

# Transformational Leadership In Realizing Humanist Character Education For The Alpha Generation

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**Abstract.** The discussion about the Alpha generation cannot be separated from education. Mainly humanist character education. This study uses a library research method by studying data sourced from books and scientific journals that discuss the Alpha generation, humanist character education, and transformational leadership. The goal is to find out how the contribution of transformational leadership in realizing humanist education for the Alpha generation. From this study, the results obtained; 1) Humanist character education is needed to reduce negative things and optimize the individual potential of the Alpha generation. 2) Based on the facts above, schools need to improve to change the new paradigm of the direction and purpose of education, namely the formation of knowledge and personality of students through increasing the intensity and quality of character education. 3) The role of leadership in realizing education based on human values is very large. 4) In this era, school principals are required to present humanist leadership; humanize humans. Not a rigid authoritarian leadership or leadership that merely performs administrative functions; 5) The contribution of the principal's transformational leadership to implement humanist character education in schools must appear in several strategic steps.

**Keywords:** Generation Alpha, Transformational Leadership, Humanist Character Education

## 1. Introduction

Future generations are faced with the challenge of changing conditions that are so rapid and the craze of the industrial revolution 4.0 and the era of society 5.0 that continues to roll. The internet of things and the automation of technology application will become a trend in every line of people's lives today. A life that is so complex with rapid and unpredictable changes is considered a new challenge in creating a harmonious and progressive national atmosphere that will be encountered by future generations. Call it the alpha generation. This generation is predicted to be a leader in the next 20 years. The alpha generation is the generation born after 2010. This means that currently the oldest age of the alpha generation is around 12 years old, and is at the level of junior high school education. Thus, the quality of the individual and the educational experience gained today will greatly support the success of future generations.

Several recent studies dissect the characteristics of alpha generation. [1] explained that the alpha generation has several unique characteristics, including having a more prosperous life as a legacy from the previous generation, highly educated, living highly dependent on technology, not having many skills, being obsessed with new products and easily bored. have excess body weight due to lack of physical movement, and lack of socialization aspects[2-4].

The discussion about the alpha generation with all its uniqueness, cannot be separated from the discussion about education. Education as a foundation in human development, must play a role in the two stages of the change process. First, humanization in terms of reflective awareness of human potential, and second, the process of humanization in terms of awareness of actual human activities themselves. Departing from the understanding that education is a process of humanization towards the birth of human beings of value in humanity [5], education needs to be managed seriously and with proper functions.

Humanist characters need to be pursued to save humans from the threat of character disasters in the future. Noting that humanization through the implementation of education is a necessity, educational institutions are required not only to advance science and technology, but also to be able to produce human resources with character.

Facing the challenges of the above conditions, educational leadership is a major issue that must be considered. The principal as a key figure in the school management system has a very strategic role in ensuring the quality of education. [6] in their inaugural speech for the professor of education management science stated that the success of a school in carrying out all the aspects it has planned needs to be supported by the presence of a reliable headmaster. dynamic. A professional provides job services in a structured manner. Educational leadership needs to respond to current challenges in the world of education; how to form humanist character in the alpha generation in the implementation of education?.

## **2. Research Methods**

This research uses library research method. The data to support this paper was taken by studying books and or scientific journals related to the discussion material and referring to the problem. [7] suggests that literature study is an activity related to the method of collecting library data, recording and collecting information and then processing the data. Meanwhile, the data sources are taken from various document sources, various reference books and scientific journals.

The emphasis of library research in this article is to find various theories, laws, propositions, principles, opinions, ideas and others that can be used to analyze and solve problems related to educational leadership in realizing humanist education for the Alpha generation. Therefore, this study describes and explores the documentation carried out by conducting a theoretical review of other references that are linked through the values, culture and norms that develop according to the research topic [8].

## **3. Results And Discussion**

### **3.1. The Alpha Generation**

In general, generations are categorized on the basis of the period of year of birth or events that occur globally [9] At least, at the beginning, some researchers classified there are four categories of generations; namely the Baby Boomers, X, Y, and Z generations. First, Baby Boomers were born in the period 1946 – 1964 after world war 2. Second, generation X was born in the period 1965 – 1979. Third, Generation Y is known as the millennial generation, who were born in the period 1980 – 1995. Then there is the fourth generation Z, which was born in the

period 1995 – 2010. Over time, a new category emerged for the generation born after 2010. Researchers call it the alpha generation.

Generation Alpha is always interesting to study. Unlike the previous generation, this generation was born in an atmosphere of massive technological development. Of course this is a challenge for anyone who dwells in the world of education. Ria Novianti in the journal *Educhild (Education & Social)* stated that 64% of the alpha generation interacted with gadgets in the medium category with a duration of 8 to 11 hours per day. Only 9.6% of them stated that they had never used a gadget. In fact, changing the mindset of each generation also triggers a positive or negative change in their behavior.

From an educational point of view, [10,11] explains that the Alpha generation is the generation that is most formally educated, is present from an early age, and learns longer because they are familiar with the concept of learning in the network. However, on the other hand they are also referred to as a materialistic generation. In his article, [11] vulgarly describes several characteristics of the alpha generation, including;

1. have high ownership of something they own,
2. high mobility characterized by the habit of traveling / traveling,
3. do not pay too much attention to matters relating to privacy,
4. have a tendency to disobey the rules,
5. tradition breaker,
6. a generation that is not very religious, and
7. unpredictable and changing all the time.

Based on the concept above, the Alpha generation is the generation that has more challenges. The influence of technology will give them the opportunity to develop very quickly, but it can have an impact on the character problems of each individual. Therefore, to answer these problems, character education is needed to reduce negative things and optimize the individual potential of the Alpha generation.

### **3.2. Humanist Character Education**

Education is an important way in developing and optimizing human character. As Ki Hajar Dewantara once said, "Education is an effort to advance the growth of character (character), mind (intellectual) and a child's body". Generation Alpha with all its uniqueness, especially those whose lives are very dependent on technology and are vulnerable to anti-social, feel the need to be closer to the humanization process through character education.

In the perspective of Islamic education, [12] said that humanist education is an educational process that positions humans as humans, God's creations with certain traits to be developed optimally. The humanist approach to learning is an approach that views that a person's learning process is not only to accommodate cognitive aspects, but more than that. Education with a humanist approach is a process that involves all aspects of human potential itself, including cognitive, affective and psychomotor. In a similar sentence, human character is interpreted as the result of the integration of four parts, namely the heart, thought, exercise, taste and intention.

Suyanto in [13] explained that there are four weaknesses that cause character education to be not optimal.

1. teachers do not fully understand how to integrate character values in all subjects,
2. syllabus and lesson plans are carried out conventionally and minimal innovation so that the implementation of character values is not on target,
3. education is still oriented to the cognitive aspect and ignores the development of attitudes,
4. a strong assumption of the wrong dogma that if aspects of cognitive development are carried out correctly, affective aspects will also develop.

Based on the facts above, schools need to improve to change the new paradigm of the direction and purpose of education, namely the formation of knowledge and personality of students through increasing the intensity and quality of character education. Schools need to improve to become centers of humanist character education because,

1. School is a place for sowing and cultivating the spiritual-religious seeds of students. The role of the school in this regard is to educate, teach, train and instill the values of honesty, love, truth, loyalty, moral consistency, non-corruption, justice, compassion for others [14]
2. Schools are a place for human empowerment of students, and
3. School as a conducive environment for practicing patriotism/nationalist learning (appreciating unity and diversity in maintaining the integrity of the nation, independence, discipline, ethical thinking, upholding moral values, promoting loyalty, responsibility, and caring).

### **3.3. Contribution of Transformational Educational Leadership**

To realize progressive conditions in the implementation of humanist education, visionary leadership is needed and is able to bring the school environment to a more conducive climate. It is common for school principals to seek to improve the quality of education, in this context, realizing humanist education. The role of leadership in realizing education based on human values is very large. Of course this is because the educational leadership position has access and space to execute various decisions and policies that are able to make a positive contribution to the educational community.

While the term transformational comes from the word to transform, which means changing or transforming something from one form into another different form [5]. Therefore, the word transformational contains the meaning of properties that can change something into another form, for example changing the energy of ideas and ideas into actual energy, or potential energy into real achievements. Therefore, a leader is said to have implemented transformational leadership practices, if a leader can change the energy of existing resources.

In fact, every organization, including schools, must have and need a leader or manager who carries out leadership activities to succeed in organizational goals. School as a formal educational institution is a place where a group of people (principals, teachers, staff, students, school committees, and the community) work to achieve the expected goals. As a leader, the role and function of the principal is very vital in determining the success of an educational institution to achieve its goals. In schools, the principal is the person most responsible for

managing and leading school programs with good management. The work climate, harmonious and conducive relations between the educational community in the school must be created through the leadership of the principal. This means that the principal is obliged to develop all components of education in schools in an integrated manner to increase the relevance of the education being carried out with the expected quality of education.

In relation to realizing humanist character education for the Alpha generation in schools, transformational school principals have very vital roles and functions. At least, Tony and Marianne and the Ministry of Education and Culture's Character Education Strengthening Team (2015) in a study conducted, explained that the principal's transformational leadership strategy to implement humanist character education in schools must appear in several strategic steps as follows:

1. involve all school components in formulating the school's vision and mission,
2. involve all school components in determining the values of humanist character to be instilled in students in line with the direction of the school's vision and mission,
3. involve all school components in developing the organizational structure of character education through clear job descriptions,
4. to socialize the integrated program of humanist character education in collaboration between the city/district education office, school supervisors, school principals, teachers, employees, students, school committees, and stakeholders,
5. involve all school components in compiling character education guidelines that are applied in learning, extracurricular, and co-curricular activities,
6. Conduct periodic evaluations of performance and results in the form of an assessment of the internalization of character values in students.

In addition to the above, in realizing humanist character education, the principal needs to apply the principles of humanist leadership in the school environment he leads. Change does not occur because of the leader's actions towards people but with people. In this case, the presence of a school principal must support the relationship and closeness between himself and all school components in the humanitarian dimension, such as; school residents find meaning and vision in the workplace, communication made by a principal is persuasive communication, invites participation and autonomy and is not merely instructional, fair treatment for all school members, constructive responses to problems that arise, being an example and role model.

In this era, principals are required to present humanist leadership; humanize humans. Not a rigid authoritarian leadership or leadership that merely performs administrative functions; wait for instructions and orders from superiors (top-down) followers work under a pressure leader, work to get the reader's attention, work after taking orders, work with hypocrisy. Such a leader's role can hinder the existence of the humanity of his followers equally and perfectly and at the same time become an obstacle to the growth of human inclusivity.

#### **4. Conclusions**

1. Generation Alpha is the generation that has more challenges. The influence of technology provides opportunities for them to develop very quickly, but it is also vulnerable to affecting the character problems of each individual. Humanist character education is

- needed to reduce negative things and optimize the individual potential of the Alpha generation.
2. Based on the facts above, schools need to improve to change the new paradigm of the direction and purpose of education, namely the formation of knowledge and personality of students through increasing the intensity and quality of character education. Education with a humanist approach is a process that involves all aspects of human potential itself, including cognitive, affective and psychomotor.
  3. The role of leadership in realizing education based on human values is very large. Of course this is because the educational leadership position has access and space to execute various decisions and policies that are able to make a positive contribution to the educational community.
  4. In this era, school principals are required to present humanist leadership; humanize humans. Not a rigid authoritarian leadership or leadership that merely performs administrative functions;
  5. The contribution of the principal's transformational leadership to implement humanist character education in schools must appear in several strategic steps as follows: involving all school components in formulating the school's vision and mission, determining the values of humanist character to be instilled in students in line with the direction of the vision and school missions, develop character education organizational structures through clear job descriptions, socialize integrated programs for humanist character education with all policy makers and stakeholders, develop character education guidelines that are applied in learning activities, (eg extracurricular and co-curricular), and conduct periodic evaluations in the form of an assessment of the internalization of character values in students.

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