

# Character Education Management of Elementary School Students

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## ABSTRACT

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The implementation of character education in schools is an effort to enhance the positive character of students. The purpose of this research is to find out the management of character education in 5th-grade students. This type of research is qualitative descriptive research, with focus research, namely the administration of student character education. Data are obtained through interview, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using interactive qualitative analysis, namely reduction data, data collection, and concluding. The results showed that character education in SD. Laompo State Elementary School was implemented in learning activities and creating school culture, which was carried out systematically through three stages—first, formulating plans for learning programs and programs of school discipline with character. Second, implementing the learning program plan by promising the value of personality in the material, creating a character learning climate, and enforcing school discipline implementation. Third, measuring student learning development on cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects and assessing the success of character education programs. The nature of its management is still subject to several challenges, for which it is necessary to make continuous improvements.

### Keywords

Character education

Digital era

Moral degradation

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## Introduction

The Indonesian government has an essential role in protecting the growth and development of its nation's children from the danger of declining character values. It has been formulated in the national education policy based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which is rooted in religious matters, and Indonesian national culture. National education functions to develop abilities and form a dignified national disposition and civilization to educate the nation's life. It aims to create students' potential to become human beings with faith and piety in God Almighty, noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens [1].

Character is the actualization of potential and internalizing moral values from the outside to become part of the personality. Character is a value imprinted in oneself through education, parenting, experimentation, sacrifice, and environmental influences, so it becomes an intrinsic value that plagues a person's attitude and behaviour [2]. Character comes from the Greek word "to mark" and focuses on applying the importance of kindness in actual actions or everyday behaviours. Character is the nature of a person in responding to situations morally, manifested in concrete steps through good behaviour, honesty, responsibility, respect for others, and other noble values [3].

A character must be formed, grown, and built consciously and deliberately through character education. Launching character education by the government is a strategic effort to foster and shape children's morality and ethics in all educational environments. Character education guides students to become full-fledged human beings characterized by the dimensions of heart, mind, body, taste and taste. Character education can also be interpreted as value education, ethics, morals, and disposition, which aims to develop student's abilities to make decisions, maintain good things and wholeheartedly realize the goodness in daily life [2]. Character education is a system of instilling character values in students, which includes components: awareness, understanding, concern, and high commitment to implement these values, both towards God Almighty God, self, sesame, environment, as well as society and the nation as a whole, to become a human being following his nature [3].

Character strengthening is an educational movement under the responsibility of the education unit to strengthen the character of students through the harmonization of heart sports, taste sports, thought sports, and sports with involvement and cooperation between academic departments, families, and communities as part of the national movement for mental revolt (*Gerakan Nasional Revolusi Mental*). It is carried out by applying the values of Pancasila in character education, mainly including religious values, honesty, tolerant, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the homeland,

respect for achievements, communication, peace-loving, fond of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility [4].

The responsibility of school administrators in implementing character education can be applied in the learning classroom and the school environment in general. [5] explained that class-based character education is an intervention in character building for students through learning activities in the school by prioritizing the process of communication and interaction between teachers and students as well as between students. The method of communication and interaction is intended not only for the teacher to function as an effective teacher but as a facilitator of character building. A teacher can invite, direct, and inspire students about moral values in every learning material he receives as part of the formation of a complete and mature personality. Classroom-based character education can occur in a dialogical context during the learning process through reading, discussion, creative questions, or classroom management.

The integration of character education in the learning process is carried out from the planning, and implementation, to stages of learning allotments in all mata lessons [5]. In the planning stage, what is carried out is the analysis of competencies, the development of a character syllabus, the preparation of a character lesson plan, and the preparation of character teaching materials. Competencies analysis is carried out to identify character values that can be substantially integrated into the competencies concerned. In the implementation stage, learning is carried out from the steps of preliminary, core, and closing activities selected and carried out so that students practice the targeted character values. The principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning are recommended to be applied to all learning stages because they can simultaneously facilitate the internalization of student character values. In addition, the teacher's behaviour throughout learning must be a model for implementing student values. The teacher carries out learning steps that facilitate students to be active, starting from the preliminary, core, to closing activities. The teacher must master various methods, models, or strategies of active learning so that learning steps are easy to compile, can be practised properly and correctly, and can observe and perform evaluation, especially on the character of the learners. In the evaluation stage, the assessment concerns not only the cognitive achievements of the learner but also his affective and psychomotor achievements as the main focus in the evaluation of character.

School culture-based character upbringing is an intervention in character building for students through activities to create a school environment climate. It examines the pattern of relations between individuals in an educational environment that overcomes class boundaries, both physically and pedagogically, by involving norms, rules, and regulations that frame each pattern of individual behaviour who became a member of the school community so that an

ecosystem was formed. Schoolculture-based education discusses the ways of interaction and relationships between individuals in the educational environment through the development of norms, traditions, rules and regulations that occur in the academic environment [6]. Lebih further explained that the moral ecosystem of education is formed by: norms and regulations. Norms are basic ethical principles that are a guideline that helps a person cultivate his freedom and responsibility as a being who is endowed with moral capacity. In an educational environment, norms can be written and unwritten (some good traditions and customs). The regulation shall constitute a mutual agreement agreed upon by each individual to achieve the educational institution's objectives and formally bind each individual to the educational institution's commitment, content and mission. Regulation is a legal order that applies to every citizen who maintains each individual can carry out their contents and tasks personally in the realm of national life without hindering the freedom of others. Each individual gets equal opportunities to achieve what is considered excellent and worth fighting for in life, both living in the social environment of society in general and in the school environment. Five central values that need to be developed in character education are character values about their God, oneself, others, the environment, and national values. Furthermore, the character has been formulated into 18 character-forming values derived from Religion, Pancasila, culture, and national education goals to strengthen the implementation of character education in schools, includes religious, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, and curiosity [2].

The success of the character education program can be known through the achievement of the items of the Graduate Competency Standards for students. It includes practising the religious teachings adopted following the stage of student development, understanding one's shortcomings and strengths, demonstrating a confident attitude, and abiding by the social rules applicable to the broader environment. At the school level, the criterion for achieving character education is the formation of school culture, namely behaviour, traditions, daily habits, and symbols practised by all school residents and the surrounding community based on the abovementioned values. Efforts to strengthen character values are carried out through character education management. Ref. [2] explained that character education management is a process of implementing character education which includes planning activities, socialization, and instilling character values to supervising the implementation of character education in schools. Character education management is how character education is planned, implemented, and controlled in-school educational activities. Ref. [7] explains that character education is carried out in steps: planning education based on content and mission with a focus on the character's attention. The principal and the team make a character-based school program. All school programs shall be disseminated through staff meetings and shared information to parents and students. They were controlling character

education. The principal should ensure by observing teachers and students with performance standards.

In today's information and communication technology era, almost all aspects of people's lives depend on technology. In education, information technology can have a positive influence, namely easy access to learning for teachers, education staff, and students, including obtaining sources of knowledge, interaction and learning processes, and accessing children's creativity. It is created when the use of information technology is controlled, proportionate, and guided by parents. On the other hand, if children's use of information technology is excessive and beyond parents' control, then it is potential for children to be free to access and be exposed to prohibited content, the spread of hoaxes, hate speech and destructive issues. The tendency of children to be passive in learning is due to their dependence on the internet. This situation can have negative impacts on children physically and psychologically. It includes triggering low creativity, hard work, and learning independence, the growth of individualism in the family and social life, as well as the ease of eradicating information without filters, which in turn, there is a degradation of the moral character of a generation of the Indonesian people.

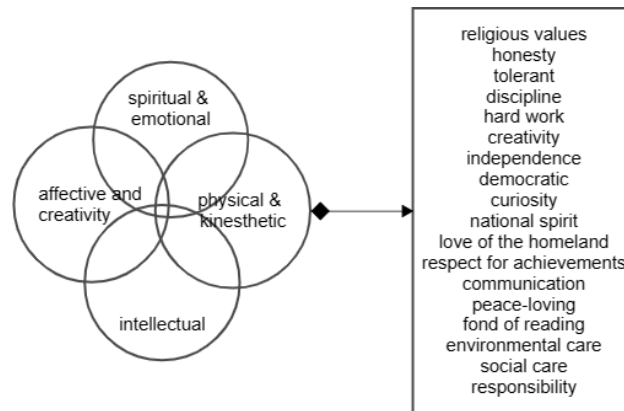
Ref. [8] explained that a child nowadays spends more time playing online games and interacting with gadget media, such as cell phones, laptops and video games. Activities that come into contact with technology colour the child's life more, rather than interacting with peers in the home environment, playing football, cycling and other play activities. Ref. [9] stated that the digital age has both a positive and negative impact. It is also a task for educators, parents and the adult community to guide and monitor what children do with their digital media so that children can make the best use of their digital media and get good benefits for themselves and their lives. Therefore, the problem of moral/character degradation is a real threat that must be faced by implementing character education in each academic unit. Ref. [2] explained that the Indonesian government, since 2010, has made character education a national movement. The emergence of character education is motivated by the increasing erosion of nature in the Indonesian nation and an effort to develop Indonesian people with a noble ethical character.

Today's information technology has influenced the order of children's lives throughout Indonesia. It has been a challenge for teachers to educate students. For this reason, this study will examine the implementation of character education in students in 5th-grade students.

## **Method**

This type of research is qualitative, focusing on studies, namely the implementation of character education in elementary schools. This study aims to determine the management of character education in students in 5th-grade student. The subject was students at SD. Laompo

State Elementary School, Batauga, Kabuoaten Buton Selatan. The data were obtained through interviews, observation, and documents. Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive model data analysis techniques: data reduction, display data, and conclusion/ verification)[10]. The character values development in school refer to the national agenda created by the Ministry of Education and Culture as shown by Fig. 1.



**Fig. 1.** The Character Values

## **Results and Discussion**

The character instilled in students includes the cultivation of religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the homeland, respect for achievements, communication, peace-loving, caring for the environment, caring for social, and an attitude of responsibility. It is implemented in class-based character education and a school culture-based approach. In terms of the aspect of governance, it is implied to be elemental with a sound management system, namely through the planning, implementation, control and evaluation. In line with the opinion of Ref. [11], character education is carried out in four stages: planning, organizing, implementing, directing and controlling.

### **A. Implementation of Classroom-Based Character Education**

In this approach, character education is implemented in the learning process activities. In this case, character values animate all learning activities in the classroom, carried out through integrating character values in the content of learning materials, strengthening a learning, and creating a learning climate through classroom discipline that stimulates the formation of student character. This activity is carried out through the stages of management functions, namely planning, implementing, controlling and evaluation.

Planning Stage, where the teacher formulates a learning design in the classroom to facilitate the realization of student character values. The activities carried out at this stage include many activities. First, compiling learning plans starts with analyzing the competencies

and formulating the lesson plan, designed to stimulate the value of existing characters, starting from the design of preliminary activities, core activities, and closing activities—the implementation of learning approaches, the determination of media, teaching aids, and assessment systems. Awareness of teachers' importance of strengthening character education is clearly illustrated in the school lesson plan document—second, formulation and development of learning themes. Teachers develop learning pieces that accommodate and are relevant to exist character values. In this activity, the teacher creatively integrates and distributes character values across all pertinent school subjects to form the character of the students needed. The results of this content integration are clearly described in the teaching materials developed by the teacher. Third, designing the expected learning climate. The school management and the teacher formulated the rules for students in the classroom, both in the traditions of learning activities (entering class, learning interactions, and leaving the classroom) as well as regulating communication and interaction between students and teachers and between students and students in the learning process in class. The results of this design are clearly described in the classroom learning order document. Learning design at this planning stage is based on the principal and teachers' concern for strengthening student character values. It is to avoid negative influences of information technology flows, especially the rampant dissemination of content and social interactions media, which potentially decline the moral values of students.

Implementation Stage, namely, the teacher implements the design of the learning program, which is carried out in two acts, namely the socialization program and application of the activity program. The quality of socialization of learning programs; in this case, the school leadership and teachers socialize all programs, especially teaching programs, as formulated in the planning mentioned above the stage in the school stakeholder forum. In this school stakeholder forum, the principal presents all class teachers, subject teachers, staff, and parents, carried out at the beginning of each year. Furthermore, teachers in their respective foster classes also convey this socialization to students at the beginning semester. The content of this socialization is the entire program, including the affirmation of programs to strengthen students' character values. Thus, the whole design of the learning program and the provisions of other learning rules are well-socialized and can be understood and become a joint commitment by all school stakeholders to continue to be carried out with a complete sense of responsibility for each party.

The next activity at this stage is the implementation of the learning program. The teacher realizes the entire learning program that has been designed, both related to the performance of the learning implementation plan (preliminary activities, core activities, and closing

activities) and the utilization of the results of the development of teaching materials, as well as the implementation of teaching order.

The preliminary activity, activity was strengthening student character education. The teacher begins his meeting by providing reinforcement about learning discipline, explaining learning objectives related to character values, and enforcing discipline in classroom learning. In the core activities, the teacher looks for the learning theme formulated by carrying out learning steps according to the formulation of the lesson plan. It is applied to learn approaches stimulating student character formation, including stimulating student curiosity, training student creativity, learning independence, discipline, honesty, hard work, and so on. Character values have strong relevance to individual lessons. For example, are, religious values, tolerance, democracy, national spirit, love of homeland, peace-loving, appreciating the results of achievements, love to read, care for the environment, care for the social, communicative, and responsibility are further strengthened in carrying out the themes of the subject matter, religion lesson, civics education, Indonesian values, natural sciences, and social sciences. In particular, the strengthening of character values in learning activities was implemented by creating a learning climate and integrating into learning themes in relevant subjects according to the existing schedule. In the closing activity, the actions of strengthening character values that appear to be the teacher reinforcing students so that the character values obtained are internalized in themselves and get used to applying them in daily activities both at school, in the family environment, and the social environment of the community.

Control and Evaluation Stage, namely control and evaluation activities over strengthening character values in integrating learning themes and creating a learning climate in the classroom. In the control bag, the teacher supervises the implementation of learning to ensure the performance of conformity between the planning formulation and the implementation of strengthening character values in learning. At this stage, the homeroom teacher of 5th grade carries it out by observing the student learning activities during the learning process and coordinating with teachers of other subjects to control student behaviour when learning takes place in class. The teacher's praxis of control in this context means prevention and guidance to make the students feel themselves behaving according to the expected character values.

Meanwhile, there is activity evaluation, and the teacher takes measurements and assessments of student learning progress. The learning progress measured and assessed by the 5th-grade teacher includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. The size of learning progress on cognitive elements is aimed at evaluating students' understanding of the concept of character values integrated into the learning theme. Meanwhile, the measurement and assessment of learning progress in the affective and psychiatric aspects are aimed at assessing students' level of change and development regarding the practice and



implementation of the values. In addition, the evaluation carried out by the school seeks to reflect the program's performance to strengthen character values in the classroom, both in the planning, implementation, and control stages.

Evaluation at the planning stage shows that technically there are no significant obstacles experienced by teachers. However, teachers still need help developing learning themes reflected with character values due to the dense subject matter. Teachers are creative in creating an effective student learning atmosphere for strengthening character through design formulation. Meanwhile, evaluation at the implementation stage shows that the obstacle experienced is that the teacher feels he has limited time available to develop discussions on the theme of strengthening character values and implementing learning approaches based on maintaining character values. It was reflected in formulating the planned lesson plan that needs to be fully implemented. In such a situation, teachers prefer to complete the teaching material according to the learning objectives set on the syllabus.

Meanwhile, at the control stage, it shows that the obstacles that occur are more in the psychological aspects of students. Teachers experience little difficulty in conditioning students in learning due to differences in competencies, characteristics, habits, family backgrounds, and others. However, teachers still try to overcome it by maximizing established teaching approaches.

The evaluation result of strengthening class-based character values in general in terms of the technical aspects of its management shows that it has gone well and systematically because it is supported by excellent and creative teacher dedication, participation and loyalty of students. However, several obstacles were still found, including the limitations of teachers integrating character values into the content of existing learning materials and time constraints with the use of learning approaches so that they were not optimally accommodated.

## **B. Implementation of Character Education Based on School Climate Creation**

Strengthening character education, in addition to being realized on a classroom-based basis, is also manifested in creating a school climate, including student discipline development programs and extracurricular programs, with governance through activity planning, implementation, control and evaluation.

In the Planning Stage, the principal invites the teacher council, education staff, school committee, and parents to attend meetings for the benefit of the school, formulating the school program. Some of the programs prepared include student discipline coaching. The formulation of school discipline development that is set includes discipline school time (coming and going home from school and entering and leaving the classroom), dressing, school hygiene discipline, the discipline of the interaction of teachers with students, and students with students.

Meanwhile, the extracurricular programs established include: scouting programs, school health efforts, fostering students' interests and talents to support the smooth realization of the program, a schedule of school annual activities, the distribution of teacher duties, and the person in charge and program supervisor is also formulated. The results of the program formulation are implemented into a description of school rules, which the principal validates.

Implementation Stage, namely the implementation of the established school program plan. The school implements the program in two stages, namely, the socialization stage and the realization of the school program. At the socialization stage, the school, teachers, and education staff socialize all school programs to all school stakeholders: school committees, parents, and students. This socialization is carried out at the beginning of each learning year. An explanation of the types of school discipline and extracurricular coaching programs integrated into the program of strengthening student character values. Introduction of the teacher in charge and program supervisor. Explanation of scheduled realization of school programs for a year. Consider the role and participation of the school committee, parents, and students in the school program's success.

At the program realization stage, the school mobilizes and utilizes all school resources to make school-level programs successful, both in implementing school discipline and extracurricular programs. Daily, teachers in charge guide the implementation of the school discipline program according to their respective schedules and work together with the class teacher every day. The daily picket teacher and the class teacher coordinate with each other to enforce school discipline, including school time discipline, dress discipline, school hygiene discipline, orderly interaction of teachers with students, and students with students, who continue to make records, and daily reports. There are still disciplinary violations, including disciplinary violations when entering school, violations of dress discipline, violations of hygiene discipline, and violations of discipline in interacting, especially between fellow students. Extracurricular programs are implemented according to the predetermined schedule and the appointed coach teacher coaches. Furthermore, the program supervisory teacher provides a report on the excitement and progress of students further to become the subject of study in school-level meetings.

Control and Evaluation Stage. In control activities, daily picket teachers supervise the implementation of school discipline to ensure the performance of conformity between the formulation of planning and its day-to-day implementation. At this stage, the daily picket teacher and the homeroom teacher of a 5th-grade student carried it out by monitoring the student's activity while at school and coordinating with teachers of other subjects to control students' behaviour while in school. The control efforts carried out by the teacher in this context are in the form of prevention by giving advice, motivation, and encouragement so that

students can get used to behaving according to the expected character and the discipline values. In the control stage, several disciplines were found by students. The daily picket teacher and the class teacher conducted coaching according to the level of violation in the form of verbal reprimands, written reprimands, educating punishment and coordination with parents. As for the extracurricular program, the controlling activities are carried out directly by the program supervisor, who provides periodic reports to the principal as material for study in school-level meetings.

In the evaluation, the school periodically assesses the realization of school discipline and extracurriculars at the end of the semester, including evaluation of planning, implementation processes, and results. The implementation of school discipline is assessed based on the level of compliance and disciplinary violations from the existing daily report data. Meanwhile, the performance of extracurricular programs is evaluated based on the level of participation and student achievement in various activities internally and externally of the school. The assessment of the results of the two programs becomes the basis for evaluating planning and their respective implementation processes. Furthermore, it can be to make improvements or improvements in the aspects of planning standards or in the elements of the process of implementing a naan of the following program.

The results of the evaluation of the program of strengthening character values through school discipline and extracurriculars found that obstacles were experienced at the implementation stage. For the disciplinary enforcement program, there are still correctional officers with various factors behind it. Meanwhile, in the extracurricular program, there needs to be more interest in extracurricular programs. However, the principal and the teacher council are constantly fostering and encouraging students to participate in the school program's success actively. The program contains the strengthening of character values shaping students' personalities. It includes religious values, honest attitudes, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, and national spirit. Evallegations of strengthening character values based on the creation of the school climate in terms of the aspects of the management economy are supported by inspiring and open leadership of the principal, the active role of teachers and creative education personnel, as well as support for active participation in school committee in the success of the school program.

In terms of aspects of the scope of implementation, student character education is carried out as a conscious and joint effort by all school stakeholders to form student morale and create a friendly and moral education ecosystem through learning programs and creating a school climate. In line with Ref. [6] explained that in the nature of its implementation, whole and comprehensive character education develops an approach by basing itself on three bases,

namely class-based character education, school culture, and community. In addition, the operational form of its activities is carried out in intracurricular activities, creating a learning atmosphere, extracurriculars, and enforcing school discipline. In line with the opinion of Ref. [12] that character education is carried out through integration in the learning process, habituation activities, exemplary activities, extracurricular activities such as scouting, and character building.

## **Conclusion**

Character education in 5th grade is realized within the scope of the learning program and the creation of a school climate. Learning-based character education is carried out by integrating character values into learning themes and classroom discipline through students' self-habituation of learning discipline in the classroom. Character education is based on creating a school climate, implemented by integrating character values in student extracurricular programs fostering students' talents, and enforcing school rules through students' self-habituation to school discipline. All of these programs are implemented with a sound governance system through planning, implementation, control and evaluation activities, which are supported by the active participation of all school stakeholders: principals, school committees, homeroom teachers, teachers, students, and parents. The spirit of character education needs to be improved again by improving the teacher's skills in integrating character values into the development of the content of learning materials. It is also the adjusting time allocation with learning approaches to accommodate the activities of strengthening character values in the classroom, building student awareness in enforcing learning/school disciplines, and increasing students' active participation in extracurricular programs through the formulation of creative, engaging, and emotional skills by the school.

## **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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