

# The Study of Christian Education on “*Tu’ulan I Pal*” Values and Their Relevance with the Church’s Diakonia Duty During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract.** The Covid-19 pandemic as a global disaster has become a terrorizing monster and instantly become the factor that changes the centuries-old global's order. In an instant, everything turned into a frightening thing as it affected many sectors with the economy being the most affected one after the health sector. As a result, poverty is inevitable. Amid this pandemic, the church as a representation of God's face that maintains the integrity and sustainability of all of God's creations must synergize with various elements of society to face this global problem. One of the duties of the church is Diakonia. In the context of the Kuyanga village of the Tonsawang tribe, diaconal services have become values in social life. These values can be found in the *Tu’ulan I Pal* tradition, which is a representation of the values that apply in society by prioritizing brotherhood, solidarity, equality, and service to others, especially community members who experience grief without differences in social status, education, position, property, and others. Researchers are interested in analyzing the relevance of *Tu’ulan I Pal* values with the task of church deacons during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study uses descriptive qualitative methods to discuss the study of Christian education regarding the values that apply in the Kuyanga community tradition, namely *Tu’ulan I Pal* as an effort to realize the church's Diakonia duty during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** Covid-19 Pandemic; The Church’s Diakonia Task; *Tu’ulan I Pal*; Christian Education

## 1 Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has taken the world into a new normal era. The Indonesian government has taken various policies to break the chain of the spread of Covid-19, including wearing masks, PSBB, social distancing, washing hands, avoiding crowds, mandatory vaccines, and various other policies; becoming a general effort in implementing the health protocol. Kuyanga Village a village located in the North Tombatu area is included in the Southeast Minahasa district, North Sulawesi Province. This village cannot be separated from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Responding to this reality, the local government took the initiative to maintain the health of its citizens by contributing to the success of the Southeast Minahasa district government program. In line with the central government's program policies, the public is advised not to do much outside their home. As a result, many community members complain of reduced income to support the family's economy.

Although the government instructed all citizens to keep a distance and reduce excessive activities outside their homes, Kuyanga village has a *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition whose implementation involves a group of people. This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation and is estimated to have started in the 18th century. However, the tradition is made to maintain the order of values and the sustainability of people's lives. The local government is aware of this and let the citizen carry out the *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition in another form, without reducing the values of the *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition itself while worship is the duty of the church [1].

## 2 Literature Review

Education is important and necessary in human life. It should be noted that education is believed to be able to bring enlightenment to life for the community and is considered to be able to build a better civilization in human life [2]. In the study of Christian education, this model of education aims to help the younger generation of Christians not to go with the flow but to live and grow before God in Jesus Christ [3]. This way, Christians will be increasingly able to understand everything, especially regarding their faith in Christ.

Christianity has recorded its history in the world of education because Christian education has made a major contribution to the development of the world of education as a whole [4]. Christian Education is a process of teaching and learning based on the Bible, centered on Christ, and dependent on the Holy Spirit, which guides each person at all levels of growth through modern teaching towards knowing and experiencing God's plan and will through Christ in every aspect of life, and equip them for effective ministry, centered on Christ the Great Teacher and disciple-maturing commandments [5]. Christian education is the process of guiding each individual into the decision to live as a Christian [6].

*Tu'ulan I Pal* is a community gathering in connection with family thanksgiving for the completion of making *Pal* (tombstones) from deceased family members. *Tu'ulan I Pal* is done according to the request of the bereaved family, and is generally done on Sunday right after the community has finished worshipping together in church.

Covid-19 was first detected in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and quickly spread around the world. Furthermore, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) designated Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) as a pandemic due to the large number of confirmed positive cases [7]. Covid-19 is a disease caused by a new type of coronavirus namely sars-Cov-2 [8]. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on global life.

## 3 Method

This research was conducted with a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative research is the method to explore and understand the meaning that some individuals or groups of people ascribe to social or humanitarian problems. Qualitative methods are part of the knowledge process which is considered a social product and also a social process. Knowledge as a process has at least three basic principles, namely empiricism based on facts and data, objectivity, and control. The research data were obtained from interviews and literature studies related to the Study of Christian Education regarding *Tu'ulan I Pal* value its relevance to the church's Diakonia duty during the Covid 19 pandemic.

## 4 Result and Discussion

A study of the values of local wisdom of the community is very necessary for the life of the community itself. For the people of Kuyanga village, North Tombatu, Southeast Minahasa district, North Sulawesi province; *Tu'ulan I Pal*, needs to be studied more deeply to raise the positive values of this local wisdom. The values in question can be the glue of brotherly relations between the Kuyanga village communities.

### 4.1 The Study of Christian Education Regarding *Tu'ulan I Pal* Value

One of the important efforts in building human civilization, including the development of patterns of daily life, is education. It should be noted that education is believed to be able to bring enlightenment to life for the community and is considered to be able to build a better civilization in human life [9]. With Christian education, church members will have the knowledge to develop their lives for the better.

Based on direct interviews with community leaders in Kuyanga village, the values of *Tu'ulan I Pal* in the practice of everyday people's lives and as hereditary tradition contain several values. First is Brotherhood, where every member of the community will position himself as a brother to one another. The term brother is not only limited to blood relations but brothers as fellow human beings, fellow communities, fellow neighbors, and others as in the slogan of the Minahasa community, namely "*Torang Samua Basudara*". The second value is Solidarity, where the burden of community members, especially those who are grieving, becomes a shared burden in a sense of solidarity that is manifested in the willingness to deliver food to the bereaved family. Third is Equality, where every member of the community who experiences grief gets the same attention just like the other members of the community. Fourth is Service, meeting the grieving community by sharing food and eating together is part of service to fellow community members [10].

The value of the *Tu'ulan I Pal* in the Bible which is a source of teaching in Christian Religious Education is manifest in the following few Bible verses, namely: "Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters." (Hebrews 13:1), "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2), "And the second is like: 'Love your neighbour as yourself'" (Matthew 22:39), "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity." (Psalm 133:1)

### 4.2 The Relevance of *Tu'ulan I Pal* Values to Diakonia Services During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The values of *Tu'ulan I Pal* must be noble values that permeate all church deacon duties with a platform that is relevant to local values and the value of Christian religious education. That means the values of *Tu'ulan I Pal* need to be values that are owned by the church. Christian education involves four things, namely: First, group discussion: finding concrete solutions in social life. Second, Witness (Marturia): proclaiming the Gospel through testimony. Third is Serving (Diakonia): Service that embodies "Shalom". Fourth, fellowship (Koinonia): fellowship of worship is the most important thing in Christian education theory [11]. Christian religious education stems from the fellowship of God's people [12].

The name of the village Kuyanga, is taken from the name of the type of flower that comes from Tomohon. These flowers are known as "hibiscus flowers" or "Kuyanga" flowers. These flowers are often found in the village, so the name of the village is taken from the name of the flower, namely Kuyanga. The formation of the Kuyanga community occurred due to the migration of several Tombatu residents, especially farmers to open plantation land. Gradually

these farmers began to settle on their plantations. The Minahasa community which has a cooperation tradition, namely Mapalus, is then represented in the tradition of the Kuyanga village community, namely *Tu'ulan I Pal*.

In the *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition, the community gathers and gives thanks for the completion of making the Pal (tombstone) of a deceased family member. The *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition is carried out according to the request of the bereaved family and is generally carried out on Sundays after worshipping together at the church. Usually, the *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition is carried out by a community consisting of several family members and will be attended by all members of the community of one village. *Tu'ulan I Pal* is related to mesahey, which is between eating/entertaining grieving families. Each member of the community will bring rice including drinks from home, wrapped in a napkin and delivered to the funeral home. In essence, the burden, including family thanksgiving, becomes the same feeling and burden among all members of the community. Grieving families are not allowed to smoke, or are not allowed to cook food. The availability of food is the responsibility of the closest community members. Leftovers brought from home cannot be taken home. Collected in a pan and destined for the bereaved family. The point is the same, the same taste [13].

During the Covid-19 pandemic, where people are prohibited from gathering, the implementation of *Tu'ulan I Pal* is celebrated with strict health protocols, without reducing its value and meaning. The values of *Tu'ulan I Pal* must be noble values that permeate all church deacon duties with a platform that is relevant to local values and the value of Christian religious education. That means the values of *Tu'ulan I Pal* need to be values that are owned by the church.

## 5 Conclusion

A study of the values of local wisdom is necessary for the life of the community itself, and for the people of Kuyanga village, North Tombatu, Southeast Minahasa district, North Sulawesi province. *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition can raise the positive values of this local wisdom. The values in question can be the glue of brotherly relations between the Kuyanga village communities. In the *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition, the community gathers and gives thanks for the completion of making the Pal (tombstone) of a deceased family member. The *Tu'ulan I Pal* tradition is carried out according to the request of the bereaved family and is generally carried out on Sundays after worshipping together at the church. During the Covid-19 pandemic, where people are prohibited from gathering, the implementation of *Tu'ulan I Pal* is celebrated with strict health protocols, without reducing its value and meaning.

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