

Investigating the Principal Transformational Leadership Strategy in Implementing Character Education at the Senior High School Level (SMA) in Indonesia

^{1*}Pieter Sahertian, ²Yulius Rustan Effend

^{1,2}Universitas PGRI Kanjuruhan Malang, Indonesia (Unikama)

ABSTRACT

Character education (CE) in secondary schools is one of the educational programs aimed to anticipate the tendency of moral perversion, as a result of moral decadence. Various forms of moral deviations that occur among high school students result in them being alienated from life because they conflict with cultural norms, school discipline, and life ethics in society. This article aims to discuss the relation of character values reinforcement and the principal's transformational leadership strategy to shape student characters in a descriptive-critical manner. The objectives of this study are school strategies in optimizing the implementation of character education reinforcement. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study design. The instrument of data collection was through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies. Data analysis used a modified analytic analysis method. Meanwhile, the data validity measurement was based on the level of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The results emphasize the importance of shaping student character as an anticipatory step to minimize moral distortions among high school students, and the effectiveness of the principal's transformational leadership role in optimizing the implementation of character education programs (CEP) in schools.

Keywords: Character education, Principal, Senior high school, Transformational leadership.

INTRODUCTION

The discussion about the phenomenon of humanity is always associated with the implementation of education. Education is a process of humanizing humans, to form people who have character (Danim, 2018). Humans' self-actualization requires human values. Separately, the actualization of human values is obtained through the stages of educational awareness (Freire, 1987). Education is the necessary foundation for building human values through a process of change, from hominization in the form of reflective awareness of self-potential, to humanization in the form of knowledge of actual activities (Driyarkara, 2011). At the level of humanization, education aims to free people from sub-human conditions to the human condition.

On the other hand, education in Indonesia is not yet ready to compete. It affects the ownership of competencies to emulate people's work. Thus, they face difficulties in competing with foreign workers. Besides, the presence of foreign culture weakens the existence of local culture, so Indonesian people experience a culture shock (Kasali, 2017). In this condition, the concept of Giddens (2003) needs to be considered, where progress needs to be understood as a medium for increasing equality and not condemned for increasing inequality. In this context, education in the global era is postulated as the process of maturing quality of life, values, and norms that is true from generation to generation in the face of highly competitive competition (Lovvorn & Chen, 2011)

This era, if traced in the mindset of futurists, has been named a century of enlightenment of knowledge (Li, 2013; Cook et al., 2016). Knowledge is the main force that places

humans in paradigmatic competition. Therefore, it takes revitalization and transformation of education to form strong, resilient, and competitive characters based on Endah (2014); Koesoema (2015); the Ministry of Education [MoE] (2016), the implementation of character education (CE) in schools is considered necessary because of the growing social phenomenon, namely the increase in delinquency of middle school (high school) youth in the community. Those delinquencies cover fights between students, drug use, promiscuity, fading values of honesty (cheating, stealing), faded ethical values and good manners in communication, violence and anarchism perpetrated by peer groups, increasingly worthless work ethic the tendency of not respecting yourself (free sex, suicide, extortion).

Empirical facts of moral deviance, provide an assessment that schools, parents, and communities have failed to prepare

Corresponding Author e-mail: pieter@unikama.ac.id

ORCID Number: 0000-0002-3114-4985

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the future of Indonesia's young generation. There are three causes of CE not being implemented optimally. First, the limitations of teachers integrating character values in learning. Second, the syllabus and lesson plan does not reflect national guidelines. Third, education is oriented towards cognitive aspects and does not pay attention to issues of attitude or behavior (Mutrofin, 2017).

Besides, CE in schools is only related to the introduction of norms or values and has not been internalized in practical action. In other words, CE has not yet taken root in student behavior. Responding to this reality, schools need to proactively change the new paradigm of educational goals, namely shaping the character of students through the acculturation of values. This expectation is outlined in [Law No. 20 of 2003](#), Article 3, that "national education functions to develop capabilities, shape the character and dignity of the nation, people who believe in God Almighty, have good character, healthy, knowledgeable, intelligent, creative, independent, democratic and responsible."

Besides, it is necessary to implement [Government Regulation \(GR\) Number 17 of 2010](#), Article 12, Paragraph 3, which explains that, "the implementation of Elementary Education (SD), including Junior High Schools (SMP), and Senior High Schools (SMA) aims to develop potential human beings, such as, (a) having faith and devotion to God, (b) having good character and noble personality, (b) knowledgeable, intelligent, critical, creative and innovative, (c) healthy, independent and confident, (d) tolerant, socially sensitive, democratic and responsible.

In this case, the purpose of education at every level, including senior high school (SMA), is focused on the formation of student character. Students must have character, as a form of school responsibility to restore the school's image in the face of moral degradation. Therefore, it is necessary and urgent to restructure the design of CE models at the school level. There are several reasons why schools need to design a character education model. First, the school is a place to grow and develop the values of the spirituality of student faith. The personal spiritual integrity of students is reflected in three relational dimensions which include; interpersonal relations with God as *homo religiosus* (Erikson, 1958); social relations with others as *homo socialae* (Tony, 2015), and personal relationships with the natural environment (*homo naturalae*). These three spiritual-relational dimensions are integrated into the principle of the personal human character as transformative and adaptive beings (*homo concerns*). The value of religiosity is implemented through redesigning religion-based learning, conditioning the school environment, habituation and exemplary attitudes of peace, love, tolerance, tolerance of the situation, fighting for justice for the rights of small people, doing charity and visiting orphans (MoE, 2017).

Second, school is a means of empowerment for student character. The role of school, in this case, is educating, teaching, training, and instilling the value of honesty, love, truth, loyalty, moral consistency, not corrupt, fair, and compassionate with others (Lickona, 2004). Therefore the role of the teacher, as a professional educator, is to design character learning in co-curricular, extracurricular, and regular curricular activities. Also, the presence of a teacher as an excellent person with good and right behavior can be imitated as a model of character habituation for students in the school (MoE, 2016).

Third, the school as a conducive environment for practicing patriotism/nationalism (respect for unity without a narrow primordial attitude, maintaining integrity to create an Indonesian country that is more tolerant, independent, disciplined, with ethical thinking, upholds moral values, promotes loyalty, responsibility, and mutual care). At this level, the role of all school's components, such as teachers, staff, government, and society, is to create a school culture that is peaceful, harmonious, and law-abiding.

To shape student character through habituation activities in an integrated and continuous manner, besides teachers, employees, parents, and the community, the presence of the principal as a leader, is also the key to achieving the success of school programs. The principal's contribution as the key to success appears in his role in motivating, coordinating, encouraging, and influencing all components of the school in CE activities (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). First, the principal's role as a character learning designers, is to determine the core values of school characters, designing tools, models, and assessments of character learning. Second, the principal also builds good working partnerships, such as; creating pleasant working conditions, building self-confidence, avoid speaking habits, anger, and vice versa. Besides, the principal also motivates teachers to work more effectively; avoids the habit of blaming the teacher, but correcting the teacher's mistakes; creates a work atmosphere that makes the teacher feel comfortable, so that all elements in the school want, without coercion, to participate optimally. Lastly, the principal creates work partnerships between schools, the government, and the community to evaluate joint school programs.

In reality, as evaluated by MOE (2016), the implementation of character education in schools was not carried out optimally. Based on the evaluation, this research broadly describes the reasons for character education not being implemented optimally in Indonesia. In addition, it describes the strategic steps of the principal to optimize the implementation of character education programs. The main question of this research is what causes the failure of the implementation of character education, and what are the strategic steps of the principal to optimize the character education program in schools?

Character education in the Global Era

Globalization is the process of uniting the whole existence of the world through ways of thinking, communicating, and acting without space and time restrictions, so that it impacts changes in various fields of life (Cook et al., 2016). Changes in the field of education are postulated as a process of maturation of quality of life, which is not only measured by intelligence but also from the appreciation of actual values and norms from one generation to the next (Reeves, 2006; Ölmez-Çağlar, Mirici & Erten, 2020).

The globalization of education in the context of CE is a process of raising student self-awareness (Freire, 1987). Conscientization, in Freire's view, is an educational concept that emphasizes student awareness in assessing the reality of themselves and the environment critically and creatively. Critical and creative in Freire's (1987) theory, rooted in ontological, epistemological, and axiological connotations. Ontological, epistemological, and axiological implications in the context of education, represents humans who do not only exist in the world, but also live together with the world, and education becomes a dialogic-emancipatory space that gives value to the quality of students' life. Freire's theory positions character education as a conscious effort to shape the spiritual potential, personality, intelligence, skills, and self-control in students (Menziez & Baron, 2014).

According to Koesoema (2015), self-control is an essential point for students in Indonesia, to dare to say "no" to drugs, alcohol, sex, gangs, and other bad behavior. Therefore, to overcome the decline in students' moral values, Ellison (2011) emphasizes the importance of character building programs in educational institutions, especially the value of honesty and respect for oneself, as a solution to stop impairment so that students can live as good citizens. The same concept has been programmed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, through practical, comprehensive, and sustainable actions at the school level. Providing CE in schools is essential for students so that they can anticipate the negative impacts of progress. Because competition in the era of growth could have given birth to millennial human figures as wolves for other humans, which Thomas Hobbes (Frans, 2006) called "*homo homini lupus*" / Humans became wolves to other humans."

To anticipate the threat of dehumanization due to competition in the global era, according to Foester (Berkowitz & Bustamante, 2013; Helterbran & Strahler, 2013), students need to be prepared with CE in the form of giving awareness about the hierarchy of values to evaluate each student's actions. In an era of progress, human limitations can cause ambiguity and division within oneself. Through CE, students are trained to think critically and wisely to turn chaos into the regularity of values. Further, students need to have the regularity of facts and ideas that challenge self-limitations that caused an individual to have no substantial personal autonomy.

As a result, anxiety, fear, and lack of confidence arise. Because of that, it is necessary to develop systematic and exemplary practical moral values for "life." Other than that, students also need to have independence. Autonomy refers to the independence of identity. Personal essence formed through character education becomes an autonomous person in making decisions. Lastly, they also need the certainty of principle and commitment to decisions, which is a form of engagement in the behavior, whereas commitment is respect for the resolution chosen.

Principal Transformational Leadership in Character Education

In organizational practice, the word lead contains the connotation of moving, directing, guiding, protecting, fostering, setting an example, providing encouragement, providing assistance, and so forth (Robbins, 2002). A leader is said to have applied a transformational leadership model if he or she can transform energy resources (Avolio, Waldman & Yammarino, 1991). Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) explain that transformational leadership is perceived to be sensitive to organization building, developing a shared vision, distributing leadership, and building school culture necessary to current restructuring efforts in schools. The presence of transformational leaders in organizations is significant to deal with change that occurs not because of the leaders' actions towards others, but the actions of the leaders together with others (Colbert et al., 2018). This leader supports the relationship and dialogue between himself and followers in several aspects such as; finding meaning and vision in the workplace for followers, persuasive communication, participation and autonomy, fair treatment, constructive feedback, the development of personal and organizational goals, and a role model (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999).

In reality, the role of principals in Indonesia is ineffective. Their ineffective roles are reflected in their inability to involve all stakeholders in determining the school primary characters; to provide policies relevant to characters assessment that involve teachers and parents; to integrate the character reinforcement program into schools' primary curriculum; to motivate teachers in integrating character reinforcement materials in their teaching; to adopt local values in enacting the policies that support students' character development; to realize supportive school environment that is required for students' democratic, tolerance, and nationalism values development; to optimally motivate the teachers to present noble attitudes as the example for the students. This situation results in an unequal education system so it can threaten the existence, sustainability, competitiveness, and advancement of the quality of education (MoE, 2016). This fact gives a negative stigma to the role of the principal. That negative stigma does not need to be reactively responded to because the stigma may

indeed reflect the truth of the substance of the principal's role. The best response is to revise the conventional approach to a transformative approach, to realize success and progress in the quality of education (MoE, 2016)

In the context of CE, according to Bass (1999); Podsakoff et al. (1990), Koesoema (2015); Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), the transformational leadership role of the principal aims to first, provide an ideal influence so that followers run an organization that is relevant to the interests of followers in addition to the interests of the overall organizational progress. Therefore, leaders work in a democratic and participatory manner. Second, it aims to motivate and inspire followers by showing empathy and optimism, involving members in providing prospects in implementing character education programs (CEP) that include; personal development activities, character learning activities, activities in the school environment, and the community. Third, it aims to provide intellectual stimulation, through harmonious interaction between leaders and members and encouraging followers to explore creative ways of solving problems of inequality in the education system. Fourth, it aims to express sympathy for individuals, namely understanding and respecting individual differences (equality), stimulating followers by delegating responsibilities, communicating individually to understand the various needs, skills, and ambitions of followers.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach, case study design, which aimed to collect data in written or oral form, arranged in sentences based on interviews with informants (Miles et al., 2014). This descriptive qualitative research aimed to describe the school strategy, specifically the role of the principal transformational leadership in optimizing the implementation of CEP. This research provides useful input in the implementation of national character education programs because it involves school principals as a determinant of the success of school programs.

Participants

Participants in this study involved five principals and three senior teachers in each school located in Malang, East Java, Central Indonesia, and five principals and three senior teachers in each school located in East Nusa Tenggara, East Indonesia. The reason for selecting five school principals and three senior teachers from each location was to obtain information about the implementation of a CEP in Java that had advanced in the field of education and in the eastern region of Indonesia, which was still limited. Also, the ten school principals were chosen because they have successfully implemented a program to CE in schools. The selection of three senior teachers in each school was aimed to obtain additional information related to the actions of the principal in carrying out his role.

This research also developed a case study on the role of the principal's leadership based on the transformational leadership style. Regarding research ethics, this research used pseudonyms to protect the identity of schools and the participants.

Data collection

Interviews were conducted with the school principal to obtain information about his assessment related to problems in implementing CEP in the school. Besides, during the interview, they were asked about their strategy as a leader in optimizing the implementation of CEP. Furthermore, the researchers requested information from the principal associated with the senior teachers who need to be interviewed, so that researchers obtained more accurate information about the role of school leadership. Data collection at five schools in Malang City, East Java, Indonesia, was attained in six months. Whereas five schools in the East Nusa Tenggara region, Eastern Indonesia, spent six months. After obtaining field data in written and oral form, researchers analyzed data that has been collected (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2017).

Data Analysis

Through involvement in a continuous interview session, the researchers analyzed the meaning of all data collected (Patton, 1987). From the initial interpretation, the researchers received a slightly different response to the plan of the participants; therefore, the researchers re-processed the data following the plan of the participants (Creswell, 2009). Data validity in this research was analyzed using credibility criteria. The purpose of data credibility was to prove the suitability of the data with the facts in the study. Transferability was done by carefully examining the reports that refer to the focus of the research. Meanwhile, the dependency was completed to check or evaluate the accuracy of researchers in constantly conceptualizing data. On the other hand, confirmability was finished through testing to assess research results, mainly related to the description of research findings and discussion of research results (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A philosophical statement that has educational value delivered by Saneca (Hartoko, 1989), a philosopher who lived in the 3rd century BC, stating "*non scholae sed vitae discimus*", learning not for school but life. This philosophical statement asserts that education is a fundamental action, which touches the basis of life, to change and determine human life. Human life is valuable if it has a good character. Good character is not only influenced by education but created by a school. CE forms the praxis of life that is valuable and becomes a fundamental force to compete in the global era (Berkowitz & Bustamante, 2013).

Indonesia's CE has not yet been implemented to its fullest extent. [Koesoema's \(2015\)](#); [MoE \(2017\)](#), explains that the concept of CE at the senior high school level in Indonesia is not yet working-practical. The identified problems include the weaken role of parents in teaching morality to children, anti-social behavior in classrooms and playgrounds, disobedience to rules, and violence among students ([Koesoema, 2015](#)). Thus, attribution research needs to explore and find more alternative solutions to implement CEP at the school level. This issue concurs with the findings of previous studies conducted by [Althof and Berkowitz \(2006\)](#); [Bulach \(2002\)](#), where schools need to prepare grand design CE clearly and empirically. Thus, there is the ease in understanding the concept and is not ambivalent in developing practical guidelines for carrying out activities, and instructions for assessing.

In connection with the practical implementation of CE, [Anderson \(2000\)](#) asserts that CE can not be taught; rather it is intertwined in whole curriculum material, extracurricular, regular academic activities along with the availability of a learning environment (school and home) that can integrate the entire core of character values. This condition is not yet apparent in Senior High Schools in Indonesia. Constraints are found according to [Freeks' \(2007\)](#); [Zubaidi \(2011\)](#), such as: first, the schools do not yet have an organizational structure and CE norms. Consequently, the implementation of CE is not monitored. Second, the school does not make a report on the implementation of CE. Third, schools do not yet have an education quality assurance system. Fourth, schools do not have rules for planning, implementing, and evaluating CE activities. Fifth, the schools have not determined the values of the school's main characters as school branding. Sixth, the teachers have not included character values in the subject matter. Seventh, teachers are less competent in designing learning tools in extracurricular and regular academic activities that have character content. Eighth, the teachers are not yet qualified in integrating character values in learning activities. Besides, the teachers have not set an example in behavior. Lastly, parents do not guide the students' character at home.

To overcome the obstacles in implementing the strengthening of character education, the strategies carried out by the principals are as follows.

Early understanding of universal moral values, determine the values of characters in school, included CE in the core curriculum, instilling the values of local wisdom, the behavior of the teacher should be a role model, creating a school environment that is characterized, all the teachers and parents involved giving an assessment of student character (Interview, January, 2020).

According to the explanation given by the principals, senior teachers outlining the strategic steps of the principal as follows.

The school principal has involved all stakeholders to think together to formulate the measures necessary to implement character education. Encourage teachers to be actively involved in designing character learning. In addition, it publishes a practical handbook on the implementation and assessment of character education (Interview, February 2020).

Based on the explanation of the principals and senior teachers, it is certain that the principals have overcome the problems of implementing character education. The strategic steps of the principals in overcoming the obstacles that occur, according to the framework developed by [Valentine & Prater \(2011\)](#) and [Versland \(2013\)](#) namely; first, schools must understand universal moral values well. Second, schools need to set standards for their central character values (benchmarking). Student character assessment is carried out by all teachers and the results of the evaluation are announced to all parties in a coordinated manner. Assessments are carried out every time, in and outside the classroom through observation and behavioral records. There are three aspects of the character assessment standards, namely behavior, crafts, and neatness. Third, schools need to develop CE holistically, through physical development (sport), intellectual (though the thought), aesthetics (though the feeling), ethical and spiritual (heart processing). Fourth, schools need to include CEP in the school's core curriculum, so that CE is implemented optimally. Fifth, schools should involve various stakeholders to agree on the values of the main character following the specification of the school, including financing and strategy for implementing CE. Sixth, they should be focusing and responsive to local wisdom in diversity, so that it has contextual value and characterizes student identity. Seventh, they should develop lifelong skills, such as; critical thinking, social sensitivity, cultural competencies, foreign language competence, search, and discovery of learning models. Eighth, schools should advance based on the principles of justice, non-discrimination, non-sectarianism, respect for diversity and diversity (inclusive), and respect for human dignity. Ninth, they should evolve following the development of student personality, both biological, psychological, and social development, so that the level of compatibility and acceptance is high. Tenth, They should progress according to and implement measurable principles; thus, its process and results can be observed and known objectively. Therefore schools need to develop guidelines for character assessment, develop programs that are performed, and assure the availability of resources. Eleventh, evaluation, and follow-up are required to change student behavior. If there are student violations, the school needs to involve parents in handling them as joint problems. Other than those, schools also need to Involve the officer on duty daily to control student behavior and strengthen the habituation and example of all members of the school community. Besides,

the teacher, as a character model, should show the disciplined practice to students, teachers who love, respect, treat students morally, will be heard and valued by their students. Also, schools need to design simple learning so that it is easy to understand practice and master the theories of learning about developing concrete and practical behavior. Teachers also need to run classroom management that is creative, innovative, and competitive, built based on the situation and environmental conditions of students. Therefore, the school environment needs to avoid various forms of injustice, cheating, lying, and discriminatory treatment. Lastly, schools' regulations must be flexible, considering the uniqueness of students, and support tolerance in respect for differences.

Argumentatively, school as a formal organization is a place of the collaboration of a group of people (principals, teachers, staff, students, school committees, and communities) to achieve the desired goals (Gamage & Pang, 2018). The various types of organizations, including schools, require leaders to carry out leadership roles. Strategies are needed in carrying out leadership roles (Wahab, 2016). The purpose of transformational leadership is significant in optimizing programs to CES. This hope supports the ideas of Bass's (1999), namely; (1) take action based on awareness of what is right and essential; (2) establish a common goal for the betterment of the school; (3) optimize the performance of which has a value of character; (4) encourage followers to work following moral and ethical standards; (5) implement collaborative learning by empowering the entire school community; (6) redefine the vision and mission of the school, renewing commitment, and restructuring the school system; (7) change behavior as a moral agent; (8) commit to a code of ethics as a shared ethical standard; (9) consider the good achieved through faith and highest satisfaction values changes; (10) help followers maintain a positive school culture; and (11) establish the competency of followers to solve problems effectively.

The practical action of school principals in building cooperation is through, "implementing participatory management so that all stakeholders are involved in program planning, implementation, and evaluation activities." (Interview, January 2020) Based on the MoE (2016), the principal's transformational leadership strategy in implementing the CE in Indonesia was found in several strategic steps as follows. First, giving opportunities to subordinates to participate in the process of change in the body of the school organization through several strategies, namely: involving all school components, school committees, and the community in formulating the vision and mission of the school; and including all stakeholders in selecting and determining the values of the main characters of the school. This step is in line with the recommendation of the CEP (2010), in which the principals need to have a meeting with stakeholders to affirm the core values and articulate goals associated with the character.

Besides, that strategy also covers the involvement of all stakeholders in developing a clear organizational structure and division of tasks, while also carrying out program socialization in an integrated and synergistic manner between the education office, school supervisors, school principals, teachers, staff, school committees, and stakeholders. Besides, together with teachers, staff, school committees, and stakeholders, develop guidelines for character education. This strategy is emphasized by the CEP (2010), that school needs plan to strengthen CE taught in the classroom, in the school environment, and in community. Meanwhile, the government needs to motivate the school to determine the target achievement of the formation of student character through limited socialization and training. Lastly, schools need to make an evaluation report on the implementation of the program.

The targets achieved include, first, having a vision and mission of the school that has character content. Second, to create a formulation of the school's character values by the achievement of the school's vision and mission. This goal is consistent with the target expected by CEP (2010) that the school community promotes core ethical values and performance as the basis for the formation of good character. Third, the school has an official character education organizational structure with a clear division of tasks. Fourth, the organizing education that answers the demands of the world of work. Fifth, to have a school branding related to the implementation of a program to CES. Sixth, to integrate three educational programs (character education, 2013 curriculum, and full-day school /five-day school) in one curricular, co-curricular, intracurricular, and extracurricular packages. Seventh, implement a CEP that is sourced from Core Competencies (CC) and elaborated in Basic Competencies (BC) in curriculum content standards. This goal is consistent with the CEP (2010) affirmation that schools use a comprehensive, deliberate, and proactive approach to character development. Eighth, to have clear work guidelines in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating activities as well as follow-up programs

Second, encourage followers to work together in fighting for change through several strategies, namely: (1) providing opportunities for teachers, employees to participate in socialization and training to formulate and teach character in continuous teaching; and (2) building commitment in behaving as a form of theory internalization that is in line with the vision and mission of the school.

The targets achieved include increasing teacher competency so that the implementation of CE runs optimally and improving teacher competence so that it has the form of character achieved through learning. The teacher's behavior as an example is in line with the internalization of the values to be formed.

Third, integrating the CE in the curriculum. This activity involves several parties, as explained ahead.

Principal

The strategies undertaken by the principal are: (1) conducting socialization and training for teachers through verb selection exercises in preparing indicators implemented in teaching; (2) intensifying the Teacher Subject Meeting activities in developing learning tools, (Syllabus, Lesson Plans, preparation of questions, evaluations and follow-up plans); (3) developing guidelines for student behavior involving all components of the school; (4) arranging a schedule of daily or weekly activities to optimize CE activities; (5) adjusting curriculum programs, especially morning and afternoon activities programs and stated in school curriculum documents; (6) arranging a schedule for implementing CE activities and adapt it to the school academic calendar; (7) making commitments with all parties to support and implement CE in accordance with the planned implementation strategy, both in the curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities.

The targets achieved include: first, developing the values of school characters that are described in representative indicators. Second to establish the formulation of character values in the indicators of achievement of Basic Competency, using operational verbs that are following cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects in the context of the Education Unit Level Curriculum. Third, to build the formulation of character values in the indicators of achievement of Basic Competence, using operational verbs that are following aspects of attitude (spiritual and social), knowledge, and skills in the context of the 2013 Curriculum. Fourth, to build syllabus uniformity, Learning Implementation Plan, and using learning methods, evaluation, and follow-up plans. Fifth, to create a standard uniform of the central values of the characters and the main steps in learning. Six, to have a document of student discipline guidelines, with various reward and punishment provisions that are always evaluated and changed according to changes in the findings of violations committed by students. Seventh, to provide internet access services and other reading sources and counseling guidance teachers.

Teacher (educator)

Strategies undertaken by the principal involve teachers, namely: first, creating a school culture that supports the implementation of the program of CEP. Second, providing exemplary to the whole school community as a manifestation of the implementation of the application of CE. Third, developing a Learning Implementation Plan, an assessment that integrates the primary values of CE. Fourth, using learning methods that produce critical, creative, communicative, and collaborative thinking skills. Fifth, providing examples to the entire school community as an embodiment of the implementation of a CEP. Sixth, supporting the establishment of good relations between educators, students, and the entire

school community in the classroom and outside the classroom. Seventh, building a learning environment that appreciates and respects the uniqueness of the individual. Eighth, optimizing the function of Teacher Working Groups and Subject Teachers' Meetings for the development of learning based on the CE. Ninth, developing curricular activities based on the CE. Tenth, Implementing extracurricular programs based on CE. Eleventh, optimizing the role of guidance and counseling in the implementation of CEP and carrying out monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of CEP.

Educational staff

Strategies undertaken by principals involving employees, namely, first, providing role models to the entire school community as an embodiment of the implementation of a CEP. Second, supporting the establishment of good relations between education staff, educators, students, and the entire school community within the education unit environment. Last of all, supporting the implementation of intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities based on the CE.

School committee

Strategies undertaken by the principal that involve the school committee, namely, first, providing exemplary to the whole school community as a manifestation of the implementation of the CEP. Second, supporting the implementation of CESP through mutually beneficial cooperation. Third, supporting the implementation of intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities based on the CE. Fourth, supporting the implementation of the five-day school policy. Fifth, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of CEP.

Community communities and professional organizations

Strategies undertaken by the principal that involves the community and professional organizations, namely, first, providing exemplary to the whole school community as a manifestation of the implementation of the CEP. Second, providing support to education units in the implementation of CEP. Third, become partners and volunteers of education units in the implementation of CEP following their respective competencies and professions. Fourth, implement monitoring and evaluation of program implementation CE.

According to [Hermino \(2016\)](#); [Leithwood, Kenneth, and Jantzi \(2006\)](#); [Lickona \(2012\)](#); [MoE \(2016\)](#), there are essences of the principal's transformational leadership role emphasized in CE at the senior high school level in Indonesia, namely, first, use the knowledge and skills to chart a new direction, respond to the challenges of present and future through building positive and inspiring school culture. Positive and inspirational school culture is associated with: (1) high motivation and student achievement, (2) increasing inter-teacher collaboration, and (3) changing teachers' attitudes toward their work going forward to be more positive. Those teachers' characters include

as an agent of change, a charismatic person in flexible ways of thinking and acting, building the trust of teachers, staff, and students to achieve school progress; acting based on a system of values morals; can deal with complicated, unclear, and uncertain situations; and having a vision going forward, by always accepting new ideas, new ways in solving problems

The second role is growing character values through logical, expressive, and passionate thinking. The purpose of the principal includes being a planner, resource empowerment, coordinator, supervisor, official, legal expert, gatekeeper, and analyst. In a symbolic role, the principal is considered as a historian, detective anthropologist, visionary, symbols, poet, actor, and leader. Also, [Damayanti \(2017\)](#) explain that the specific values required by the principal as a leader, namely; (1) openness to participate; (2) transparency to diversity; (3) openness to conflict; (4) openness for reflection; (5) openness to mistakes.

The third role is as an agents of change; a culture without disputes is a culture that is destined to stagnate because change always starts with disagreement ([Champy, 1995](#)), and it takes courage from the principal to dismantle the stand that inhibits change. Fourth, as managers, good principals know the importance of management. In a school-based management system, where teachers and administrators work together to set educational policies and agendas for schools, responsibility is no longer on the shoulders of the principal but is spread between groups. Fifth, provide inclusive education to build meaningful relationships with various members of the school community. Another critical aspect of the relationship between the principal and the school community is that the principal must increase the awareness of teachers, parents, students, school committees about the reality of the school community through joint meetings, orientation activities, bulletins, newspapers, or school handbooks.

CONCLUSION

Policy directions and development prioritize in the field of education are based on CE as the ultimate goal. In line with this intention, the legal foundation of the national education system emphasizes that the CE in schools needs to be placed as a conscious effort to help students become autonomous, knowledgeable, and have a strong and robust personal character.

The existence of the wholeness of human identity is postulated in the appearance of an autonomous, integrative, and humanistic self in personal wealth that believes in God. The focus point is on the implementation of CE that needs to be realized in a real-life directly felt and practiced by students. Therefore, at the level of concepts and practices, the implementation of CE becomes part of the core curriculum in schools. This is considered essential because the curriculum and learning methods are vital tools used to socialize and internalize life values that are based on norms and morality.

Hence, students have a strong and resilient character in facing the challenges of increasingly competitive times.

In the context of the principal transformational leadership strategy in implementing the CE in high schools (SMA), it appears in several strategic steps namely; provide opportunities for subordinates to participate in the process of change in the body of the school organization through several characters strengthening activities; give encouragement to subordinates to form teacher working groups and form traditions to support each other during the process of change through several joint activities in forming character schools; and integrate character education in the curriculum, extracurricular activities, structuring classroom management, literacy movements, creating a characterized school environment, and counseling guidance activities.

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