



Improving Education Character in Children

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ABSTRACT

Effective character education does not only focus on cognitive aspects, but also on the moral, social, and emotional development of children. This abstract will examine various approaches and strategies to improve character education, including innovative learning methods, the role of teachers and parents, and the importance of a supportive school environment. Research and best practices will be reviewed to show how schools can create an environment conducive to the development of positive character in elementary school children, such as honesty, responsibility, respect, and cooperation. The main objective of this abstract is to provide a comprehensive overview of effective strategies in improving character education in elementary school children, which will ultimately shape a young generation with noble character and ready to face future challenges. Character education is a process of applying moral and religious values to students through knowledge, the application of these values to oneself, family, fellow friends, to education and the surrounding environment and God Almighty. The social development of elementary school children has increased, from initially only socializing with family at home, then gradually getting to know the people around them. Children at this age have also known the digital lifestyle, both from home, friends, school and the surrounding environment. The digital era not only has positive impacts, but also negative impacts, this is where our role as parents, educators and adults guide and supervise children to live it well, correctly, and positively benefit the child himself.

Keywords: *character development, moral values, morality, ethics, honesty, responsibility*

1. INTRODUCTION

Character education serves as a crucial foundation for shaping a high-quality young generation. As the future leaders of the nation, children need to develop strong moral, ethical, and noble values to effectively face the challenges of an increasingly complex and fast-paced modern world. The rapid advancement of information technology and the impact of globalization bring both positive and negative influences on children's personality development. Therefore, enhancing character education must be pursued in a structured, comprehensive, and collaborative manner—engaging families, schools, and the broader community.

This introduction highlights the importance of strengthening character education in children, identifies the key challenges involved, and outlines a framework to address these issues. The following discussion will explore effective strategies and methods for cultivating positive character traits in children, enabling them to grow into morally upright, responsible individuals who contribute positively to their environments.

Character education for children with disabilities (AD) requires an inclusive and individualized approach that recognizes each child's unique needs, abilities, and challenges. A one-size-fits-all model is not appropriate. Instead, character education must focus on empowering children with AD by leveraging their strengths and providing tailored support that addresses their specific conditions.

Special Considerations in Character Education for Children with Disabilities (AD):

1. **Type of Disability:** The nature of the disability—whether physical, intellectual, psychological, or sensory—greatly influences the choice of effective character education methods. For instance, children with autism may benefit from a structured and visual approach, while those with intellectual disabilities may require more repetition and guided support.
2. **Abilities and Limitations:** It is essential to align character education goals with each child's abilities. The focus should be on helping children reach their fullest potential, rather than imposing unrealistic expectations.
3. **Accessibility:** Educational materials and methods must be accessible. This may involve curriculum adjustments, assistive technologies, and adapting the learning environment to meet individual needs.



4. Professional Support: Involving professionals such as special education teachers, psychologists, occupational and physical therapists is vital. Their expertise ensures that children receive the appropriate guidance and support to aid their development.
5. Inclusive Environment: A supportive and inclusive learning environment plays a key role in successful character education. Children must feel accepted, valued, and respected by both peers and educators. Efforts to reduce stigma and foster a culture of inclusion are also important.
6. Fostering Unique Strengths: Children with AD often possess unique talents and capabilities. Character education should nurture these strengths, fostering self-confidence and promoting a positive self-image.
7. Family Collaboration: Close collaboration with families is essential. Families reinforce character development at home and help ensure consistency between home and school environments.

Effective Learning Methods for Children with AD may include:

1. Experiential Learning: Engaging in hands-on activities that promote active learning and real-world interaction.
2. Play-based Learning: Using structured play and games as tools for character development and skill-building.

2. METHODS

Character education in elementary schools is implemented using a variety of methods aimed at shaping students' behavior and values. These methods include the development of good habits, exemplary conduct by adults, integration into the curriculum, teacher modeling, and the use of rewards and consequences.

One method involves encouraging children to develop positive habits through routine, spontaneous, and structured activities that promote ethical behavior. These habits help students internalize values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline over time. Another important approach is exemplary behavior, where educators and adults intentionally demonstrate positive attitudes and actions to serve as role models for students.

Curriculum integration is also a key strategy, where character values are embedded across various subjects, allowing students to learn these principles in academic as well as real-life contexts. Teacher modeling reinforces this process by making teachers consistent examples of the values being taught. Additionally, rewards and consequences are employed to reinforce good behavior and address inappropriate actions, helping children understand the outcomes of their choices.

Character education is implemented through several channels, including classroom learning, extracurricular activities, daily school routines, and the broader family and community environments. This multi-faceted approach ensures that children receive consistent messaging and reinforcement of values across different areas of their lives.

The core character traits that need to be nurtured in students include honesty, discipline, independence, hard work, creativity, respect for others, responsibility, patriotism, leadership, and a sense of justice. These values serve as a foundation for students to grow into morally upright, responsible citizens.

Parents play a crucial role in character education, especially in the digital era. They are responsible for guiding their children in managing the influence of technology and online content. This can be achieved by increasing their own knowledge about the internet and gadgets, and setting clear boundaries on their children's screen time. By doing so, parents help ensure that digital tools support rather than hinder their children's character development.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Character education consists of two key components—*character* and *education*—each with distinct meanings. Education is a process of human development aimed at shaping individuals through structured



learning, while *character* refers to a person's identity—an adaptable and reflective quality that allows individuals to navigate changes critically and ethically.

According to Warsono (2010), character education is the process of guiding students to become whole individuals, embodying character across the dimensions of heart, mind, body, feelings, and will. Character is understood as a good personal quality—knowing what is right, desiring to do right, and consistently acting in morally sound ways. These values are reflected coherently through one's thoughts, feelings, actions, and decisions.

Character education, therefore, is a purposeful effort to instill moral values in students, enabling them to grow into well-rounded individuals with integrity across all aspects of their being. Lickona (1992) defined character education as “the deliberate effort to help people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values”. This perspective highlights that character education supports the moral, emotional, and ethical development of students. In simpler terms, character education includes all positive actions undertaken by educators to influence students' moral development (Samani & Hariyanto, 2013). Character education is an effort to build character (character structure). Elmubarok (2008, p. 102) described character building as “sculpting the soul”—a process of shaping a person into someone unique, admirable, and distinguishable, much like letters in the alphabet that are never exactly the same. Character education, therefore, is not only moral or value education but a comprehensive formation of identity and moral strength.

Objectives of Character Education

The essence of character lies in moral values, ethics, and behavioral traits that define individuals and motivate their actions. The foundation of character education is the process of change—forming habits that become positive behaviors.

Key goals of character education include:

- a. Cultivating moral awareness and behavior through religious, ethical, and social values.
- b. Fostering environmental awareness, empathy, and care for others.
- c. Encouraging habits aligned with the values of Pancasila, preparing students to be responsible and ethical citizens.

According to Mulyasa (2013), character education seeks to improve the quality of education outcomes, ensuring that students internalize noble values in a complete and balanced manner, consistent with national educational goals. The Qur'anic verse Q.S. 31:17 reinforces this, urging people to uphold truth, avoid evil, and remain patient in adversity, the core principles of character.

4. CONCLUSION

Improving character education in children is a shared responsibility of parents, teachers, and the surrounding environment. Effective character education must address not only the cognitive aspects (knowledge), but also the affective aspects (attitudes and values) and psychomotor aspects (actions). A comprehensive approach is necessary to ensure meaningful and lasting character development in children.

The family plays the most fundamental role in character formation. As the child's first learning environment, the home is where core values are introduced and reinforced. Parents must serve as role models by consistently demonstrating moral behavior in everyday life. Effective communication, sincere affection, and consistent discipline are essential. Moreover, creating a supportive and nurturing home environment is vital for the child's holistic growth and development.

Schools also serve as important facilitators of character development. Through integrated curricula, extracurricular programs, and counseling services, schools help students internalize core values. Teachers must act as both mentors and role models, guiding students to learn from mistakes and develop a sense of responsibility, cooperation, and ethical awareness. A safe, inclusive, and stimulating school environment further enhances the effectiveness of character education.

The social environment outside the home and school, including peers, community leaders, and the broader community, also plays a crucial role. Positive social interactions and exposure to role models who embody strong moral values contribute significantly to character development. It is equally important to shield children from negative influences, such as harmful media content, which may undermine their moral growth.



Another key principle is the integration of character values into all aspects of life. Character education should not be confined to specific lessons but should be embedded throughout academic subjects and school activities. Core values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, hard work, and respect must be consistently reinforced across various learning contexts.

The use of effective teaching methods also enhances character development. Participatory and experience-based approaches—such as role-playing, group discussions, and case studies—encourage students to understand, reflect on, and practice character values in real-life scenarios. These methods engage children actively and help them internalize values more deeply.

Evaluation and monitoring are essential in the character education process. Regular assessments allow educators and parents to track students' development, identify areas for improvement, and adapt strategies accordingly. Importantly, evaluation should go beyond academic performance and include observations of students' behavior, attitudes, and emotional responses.

Collaboration between all stakeholders—parents, teachers, and the broader community—is critical to the success of character education. Effective communication and cooperation ensure a consistent and unified approach to moral development across different environments. Building synergy among home, school, and society fosters a more stable and supportive framework for children.

The rise of technology and social media presents both challenges and opportunities for character education. Children must be taught to use digital platforms responsibly and ethically. Parents and teachers play an important role in building children's resilience to online risks and guiding them in making wise, values-driven choices in the digital space.

Equally important is developing mental and emotional resilience. These skills help children cope with life's challenges and pressures, allowing them to maintain strong character even in difficult situations. Emotional intelligence, stress management, and self-awareness are all integral to building a resilient personality.

Lastly, the power of example cannot be overstated. Children learn more through observation than through instruction. Parents, educators, and community members must embody the character values they seek to instill. Actions often speak louder than words, and consistent, positive behavior from adults serves as the most powerful teaching tool.

In conclusion, improving character education in children requires a holistic and integrated approach involving families, schools, and society. This process demands patience, consistency, and a long-term commitment from all involved. Only through sustained collaboration and shared responsibility can we nurture future generations who are morally grounded, emotionally resilient, and socially responsible.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our supervisor, Putry Julia, S.Pd, M.Pd who has provided guidance and advice in the process of writing this article. With her help, we were able to complete this article.

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