

HUMANISTIC APPROACH TO PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACTS IN CHARACTER EDUCATION STRENGTHENING

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: This paper aims to describe the basic reasons behind the application of the principal's humanistic approach, and the steps of the principal's humanistic approach to optimizing character education strengthening programs.

Methodology: This research uses a qualitative approach, case study design. Data collection is done through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and study documentation to achieve research objectives.

Main Findings: Research findings reveal that personal excellence (integrity, wholeness, and authenticity) and the humanistic spirituality of inspirational figures inspire the principal's humanistic approach. In addition, the application of the principal's humanistic approach has a significant impact on optimizing the implementation of character education strengthening in schools and successfully forming the character of students.

Applications of this study: This study can be useful for principals in the education department of Malang City, East Java, Indonesia, to use a humanistic approach model in carrying out leadership roles, because it has been proven effective in optimizing the implementation of optimizing character education strengthening programs in schools.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The principal's role is to create a "humane" school environment through harmonious relationships, respecting subordinates as human beings, tolerant and non-discriminatory, giving examples of good behavior to subordinates based on self-excellence and imitating the spirituality of inspirational figures, so that good characters are formed in the teachers and students at school.

Keywords: *Humanistic Approach, Principal's Leadership, Strengthening Character Education, Self Excellence, Inspiring Figure Spirituality.*

INTRODUCTION

A program for character education strengthening by the Indonesian Ministry of Education has revitalizing character education in Indonesia since 2010. Although the revitalization of national education policy applies, character education strengthening has not been implemented optimally at the school level. Based on the findings of [Wahjosumidjo \(1999\)](#); [Koesoema \(2015\)](#); [Ministry of Education \(2017\)](#), the failure to carry out the program for character education strengthening in schools is caused by two weaknesses of the principal's leadership, namely; first, the principal has not yet found an approach model that humanizes human. Several indicators of weakness in the principal's approach; a) does not civilize the followers, because it only focuses on the leader, glorifies the leader, and ignores the principle of human equality, ignores the maturity and personality of followers; b) based on the concept that the leader runs power over followers, which was carried over since the authoritarian Suharto regime; c) result-oriented and regards followers as followers instead of humans, because their morality needs encouragement; d) emphasizes the leader, followers are only the result of leader's behavior; e) leader fails to explain the personal development of followers or their well-being; f) leader and followers are not on the same level, and there is a clear hierarchy between them. As a result, followers only wait for the leader's order (top-down). Second, the principal has not been able to design an education that means humanizing human with character ([Dewantara, 1977](#)). As a result, school principals are less innovative in implementing the 2013 Curriculum which was conceptualized by the Indonesian Ministry of Education; the character education strengthening has not yet received a central position in the school curriculum and is insignificant so that students' self-development becomes stunted, there is no integration of character values in learning, school environment does not become an environment of character empowerment, active participation of parents and the community in supporting the formation of student's character in school is very low.

Responding to the weaknesses of the principal's leadership, it is crucial and urgent for school principals to use a humanistic approach as a step in building the student's character ([Veugeliers & Kat, 2002](#); [Ministry of Education \(2017\)](#)). It is time-consuming since the humanistic approach is considered new to be implemented by school principals in Indonesia. Most school principals in Indonesia use the humanistic approach label, but there is no apparent leadership approach in its practical application, thus confusing the followers to join in.

Although not all school principals in Indonesia are able to apply the humanistic approach, we found two principals of private schools in Malang City, East Java, Indonesia, namely Santa Maria II Catholic Middle School and Sang Timur Catholic Middle School who have implemented the humanistic approach effectively in recent research. The two principals adopted the humanistic approach based on self-excellence (integrity, wholeness, self-authenticity) shows in an

attitude of openness, existentialism in the new experience, consistency, flexibility, creativity, and constructive. In addition, they were inspired by the humanist spirituality of the founding fathers of the spiritual congregation as the spirit that drives the humanistic values of all members of the school community. It is also shown in the performance of the two principals who humanize their followers (working with no pressure, respect, and care for followers). Eventually, the followers join in a framework that characterizes humanistic values, which has an impact on optimizing the implementation of a program for strengthening character education.

The purpose of this study is to describe the basic reasons behind the application of the humanistic approach by the two principals, especially those relating to the background and inspiration that underlies the application of the humanistic approach. In addition, this article also aims to describe the steps of the principal's humanistic approach to optimizing character education strengthening programs through self-development activities, classroom activities, activities in the school environment, and in the community. Thus, the overall character education strengthening programs certainly have an impact on the formation and strengthening of student character in schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Humanistic Approach in Educational System

The approach in the education system is a pedagogical activity that is implemented in learning activities and aims to build humanity of humanity (Freire, 1978; Hartoko, 1989). According to Freire, (1978) the humanistic approach in the education system is a pedagogical activity that frees students from pressure, which eliminates student criticism. This pedagogic activity changes the paradigm of teacher-centered education to student-centered. Therefore, the education system at the school level is carried out systematically through a humanistic approach, to build student humanitarian awareness (Ministry of Education (2017).

To optimize the humanistic approach in the education system, in addition to conditioning the school environment, the role of the teacher in learning, the role of parents and the community, it is also important to have a principal present through a humanistic approach (Lickona, 1996; Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2010; Zubaidi, 2011). The principal supports the relationship and dialogue between leaders and followers in several dimensions of humanity, such as; followers find meaning and vision in the workplace, persuasive communication, participation and autonomy, fair treatment, constructive responses, supporting personal growth, as role models (Peus & Frey, 2009; Colbert, Nicholson, & Kurucz, 2018).

Related to the principal's leadership in advancing the education system in Indonesia, it can be said that, principals have not been maximized, because they are still carrying out administrative activities, being authoritarian and indoctrinating in leadership (Wahjosumidjo (1999); Mutfin, 2007). As a result, followers only wait for orders from superiors, work under pressure, work to be liked by superiors, work with hypocrisy (Endah, 2012). The role of such leaders stunts the existence of followers of humanity as an equal and perfect being as well as being a barrier to the growth of human inclusiveness (Koesoema (2015); Kasali, 2017).

This issue needs to be addressed immediately through wise thinking to apply an effective leadership model through a humanistic approach. The principal's discretion is judged based on; a) moral imagination, in the form of the ability to see ethical problems and consequences in circumstances (Werhane, 2002); b) understand the system or perspective about a situation that is quite realistic and holistic (Werhane, 2008); c) aesthetic sensibility or the ability to see and assess the design and aesthetic problems and consequences in a situation (Veugeliers, 2007). A leader must have moral imagination (Waddock, 2016) because managing and organizing education are human activities so that it is firmly and inseparably embedded in moral values and problems. Human activities in the educational environment are integrally related to ethical considerations. Therefore, what is prioritized is to look at human activities with feelings, rationality, spirituality, and caring, as well as relationships with others, and create positive competition in education (Waddock, 2016).

The humanizing systems, integrating ethics and responsibilities, are parts of the inseparable unit, and bringing humanities into educational leadership is significant for future leaders. In this context, both the human dimension and the professional dimension are equally important. Therefore, both professional and personal lives integrate into the existence of a leader. Thus, moral imagination explicitly opens the strategic steps of an approach for an educational leader on the act of giving meaning and direction to the lives of all school components. Leaders have a moral obligation to live a life and protect people (Veugeliers & Kat, 2002; Pirson, 2017). It is also confirmed by Werhane (2008); Waddock (2016); Dierksmeier (2016); Melé (2016) that the educational environment should develop aspects of the humanistic approach including: appreciation and unconditional recognition of the values of human dignity of all school components, ethical reflection integrated into decision making, normative legitimacy to take action and decision in educational organizations; school does not only target academic achievement, but also consider the value of human character, the existence of transparency, truth, and humanistic communication through the similarity of words and actions. These components are an integral part of moral imagination.

Emphasis on moral imagination is as a model approach that realizes organizational members as individual human beings; which explains, reflects and respects the subjectivity, relationality, individuality and personality of members; acting in relation to self-determination and human dignity of these people; and aims to build a constructive community

of people and on human growth (meaning welfare, self-actualization, and self-transcendence of organizational members) as the goal ([Sass, 2000](#)).

Thus, the humanistic approach is meaningful because it ignores leaders-centralism and deification-leaders as well as prioritizes humanitarian ethics ([Waddock, 2016](#)). By placing humans at the center of leadership research, this research can make a far more meaningful contribution to leadership in practice, and help educational organizations realize human potential and increase social capital in building trust, integrity, harmony, and morality in followers.

The Principal's Humanistic Approach in Strengthening Character Education

Indonesia in the post-reform era has experienced a multidimensional crisis, specifically the moral decline in the economic, political, and education sectors ([Kasali, 2017](#)). Moral conflict causes moral deviations among students in Indonesia, such as; intolerant attitudes, student fights, drugs, promiscuity, cheating, stealing, skipping school, dressing immodestly, not ethical in speaking, decreasing national cultural values ([Koesoema, 2010](#); [Endah, 2012](#); [Ministry of Education 2016](#)). The moral decline among students can lead to a judgment that schools, parents, or society has failed to prepare the future generation of the nation. Responding to this fact, schools need to be proactively change the new paradigm in the direction and purpose of education, namely on the formation of students' knowledge and character. School responsibilities in this regard are to optimize the program for strengthening character education in line with the Republic of Indonesia Government Regulation number 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education, chapter I, article 1, which emphasizes that " program for strengthening character education is a pedagogical activity that integrates heart, feeling, mind, and body and is implemented through a collaboration between the internal components of the school, parents, and society in line with the drive to developmental through the National Mental Revolution Movement".

This Government Regulation needs to be implemented in schools through intensive coordination with all components of the school, including the role of principal. The significance of school principals in Indonesia has long declined so that it can threaten the existence, sustainability, competitiveness, and progress of the quality of education ([Wahjosumidjo \(1999\)](#); [Mutrofin, 2007](#)). It clearly generates a negative stigma on the roles of the principal. The negative stigma to the role of the principal does not need reactive responses because it is possible that the stigma does indeed reflect the truth of the substance of the principal's role. The best response is to reform, formulate, and change the principal's approach model. The change in question is revising the conventional approach to a humanistic approach to empower the potential of educational institutions to become a reliable agent in escorting, delivering, and realizing the success and improvement of the educational institutions' quality.

The principal's contribution as the key to success has four key elements of the humanistic approach framework: confidence in progress (human capacity for development and improvement); reasons (including justified knowledge, learning, and beliefs); inclusiveness (universal acceptance into dialogue with all people who are able to reason); and focus on individualism (the idea that each person is inherently valuable, regardless of the collective identity determined by ethnicity, religion, race, and class ([Nida-Rümelin, 2009](#)).

According to ([Cowan \(2007\)](#); [Aloni \(2011\)](#); [Koesoema \(2015\)](#); [Colbert, Nicholson, & Kurucz, 2018](#)). the benefits of the principal's humanistic approach in strengthening character education, are; 1) organizational structure, so that it is relevant to members' interests and organizational progress; 2) the school has a program to strengthen character education such as; personal development activities; character learning; activities in the school environment, and activities in the community environment; 3) the creation of a harmonious relationship between the principal and the teacher, between fellow teachers, between teachers and students, and fellow students. 4) the creation of working conditions that are mutually respectful, mutually enjoyable, and mutually supportive; 5) the formation of partnership relations between schools and the government and the community through the habituation program; 6) sensitivity to the needs of teachers and students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research uses a qualitative approach, analytic descriptive method ([Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014](#)). Through this approach, an actual picture will be observed and analyzed about the reasons underlying the principal using the humanistic approach, and the steps of the principal's humanistic approach. The characteristics of this study are the natural setting as a source of direct data and researchers become a key instrument ([Bogdan & Biklen, 1998](#)). As a key instrument, the researcher acts, with the help of others, collecting data through interviews with teachers, staff, students, school committees, parents and students themselves as informants who are actively involved in supporting humanistic approaches.

Sampling using purposive sampling, using the chimney technique. The data collection process starts from extensive data collection related to the overall picture of the principal's humanistic approach, then narrowed to the reasons underlying the principal to use a humanistic approach, and the concrete steps of the principal's humanistic approach in optimizing character education strengthening programs, and how their impact on strengthening student character. This research uses a period of one year, from 2018 to 2019, and is carried out in two schools in Malang, East Java, Indonesia.

Data and Sources of the Data

The sources of the data were from primary data obtained from key informants in the form of words of oral or verbal language and from secondary data in the form of documents as a complement to the primary data (Creswell, 2009; Yin, 2017). The selection of informants used several techniques; first, purposive sampling, selecting informants who master information in-depth, reliable as a valid data source. Data sources used in the research were 40 informants, including: 1 school principal (2); 5 teachers (10); 3 employees (6); 3 students (6); 2 students' parents (4); 2 school committees (4); 2 alumni (4); 1 school supervisor (2); 1 lecturer as a consultant. Second, snowball sampling, looking for information continuously from one informant to another so that the data obtained is getting more in number and more complete and in-depth, and stops when the data obtained is considered saturated. We directly observed events or activities at school.

Data-Analysis Techniques

The technique used in data analysis was working with data through the process of systematically searching and organizing interview characters, field notes, and other materials collected by the researchers (Creswell, 2009; Miles et al., 2014). The analysis was continued by analyzing data, arranging, dividing into units, synthesizing, looking for patterns, finding what was meaningful and what was examined and reported systematically. At this stage, data analysis was performed and used in such a way as to obtain the truth of the data to answer the research focus. The inductive method was used to manage qualitative data. The inductive method allowed the arrangement of data in the form of data condensation through the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and changing the data appearing in comprehensive research from written field notes, interview transcripts, and documents. Then, the data was presented, allowing conclusions and actions made. Temporary conclusions based on matrices had been made to find patterns, topics or themes in accordance with the research focus.

Checking the Validity of Data

In this research, data was validated using several measures, including first, a measure of credibility (level of trust). The purpose of data credibility is to prove the data suitability with the facts in the research. To establish the validity of the data, the researchers used the following inspection techniques: 1) extending involvement, thus allowing an increased level of confidence in the data collected. By extending involvement, obtain accurate information and subject trust. Therefore, the researchers expanded participation explained in the research background. 2) Perseverance in observation means that researchers in detail looked for and found characteristics and elements in situations that were highly relevant to the problem under the study. 3) Triangulation facilitated data checking by comparing it with something else. This was performed in several stages, including: (a) source triangulation, performed by means of: (1) comparing observation data with interview data; (2) comparing what was said in public with what was said privately; (3) comparing what people say about the research situation with what they say all the time; (4) comparing one's circumstances and perspectives with other people's views; (5) comparing the results of interviews with the contents of related documents. (b) Triangulation method by checking the level of confidence in the research findings based on several data sources with the same method. (c) Triangulation theory compared facts with one or more theories as a comparative explanation. 4) Peer examination through discussion with peers. 5) Analysis of negative cases by collecting examples beyond the patterns and trends of information collected and used as a comparison. 6) Examining members, to check whether the data recorded and interpreted by the researchers was appropriate, and the key informants recognized the truth. Second, performing transferability through detailed research reports that referred to the focus of the research. Third, dependability was performed to check or evaluate the accuracy of researchers in conceptualizing data constantly. Fourth, confirmability was performed through a test to assess the research results, mainly related to the description of research findings and discussion (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2017).

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Reasons Behind the Implementation of the Principal Humanistic Approach

The two principals at Santa Maria II Catholic Middle School and Sang Timur Catholic Middle School implement a humanistic approach that is unique and distinctive. It is said to be unique and distinctive because, as members of the Catholic religious congregation, the two principals showed personal excellence (integrity, wholeness, the authenticity of self) that appears in an attitude of openness, existentialism in new experiences, consistency, flexibility, creativity, and constructive (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). The aspects of personal excellence of the two principals support the humanistic approach principles, as stated by (Peus & Frey, 2009; Barrick & Mount (2003): a) open, so followers (teachers and employees) can find meaning and vision as educators, followers are entitled to transparency through open information and communication, b) supportive, accommodating, empathetic, gentle and kind, c) encouraging participation and autonomy among all team members, d) upholding a sense of justice, e) providing constructive feedback, f) jointly developing goals and personal growth and function as a role model.

In connection with the reasons used personal excellence that is owned by the principal, in interview opportunities, Sister of the Santa Maria II Catholic Middle School explained that "my personal superiority is the wealth of myself that I have to use in making good and useful policy and decision making for all school members" (A-1 / W-25/10/18).

In addition to personal excellence, the fundamental inspiration that encouraged the two principals to use a humanistic approach was because of the drive to revive the humanistic spirituality of the founding fathers of the congregation who ran the schools. At Santa Maria II Catholic Middle School, the appreciation of humanist spirituality is inspired by Sister Julie Billiard (Sister of the founder of the congregation), that is "loving our fellow humans as the image of Allah." Sourced from the Bible: "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God, he created them; male and female he created them" ([Genesis 1:27 New International Version](#)). Humanistic values that are raised by the principal including; democratic spirit, solidarity, social sensitivity, pluralistic brotherhood, tolerance, dialogue, respect for human rights, and respect for life. School vision implements these humanistic values; "Realizing a quality, faithful, related, knowledgeable, and cultured school through the appreciation of Christian virtues; love, truth, justice, peace and the integrity of creation."

At Sang Timur Catholic Middle School, the appreciation of humanist spirituality is inspired by Ms. Clara Fey (founder of the congregation) through her longing for "Abide in Me." Sourced from the Bible: "Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." ([John 15:4 New International Version](#)). Humanistic values that support the principal's approach are to accept others as a learning community, in an atmosphere of brotherhood, family, and joy with no pressure. Implementation in the vision of the school; "The realization of a superior, accountable school in competition with the spirit of true brotherhood, kinship, joy, and simplicity in order to develop into a whole person."

Regarding the reason for reviving the humanistic spirituality dimension of the inspirational figure by the school principal, it was conveyed in an interview by the Head Sister of Sang Timur Middle School, as follows.

The dimension of humanistic spirituality that I live in school is spirituality in the work environment, not spirituality in a full belief system. The purpose of this dimension is to live, to serve the needs of others in the workplace, to build mutual commitment and to revive harmonious expressions of compassion, wisdom, and communication and to oppose all forms of egocentric, sociocentric, or anthropocentric in the school environment. In this way, the characters are formed in the teachers and students ([A-2/W/ 20/05/2019](#)).

Forms of Activities for Character Education Strengthening and Steps in the Humanistic Approach of Principal's Leadership

In implementing the program for character education strengthening, the two schools referred to guidelines directed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, which includes; personal development activities, class activities, activities in the school environment, activities in the community environment ([Ministry of Education \(2017\)](#)).

Personal development programs were carried out through several activities, such as: a) regular school activities, including: cleaning classes and toilets, holding the flag ceremony; b) spontaneous activities, including: disposing of garbage properly, not making noise in class, not doing violence, being polite, not stealing, dressing modestly; c) exemplary activities.

The humanistic approach of the school principal's leadership in self-development programs is based on the awareness that humans are perfect in nature, and require intrinsic aspirations to actualize themselves ([Maslow, 1969](#); [Leutner, Ahmetoglu, Akhtar, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2014](#)). This is demonstrated through the humanistic approach steps of the principal, such as: (1) collaboration with all school components who directly involved in decision making, guiding and directing student behavior, (2) building a shared commitment in an exemplary behavior, (3) creating an atmosphere of intimacy in communication, (4) self-control, not getting annoyed with the teachers, employees, and students easily; (5) providing counseling for students who have problems lovingly ([Cowan, 2007](#)).

In this context, a leader needs to realize that the success is not due to the work of the leader, but the collaboration of leader and followers ([Blanch & Zigarmi, 2006](#)). In addition, exemplary behavior becomes the standard of trust and participation of followers to the leader ([Wahjosumidjo \(1999\)](#); [Mutrofin, 2007](#); [Cowan, 2007](#)). It is important to understand that a leader does not need to build a gap from followers, but sees followers as equal human beings, having the same personal and social dependency. So, it is necessary to establish persuasive communication ([Acevedo, 2012](#); [Dierksmeier \(2016\)](#)). In teacher and student mentoring activities, they jointly develop personal growth and realize that all human beings are basically perfect, so they need self-control to respect each other in the process of mentoring ([Dierksmeier, 2016](#); [Ministry of Education, 2017](#)). Thus, humanistic values, which are formed in the principal, such as: understanding teachers, employees, students, parents, school committees, school supervisors, the community as human beings, so that it is necessary to respect their subjectivity, relationality, individuality and personality; and acting with the aim of jointly building the community and human growth (welfare, self-actualization) as the ultimate goal ([Aloni, 2011](#); [Melé, 2016](#); [Dierksmeier, 2016](#)).

Strengthening character in integrated classroom activities through learning activities and classroom management requires collaboration between school principals, teachers, students, parents, and school supervisors ([Ministry of Education, 2017](#)). In this activity, the humanistic approach steps of the two principals included: (a) together with teachers, staff, school committee, and students' parents, supervisors, and lecturer as the consultant for designing learning tools that contain character education. 2) Offering parents to share practical knowledge of moral life to the student, and

the school set the time. 3) Together with subject teachers supervising "brotherhood-pedagogical", by (a) the teacher and the principal take turns presenting subtopics from the same theme; (b) the teacher is asked to deliver all the material, and the principal together with students make conclusions accompanied by the inculcation of character values, or vice versa; (c) the teacher and the principal jointly present the subtopics, students are asked to submit conclusions accompanied by reflections on the content of character values contained in the material discussed. 4) Together with a subject teacher supervising "pastoral environment," by presenting a school supervisor and two parents of students. Supervision is carried out outdoor, and learning material is given together, discussed together, and makes conclusions together. 5) In applying a good and clear management, the humanistic approach of the two principals appears in (a) Building a shared commitment termed "bona fide" which means with a good and trustworthy purpose. That is, in managing the classroom, the teacher's attitude must be goal-oriented, and the teacher must be able to be trusted by students. It shows through attitude; inviting students to listen toward the learning, respecting the opinions of friends, ethical ways of asking questions, creating a comfortable classroom environment, learning from one another (peer tutors), guiding students with love. (b) Building a shared commitment to realize "utilitatem" (common good). Through this principle, in managing classrooms, teachers need to foster individual freedom and relationality, as well as respect for the free initiative, dialogue, participation, cooperation, and maintaining harmony.

In addition, in the learning activity, teacher as a facilitator applies learning models developed by [Stiefel \(1975\)](#); [Gage and Berliner \(1991\)](#); [Rogers & Freiberg \(1994\)](#); [De Groot \(2011\)](#), such as: a) Building students' independence in learning by designing unstructured learning models and directing students to arrange them according to their own thinking concepts, making task choices for students to work on, studying together and guiding fellow friends with their knowledge, designing learning models based on problems raised by students. b). Exploring students' learning characteristics by encouraging students to discover values contained in the material that has been stated by students. c). Building interpersonal character through open learning, responding to students' emotions, encouraging interests by asking questions to satisfy students' curiosity, avoiding mental stress. d) Building a communicative character in oneself, through dialogue and open discussion, appreciating students' conversation in expressing opinions, e) Building social character by giving responses or feedback in the learning process. f) Conditioning learning spaces and learning designs that position students as learning resources and teachers as facilitators. g). Building character skills in learning by designing various learning designs that are active, creative, and innovative that can be developed by the students themselves.

Reviewing the steps of the humanistic approach of the two principals in-class activities, it clearly shows how the principal built relationships that led to positive morale orientation, because teachers are considered capable of self-regulate, aligning moral values with action ([Patteron, 1987](#); [DeCavalho, 1991](#)). The principal's humanistic approach that entrusts teachers integrates character education in classroom activities, postulates the nature of holistic education because it combines the educating process with human development ([Fry, 2003](#); [Davila & Elvira, 2012](#)). Building humans in the concept of humanistic pedagogy, placing school as a field for student character development, and assessing that the purpose of learning is to interpret relationships with self, school environment, family, and society ([Gage and Berliner \(1991\)](#); [Jingna, 2012](#)).

Furthermore, to build a positive school culture, the two schools program various types of extracurricular activities, such as: organizing recollection, retreats, spiritual camping, eucharistic celebrations, confession of sins, providing an honest canteen, taking choirs in the church, initiating solidarity actions to help friends who are economically weak, raising fund for orphanages, running democracy electing school administrators, opening family dialogues with students' parents, looking for donors to finance underprivileged students, cooperating with alumni associations to finance students or parents who are sick and underfunded, making contributions to the deceased family members of students or teachers, forming blood donor groups.

In optimizing this program, the humanistic approach steps taken by the two principals were: (1) realizing the joint decisions contained in the school's strategic plan to organize the programmed activities; (2) entrusting the work team to work in accordance with the area of responsibility; (3) fostering a spirit of cooperation between work teams; (4) creating persuasive communication both inside and outside the school environment; (5) supporting and getting involved in every activity implementation; (6) living and developing the values of faith; (7) building self-sensitivity for solidarity and favoring those in need; (8) promoting the spirit of democracy to reach mutual agreement; (9) inviting alumni to discuss school development, and student conditions; (10) fostering values of honesty; (11) conducting joint evaluation in accordance with mutual agreement, to reflect and internalize the meaning of each activity performed.

Based on the description of the strategic humanistic approach steps of the two school principals, in building a positive school culture, humanistic values emanate clearly. This fact reflects in attitudes such as building cooperation, mutual respect, responsibility, persuasive communication, solidarity, self-sensitivity, and compassion in every action. These humanistic values shape a positive school culture ([Nemiroff, 1992](#); [Koesoema \(2015\)](#); [Ministry of Education, 2017](#)), in line with the inspirational humanistic spirituality of the founding fathers of the congregation who manage the school, namely "loving fellow human beings as the image of Allah" and "abide in me". These values are philosophies that give meaning and recognition of the dignity and value of every human being in the school environment ([Westheimer, 2011](#)). In this context, the principal's humanistic approach in building a positive school culture becomes the foundation of a

holistic-humanistic education (Nava, 2001). The school environment is a character learning environment, a place where students are welcomed into unique personal differences, a tolerant life, and mutual respect because they have unique physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual abilities (Sahenk, 2010; Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Activities in the community environment are applicable in the form of a) "ad infinitum" activities (up to infinity), meaning that educational activities are not limited to the school environment, but are ongoing with the families of students. It is performed by visiting the students' home. This activity is scheduled every Sunday and arranged by the head of the public relations work team. b) Building the sensitivity of "Amor Vincit Omnia" (love conquers all) by giving scholarships and providing dormitory for free to underprivileged students; b) establishing cooperation with the police to provide material about the dangers of drug use, and orderly traffic. c). Cooperating with medical personnel (doctors, midwives, sanitizers), for health checks. (d) Sending greeting cards for every religious holiday. e) Inviting parents to celebrate religious celebrations at school. Inviting religious leaders for preachers. f) Conducting social services in public places. f) Conducting JUMPA BERLIAN activities (Jumat Pertama Bersih Kampung - First Friday Clean Environment).

To optimize the program, the humanistic approach steps of the two principals are: (1) building cooperation with students' families in ongoing mentoring activities; (2) building a network of cooperation between schools and the community to anticipate and protect students from the dangers of drugs, traffic safety on the road, and maintain student health; (3) maintaining tolerance in the internal scope of schools, and between schools, parents and the community; (4) providing scholarship funds to students who cannot afford; (5) caring for the natural environment; (6) living up to and practicing religious values in accordance with their respective beliefs.

The humanistic approach steps of the principals are in the form of actions of social moral ethics, joint decisions on good knowledge and not only based on assumptions, and making approaches to find meaning and purpose of cooperation with the families of students, alumni, the police, the medical team, religious leaders who care about education (Dehler, & Welsh, 1994; Ministry of Education, 2017). Besides, the students' behavior in the middle of the community shows a peace-loving attitude; respect for brotherhood in the diversity of tribes, religions, languages and cultures; loving the environment; fair, and good deeds (Ministry of Education 2016). Finally, schools become a forum that provides a balance in shaping the character of students, so that the relationship between school and parents and the community is stronger (Aloni, 2011). Thus, we can draw a conclusion that through the humanistic approach of the principal, the image of the school has changed meaning into a forum for empowering student characters. Schools become a conducive environment to the practice of learning to love, independence, discipline, ethical thinking, uphold the moral values of humanity, promote loyalty, responsibility, and care for others (Solaja, Idowu, & James, 2016).

Impacts of the Humanistic Approach of Principal's Leadership

Impacts of the principal's humanistic approach on the self-development program are described in the following table 1.

Table 1: Impacts of the PHA on the Personal Development Program

No.	Forms of the Principal's Humanistic Approach	Impact	
		Program for Character Education Strengthening	Student Character
01.	Realizing cooperation in joint decision making to guide and direct student behavior	Performed optimally through cooperation and work based on the results of joint decisions	Order, discipline, and responsible respect others, good manners, love clean environment
02.	Building a commitment not to disappoint self and others	Performed optimally based on a joint commitment	Perform behavior that does not disappoint self and others
03.	Becoming a role model	Performed optimally through self-example	Reflect character obtained from the exemplary model
04.	Providing counseling for students who have problems with affection	Performed optimally through cooperation in mentoring activities	Change of character

Source: results of interviews with principals, teachers, students, students' parents, document archives (presence of self-development activities, and student guidance books), and observations of student behavior in the school environment, observations of student behavior at home by parents reported during the interview.

Based on the table, self-development activities were optimum. Optimization of self-development program is reflected through the collaboration of school principals with all school components (Koesoema (2015); Ministry of Education 2016). The cooperation is based on the results of joint decisions, in which each element is equally responsible in accordance with their duties and roles. The principal together with the teacher and employees on duty in turns; each homeroom teacher created a daily work schedule for students, controlled student work, checked student attendance in

every activity, each group was responsible for the flag ceremony activity, classroom environment, as well as lavatory and classrooms cleanliness and order. In addition, the commitment to be a role model in behaving well (timely, attending the class in an appropriate manner, being responsible for carrying out tasks, wearing proper attire, speaking politely) is clearly visible. Furthermore, the principal, homeroom teacher, and guidance counseling teacher succeeded in assisting problematic students, which was shown by a change in behavior toward a better direction.

Personal development activities directly influence the strengthening of student character, such as: Rules of entering and leaving school, responsible for assignments entrusted, disciplined in class, respecting friends, polite in speaking and dressing, favoring the clean environment, having a commitment to improve behavior ([Ministry of Education, 2017](#)). The following table 2 presents the impact of the principal's humanistic approach on class activities programs.

Table 2: Impacts of the Principal's Humanistic Approach on Class Activities

No.	Forms of Principal Humanistic Approach	Impact	
		Program for Strengthening Character Education	Strengthening of Student Character
01.	Integrated in learning activities		
a.	Conducting a meeting to prepare character learning tools	Implemented optimally by involving all parties in developing learning tools	-
b.	Entrusting parents, sharing practical knowledge about good moral behavior with students and scheduled school authorities	Implemented optimally by involving parents in guiding the student character	Perform behavior according to the moral life experience input shared by parents
c.	Together with the teacher supervising the pedagogical fraternity and pastoral environment	Performed optimally through cooperation in the presentation of material together	Discipline, responsible, critical, applicable
d.	Supporting joint decisions in giving students a final assessment	Performed optimally based on joint decisions in giving the final grade of students	Balance of academic competence and good character
02.	Class management	Run optimally based on the joint commitment	Perform behavior that does not disappoint self and others
	Making a joint commitment called the "bona fide" that means with good and trustworthy goals, and "utilitatem" (common good).	Performed optimally by building a shared commitment	Have the ability to work in a team, respect others' thoughts, behave in an ethical manner in class, order, learn from one another
03.	Learning Activities		
	Learning together, and giving teachers the freedom to innovate and preparing evaluation time in accordance with joint scheduling, to reflect on all learning actions, and to ask for constructive support from other teachers	Performed optimally by learning together, innovating, evaluating in the form of reflection and constructive input	Open to innovative and creative learning designed by the teacher

Source: results of interviews with teachers, students, parents, school supervisors, document archives (attendance, violation notes, and student guidance books), and observations of student behavior in the classroom.

The impacts of the principal's humanistic approach on classroom activities programs are: teachers have character learning tools; parents who had been appointed to share their moral lives to students cooperate well according to the schedule set by the school, which results in the internalization of moral values in students; supervision of "pedagogical fraternity" and "pastoral environment" was well performed and the results were pleasing to students; give students an objective and balanced final grade, which includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains; the teacher shows the principle of "bona fide", so that the presence of the teacher pleases students, as evidenced by the acquisition of learning achievements and well behavior of the student; the teacher shows a clear commitment to realize "utilitatem" (the common good), so students feel free in expressing opinions, cooperation between students goes well, and harmony of life among students is visible; teachers are creative and innovative in applying learning models ([Ministry of Education, 2017](#)).

Class activities influence the strengthening of student characters, such as: good moral life; attending the class in an appropriate manner, doing assignments with full responsibility, being critical in asking questions and discussion, building an applicable mindset; building a balanced development between academic competence and good character; behaving in a way that does not disappoint self and others; being able to work together, respecting others' thoughts, behaving in an ethical manner in class, order, learning from one another; being open and ready to follow innovative and creative learning designed by teachers ([Ministry of Education, 2017](#)). The following table 3 presents the impact of the humanistic approach of the two principals in building positive school culture.

Table 3: Impacts of the Principal's Humanistic Approach in Building School Culture

No.	Forms of Principal Humanistic Approach	Impact	
		Program for Character Education Strengthening	Strengthening of Student Character
01.	Performing joint decisions by coordinating each activity	Performed optimally based on joint decisions, to organize activities	Cooperation, responsible
02.	Entrusting teamwork	Performed optimally in the spirit of mutual trust in teamwork	believe in self and others, take responsibility
03.	Cultivating the spirit of cooperation between work teams	In an ongoing process through collaboration between teamwork	Cooperation
04.	Persuasive communication	Performed optimally through persuasive communication	Open in the community
05.	Supporting and being engaged in activities	Performed optimally through support and involvement	Respect togetherness
06.	Cultivating the values of faith	Performed optimally in various spiritual activities	Have faith and piety
07.	Building self-sensitivity and being solidier	Performed optimally by arousing self-sensitivity to solidify with others	Sensitive and solid with others
08.	Promoting the spirit of democracy	Implemented optimally through the inculcation of democratic values	Democracy
09.	Holding alumni gathering	Performed optimally by fostering togetherness	Adaptation
10.	Cultivating honesty values	Performed optimally through the planting of honesty values	Honesty
11.	Conducting joint evaluation	Performed optimally through evaluation to reflect and internalize the meaning of each activity carried out	Reflective, and understand self-respect

Source: results of interviews with principals, teachers, students, parents, school committees, school supervisors, document archives (decree letters, memorandum of understanding, school strategic plans), and observations of student behavior in the classroom.

The humanistic approach has positive impacts in optimizing character-building programs in the school environment, such as: well-organized extracurricular activities; the creation of a spirit of cooperation among teamwork so that it is solid and responsible at work; persuasive communication between school principals, teachers, staff, school committees, parents, and the community; all parties support each other and get involved in every activity; the values of faith are getting strong and resilient; all school components have awareness and sensitivity to help each other, both related to learning activities as well as other interests; the spirit of high democratic life; establishment of cooperation between schools and alumni to think about and build a better quality of education; Evaluation activities are going well to reflect and internalize the meaning of each activity performed ([Koesoema, 2015](#); [Ministry of Education 2016](#)).

Activities in school environment influence the strengthening of student character such as; being able to perform collaboration; being responsible with the task, believing in yourself and others, being easy to get along and open; respecting for togetherness, having faith and piety, having sensitivity and solidarity with others, having the spirit of democracy, showing adaptability; honesty, reflective and self-respecting behavior ([Koesoema, 2015](#); [Ministry of Education, 2017](#)).

The following table 4 describes the impact of the two principals' humanistic approach in optimizing activities in the community.

Table 4: Impacts of the Principal's Humanistic Approach on Activities in the Community Environment

No.	Forms of Principal Humanistic Approach	Impact	
		Program for Character Education Strengthening	Strengthening of Student Character
01.	Establishing cooperation with student families	Performed optimally through home visits of students' parents	An open individual
02.	Providing scholarship funds	Performed optimally through fundraising from the government, alumni, and school foundations	Sensitive, and have a passion for achievement
02.	Establishing cooperation with the police	Performed optimally through providing materials of the dangers of drugs and orderly traffic by the police	Free from drugs and has an orderly traffic
03.	Establishing cooperation with the medical team	Performed optimally through health inspection activities	Healthy
04.	Maintaining a tolerant atmosphere in scope	Performed optimally through sending greeting cards, and religious celebrations at school	Tolerant
05.	Cultivating the habit of maintaining a clean school environment	Performed optimally through JumatBersih activities	Love clean environment
06.	Living and practicing religious values	Performed optimally through the sharing of coaching activities, and religious celebrations	Have faith and be pious
07.	Cultivating the values of faith	Performed optimally in various spiritual activities	Have faith and piety

Source: results of interviews with the principal, teachers, students, parents, school committee, document archives (invitation letter to the police, the medical team, guest book, schedule, and family visit letter)

The humanistic approach has positive impacts in optimizing the character-building program in the community, such as: cooperation with parents in scheduled home visits are running well, and building a sense of kinship; every semester the school announced names of students who receive scholarships from government, alumni, and school foundations; there were no cases of drug use, and there were no reports from the public and the police to the school regarding the traffic violations committed by students; students lived healthily; the atmosphere of tolerance was very harmonious; school environment was clean and tidy; every activity of fostering and religious celebrations were well implemented; student faith was built ([Koesoema, 2015](#); [Ministry of Education, 2017](#)).

Activities in the community influenced the strengthening of student character, such as: create an individual who is open, sensitive, drug-free, drive safely, has a spirit of struggle to pursue achievement, knows how to take care of him/herself, loves religious tolerance, favors a clean environment, has noble and pious religious character ([Ministry of Education, 2017](#)).

CONCLUSION

Overcoming the weaknesses of the principal's leadership role in the implementation of the character education strengthening programs, it is also urgent for the principals to find an appropriate approach model, namely the humanistic approach. The humanistic approach adopted by the principal is supported by self-excellence and inspired by the spiritual humanistic inspirational figure. A leader's self-excellence is shown in being open to accepting others, transparency in managing education, empathy, and respect for others, involving others in decision making, and receiving input and advice from others. Reviving the humanistic spirituality of inspirational figures by the school principal is an encouragement to express humanistic values such as compassion, wisdom, and harmonious communication and to oppose all forms of egocentric, sociocentric, or anthropocentric in the school environment.

The contribution of this research is to position humanistic values derived from self-excellence and the humanist spirituality of inspirational figures as a reason for applying the humanistic approach by the school principal. In addition, this study is recommended for all principals in the Malang City Education Office, East Java and throughout Indonesia, to use a humanistic approach model in carrying out leadership roles, because it has been proven effective in optimizing the implementation of character education strengthening programs in schools.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This research is limited to the reasons behind the character education strengthening and the steps in applying the character education strengthening and its impact on strengthening student character education. In the context of the character education strengthening, it is also necessary to explore other issues, which are not only related to character education strengthening, but the management of education in various aspects can also use a humanistic approach by the principal.

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AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

CONTRIBUTION	DESCRIPTION	CONTRIBUTORS
Conception	To construct an idea or hypothesis for research and/or manuscript	Yulius Rustan Effendi
Design	To design and plan the method to achieve the results	Yulius Rustan Effendi and Ibrahim Bafadal
Supervision	To organize the execution of the study, observe the progress and take responsibility	Yulius Rustan Effendi and I Nyoman Sudana Degeng
Fundings	To provide personnel, space, financial resources and equipment necessary for the work	Yulius Rustan Effendi and Imron Arifin
Materials	To take responsibility for biological materials and referred patients	Yulius Rustan Effendi dan Ibrahim Bafadal
Data Collection And/Or Processing	To take responsibility for matters such as followup of patients, collection of relevant biological materials, regulation and reporting of data, etc.	Yulius Rustan Effendi and Ibrahim Bafadal, and asked for input, suggestions, and critical notes from the authors
Analysis- Interpretation	To take responsibility for the evaluation and conclusion of findings	Yulius Rustan Effendi and Ibrahim Bafadal, and supported by the authors
Literature Review	To take responsibility for the literature review	Yulius Rustan Effendi, and reviewed by Ibrahim Bafadal, and supported by I Nyoman Sudana Degeng and Imron Arifin
Writing	To take responsibility for the writing of the entire work or its noticeable parts	Yulius Rustan Effendi was assisted by I Nyoman Sudana Degeng, and asked for thought input from Ibrahim Bafadal and Imron Arifin
Critical Review	To re-evaluate the study in the scientific sense, regardless of language and literary corrections, prior to the delivery of the manuscript	Yulius Rustan Effendi and Imron Arifin and supported by Ibrahim Bafadal and I Nyoman Sudana Degeng

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