates were not treated as the sole indicators of programme success. Character development was designed as a continuous process, with monitoring extending beyond the training period into subsequent police education and professional placement. Evaluation was therefore planned in three stages: immediately after the training programme, after completion of Non-Commissioned Officer education, and after participants had served for at least one year. The

expected long-term output was the sustainability of nationalism, discipline, responsibility, integrity, social sensitivity, and Indonesian national identity in participants' educational and professional behaviour.

The implementation of the programme is divided into four main stages, namely (1) preparation and capacity building for instructors, (2) the delivery of training based on *experiential learning*, (3) assessment and reflection on learning, and (4) monitoring, evaluation and follow-up. These stages were developed as an interconnected sequence to ensure that character building does not stop at the transfer of knowledge, but continues through to the process of internalising and applying values in the participants' behaviour. The learning cycle used is based on the four stages of Experiential Learning (EL), namely *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualisation*, and *active experimentation*.

1. Preparation and Capacity Building for Instructors

The first stage involves identifying needs and preparing programme materials. The implementation team developed learning materials comprising the curriculum, syllabus, teaching guidelines (*jukjar*) and teaching resources (*hanjar*) to serve as a reference for the implementation of the Binlat. The development of these materials was crucial as there had previously been no specific learning materials available for the national character development of Papuan non-commissioned officers. Planning was then carried out through internal meetings, resulting in the formation of the Noken Binlat Team, one of whose main tasks was to prepare these materials.

Prior to the programme being delivered to the Noken Non-Commissioned Officer candidates, a *Training of Trainers (TOT) session* was conducted to prepare the instructors. The session involved 50 instructors from the Papua Provincial Police Academy (SPN Polda Papua), the Papua Provincial Police (Polda Papua) and the West Papua Provincial Police. The TOT was conducted online over five days in July 2020 and was followed by an in-person session for the same 50 instructors at the Papua Regional Police Training Centre (SPN Polda Papua) prior to the training programme commencing in September 2020. This phase was designed to ensure a shared understanding amongst the instructors regarding the learning materials and approaches to be used in coaching the participants.

2. Implementation of Training Based on *Experiential Learning*

The second phase involves the implementation of national character development for prospective Noken non-commissioned officers of the Indonesian National Police. The programme runs for 400 JP following a 10–40–3–7 structure: 10 days of acclimatisation and self-discovery; 40 days of training in national awareness, love of the homeland and personal development; three days of introduction to the police profession; and seven days of consolidation through practical training, problem-solving and community service. This structure enables the character-building process to

be carried out in stages, progressing from self-discovery to an understanding of national identity and, subsequently, the application of these values through practical experience.

The implementation of EL is based on the principle of reflective experience. Participants are actively engaged in activities designed to provide practical and direct experiences. These experiences then serve as the basis for reflection, enabling participants to identify values and lessons relevant to their own lives. Conceptually, the EL process within the programme encompasses the provision of practical experiences, reflection on those experiences, linking the outcomes of reflection to values or concepts, and the application of learning outcomes. Thus, instructors do not merely explain the values of national character, but facilitate participants in discovering the meaning of these values through the activities they experience.

During *the 'concrete experience'* stage, participants gain experience through various learning activities. Next, during *'reflective observation'*, participants are given the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and share their reactions and observations. *The 'abstract conceptualisation'* stage is used to help participants link their experiences to broader ideas or values, whilst *'active experimentation'* provides an opportunity to apply their understanding and practise new behaviours in the ' ' of everyday life. This cycle is used to make participants active agents in their learning, rather than mere recipients of information.

3. Assessment and Reflection on Learning

Assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis to monitor participants' progress throughout the programme. Based on the Binlat framework, assessment covers three aspects: academic, mental and personality, and physical fitness. The academic aspect is assessed through assignments, performance observations, written tests and the results of technical exercises; the mental and personality aspect is assessed through ongoing observation of participants' attitudes; whilst physical fitness relates to participants' health, endurance and physical resilience. In the context of this community service article, the primary focus is on the development of the mental and personality aspects and the internalisation of national character as a result of the experience-based learning process.

In addition to formal assessment, reflection is carried out as an integral part of EL. Participants are given the opportunity to look back on the experiences and changes they have undergone during the training process. One of the tools used is *a logbook*. The use of *a logbook* helps instructors monitor participants' progress whilst also giving participants the opportunity to recognise the changes they have achieved. Such reflection is important because EL positions the process of making sense of experiences as a bridge between learning activities and changes in attitude and behaviour.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Follow-up

Monitoring and evaluation were conducted systematically throughout and after the programme to assess both the implementation of experiential learning and changes in participants' national character. The evaluation system combined direct observation, participant logbooks, instructor monitoring records, and follow-up evaluation. Rather than relying solely on programme completion or final scores, the evaluation focused on participants' engagement in the learning process and the development and sustainability of attitudes and behaviours related to nationalism, discipline, responsibility, integrity, teamwork, respect for diversity, and Indonesian national identity. During the Binlat programme, monitoring was conducted continuously by observers or supervisors assigned to each platoon, with instructors also documenting participants' development during learning activities. The main indicators at this stage included active participation, discipline, responsibility for individual and group assignments, cooperation, communication, respect for others, responsiveness during reflection, and the application of national character values during simulations, problem-solving activities, and community-based tasks. Direct observation was used to record observable attitudes and behaviours in actual learning situations rather than relying exclusively on participants' self-reports.

A participant logbook complemented direct observation and functioned as both a learning and monitoring instrument. Participants recorded important learning experiences, reflections, challenges encountered during activities, lessons learned, and personal progress. Instructors reviewed these records to identify changes in participants' understanding and attitudes and to compare participants' reflections with behaviours observed during the programme. Thus, the logbook was not used merely as an administrative record but as an instrument for documenting the experiential learning process from experience to reflection, meaning, and application. The combination of observation and logbook records also allowed instructors to identify participants requiring additional guidance or reinforcement. Evaluation was subsequently conducted at three measurement points. The first evaluation was carried out immediately after participants completed the Noken Pre-Non-Commissioned Officer Training. At this stage, observers and instructors assessed participants' responses to the learning process, understanding of the values introduced during the programme, and observable changes in attitudes and behaviour. The second evaluation was conducted after participants completed their formal Non-Commissioned Officer School education. Instructors and relevant education personnel monitored whether the character values developed during the Binlat were maintained and demonstrated during subsequent police education. The third evaluation was conducted after the Noken Non-Commissioned Officers had served for at least one year, with monitoring undertaken by their respective superiors. This final stage focused on whether national character values had been transferred

from the training environment into professional behaviour and everyday police duties.

The follow-up evaluation was organised with reference to the Kirkpatrick evaluation framework, covering four interconnected levels: reaction, learning, behaviour, and results. At the reaction level, participants' engagement, responses, and perceived relevance of the experiential learning activities were examined through participation records, reflection, and logbook entries. At the learning level, evaluation focused on participants' understanding and internalisation of national character values demonstrated through reflection, assignments, discussions, problem-solving, and other learning activities. At the behaviour level, observers, instructors, and later workplace superiors examined whether values such as discipline, responsibility, integrity, cooperation, respect for diversity, and nationalism were demonstrated consistently in participants' behaviour. At the results level, follow-up monitoring examined the broader sustainability of these behavioural changes during subsequent police education and after participants entered professional service. To strengthen the validity of the evaluation, evidence from different sources was considered together. Observation records provided evidence of actual behaviour during activities; logbooks documented participants' experiences and reflective development; instructor and supervisor monitoring provided longitudinal information on behavioural consistency; and follow-up monitoring by workplace superiors provided evidence of the transfer of character values into professional practice. The use of multiple sources enabled the programme to assess whether changes observed during training were also maintained in subsequent educational and workplace contexts.

Programme success was therefore determined through a combination of process, learning, behavioural, and sustainability indicators. At the process level, success was indicated by participants' consistent attendance, active participation, completion of learning activities, and engagement in reflection. At the learning level, participants were expected to demonstrate an improved understanding and interpretation of national character values. At the behavioural level, success was reflected in observable improvements in discipline, responsibility, integrity, teamwork, respect for diversity, nationalism, and other expected character attributes. At the sustainability level, these behaviours were expected to remain observable during subsequent police education and after at least one year of professional service. Accordingly, programme completion and the fact that 273 participants completed the training were treated as implementation indicators rather than the sole evidence of programme effectiveness. Through this staged evaluation system, monitoring and evaluation became an integral part of the experiential learning cycle rather than a separate activity conducted only at the end of the programme. The system enabled the programme to examine not only whether learning activities were successfully implemented, but also

whether participants understood, internalised, demonstrated, and sustained national character values across training, further police education, and professional practice.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the national character education programme through Experiential Learning (EL) was organised according to the stages described in the Methods section. Rather than functioning merely as a process of delivering course content, the programme was designed as a sequence of interconnected learning experiences involving instructor preparation, participant conditioning, national character strengthening, professional orientation, practical reinforcement, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. This structured approach is consistent with the view that character development requires deliberate educational interventions and supportive learning environments rather than relying solely on the transmission of moral knowledge (Lavy, 2020). The main training programme was conducted over approximately two months, comprising 400 teaching hours (JP) and following a 10–40–3–7 structure. The first stage was instructor preparation through a Training of Trainers (TOT). Before the participant training commenced, 50 instructors from SPN Polda Papua, Polda Papua, and Polda Papua Barat participated in online and face-to-face preparation. The activities strengthened instructors' understanding of experiential learning, facilitation techniques, reflective questioning, learning scenarios, and their role in connecting participants' experiences with national character values. The importance of creating supportive learning environments for personal and social development has also been emphasised by Mahoney et al. (2021), particularly through learning processes that actively involve learners rather than positioning them solely as recipients of instruction. This stage therefore established a common understanding among instructors regarding the programme objectives and the implementation of EL throughout the training.

The second stage comprised 10 days of conditioning and self-awareness activities. A total of 273 prospective Noken Police Non-Commissioned Officers participated in activities designed to strengthen learning readiness, self-awareness, discipline, motivation, and group cohesion. Group exercises, simulations, interactive activities, and guided reflection provided participants with opportunities to recognise their personal characteristics and responsibilities as prospective police officers. Interactive learning environments can contribute to character development by providing learners with opportunities to participate actively and engage with learning experiences rather than simply receiving information (Septiani, 2020). Accordingly, this initial stage served as the foundation for subsequent character-development activities by preparing participants to become actively involved in the learning process. The third stage consisted of 40 days

of national identity and character strengthening. This was the core stage of the programme and focused on nationalism, love for the homeland, discipline, responsibility, integrity, respect for diversity, and Indonesian national identity. Participants engaged in classroom discussions, simulations, role-play, e-learning, individual and group assignments, cultural activities, and reflective sessions. Harun (2020) highlights the importance of integrating multicultural contexts and community-based values into character education, particularly when learners come from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. In the present programme, experiential activities similarly enabled participants not only to learn national character values conceptually but also to interpret those values through their own experiences and cultural contexts. Reflection after the activities helped participants connect their experiences with the values being developed.

The integration of cultural activities during this stage was particularly relevant to the characteristics of the participants. Character education does not necessarily require the separation of national and local identities; instead, local cultural resources can provide meaningful contexts through which broader character values are understood. Agus et al. (2021) demonstrate the potential contribution of local traditional culture to sustainable national character building in Indonesia. Thus, the cultural components of the Noken programme functioned as contextual learning resources through which participants could relate their social backgrounds to nationalism, diversity, and Indonesian national identity. The fourth stage was a three-day introduction to the police profession. At this stage, participants connected the character values developed during the previous activities with the roles and responsibilities they would undertake as members of Polri. Professional scenarios, interactive discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and reflective dialogue were used to explore the application of integrity, discipline, responsibility, nationalism, and respect for diversity in police duties. The emphasis was therefore shifted from understanding values as abstract concepts towards interpreting their implications for professional conduct. Bleazby (2020) argues that moral development involves not only understanding moral concepts but also developing moral inquiry and habits through engagement with meaningful situations. This stage similarly encouraged participants to consider how character values should guide their decisions, behaviour, and interactions with the community.

The fifth stage comprised seven days of practical reinforcement, problem-solving, and community service. Participants were placed in practical and social situations that required them to apply the character values developed during the programme. Practical exercises, group problem-solving, collective assignments, and community-oriented activities provided opportunities to demonstrate responsibility, teamwork, discipline, leadership, and social sensitivity. This contextual application is particularly important because character development becomes more meaningful when values are connected

to situations familiar to learners. Sakti (2024), for example, demonstrates how contextual and culturally grounded experiences can support the internalisation of character values by linking educational content with learners' social realities.

Each major experience during this stage was followed by reflection. Participants were encouraged to identify what occurred, evaluate their responses, interpret the lessons learned, and consider how those lessons could be applied to their future education and police duties. The process therefore moved beyond participation in activities towards the construction of meaning from experience. In this respect, the stage represented the transition from understanding character values to applying them in authentic situations, with reflection functioning as a bridge between experience and subsequent behaviour. The sixth stage involved monitoring, reflection, and follow-up evaluation. Monitoring was integrated throughout the programme through direct observation, participant logbooks, instructor records, and reflective activities. Observers and instructors documented participants' engagement and behavioural development, while logbooks enabled participants to record and interpret their learning experiences. Such reflective processes are important because character education involves the gradual development of moral understanding and habits rather than the acquisition of knowledge alone (Bleazby, 2020).

Evaluation continued after the Binlat, after completion of Non-Commissioned Officer School, and after participants had served for at least one year. This longitudinal process was intended to determine whether the national character values developed during training were maintained and transferred into subsequent educational and professional contexts. The need to consider character development as an ongoing process is consistent with Lavy's (2020) observation that character strengths can be fostered through intentional and sustained educational interventions. Overall, these stages demonstrate that the programme operationalised experiential learning as a continuous process of experience, reflection, meaning-making, and application. The 10–40–3–7 structure therefore functioned not merely as a training schedule but as a progressive learning pathway: participants were first prepared to learn, subsequently engaged in intensive character-development experiences, connected these values with their future profession, and finally applied them through practical and community-based activities. This approach also reflects the growing recognition that character education needs to integrate personal experience, social interaction, cultural context, and opportunities for practical application rather than treating character as a purely cognitive learning outcome (Muhammad et al., 2022).

1. Strengthening Instructors' Capacity in the Application of *Experiential Learning*

The implementation of measures to strengthen national character education began with capacity-building for instructors, as the key actors in the learning process. A total of 50 instructors from the Papua Provincial Police Academy (SPN Polda Papua), the Papua Provincial Police (Polda Papua) and the West Papua Provincial Police (Polda Papua Barat) took part in *the Training of Trainers* (TOT). The programme was conducted online over five days in July 2020 and continued in person at the Papua Provincial Police Academy (SPN Polda Papua) prior to the implementation of the training programme in September 2020. This activity served as a strategic stage for building a shared understanding amongst instructors regarding the objectives of the training, the learning materials, and the application of *Experiential Learning* in national character education. This is important because the quality of the learning experience is greatly influenced by the facilitator's ability to design experiences, facilitate reflection, and link experiences to the concepts being learnt (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

The capacity-building of instructors is also aimed at shifting the learning orientation from a predominantly *teacher-centred approach* towards a form of learning that allows greater scope for participant engagement. In Experiential Learning (EL), instructors do not merely act as conveyors of material, but serve as facilitators who help participants experience, observe, reflect on, interpret and apply what they have learnt. This cycle forms the core of *Experiential Learning*, comprising *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualisation*, and *active experimentation* (Kolb, 1984). The training programme design also explicitly positions EL as a reflective and *bottom-up* experience.

This shift in the instructor's role is significant in the context of police education. Police education requires discipline and structure, but at the same time, police cadets need to be equipped with the ability to think, communicate, solve problems and reflect on their actions. Turner (2022) explains that the use of experiential learning and *role-play* in police education can provide participants with the opportunity to encounter situations that resemble real-world professional scenarios, ensuring that learning does not stop at theoretical understanding. Consequently, the training of trainers (TOT) for instructors in this programme serves as the foundation for integrating the discipline of police education with more reflective and participatory learning.

2. Implementation of Experience-Based National Character Development

Following the capacity-building of instructors, the programme continued with training for prospective Noken Police non-commissioned officers. The programme lasted for two months, comprising 400 teaching hours and following a 10–40–3–7 structure. This structure consisted of 10 days of acclimatisation and self-awareness, 40 days of national awareness training

to foster patriotism and personal development, three days of introduction to the police profession, and seven days of reinforcement through practical training, problem-solving and community service. This training structure demonstrates that character education is positioned as a phased process that combines personal, social, national, and professional aspects. The implementation of EL is carried out through activities that provide participants with direct experience. Learning utilises simulations, *role-play*, reflection, socio-cultural activities, and various other activities that enable participants to engage actively. This approach is in line with the principle that learning is a process of knowledge creation through the transformation of experience, rather than merely the reception of information (Kolb, 1984). In the context of character education, concrete experiences are important because national values are more easily internalised when participants have the opportunity to experience situations related to those values, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Trainerr Activity

The values of Pancasila, nationalism, diversity, love of the homeland, and police ethics are thus not merely presented as theoretical material. These values are integrated into the learning experience, providing participants with the opportunity to experience and practise them. This approach is in line with Lickona's (1991) view that character education needs to integrate *moral knowing*, *moral feeling* and *moral action*. In other words, knowing what constitutes a good value must be followed by developing a commitment to that value and the ability to put it into practice.

3. Reflection as a Process of Internalising National Values

Concrete experiences do not automatically lead to learning unless participants are provided with opportunities to interpret and reflect on those experiences. Therefore, one of the programme's key characteristics was the systematic use of reflection after learning activities. Participants were guided to identify what they had experienced, how they responded to the activity, what they had learned, and which values emerged from the experience. In the experiential learning cycle, this process represents reflective observation, in which learners revisit their experiences and construct meaning from them (Kolb, 1984). The importance of active engagement with experience is also

consistent with Mahoney et al. (2021), who emphasise that personal and social development requires learning environments that provide opportunities for meaningful participation and reflection. Reflection subsequently served as a bridge between experience and the internalisation of national character values. Participants were not merely asked to describe what they had done but were guided to identify the lessons embedded in their experiences and relate them to their personal lives and future responsibilities as police officers. Lavy (2020) suggests that character strengths can be intentionally developed when educational interventions provide opportunities for individuals to recognise and practise positive qualities. In the Binlat programme, this process was operationalised by linking practical experiences with values such as nationalism, discipline, responsibility, integrity, cooperation, and respect for diversity.

The reflective process was also contextualised within the participants' social and cultural backgrounds. Harun (2020) highlights the importance of connecting character education with multicultural contexts and community-based values, particularly when education involves participants from diverse cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, reflection in the Noken programme provided space for participants to interpret national values in relation to their own experiences while simultaneously developing a shared understanding of Indonesian national identity and their professional responsibilities. The use of participant logbooks further supported this reflective process. Participants used the logbooks to document significant experiences, lessons learned, personal responses, and perceived changes throughout the training, while instructors used them as complementary records for monitoring participants' development. Written reflection therefore functioned not merely as documentation but as a mechanism through which participants could revisit and interpret their learning experiences. Septiani (2020) similarly emphasises the importance of appropriate learning resources in creating an engaging learning process that supports character development. Programme data indicated that the logbooks helped instructors monitor participants' progress while enabling participants to recognise their own development, which in turn supported their motivation to remain engaged in the programme. In this sense, reflection and documentation transformed activities from isolated experiences into a continuous process of experience, meaning-making, value internalisation, and subsequent application. This contextual transformation of learning experiences into character development is also consistent with Sakti (2024), who demonstrates the importance of connecting educational experiences with learners' social and cultural realities in character formation.

4. The Development of Interactive and Humanistic Learning

The results of the programme also demonstrate the development of a more interactive learning approach. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions, express their opinions, discuss their experiences and interact with the instructors. Programme data indicates that interactive dialogue stimulates participant engagement, develops critical thinking and memory, and boosts participants' confidence in expressing their opinions. Both individual and group assignments were designed to foster independence, responsibility, discipline and creativity. This approach reflects a humanistic approach to learning, as participants are not merely positioned as objects to be instructed, but as subjects with their own experiences and the capacity to participate in the learning process. Rogers (1969) explains that meaningful learning requires the involvement of participants and an environment that enables individuals to develop their full potential. In this context, the humanisation of education does not mean reducing disciplinary demands, but rather providing participants with the opportunity to understand the values and reasons underlying a particular action.

This finding is particularly interesting because, institutionally, police education continues to require hierarchy, discipline and compliance. However, the process of character development can take place through a more dialogic approach. EL enables instructors to continue to fulfil their guiding role whilst allowing participants the space to participate. This approach is consistent with Turner's (2022) study, which shows that experience-based methods in police education provide scope for developing reflection, participation and learning from situations that closely resemble professional practice.

5. Strengthening National Awareness and Changing Participants' Attitudes

The results of the activities indicate progress in the participants' national awareness and attitudes. Assessment was carried out across academic, mental-personality and physical fitness aspects. The academic aspect covered assignments, performance observations, written tests and technical exercises, whilst the mental-personality aspect was assessed through ongoing observation of attitudes. This assessment approach, which encompasses both knowledge and attitude, is consistent with the aims of character education, which seeks not only to develop cognitive abilities but also to foster the development of dispositions and behaviour (Lickona, 1991).

The results of the assessment and monitoring indicate the development of the participants' sense of national identity and love for their country throughout the training process. These findings demonstrate that learning experiences combined with reflection provide participants with the opportunity to link national identity-related material to their personal and professional experiences. From an EL perspective, this process illustrates the interconnection between concrete experience, reflection, concept formation and behavioural application (Kolb, 1984). Of the 274 prospective participants

in the first cohort, one withdrew before the programme began because their parents had encouraged them to enrol, whilst 273 participants attended the training programme and were declared to have passed. The programme's completion rate indicates a high level of participant retention. However, graduation data cannot be regarded as the sole evidence of EL's success in character transformation. In community service articles, character transformation is more accurately assessed through a combination of observational findings, mental and personality assessments, participant reflections, and monitoring of behavioural development.

6. Monitoring and Sustainability of Character Building

Another strength of the programme is the monitoring carried out in stages. Monitoring is not only carried out during the training programme, but continues into subsequent training and once participants have entered the workplace. Monitoring during the training programme is carried out by observers or mentors assigned to each platoon, followed by non-commissioned officers or instructors during the training phase, and, once participants are on duty, through monitoring by their respective line managers. This approach allows changes in character to be observed over a longer period of time.

The evaluation is also carried out in three stages: after participants have completed the Noken Pre-Non-Commissioned Officer Training Programme, after completing Non-Commissioned Officer School, and after having served for at least one year. Validation is used to assess *the outcomes* of the activities, particularly changes in behaviour once participants enter their operational environment. This evaluation approach is in line with the Kirkpatrick model (2006), which identifies behavioural change and outcomes as key components of training programme evaluation following the learning process.

Further monitoring carried out in April 2025 also provided information on the sustainability of the training outcomes. The follow-up results in the programme documentation indicate that changes in national character are still evident within the participants' family, community and workplace environments. These findings are significant because the aim of character education is not merely to bring about change during the training, but to encourage participants to maintain and apply these values upon returning to their social and professional environments (Lickona, 1991).

7. A Model for Strengthening National Character Based on *Experiential Learning*

Based on the overall implementation of the programme, the process of strengthening national character can be outlined in five interconnected stages: concrete experience → reflection → interpretation of values → behavioural application → monitoring and reinforcement. The first four stages were adapted from the experiential learning cycle, which connects

experience, reflection, conceptualisation, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984), while the fifth stage was incorporated into the Binlat Noken programme to assess and reinforce the continuity of behavioural development. In the concrete experience stage, participants engaged in simulations, role-play, group exercises, social activities, problem-solving, and other contextual learning situations. These activities positioned participants as active learners rather than passive recipients of character-related information. Mahoney et al. (2021) emphasise that personal and social development is strengthened when learners are actively engaged in supportive learning environments that provide opportunities to develop and practise relevant competencies.

The reflection stage encouraged participants to revisit their experiences, identify their responses and feelings, and recognise the lessons emerging from each activity. Reflection was subsequently followed by the interpretation of values, through which participants connected their experiences with Pancasila, nationalism, diversity, love for the homeland, discipline, responsibility, and police ethics. Character development through such processes is particularly relevant when learners are encouraged to recognise and practise positive character strengths rather than merely acquire knowledge about them (Lavy, 2020). The interpretation of values was also situated within the participants' diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Harun (2020) demonstrates the importance of integrating multicultural and community-based perspectives into character education. This contextual dimension was particularly relevant to prospective Noken Police NCOs because national character values needed to be understood not in isolation from their backgrounds, but in relation to their lived experiences and shared Indonesian identity. The use of cultural context as a learning resource is also supported by Sakti (2024), who highlights the contribution of ethnopedagogical approaches to character formation.

The fourth stage, behavioural application, provided participants with opportunities to demonstrate the values they had interpreted through practical exercises, group responsibilities, problem-solving, and community-oriented activities. Thus, the learning process moved progressively from experiencing and understanding values towards demonstrating them in action. The fifth stage, monitoring and reinforcement, extended this process through observation, logbooks, instructor monitoring, and follow-up evaluation. These mechanisms enabled character development to be documented during the programme and monitored during subsequent education and professional service. The findings therefore suggest that the contribution of EL extended beyond making learning more active and engaging. More importantly, the programme shifted character education from the transmission of values towards a process of experience-based value internalisation. Participants were not merely informed about nationalism, discipline, responsibility, integrity, and love for the homeland; they were provided with situations in which these values could be experienced, reflected

upon, interpreted, and applied. Agus et al. (2021) similarly emphasise that sustainable national character building can be strengthened by connecting character values with meaningful social and cultural experiences.

A key finding of the programme can therefore be represented through the sequence instructor capacity building → experience → reflection → meaning-making → behavioural application → monitoring and reinforcement. Instructor preparation provided the foundation for participatory learning, while experience and reflection enabled participants to construct meaning from the activities. Behavioural application subsequently provided opportunities to practise the values learned, and monitoring supported their continued reinforcement. This model retains discipline as an essential characteristic of police education while creating greater space for participation, reflection, and contextual learning. Accordingly, the programme indicates the potential of experiential learning as an alternative approach to national character development in police education, particularly when training involves participants from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Programme Implementation Progress

Stage	Participant/ Duration	Activities and Methods	Programme Outputs	Evidence of Outcomes
Preparation of learning resources	Programme development team; prior to training	Development of curriculum, syllabus, teaching guidelines (<i>jukjar</i>), teaching resources (<i>hanjar</i>), and supporting learning materials	Learning resources for national character education were prepared for programme implementation	The programme had structured learning resources that enabled national character values to be integrated systematically into the training process
Instructor preparation	50 instructors from SPN Polda Papua, Polda Papua, and Polda Papua Barat; five days online followed by face-to-face preparation	Training of Trainers (TOT), discussion, simulation, facilitation practice, and preparation of reflective learning	50 instructors participated in the preparation programme	Instructors were prepared to facilitate experience-based activities, interaction, and reflection rather than relying solely on one-way content delivery
Conditioning and self-awareness	273 participants; 10 days	Orientation, self-awareness activities, group exercises,	Participants completed the initial	Observations and reflections indicated the

		simulation, interaction, and guided reflection	conditioning stage	development of learning readiness, discipline, responsibility, self-awareness, and group engagement
National identity and character strengthening	273 participants ; 40 days	Experiential learning, discussion, role-play, simulation, e-learning, cultural activities, individual and group assignments, and reflection	Participants completed intensive national character learning activities	Observation and reflective records identified development in participants' understanding and expression of nationalism, love for the homeland, responsibility, discipline, and respect for diversity
Introduction to the police profession	273 participants ; 3 days	Professional scenarios, discussion, question-and-answer sessions, and reflective dialogue	Participants connected national character values with the roles and responsibilities of Polri	Participants demonstrated an increased ability to interpret discipline, integrity, responsibility, and nationalism in relation to professional police conduct
Practical reinforcement and community service	273 participants ; 7 days	Practical exercises, problem-solving, group activities, community service, and post-activity reflection	Character values were applied in practical and social situations	Observers identified the application of responsibility, discipline, teamwork, leadership, social sensitivity, and problem-solving during practical activities
Reflection and assessment	273 participants ; throughout the programme	Direct observation, individual and group reflection, assignments, and participant <i>logbooks</i>	Participants' learning and behavioural development were documented	Logbook and observation records showed participants' progress in understanding experiences, identifying the values learned, and relating those values to

				subsequent behaviour
Programme completion	273 of 274 initial prospective participants	Completion of the 400-JP programme	273 participants completed and passed the training	Completion indicated sustained participation in the programme; however, it was treated as an implementatio n indicator rather than as the sole evidence of character development
Follow-up monitoring	Graduates; after Binlat, after NCO School, and after at least one year of service	Monitoring by instructors, observers/supervisor s, and workplace superiors	Longitudinal monitoring of participants was established	The evaluation examined whether character values developed during training were maintained during subsequent police education and transferred into professional practice

Table 1 demonstrates that the programme outcomes were assessed beyond participant completion. Although 273 of the 274 prospective participants completed the 400-JP programme, the completion rate was treated only as an indicator of programme participation and continuity rather than as direct evidence of successful character education. More relevant evidence was obtained through observations, reflective activities, participant logbooks, assignments, and follow-up monitoring, which documented changes in participants’ understanding, attitudes, and observable behaviour throughout the programme.

During the initial conditioning stage, observations and reflective activities indicated development in participants’ readiness, self-awareness, discipline, responsibility, and engagement in group learning. During the 40-day national identity and character-strengthening stage, participants increasingly engaged with values such as nationalism, love for the homeland, responsibility, discipline, and respect for diversity through simulations, role-play, discussions, cultural activities, and reflection. The evidence collected during these activities suggested that participants were not merely able to

identify the values conceptually but increasingly related them to their own experiences and expected roles as prospective police officers.

Behavioural evidence became particularly important during the practical reinforcement and community-service stage. Participants were required to demonstrate responsibility, teamwork, discipline, leadership, problem-solving, and social sensitivity in practical and social situations. Observers and instructors monitored these behaviours during the activities, while post-activity reflection enabled participants to explain the meaning of their experiences and identify how the values learned could be applied in subsequent situations. The *logbooks* further documented participants' learning progress by recording experiences, reflections, perceived changes, and lessons learned throughout the programme.

These findings indicate that the effectiveness of the programme should not be interpreted solely from the 273 participants who completed and passed the training. Rather, evidence of character development was derived from the convergence of several sources: observable behaviour during experiential activities, participants' reflective records, instructor and supervisor monitoring, and the application of values in practical situations. Follow-up evaluation after the Binlat, after completion of NCO School, and after at least one year of service was designed to determine whether these changes were sustained and transferred from the training environment to subsequent education and professional police practice.

D. CONSLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The national character education programme for prospective Noken Police NCOs at SPN Polda Papua achieved its objectives in supporting the development of participants' national character and strengthening instructors' capacity. Of the 274 prospective participants, 273 completed the 400-teaching-hour programme, while 50 instructors were prepared to facilitate experience-based and reflective learning. Evaluation through observation, reflection, logbooks, assignments, and monitoring indicated positive development in participants' nationalism, love for the homeland, discipline, responsibility, teamwork, respect for diversity, and Indonesian national identity. Participants also demonstrated an increased ability to relate these values to practical activities and their future professional roles. Further monitoring after police education and during professional service is required to determine the sustainability of these outcomes. Future implementation should focus on strengthening instructors' competencies in facilitating experiential activities, reflective dialogue, and participant feedback through regular training and refresher programmes. The programme should also adopt standardised evaluation instruments, including observation sheets, reflective logbooks, and behavioural assessment rubrics, to measure changes in national character consistently. Post-training monitoring should be conducted systematically after NCO School and during

professional service, involving instructors and workplace supervisors to assess the sustainability of participants' character development. The model may subsequently be adapted to other police training contexts based on participant characteristics and regional needs.

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