

## The Application of Christian Religious Education Through Dinner Table Culture: An Analysis of Internalization and Spiritual Dialectics in Sentani Family

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### Abstract

*This study aims to analyze the application of Christian Religious Education (CRE) through the culture of "dining table" in Christian families in Iifar Besar, Sentani, Papua, and identify the spiritual dialectics that occur in the context of that culture. The background of this research is the shift of traditional values in society due to modernization, which has an impact on the decline in the quality of value and moral education in the family. The research method used is qualitative with an analytical description approach, involving the direct participation of family members involved in the practice of dining table culture. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, which were then analyzed inductively and descriptively. The results of the study show that the integration of PAK with the local culture of the dining table contributes to the internalization of family, spiritual, and social values in Christian families in Iifar Besar. This process strengthens family relationships, fosters spiritual life, and helps families overcome the challenges of modernization. In addition, the culture of the dining table also creates a spiritual dialectic in the form of value reflection, spiritual transformation, and resolution of value conflicts and roles in the family. This research emphasizes the importance of local culture-based education in shaping children's character and moral values, as well as offering a relevant and effective educational model in the context of modernization.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Christian Religious Education (CRE) is an effort to educate church members to be actively involved in various religious activities, such as Bible study, prayer, worship, and service. Calvin simplified PAK as an activity that educates every church member to be intelligent in the guidance of God's Spirit and actively involved in the community, both in the family, congregations, and churches gereja. This process aims to equip the people in manifesting devotion to God the Father and Jesus Christ in daily life, as well as living responsibly under the sovereignty of God. Graendorf also emphasized that PAK is a process of delivering teachings based on the Bible, which guides each individual to know and live God's plan in all aspects of life, as well as prepare them for effective Christ-centered ministry.

Thomas Groome in Boiliu defines Christian Religious Education as a conscious and systematic effort to pass on knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and spiritual sensitivity to students. The main goal of CRE is to bring students to encounter Christ, love God earnestly,

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live in obedience, and be able to practice faith in daily life. This education is fundamental in shaping the true Christian man, which begins with the fellowship of the Christian family. Chafin added that the family is the first place to undergo spiritual growth and activity development. The family is also a place to transfer life values and solve problems that arise.

The diversity of traditional cultures and beliefs in Papua, as well as the influx of major religions such as Christianity, have created unique social and cultural dynamics. The Church has an important role in exploring and transforming local cultural values to be relevant to today's life. Hope S. Antone pointed out the importance of context in Christian Education, where the dialogue between the biblical text and everyday life experience should be the PAK methodology. In the context of the community in the coastal area of Lake Sentani, Christian families face the challenge of maintaining traditional values while applying the Christian faith.

Christian religious education (CRE) must also understand and appreciate multiculturalism. This is important because Indonesia is a country with high cultural diversity. Christian religious education based on local culture means using the basic values that exist in a region as a means to proclaim salvation through the gospel. This approach is in line with the view that all life is the implementation of faith. Christians are new humans in all aspects of their lives and do not need to abandon secular activities. Instead, they can see each activity as a way to practice their faith in Christ in obedience.

Christian religious education (CRE) based on local culture aims to respond to the challenges of globalization and modernization that can erode traditional and religious values. In this case, Christian religious education not only aims to provide theological knowledge, but also to strengthen local cultural values that exist in society. Christian religious education based on local culture can be a solution to many educational problems faced, because it can help create mutual respect, mutual respect, and increase togetherness between students from various religious and cultural backgrounds.

Theology locally is also a call to use the basic values that exist in a region as a vehicle to convey the gospel message. According to Gerrit Singgih, these values are found and lived by people in the region in the form of language, art, norms, or ordinances. A theologian who is directly involved in people's daily lives can understand and interpret these basic values in depth. This in-depth understanding of local culture is important for contextual theology, so that the message of the Gospel can be conveyed in a way that is relevant and understandable to the local community. Thus, Christian religious education based on local culture is not only about understanding cultural values, but also about building deep and meaningful relationships with society.

One of the tribes that carefully implements CRE by integrating it with local culture is Sentani Tribe. The process of internalizing CRE with local culture is implemented through the "*meja makan*" or when eating together. Dining tables and communal meals for the Sentani tribe, especially in Ifar Besar, have high cultural value. This is formed as if it is an obligation that meals must be done together while listening to the advice of the family leader. The main urgency of implementing this educational model is the inclusion of education in the family. However, today, Christian education based on local culture is experiencing a shift due to the rapid global current that erodes the values instilled. The values of honesty, love, politeness, loyalty, and social have shifted. Often we see teenagers having a high attitude of selfishness, a reduced sense of honesty, and no courtesy to the elderly is practiced. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the internalization of local culture in Christian families in Ifar Besar-Sentani and identify the spiritual dialectics that occur in family culture.

Several studies that identify the internalization of CRE values to local culture due to global development flows such as those conducted by Selanno and friends who tried to look at the internalization of PAK values in local cultural traditions in Minahasa. They revealed that various problems were encountered, namely the lack of religious moderation, the existence of cultural and religious syncretism, and even the role of educators has not contributed to forming a moderate attitude. Therefore, the research they conducted aims to offer a multicultural Christian education construction to form moderate religious behavior. The results of their study show that Christian education that integrates local cultural values, such as the Yaki-Yaki tradition in Minahasa, helps shape moderate religious behavior. By providing a space for cultural identity expression, students can develop a tolerant attitude and respect differences. This study provides recommendations for an inclusive education approach to reduce hatred and violence between religious believers agama.

Furthermore Mizal identifies effective methods carried out by families in educating morals. This is revealed because it is no longer a common secret that the development of the times has changed the character of children. The results of his research show that a good family education can produce quality and characterful individuals. Moral education must involve example, practice, and habituation. In addition, the development of UNESCO's four learning pillars, namely "learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together" is important to support moral education. The study concluded that to overcome moral decadence, education in the family must be strengthened and aligned with good universal values.

In line with Mizal's research, Generation Z experiences moral degradation due to POP culture and is associated with high mental health and literacy. Family dynamics and external factors also affect the effectiveness of Christian education in shaping children's character. The purpose of this study is to understand the role and implementation of Christian education in the family as an effort to build the character of Generation Z children, as well as to develop a more effective and relevant character education strategy. The results of the study show that Christian education in the family has an important role in shaping children's character by strengthening moral values and creating a supportive environment. Parents who are role models and open discussions about moral issues in the family are very influential. Despite the obstacles, a holistic and innovative approach can increase the contribution of Christian education in shaping a strong generation.

The common threads of previous and ongoing research can be described as follows: The research of Selanno et al. shows that multicultural Christian education that integrates local cultural values can help shape moderate religious behavior in the midst of the challenge of cultural and religious syncretism. Mizal underlined the importance of moral education in the family as the foundation for the formation of children's character, highlighting the need for a holistic approach and involving affective aspects. Meanwhile, Armila et al.'s research identified the challenges faced by Generation Z children, including the negative impact of pop culture and social media, as well as dependence on technology. However, the research that is currently ongoing seeks to integrate local cultural practices in family education through the "dining table" culture which is analyzed in the form of PAK's internalization of the culture of eating together at the dinner table and identifying the Spiritual Dialectic that occurs in the Family. This research is expected to make a positive contribution to the formation of character in the family and address modern challenges.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a qualitative analytical description method. This method relies on the natural background as the integrity of the research and humans as the main instrument. The data analysis process is carried out inductively and descriptively, focusing on the process rather than the results, and limiting the study to a clear focus on checking the validity of the data. This research took place in Ifar Besar-Sentani, Papua. The data collected consisted of words and actions observed or interviewed, as well as additional data such as documents, photographs, and statistics. Primary data sources are participants or key persons who are directly involved in the practice being researched, while secondary data sources include books, journals, magazines, dissertations, theses, photos, videos, documents, and relevant statistics. Data collection is carried out logically in practice, which means that research is carried out flexibly and is tied to specific cases. In analyzing the data, it is carried out by following six steps based on the model from Creswell (2019), namely preparing the data, mastering the entire data, coding the data, describing the setting and participants, presenting descriptions and themes in qualitative reports, and making interpretations or meanings of the data. The validity of the data is maintained by using the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in accordance with the natural paradigm.

### 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

One of the local cultures in Ifar Besar-Sentani, Papua is the culture of eating at the dinner table or more familiar in the language style called the culture of the dining table. Sentani people highly value eating together at the dinner table because through it the family can reflect on the attitude, values, and intimacy of relationships in the family. Children often express complaints and needs, family leaders give advice and education, communication and interaction in the family are established, and mutual understanding between family members is also formed. Haris and Auliya revealed that the family is the first place for children to receive education, interact, and form emotional intelligence. Apart from the place of receiving the first education, the family is also the initial trigger in forming the character and making ethical decisions. It indirectly shows that the family is the source and trigger of all positive and negative impacts.

Contextually, education at the dinner table by Christian families in Ifar Besar Sentani and its relationship with Christian Religious Education directly contributes to the internalization of Christian Religious Education by strengthening family ties, fostering spiritual life, and overcoming the challenges of modernization. In addition, at the dining table according to the local culture of Ifar Besar Sentani, Papua, a spiritual dialectic was also formed in the form of reflection on values and spiritual transformation, and resolution of conflicts of values and family roles. Both the internalization of Christian Religious Education and spiritual dialectics are the result of a combination of local cultural education and Christian education that are formed contextually and contribute as conflict mitigation materials due to the friction of modernization

The table detailing the results of the combination of local cultural education, dining table and Christian Religious Education is as follows;

**Table 1. Convergence of Local Culture "Dining Table" and CRE**

No.	Subjek Pendidikan	Hasil	Realisasi Kontekstual
1	Integration of Local Culture-Based Education "Dinner Table" and	Internalization of Christian Religious Education	1. Strengthening family relationships 2. Building a spiritual life

2	Contextual Christian Religious Education  Spiritual Dialectics	3. Addressing the challenges of Modernization 1. Reflection on values and Spiritual transformation. 2. Resolution of Conflict of Values and Family Roles
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**Internalization of Christian Religious Education**

Educational Integration is an effort to combine aspects of education into a unified and comprehensive part. Meanwhile, internalization is an effort to teach and know aspects of education such as values and norms and then practice them in daily life. In line with Pertiwi who said that internalization proceeds from teaching, understanding, and practice or real fruits in daily life. From the integration of the local culture "Dining Table" in Ifar Besar-Sentani with Christian Religious Education, the internalization of values in the form of family, spiritual, and social values has been formed. The tangible form of the results of internalizing these values is strengthening family relationships, fostering spiritual life, and family efforts in anticipating the dangers of modernization.

For the people of Sentani in general, kinship is something that is considered fundamental because from within the family are obtained various valuable educations, life values, and efforts to maintain life. Yektiningtyas explained that the family values of the Sentani community are reflected in the expression "holei narei", which is the importance of maintaining brotherhood, besides that the expression contains meaning as a reference that refers to education, social values, and customary norms. The local culture of "dining table" or getting education at the dining table is an important tradition that not only functions as a time to eat together with all family members but this right is a moment to teach values and life norms to family members, especially for the younger generation.

Activities at the dinner table, accompanied by sharing stories, experiences, and advice from parents. At that moment, parents will teach children about the importance of maintaining family unity, respecting elders. The dining table is a container to foster family intimacy because all expressions can be poured through the dining table. Children will realize their role and learn to be responsible in the family and in society. Therefore, the practice of "dining table" in the Ifar Besar-Sentani community is considered as a form of informal education that is very effective in shaping responsibility, strengthening brotherhood, character and personality of children. This shows how important the role of the family is in education and how local values can be internalized in daily life, making individuals not only academically educated but also morally and ethically high.

In addition to strengthening the bonds of brotherhood and kinship, the tradition of the dining table can also increase the spiritual value of the family in general. Labobar and Pattipeiluhu revealed that there are several ways to increase children's spiritual value, one of which is to give children the opportunity and attention to pray. This is realized through the tradition of the dining table because inside the dining table parents teach children to pray before eating. This shows that children need to be invited to always be grateful. In addition, leading prayer is an indirect teaching to have a mentality as a leader. The tradition of the dining table also teaches about simplicity. Parents will teach children through prayer that it is important to appreciate the blessings received through the meals received, and to share love through sharing with the less fortunate. The gratitude expressed in praying and eating together can increase spiritual values, namely encouraging children to be grateful and do good.

The next internalization is through the tradition of the dining table, parents will encourage their children to find strategies to overcome the era of globalization or modernization. It is undeniable that the era of globalization is an era that knows no boundaries and sometimes has a destructive attitude for those who do not have resilience Layan and Yapsenang. In addition, modernization will change mentality and character and even change a person's order or principles which has an impact on behavior change Kabanga. Therefore, one of the concerns of the dining table tradition for the Ifar Besar-Sentani community is the education of children to face rapid development.

The dining table tradition serves as a platform where parents can discuss current issues faced in the era of globalization and modernization, as well as provide a perspective rooted in cultural and spiritual values. The tradition of the dining table in the Ifar Besar-Sentani community plays an important role in shaping the character of children, especially in facing the challenges of globalization and modernization. Here, parents discuss current issues, teach children to think critically about information from various sources, and reinforce a sense of pride in cultural identity. Through ancestral stories and traditional values, children are encouraged to maintain their identity while developing a work ethic and discipline. This tradition becomes a solid moral and spiritual foundation, preparing children for success in an ever-changing world without losing their integrity.

Overall, the tradition of the dining table in the Ifar Besar-Sentani community not only serves as a place to strengthen family relationships, but also as an important forum to prepare children to face global challenges with strong moral, spiritual, and cultural strength.

### **Spiritual Dialectics**

Judging from spiritual dialectic, there are 2 things that are interrelated, namely value reflection and spiritual transformation. Value reflection is in the form of the bond of an individual's or someone's relationship to social life, while spiritual transformation is the individual's relationship with the religious or moral values held. What triggers spiritual transformation is the existence of a perspective on spiritual practices that is not in accordance with social values that have changed significantly. Therefore, the importance of the role of the family in instilling spiritual values in understanding spiritual maturity. Contextual speaking, the local wisdom of the dining table or eating together according to the Sentani culture is the right moment in evaluating the moral and social development of children. Inside the dinner table, there is communication that involves the attention of parents about the importance of maintaining spiritual values and balancing them in community life. In addition, parents also have concerns and even motivation for children to balance between tradition and technological adaptation. In the era of rapid technological development, there is a reflection of values due to the transformation of spiritual values. The role of parents in mental development can be realized through the use of local culture such as the culture of eating together or "dining table".

Next is conflict resolution and family roles. One of the effective efforts in solving problems is internal family discussions, familial settlements, and sitting in the family and reaching consensus. Problems can be solved creatively and thoroughly in order to create a harmonious family. In the family, parents have the ability to see and anticipate problems from different angles. The Ifar Besar Sentani community has an intimate family tradition. Each family is responsible for the continuation of the good name of their family.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study found that the local culture of the "dining table" in Ifar Besar-Sentani, Papua, has an important role in the internalization of Christian Religious Education (PAK) in the family. This culture not only serves as a time to eat together, but also as a reflective and educational moment where family, spiritual, and social values are taught and strengthened. Activities at the dinner table create space for deep communication and interaction between family members, allowing children to raise complaints, receive advice, and understand and appreciate their role in the family and society. This shows that the practice of "dining table" is an effective informal education in shaping the character, responsibility, and ethics of children in Ifar Besar-Sentani.

This research also reveals that the internalization of PAK through the culture of the dining table has an impact on fostering spiritual life and strengthening family ties in facing the challenges of modernization. The spiritual dialectical process that occurs during meals together includes reflection on values and spiritual transformation, as well as the resolution of conflicts of values and family roles. Thus, the integration of local cultural values and Christian education has proven to make a significant contribution to mitigating conflicts due to the friction of modernization, as well as strengthening the moral and spiritual foundations of children in Christian families in Ifar Besar-Sentani

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