



## From philosophy to practice: The implementation of neo-humanistic educational principles in primary school classrooms



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### Abstract

This study examines the use of Neo-Humanistic education in Bali Public School, emphasizing the translation of its philosophical basis into educational methods and character education. Neo-Humanism advocates for universal love, ecological awareness, and rational thought, providing an alternative framework to the conventional curriculum by prioritizing holistic development. A qualitative study design was utilized to collect data through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, administrators, and students, and document analysis. The results indicate that incorporating Neo-Humanistic ideas in Bali Public School fosters students' critical thinking, empathy, and ecological consciousness. Educators implement reflective, inclusive teaching methods, while the institutional culture fosters spiritual and moral development in conjunction with academic success. Challenges encompass curricular inflexibility, insufficient training, and conflicts with standardized evaluation frameworks. The research indicates that Neo-Humanistic education can cultivate 21st-century competencies and character education when accompanied by institutional backing and professional development. This research enhances the discussion on education reform in Indonesia by illustrating the contextual adaptation of various educational philosophies.

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## 1 Introduction

The modern global education framework is seeing a significant reassessment as educators, governments, and communities acknowledge that the traditional focus on academic achievement and standardized assessments frequently neglects the comprehensive developmental requirements of students. Amid escalating apprehensions regarding ecological disasters, moral degradation, and social inequity, there is an increasing desire for an educational paradigm that not only conveys knowledge but also cultivates ethical consciousness, emotional fortitude, and a sense of global responsibility. The advent of holistic and values-based pedagogies addresses this necessity by providing more cohesive methods for equipping students to lead meaningful and ethical lives (Joshi, 2026).

One of these alternative educational paradigms is Neo-Humanism, an ideology formulated by Indian intellectual Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar in the early 1980s (Sarkar, 1982). Neo-Humanism broadens the scope of conventional humanism by promoting universal compassion for all individuals, irrespective of race, nationality, or gender, as well as for animals, plants, and the entire ecosystem (Bhowmik, 2023). It underscores logic, spiritual awareness, and a responsibility toward the collective well-being of all entities. Neo-Humanistic education aims to develop intellectually proficient, ethically sound, emotionally stable, and environmentally conscious persons (Eysink et al., 2017).

Education reform has encompassed initiatives in Indonesia to incorporate character education and moral development into the national curriculum. The government's focus on Character Education Strengthening underscores the pressing necessity to harmonize educational results with ethical and spiritual values inherent in Indonesia's varied cultures and belief systems (Kuning, 2018). Nonetheless, the execution of character education has encountered considerable obstacles in practice. This encompasses insufficient teacher preparation, cursory incorporation into curriculum content, and conflicting pressures from standardized academic evaluations (Susilo et al., 2022).

Bali, recognized for its profound spiritual traditions and communal principles, provides a distinctive environment conducive to the flourishing of Neo-Humanistic education (Wardhani et al., 2022). Bali Public School is situated in Denpasar, has adopted Neo-Humanistic ideas as the cornerstone of its educational philosophy. The institution has integrated academic instruction with moral and spiritual development via daily meditation, ecological awareness initiatives, value-centered storytelling, and reflective discussions. This neo-humanistic educational model aims to cultivate intelligent students and compassionate, aware, and socially responsible individuals (Karmini et al., 2021). Neo-Humanistic education builds upon humanism by extending love and respect to all humans, animals, plants, and the world (Buşoi, 2015).

Essential elements of neo-humanistic education comprise a rationalistic mindset, spiritual enlightenment, service-oriented principles, and the development of Neohumanist virtues, including compassion, integrity, and ecological awareness (Pířová & Kostková, 2011). Empirical research in several nations has evidenced the advantages of Neo-Humanistic methodologies in promoting creativity, empathy, and intercultural comprehension (singh Kushwaha, 2020; Karmini, 2022; Sahu, 2020). The Indonesian government has incorporated character education and 21st-century skills into the national curriculum (Maba et al., 2025). However, implementing these objectives in classroom practice is inconsistent (Mantra, 2024). The deficiency in current literature pertains to the insufficient recording of the contextual adaptation of alternative frameworks, such as Neo-Humanism, within Indonesian educational institutions.

This study fills the gap by examining Bali Public School as a pedagogical experimentation and transformation venue. This study examines the implementation of Neo-Humanistic education in Bali Public Schools. This study analyzes the pedagogical procedures employed by educators to foster Neo-Humanistic principles, assesses student responses and internalization of these values, and finds institutional frameworks that facilitate or hinder this educational paradigm. Notwithstanding its revolutionary concept, the experience of Bali Public School with Neo-Humanistic education remains to be adequately examined. There is a dearth of

empirical studies illustrating the application of these concepts in actual classrooms, their impact on student growth, and the institutional elements that promote or obstruct their implementation. The absence of data and analysis creates a void in the academic literature on values-based education and restricts prospects for replication or policy impact (Barbour & Reeves, 2009).

The research provides concrete insights into the difficulty of implementing a spiritual-philosophical model inside a formal educational framework by examining a single school as a case study (Awidi & Paynter, 2019). This research is significant due to its possible impact on the broader discussion of the educational revolution in Indonesia and beyond. As academic institutions increasingly aim to equip students for economic productivity, ethical citizenship, and ecological living, the experiences of Bali Public School may provide significant insights. This study's findings can guide educators, curriculum creators, and legislators in incorporating holistic, character-based education into national systems while maintaining academic integrity and cultural relevance (Widana et al., 2019).

## 2 Materials and Methods

This study utilized a qualitative case study methodology to examine the application of Neo-Humanistic education at Bali Public School. The qualitative technique was chosen to elucidate the depth and intricacy of participant experiences, school culture, and classroom practices about holistic and values-based education. A case study allowed the researcher to examine this phenomenon in its authentic environment and acquire profound, contextual insights into using Neo-Humanistic ideas in teaching methods.

Data were collected over three months using three primary methodologies: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The participants were six instructors, the school principal, two administrators, and selected students chosen using purposive sampling. Interviews investigated participants' comprehension and implementation of Neo-Humanistic ideals; observations concentrated on pedagogical tactics, rituals, and student involvement; and document analysis scrutinized lesson plans, student projects, and institutional vision-mission statements. The various data sources were triangulated to verify their authenticity.

Thematic analysis was employed to understand the data, integrating deductive codes based on Neo-Humanistic education theory with inductive patterns from the data. The study included methodologies like member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing to augment credibility. This analytical approach allowed the research to reveal intricate insights into the educational, cultural, and institutional aspects of Neo-Humanistic education at Bali Public School.

## 3 Results and Discussions

This study's findings are categorized into three principal themes: educational techniques, student character development, and institutional culture. Data are derived from semi-structured interviews with educators and learners, classroom observations, and document analysis. The following passages exemplify the lived experiences of participants and the manifestation of Neo-Humanistic ideas within the educational environment.

Before each lesson, I instruct students to close their eyes and engage in many deep breaths. This brief meditation aids in calming them, clarifying their thoughts, and enhancing their focus. It establishes a serene, purposeful beginning to the day, and kids now request it when we overlook it. (Teacher A)

"In discussions, we transcend conventional textbook inquiries." I frequently inquire about their feelings regarding a scenario or which option would be the most compassionate or equitable. These value-oriented prompts foster enhanced engagement and facilitate emotional connections with the studied material." (Teacher B)

"It is striking to observe how instinctively students express remorse when they err or cause emotional distress to others. We do not impose it. They have acquired it through consistent practice and

contemplation. These minor actions demonstrate the extent of their emotional development." (Teacher C)

"Our eco-projects are not merely allocated." Students lead them. They alone organize the weekly clean-up and maintain the school garden. They perceive environmental stewardship as a collective obligation rather than merely a duty." (Teacher D)

"In the mornings, we commence with a contemplation or a brief melody concerning nature." It establishes a soothing ambiance during the day. I have observed students exhibit increased patience and respect when initiating these attentive moments." (Teacher C)

"Students incorporate values even in artistic endeavors or collaborative projects." They create posters advocating compassion, illustrate natural images featuring messages of peace, or engage in role-playing to demonstrate polite behavior. These creative assignments facilitate the internalization of the ideals we impart." (Teacher E)

Classroom observations validated implementing mindfulness practices at the commencement of almost all observed lessons. Educators frequently employ narrative techniques and dialogue to present ethical quandaries and foster empathy. During a historical studies teaching, the teacher recounted a local folklore tale and prompted students to deliberate on how the protagonist may have acted with greater compassion. During interviews, students demonstrated a heightened awareness of moral and emotional contemplation.

"I previously adhered to regulations solely to evade consequences, but now I endeavor to act ethically because it is gratifying to assist others. Kindness is a practice, not only an instruction." (Student A)

"Initially, I found silent sitting unappealing, but it now assists me in achieving tranquility during moments of distress. It allows me to contemplate before speaking or acting, enhancing my patience towards others." (Student B)

"I have discovered that anger does not resolve issues." When I experience distress, I inhale deeply and endeavor to comprehend the underlying reasons. My instructor asserts that compassion is a virtue, and I observe its efficacy in reality." (Student C)

"Participating in the school garden team taught me that even minor actions hold significance." Engaging in planting, cleaning, and nurturing nature instills in me a sense of contribution to growth not alone of flora but of my personal development." (Student D)

"I was once apprehensive about expressing my thoughts, but now I feel secure in articulating them." Discussing our emotions in class reveals shared sentiments among peers, fostering a sense of unity."

"Observations during collaborative activities, students assisting one another voluntarily, employing respectful language, and exhibiting patience." (Student E)

An examination of educational papers indicated a distinct focus on Neo-Humanistic principles. The school vision articulates concepts of "spiritual intelligence," "universal love," and "service to all living beings." Lesson plans frequently incorporate reflection activities and ethical learning objectives with academic aims. An administrator stated, "We guarantee every program includes a values component." Students must introspect on their learning across disciplines, including sports, arts, and science. Observations revealed that school-wide activities, such as morning assemblies, featured music centered on nature, peace, and kindness. Educators and personnel demonstrated courteous and composed conduct in their interactions, thereby creating a culture of empathy and mindfulness. Moreover, documentation about extracurricular activities highlighted community service and self-discipline.

The interview data indicate that teachers assimilate Neo-Humanistic ideas and implement them into uniform classroom procedures. Their incorporation of meditation, storytelling, and reflective conversation signifies a transition from traditional academic instruction to a holistic, student-centered methodology. These practices strongly correspond with the fundamental principles of Neo-Humanism, highlighting inner development, analytical reasoning, and ethical advancement.

Student viewpoints and observed actions indicate that learners are cognizant of these principles and actively implement them in daily interactions. The focus on self-regulation, empathy, and environmental consciousness suggests a culture of character education profoundly integrated throughout the student experience. The findings indicate that Neo-Humanistic education is not externally imposed but has been assimilated by students through experiential practice.

Document analysis and institutional processes reinforce the idea that the school functions inside a unified philosophical framework. The congruence of goal statements, curriculum design, and ritual practices indicates a robust organizational dedication to holistic education. This integration demonstrates the school's intentional attempts to foster an environment where ethical and spiritual development are prioritized alongside cognitive instruction.

### *Discussion*

Adopting Neo-Humanistic education at Bali Public School exemplifies an innovative approach to teaching rooted in spiritual and ethical principles. Incorporating mindfulness, compassion, and ecological awareness in the curriculum departs from conventional didactic teaching methods. Educators serve as purveyors of knowledge and catalysts for ethical exploration and emotional development. This evolution of teacher roles fosters an educational perspective aimed at cultivating the complete potential of every student. Focusing on virtues like kindness, accountability, and introspection suggests a consistent philosophical framework. These findings correspond with the tenets of Neo-Humanism, as articulated by Sarkar, which underscore the holistic development of individuals both internally and externally (Ghosh et al., 2025).

The implementation prominently features reflective and dialogic pedagogical practices. Educators often utilize storytelling, value-oriented inquiries, and ethical problems to enhance students' critical and moral reasoning. These methodologies starkly contrast with the prevalent practices of rote memorizing and material dissemination observed in several mainstream Indonesian educational institutions. The study's observation of students participating in moral reasoning, demonstrating empathy, and providing considered responses illustrates how teaching can influence consciousness. This aligns with Vygotsky's notion of learning as a socially mediated process, emphasizing the centrality of discourse and interaction (Ahrens & Zascerinska, 2022). Educators who integrate ethical inquiries into the curriculum cultivate a more significant relationship between academic knowledge and real-life experiences. It also presents students as active participants in their education, capable of ethical discernment and self-reflection.

Incorporating mindfulness and meditation as a regular practice in the classroom enhances the learning environment uniquely. Students indicated experiencing more calmness, improved focus, and a stronger connection to their aims due to these practices. Educators observed that mindfulness practices facilitated the regulation of classroom conduct and fostered a tranquil environment favorable for learning. These practices align with contemporary social-emotional learning (SEL) research, which underscores the significance of self-awareness, emotional control, and resilience in student growth. Furthermore, the cultural congruence of these activities with Balinese Hindu traditions augments their acceptance and durability within the local milieu (Mantra et al., 2024). Neo-Humanistic education utilizes cultural resources to enhance student well-being and foster personal development.

The study reveals significant character development. Students exhibited robust ethical senses, encompassing respect, collaboration, and empathy for others. These were manifest in their peer interactions, collaborative endeavors, and participation in community service initiatives. Educators characterized character education not as an isolated subject but an integral aspect of daily school life. This reflects the (Kurniawan & Fitriyani 2023) concept of holistic character education, which underscores the necessity for moral behavior to be demonstrated, practiced, and consistently reinforced. Bali Public School's methodology incorporates these ideas comprehensively, rendering character development an intrinsic aspect of the educational experience. The research verifies that students assimilate these principles rather than only adhere to them.

The school's initiatives to foster ecological awareness exemplify another aspect of Neo-Humanistic teaching. Children cultivate a sense of land stewardship through gardening initiatives, environmental clean-up activities, and thematic projects. Educators indicated that environmental education is conceptualized in terms of sustainability and as a moral obligation to all sentient creatures. This approach surpasses economic or scientific interpretations of ecology by incorporating ethical, emotional, and spiritual components. It also aligns with Sarkar's notion of universalism, which broadens human empathy to encompass all forms of life (Nimbekar, 2016). Observations indicated that students exhibited authentic pride in their ecological efforts, implying profound participation rather than superficial conformity.

The institution functions under a values-oriented culture that upholds Neo-Humanistic ideas. Morning assemblies, classroom traditions, and interpersonal relationships are all intended to foster compassion,



tranquility, and mindfulness. Staff interactions with students are characterized by respect, nurturing, and emotional attunement, exemplifying the characteristics they aim to cultivate. This illustrates that school culture constitutes a dynamic curriculum, implicitly imparting lessons through established norms, actions, and expectations. The alignment of the school's goal, instructional methods, and daily operations indicates robust leadership and collective dedication (Mantra et al., 2022). It illustrates how the corporate atmosphere might facilitate pedagogical innovation when congruent with philosophical objectives.

Despite its achievements, Bali Public School encounters systemic obstacles that hinder the complete actualization of its Neo-Humanistic ideal. A significant difficulty is the conflict between holistic education and national curriculum and education system. Educators reported challenges in reconciling innovative, values-oriented teaching with the demands of preparing students for learning and assessments. This indicates fundamental challenges that compromises the school's commitment to prioritizing moral and spiritual growth. It also imposes pressure on instructors who must manage accordingly. Innovations such as Neo-Humanistic education will continue to be neglected without legislative reforms that acknowledge alternate types of achievement.

Professional development is an additional domain that necessitates focus. Although educators at Bali Public School exhibit enthusiasm and innovation, numerous individuals indicated a deficiency in systematic training in Neo-Humanistic education. They depend on intuition, self-directed learning, and collaborative engagement, which, while beneficial, cannot substitute for systematic capacity development. Investment in teacher education programs centered on holistic, values-based teaching is crucial for sustaining and scaling such methods. This encompasses training in facilitation, emotional intelligence, and reflective practice. It necessitates materials and resources that facilitate curriculum integration. Establishing a professional learning community centered on Neo-Humanism would augment teacher efficacy and intensify implementation.

Community engagement has also proven to be a vital aspect. However, some parents endorsed the school's values, some prioritized academic outcomes, and expressed skepticism over the time allocated to non-academic pursuits. Addressing this disparity necessitates clear communication and inclusive discussions around educational objectives. Parents must comprehend the roles of character, mindfulness, and ecological awareness in their children's long-term development. Workshops, open classes, and collaborative projects help cultivate collective ownership of the school's goal. The collaboration between families and schools enhances the effectiveness and depth of values teaching.

This study elucidates how local culture might underpin educational transformation. The efficacy of Neo-Humanistic education in Bali is partially attributable to its congruence with Balinese traditions of spirituality, communal values, and respect for nature. By situating innovation within a cultural context, the school refrains from imposing external frameworks and fosters genuine transformation. This provides a framework for various culturally grounded pedagogies that integrate tradition with contemporary values. It also contests the preeminence of Western-centric educational paradigms in reform discussions.

The research enhances discussions regarding the objectives of education in the 21st century. As nations face global crises, environmental, ethical, and psychological, there is an increasing acknowledgment that technological expertise is inadequate. Educational institutions must also foster wisdom, compassion, and awareness. Neo-Humanistic education provides a framework for this broadened goal, incorporating human growth's spiritual, ethical, and intellectual aspects. The experience of Bali Public School demonstrates that such education is feasible and impactful.

The research highlights the significance of leadership in educational reform. The principal and officials at Bali Public School actively influence culture, support educators, and uphold philosophical integrity. Relational dynamics, visionary outlook, and practical implementation in daily activities characterize their leadership. This underscores the necessity for school leaders to function not merely as managers but as moral agents who inspire and exemplify the principles they advocate. Consequently, leadership development in values-based education is crucial for future emphasis.

It is essential to contemplate the adaptation and scalability of Neo-Humanistic education in diverse circumstances. Although the model is intricately embedded in Balinese culture, its fundamental principles of universal love, logic, and spiritual awareness are significant worldwide. Pilot initiatives, collaborative networks, and policy advocacy can facilitate its expansion. Nonetheless, any replication must honor local

context and eschew inflexible standardization. Adaptation will hinge on flexibility, communication, and community involvement.

This study paves the road for future research opportunities. Longitudinal studies could investigate the enduring effects of Neo-Humanistic education on student life outcomes, encompassing civic involvement, mental health, and ethical decision-making. Comparative analyses across areas or educational institutions could elucidate contextual facilitators and obstacles. Investigating student voice, teacher identity, and classroom micro-interactions would enhance comprehension of the transmission and reception of values. Such inquiries will enhance the expanding domain of holistic education and foster a more compassionate and mindful perspective on schooling.

## 4 Conclusion

This study's findings indicate that Bali Public School has effectively adopted Neo-Humanistic teaching as a comprehensive framework for fostering character, compassion, ecological awareness, and academic growth. The school has established a distinctive environment where moral and spiritual principles are integrated into daily learning through comprehensive pedagogical practices, including mindfulness, storytelling, reflection, and service learning. Educators and learners participate in significant activities that foster emotional regulation, ethical conduct, and consciousness of global interdependence.

This study confirms that Neo-Humanistic education can act as a transforming alternative to traditional schooling, especially in environments that prioritize cultural and spiritual traditions. Nonetheless, its viability necessitates continuous support, educator training, and conformity with overarching educational policies. The amalgamation of character development and academic success is feasible and can mutually enhance one another when anchored in a shared vision and institutional dedication.

To improve the execution of Neo-Humanistic education, schools ought to allocate resources for systematic professional development, create collaborative learning communities for educators, and bolster parental involvement in values-oriented education. This study suggests that policy frameworks in Indonesia and analogous contexts should acknowledge and endorse schools implementing holistic models such as Neo-Humanistic education to fulfill national objectives concerning character development, environmental stewardship, and the cultivation of 21st-century skills.

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