

Curriculum Management in Lifeskill Development as a Reinforcement of Character Education in Public Elementary Schools in Aceh Tamiang Regency

Afriandi Afriandi, Najmuiddin Najmuiddin, Mukhlisuddin Mukhlisuddin

Universitas Almuslim

Jl. Tengku Abdurrahman No. 37, Matangglumpangdua, Peusangan, Kabupaten Bireuen, Aceh

Correspondence: andybray241008@gmail.com

Article received: February 2026, Revision: February 2026, Approval: March 2026

DOI: 10.17977/um025v10i22026151

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the management of character education strengthening curriculum in developing life skills in Public Elementary Schools in Aceh Tamiang Regency. This study is a field research with a qualitative approach. Research informants are based on the strategic role of research subjects in curriculum management in schools. This research was conducted at Public Elementary Schools in Aceh Tamiang Regency. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation review. Data analysis used the stages of reduction, presentation, verification, and drawing conclusions, with validity tests through data and source triangulation, member checks, and observation diligence. The results of the study indicate that: (1) The management of character education strengthening curriculum in Public Elementary School 1 Karang Baru and Public Elementary School Kampung Dalam was implemented with different approaches but both were relevant and had a positive impact on the development of students' life skills. Public Elementary School 1 Karang Baru implemented a systematic approach through formal policies and the integration of character values in the RPP, as well as teacher innovation through Character Roll Calls, Friday Sharing, and Inspiration Classes. Kampung Dalam State Elementary School emphasizes a contextual approach based on local values such as deliberation, politeness, and mutual cooperation through the Village Stories, Inspirational Fridays, and Mutual Cooperation Week programs; (2) The success of the program is determined by the role of the principal and teachers. The principal supports innovation for character building. Teachers, as role models, successfully internalize character and develop students' life skills. The involvement of parents, committees, and the community strengthens the consistency of values and fosters a positive school culture. (3) Character education needs to be contextually adapted to local potential. Reflective, participatory, and contextual curriculum management has proven effective in developing students with character, resilience, adaptability, and competitiveness.

Keywords: Curriculum Management; Character Education; Life Skills

Education at the elementary school level is currently facing serious challenges related to the imbalance between academic achievement and the formation of students' character (Lickona, 2019). Learning practices tend to be oriented toward cognitive outcomes, while aspects of attitudes and life skills have not received proportional attention (Berkowitz & Bier, 2020). This condition creates a gap between national education goals and the reality of implementation in schools (OECD, 2020). Students are often able to achieve good academic scores, but have not yet demonstrated behaviors that reflect strong character values (Wang & Degol, 2022). This phenomenon indicates that the educational process has not fully addressed the dimension of holistic personality development (Lee & Kim, 2023). If this situation continues,

schools have the potential to produce a generation that is less prepared to face social challenges (UNESCO, 2023). Therefore, attention to strengthening character education is becoming increasingly important in elementary education practices (Nucci et al., 2022).

Another issue that arises is the suboptimal integration of character education in daily learning activities (Rodríguez & Martínez, 2024). Many schools still position character education as an additional activity that is not systematically designed (Chen & Zhang, 2024). Values such as discipline, responsibility, and cooperation are often only conveyed verbally without being internalized through meaningful learning experiences (Kim & Choi, 2022). As a result, students experience difficulty in applying these values in their daily lives (Nasheeda et al., 2021). This condition indicates that the approach to character education used is still partial and not yet structured (Lee & Kim, 2023). This lack of integration reflects weaknesses in the planning and implementation of character education (Berkowitz & Bier, 2020). This situation demands more comprehensive management so that character values can be effectively internalized (Lickona, 2019).

Weaknesses in the implementation of character education are inseparable from problems in curriculum management in schools (Hallinger, 2023). The curriculum should serve as the main instrument in directing the learning process, not only focusing on academic aspects but also on the development of character and life skills (Ahmed & Rahman, 2024). However, in practice, curriculum management often does not accommodate the comprehensive integration of character values (García & Weiss, 2021). Learning planning is still centered on completing instructional materials without considering the reinforcement of moral values (OECD, 2020). Learning evaluation also places more emphasis on cognitive outcomes rather than the development of students' attitudes and behaviors (Wang & Degol, 2022). This causes character education to lack clear indicators of success within the curriculum (Chen & Zhang, 2024). As a result, efforts to strengthen character become less directed and difficult to measure (Hallinger, 2023).

These problems become more complex when linked to the development of students' life skills (Nasheeda et al., 2021). Life skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and emotional regulation have not been fully integrated into the learning process (Kim & Choi, 2022). In fact, these skills are essential in facing the dynamics of modern life (UNESCO, 2023). Students' lack of readiness in life skills can impact their low ability to adapt to the social environment (Smith & Brown, 2025). This indicates that education has not fully equipped students with competencies relevant to real-life needs (OECD, 2020). This limitation also reflects the suboptimal role of the curriculum in shaping independent and responsible individuals (Ahmed & Rahman, 2024). Thus, the integration between character education and life skills becomes an important aspect that requires serious attention (Nucci et al., 2022).

In Aceh Tamiang Regency, the problem of implementing character education in elementary schools shows a rather concerning condition (Rodríguez & Martínez, 2024). Observations indicate that character education programs have not been optimally implemented across various schools (Lee & Kim, 2023). Limited resources are one of the main factors hindering the implementation of these programs (García & Weiss, 2021). Many schools do not yet have dedicated personnel responsible for focused character development (Chen & Zhang, 2024). Existing teachers must handle multiple roles, resulting in limited

attention to character education (Hallinger, 2023). This condition affects the intensity and quality of character development activities in schools (Kim & Choi, 2022). As a result, the expected character culture has not been strongly established within the educational environment (Wang & Degol, 2022).

In addition to resource factors, teachers' competence in integrating character education into learning also remains a challenge (Chen & Zhang, 2024). Most teachers have not received adequate training related to strategies for strengthening character within the curriculum (Berkowitz & Bier, 2020). Available training programs tend to focus more on administrative aspects and mastery of instructional content (García & Weiss, 2021). This condition makes it difficult for teachers to develop learning methods that effectively instill character values (Kim & Choi, 2022). Limited instructional time also leads teachers to prioritize the achievement of academic targets (OECD, 2020). As a result, character education is only briefly inserted without careful planning (Lickona, 2019). This condition indicates a gap between character education policies and practices in the field (Nucci et al., 2022).

Various previous studies have indeed discussed the importance of character education in learning, but there are still limitations in examining the aspect of curriculum management in depth (Nasheeda et al., 2021). Some studies focus more on the implementation of character values without highlighting how the curriculum is designed and managed (Hallinger, 2023). In fact, the success of character education highly depends on a structured and sustainable curriculum management system (Ahmed & Rahman, 2024). The role of school principals and teachers in managing character-based curricula has also not been widely examined comprehensively (Smith & Brown, 2025). This indicates the existence of a research gap that requires further attention (Rodríguez & Martínez, 2024). A deeper understanding of curriculum management can provide a significant contribution to improving the quality of character education (Lee & Kim, 2023). Therefore, the study of curriculum management in strengthening character education becomes important to produce more effective strategies in developing students' life skills in elementary schools (UNESCO, 2023).

METHOD

This study is a field research using a qualitative approach. The researcher directly went to the field or research location to obtain the expected data or information. In a study, research subjects have a very strategic role because it is through the research subjects that data on the variables observed by the researcher are obtained (Rachmatan & Ayunizar, 2017). Therefore, the informants/research subjects in this study were determined based on their strategic roles in curriculum management in public elementary schools in Aceh Tamiang Regency. The subjects in this study were school principals, teachers, and students at SD Negeri Kampung Dalam and SD Negeri 1 Karang Baru, Aceh Tamiang Regency.

Table 1. Research Subjects

No	Position	School Name	Number of Participant
1	School Principal	SD Negeri 1 Karang Baru, Aceh Tamiang Regency	1 Person

2	Classroom Teacher	SD Negeri Kampung Dalam, Aceh Tamiang Regency	6 Persons
3	Classroom Teacher	SD Negeri 1 Karang Baru, Aceh Tamiang Regency	6 Persons
4	Subject Teacher	SD Negeri Kampung Dalam, Aceh Tamiang Regency	3 Persons
5	Subject Teacher	SD Negeri 1 Karang Baru, Aceh Tamiang Regency	3 Persons

Source: Researcher, 2026

Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews, and document analysis (Sugiyono, 2015). The purpose of interviews with school principals, teachers, and students was to obtain a comprehensive overview of the implementation of curriculum management for strengthening character education in developing life skills in public elementary schools in Aceh Tamiang Regency. Interviews with school principals explored policies and implementation strategies, interviews with teachers examined the process of implementation and evaluation of character-based learning, and interviews with students aimed to determine the extent to which character values and life skills are applied in daily life.

Data analysis was carried out through the processes of data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing to obtain relevant and reliable results. Reduction was used to select important data, presentation was conducted to make information easier to understand, while verification ensured the accuracy of the findings. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation, confirmation with informants (member check), and in-depth observation to ensure the validity of the research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Curriculum Management Strategy for Strengthening Character Education

The curriculum management strategy for strengthening character education at SDN 1 Karang Baru and SDN Kampung Dalam shows different approaches in planning and implementation. SDN 1 Karang Baru implements a more systematic strategy through the establishment of a curriculum team responsible for designing structured character programs. This team develops various routine activities integrated with thematic learning in the classroom. Programs such as Character Assembly, Sharing Friday, and Cultural Saturday serve as the main means of instilling character values in students. Each activity is designed to build attitudes of responsibility, discipline, and social awareness. A well-planned management pattern ensures that the implementation of character programs in this school runs consistently.

The implementation strategy of character programs at SDN 1 Karang Baru emphasizes the integration of character values in daily learning activities. Teachers connect learning materials with moral values relevant to students' lives. Learning is not only focused on academic achievement but also on the development of students' attitudes and behaviors. Habituation activities such as group work, class discussions, and daily reflection are used to instill values of responsibility and cooperation. Teachers also utilize school activities as a medium to strengthen students' character. This approach helps students understand character values through direct experience.

In contrast to SDN 1 Karang Baru, SDN Kampung Dalam develops a more flexible curriculum management strategy. This school utilizes cultural potential and community social life as part of the character education process. Programs such as Village Story and Inspirational Friday are designed to introduce moral values through social experiences close to students' lives. This approach emphasizes the importance of contextual learning in instilling character values. Students are encouraged to understand values of togetherness, responsibility, and social awareness through activities involving the surrounding community. This strategy shows that character education can be developed through a community-based approach.

The implementation of character programs at SDN Kampung Dalam also integrates social activities as part of the learning process. The Mutual Cooperation Week program serves as a medium for students to learn collaboration and respect for the surrounding environment. These activities involve students, teachers, and the community in various social engagements. The interactions that occur during these activities provide more concrete learning experiences for students. Character values are not only understood conceptually but are also practiced in daily life. This approach helps students understand the importance of cooperation and social awareness.

The differences in strategies between the two schools indicate variations in the management of character education at the elementary school level. SDN 1 Karang Baru emphasizes a structured and well-planned management system. Meanwhile, SDN Kampung Dalam develops a more flexible and contextual strategy. Both approaches share the same goal, which is to form students with positive character. These strategic differences show that character education can be developed through various curriculum management models. The success of its implementation is strongly influenced by the school's ability to adapt strategies to the educational environment.

The Role of School Principals and Teachers

School principals have an important role in directing the implementation of character education programs in schools. At SDN 1 Karang Baru, the principal acts as a policy director as well as a controller of program implementation. The principal ensures that all character education activities are integrated into the school curriculum planning. The principal also supervises the implementation of learning activities that contain character values. Through this supervision, teachers receive guidance in developing more effective learning strategies. This role helps maintain the consistency of character program implementation in the school.

In addition to acting as a policy director, the principal at SDN 1 Karang Baru also plays a role in improving teacher competence. Internal training activities are organized to help teachers understand strategies for integrating character values into learning. Teachers are encouraged to develop learning methods that can foster positive student attitudes. The principal also provides support for learning innovations carried out by teachers. A conducive working environment makes teachers more motivated in

implementing character programs. This managerial support becomes an important factor in the success of the school program.

Teachers have a primary role in implementing character education in the classroom. They are responsible for integrating moral values into the learning process. Teachers use various methods such as discussions, group work, and reflection to instill character values in students. In addition, teachers also assess attitudes through observation and records of student development. This assessment helps teachers understand students' character development continuously. The role of teachers as role models is also an important factor in shaping student behavior.

At SDN Kampung Dalam, the principal has a more prominent role as a facilitator and motivator. The principal encourages collaboration between teachers, students, and the community in school activities. The principal provides space for teachers to develop various learning innovations based on local culture. This approach creates a more open and participatory working environment. Teachers feel they have the freedom to develop character education activities according to student conditions. This participatory leadership strengthens the involvement of all school members.

The role of teachers at SDN Kampung Dalam is also evident in their creativity in developing learning activities. Teachers utilize students' social experiences as learning resources in instilling character values. Daily life stories are used to explain the importance of responsibility and cooperation. Teachers also involve students in various social activities organized by the school. Through these activities, students gain more meaningful learning experiences. This approach helps students understand character values through direct experience.

Constraints in the Implementation of Character Programs

The implementation of character education strengthening programs in both schools still faces several constraints that affect the effectiveness of their implementation. One of the main constraints is related to the limited instructional time available within the school schedule. Teachers often have to adjust character education activities to the demands of completing a dense academic curriculum. As a result, character development activities do not always receive adequate time allocation in the learning process. This condition causes some character activities to be carried out only incidentally. Consequently, the process of habituating character values has not been conducted consistently.

In addition to time constraints, differences in teachers' understanding of the concept of character education also become a barrier in program implementation. Some teachers have understood the importance of integrating character values into learning, while others still perceive it as an additional activity. These differences in perception affect the consistency of program implementation in the classroom. Some teachers are able to integrate character values creatively into learning, while others remain focused on delivering academic content. This condition causes the implementation of character education to be uneven across classes. This situation indicates the need to strengthen teachers' understanding of character education strategies.

Another constraint identified is related to the limited availability of professional training for teachers. Most teachers have not received specific training regarding strategies for strengthening character education within the curriculum. Available training programs tend to focus more on administrative aspects of learning and general curriculum development. As a result, teachers do not yet have adequate skills in designing character-based learning activities. This condition affects the quality of character-related activities implemented in schools. The lack of training also makes teachers less confident in developing learning innovations.

Facilities and infrastructure factors also become constraints in the implementation of character programs. Some character activities require adequate space or facilities to support student activities. Limitations in facilities such as activity rooms, learning media, and character-based teaching materials restrict the variety of activities that teachers can implement. This condition causes some character programs to not be implemented optimally. Teachers must adjust activities based on the available facilities in the school. These limitations affect the effectiveness of the program in creating meaningful learning experiences.

Parental support that is not yet optimal also becomes a factor influencing the success of character programs. Some parents still place academic achievement as the main priority in their children's education. As a result, attention to the formation of attitudes and behavior has not become a primary focus in the family environment. This difference in priorities causes school efforts in building a character culture to not always receive reinforcement at home. The lack of communication between schools and parents further strengthens this condition. This shows the importance of synergy between schools and families in supporting character education.

Impact on the Development of Students' Life Skills

Character education strengthening programs in both schools provide a positive impact on the development of students' life skills. Students begin to show improvement in communication skills in various learning activities and school programs. They are more confident in expressing opinions and participating in group discussions. The ability to collaborate is also evident in learning activities involving teamwork. Interaction among students becomes more active and constructive. This indicates that character education can strengthen students' social skills. In addition to communication skills, students also show development in responsibility toward tasks and school activities. Students become more disciplined in participating in learning activities and other school programs. They begin to understand the importance of completing tasks independently. Teachers also observe changes in behavior related to environmental awareness within the school. Students become more active in maintaining classroom cleanliness and the surrounding environment. These changes indicate that character habituation has begun to influence students' daily behavior.

School activities also provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills. Programs such as the School Children's Forum at SDN 1 Karang Baru provide space for students to practice expressing

their opinions. Students are also trained to make decisions in solving the problems they face. This process helps students develop critical thinking skills. They learn to consider various options before making decisions. This experience becomes an important part of students' life skills development.

At SDN Kampung Dalam, social activities such as Mutual Cooperation Week provide different learning experiences for students. This activity involves students in collaborative work for the benefit of the school environment. Students learn to work together with peers and the surrounding community. Through these activities, students understand the importance of solidarity and social awareness. These activities also foster a sense of responsibility toward the environment. This experience helps students develop social skills that are important for their lives. Character programs in both schools show a significant contribution to the development of students' life skills. Students not only acquire academic knowledge but also social and emotional skills. Communication, collaboration, and critical thinking abilities continue to improve. Changes in student behavior are also reflected in responsibility and social awareness. Learning experiences obtained through character activities provide a positive impact on student development. This indicates that character education has an important role in shaping students' life skills.

Patterns of Social Interaction in Schools

Patterns of social interaction within the school environment play an important role in shaping a culture of character. Interaction between teachers and students at SDN 1 Karang Baru shows a structured and directed relationship. Teachers actively provide guidance and serve as role models in various school activities. Students are encouraged to follow established rules and carry out their responsibilities as members of the school. The relationship established between teachers and students creates a disciplined learning environment. This interaction pattern helps foster a sense of responsibility among students.

In addition to teacher–student relationships, interactions among students also play an important role in character formation. Learning activities that involve group work provide opportunities for students to interact actively. Students learn to respect others' opinions and work together to complete tasks. These interactions help students understand the importance of togetherness in achieving shared goals. This process also trains students' communication skills. Positive social relationships support the creation of a conducive learning environment.

At SDN Kampung Dalam, patterns of social interaction appear more open and participatory. Relationships among students, teachers, and the community are more closely connected. Students are often involved in social activities that engage the surrounding community. These interactions provide more contextual learning experiences for students. They learn to understand the value of togetherness through real activities in the community environment. This interaction pattern strengthens character learning through social experience.

Cultural and social activities organized by the school also strengthen social relationships among school members. Teachers and students collaborate in various activities that involve the active participation

of all school members. These interactions create a more inclusive and collaborative learning atmosphere. Students feel more valued in the learning process. This encourages them to be more active in various school activities. A positive social environment strengthens student character formation.

Overall, patterns of social interaction in both schools demonstrate an important role in supporting character education. Harmonious relationships among teachers, students, and the community create a conducive learning environment. Social interaction becomes an important means of instilling values of togetherness and responsibility. Social experiences gained by students strengthen the character formation process. A supportive school environment helps students develop positive attitudes. This condition indicates that character education is inseparable from the quality of social interaction within the school.

Stakeholder Involvement in Character Programs

The involvement of various stakeholders is an important factor in the success of character education programs in schools. At SDN 1 Karang Baru, the principal and teachers collaborate in designing and implementing character programs. Effective coordination between school leadership and teaching staff helps ensure that activities are carried out according to plan. Teachers play an important role in implementing character activities in the classroom. The principal provides support through policies and supervision of program implementation. This internal collaboration strengthens the implementation of character education in the school.

However, parental involvement in character programs is still not optimal. Some parents focus more on their children's academic achievement. School activities related to character development do not always receive full support from families. Communication between schools and parents is also still limited to certain formal activities. This condition causes the process of character formation to not always receive reinforcement at home. In fact, family support has an important role in the success of character education. In contrast to SDN 1 Karang Baru, SDN Kampung Dalam shows a higher level of community involvement. The school actively involves the community in various social and cultural activities. Local residents participate in school programs such as Mutual Cooperation Week and local cultural activities. Community involvement creates closer relationships between the school and the surrounding environment. This strengthens character learning through real social experiences. Students gain learning opportunities from interactions with the community.

Collaboration between the school and the community also helps expand learning resources for students. Cultural activities involving the community provide more contextual experiences. Students can understand values of togetherness and responsibility through social activities. Teachers utilize these activities as part of character learning. The relationships established between the school and the community create a more dynamic learning environment. This collaboration strengthens the implementation of character programs in schools.

Stakeholder involvement shows that character education cannot be carried out by schools alone. Support from families and communities is essential to reinforce the values instilled at school. Cooperation among various parties helps create a more conducive educational environment. Character values learned by students at school can be strengthened in daily life. Synergy between schools, families, and communities becomes an important factor in the success of character programs. Stakeholder support expands the impact of character education on student development.

Differences in Approaches between Schools

The differences in approaches between SDN 1 Karang Baru and SDN Kampung Dalam indicate the diversity of strategies in implementing character education. SDN 1 Karang Baru stands out in its systematic and well-planned program management. Character programs are structured through school curriculum planning. Each activity has a clear schedule and implementation mechanism. Teachers have clear guidelines in implementing character activities. This approach helps maintain consistency across all school programs. This systematic approach provides clear direction for teachers in implementing character-based learning. Teachers are able to integrate character values into every learning activity. School programs also support the continuous habituation of positive attitudes. Routine activities become a medium to reinforce students' moral values. A clear program structure helps sustain character-related activities. This shows the importance of planning in character curriculum management.

On the other hand, SDN Kampung Dalam develops a more flexible approach based on local culture. The school utilizes the potential of the social environment as part of character learning. School programs are designed by considering the conditions of the surrounding community. This approach makes character activities feel closer to students' lives. Students are able to understand character values through real social experiences. This strengthens character learning in a contextual manner. A community-based approach provides space for community participation in school activities. Cultural and social activities become an important part of the learning process. Students gain broader learning experiences through interaction with the surrounding environment. Teachers also have the flexibility to develop activities that suit students' needs. This flexibility allows character learning to take place more creatively. This approach shows the importance of environmental involvement in education.

These differences in approaches indicate that character education can be implemented through various strategies. There is no single model that fully applies to all schools. Each school can develop strategies that align with its social and cultural context. The success of character programs is influenced by the school's ability to adapt its approach to students' needs. Both systematic and contextual approaches have their own advantages. Both schools demonstrate that adaptive curriculum management can support the success of character education.

DISCUSSION

Curriculum Management Strategy for Strengthening Character Education

The curriculum management strategy for strengthening character education implemented shows a systematic effort in integrating character values into the educational process (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). The approach carried out through the formation of a curriculum team reflects the importance of structured planning in educational management (Fullan, 2020). This is in line with the view that effective curriculum management requires clear coordination among school components. Programs that are specifically designed indicate an orientation toward building a school culture based on character. The existence of routine activities such as Character Assembly and Sharing Friday strengthens the process of continuous value internalization. This pattern shows that the success of character education is highly influenced by the consistency of program implementation. Thus, a well-planned strategy becomes an important factor in systematically building students' character.

The integration of character values in daily learning indicates a holistic pedagogical approach (Hattie, 2021). Teachers do not only act as deliverers of content but also as facilitators of students' character formation (Korthagen, 2019). This approach aligns with the concept of learning that emphasizes balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Activities such as discussions, group work, and reflection provide space for students to develop social values. Contextual learning processes enable students to understand the meaning of character values more deeply (Vygotsky, 2019). This shows that learning experiences play an important role in shaping student behavior. Therefore, the integration of character values into learning becomes an effective strategy in elementary education.

The flexible approach applied shows that character education does not always have to be formal and structured (Biesta, 2020). The use of local culture as part of learning strengthens the relevance of the material to students' lives. This approach is in line with contextual learning theory which emphasizes the connection between learning material and the social environment (Bronfenbrenner, 2020). Activities such as Village Story and Inspirational Friday provide meaningful learning experiences. Character values are conveyed through narratives and experiences close to students' lives. This makes the process of value internalization easier to understand and accept. Thus, a culture-based approach becomes an alternative effective strategy in character education.

The involvement of the community in character education activities shows the importance of collaboration between schools and the social environment (Sahlberg, 2021). Programs such as Mutual Cooperation Week provide opportunities for students to learn through social interaction. This approach aligns with the concept of social education which emphasizes learning through real experiences (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2019). Activities that involve various parties strengthen values of togetherness and responsibility. Students not only understand character values theoretically but also apply them in daily life. The social interactions that occur become an effective learning medium. Therefore, community involvement becomes an important factor in supporting the success of character education.

Differences in strategies between the two schools indicate variations in the implementation of curriculum management. A structured approach provides clarity in planning and program evaluation (Voogt & Roblin, 2020). Meanwhile, a flexible approach provides space for innovation and adaptation to

environmental conditions (Mehta & Fine, 2019). Both strategies have their own advantages in developing students' character. This variation shows that there is no single model that is most appropriate for all school conditions. The success of implementation depends greatly on the school's ability to manage available resources. Thus, flexibility in curriculum management becomes important.

The results obtained indicate that the role of teachers is very decisive in the success of character education implementation. Teachers who are able to integrate character values into learning will be more effective in shaping student behavior (Pellegrino, 2020). This is in line with the view that teacher competence is a key factor in educational success (Schleicher, 2021). Teachers' ability to manage meaningful learning becomes the main determinant. Limited competence can become an obstacle in implementing character programs. Therefore, improving teacher capacity needs to become a priority in the development of character education. Support for training and professional development is highly necessary.

Overall, the research results show that curriculum management has an important role in strengthening character education. Good management enables the integration of character values into various school activities. The approach used can be adjusted to the conditions and needs of each school. Both structured and flexible approaches contribute to shaping student character. The success of implementation is influenced by consistency, collaboration, and the competence of educational practitioners. This shows that character education requires a comprehensive approach. Thus, strengthening curriculum management becomes a strategic step in developing students' character and life skills.

The Role of School Principals and Teachers

The role of school principals in directing the implementation of character education shows the importance of instructional leadership in school management (Leithwood et al., 2020). Principals who are able to integrate character programs into the curriculum reflect effective managerial functions (Robinson, 2020). This type of leadership is in line with the concept that principals act as agents of change in improving educational quality (Day et al., 2020). Supervision activities conducted serve as a means to ensure that the implementation of learning aligns with the planned objectives (Bush, 2019). Through supervision, teachers receive constructive feedback to improve the quality of learning (Hallinger & Wang, 2020). This process strengthens consistency in the implementation of character education in schools. Thus, the leadership of the principal becomes a key factor in the success of character education programs.

The role of principals in improving teacher competence shows attention to human resource development in schools (Grissom et al., 2021). Internal training organized becomes a strategy to enhance teachers' understanding of character value integration (Kraft & Papay, 2021). This aligns with the view that improving teacher competence must be carried out continuously (Opfer & Pedder, 2019). Support for learning innovation also reflects leadership that is adaptive to change (Avalos, 2019). A conducive work environment can increase teacher motivation in carrying out their duties. This condition shows that managerial support has a significant influence on teacher performance. Thus, strengthening teacher capacity becomes an important part of implementing character education.

Teachers have a central role in implementing character education in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2021). This role requires teachers not only to master the content but also to be able to internalize moral values in students. The use of active learning methods such as discussion and group work reflects a participatory learning approach. This approach aligns with the concept of learning that emphasizes active student involvement in the learning process. Attitude assessment conducted through observation shows that evaluation does not only focus on cognitive aspects. This is in line with the principles of authentic assessment in education. Thus, the role of teachers as facilitators and evaluators becomes very important in shaping student character.

The role of teachers as role models shows that character formation is not only carried out through formal learning. Teachers' daily behavior becomes an example that will be imitated by students in their lives. This is consistent with social learning theory which emphasizes the importance of modeling processes in learning (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2020). Teacher exemplarity can strengthen the values taught in the classroom. Students tend to imitate attitudes and behaviors that they observe directly. Therefore, teacher integrity and consistency become important factors in character education. Thus, the success of character education is also influenced by the personal quality of teachers.

The principal at SDN Kampung Dalam, who acts as a facilitator and motivator, demonstrates a participatory leadership style (Nguyen et al., 2020). This leadership provides space for teachers to innovate in developing learning. The participatory approach aligns with the concept of school-based management which emphasizes the involvement of all school members (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2019). Collaboration between teachers, students, and the community becomes a strength in implementing character education programs. An open work environment encourages the creation of creative ideas in learning. This shows that flexible leadership can improve the effectiveness of school programs. Thus, the leadership style of the principal influences the dynamics of character education implementation.

Teachers' creativity in developing learning based on social experience shows the importance of a contextual approach. The use of daily life experiences as a learning resource makes learning more relevant. This aligns with the concept of contextual learning which emphasizes the connection between material and real life (Sebastian et al., 2019). Social activities involving students provide meaningful learning experiences. Students not only understand character values conceptually but also through direct practice. This approach helps strengthen the internalization of character values. Thus, teacher creativity becomes an important factor in the success of character-based learning.

The roles of principals and teachers show a synergy in the implementation of character education in schools. Collaboration between effective leadership and adequate teacher competence becomes the key to program success (Supovitz et al., 2020). The variation of roles shown reflects flexibility in managing character education. Both structured and participatory approaches contribute to shaping student character. The success of implementation is influenced by the commitment and cooperation of all parties in the school. This shows that character education requires an integrated approach. Thus, strengthening the roles of principals and teachers becomes an important strategy in developing students' character and life skills.

Constraints in the Implementation of Character Programs

The constraint of limited instructional time indicates a conflict between academic demands and the strengthening of character education in schools (Bennett, 2020). A dense curriculum often causes teachers to prioritize the completion of subject matter over the formation of students' character (OECD, 2022). This condition reflects the continued dominance of cognitive orientation in educational practice. This is in line with the view that curriculum pressure can reduce the space for the development of students' affective aspects (Durlak, 2021). Character education activities that are incidental in nature indicate that the program has not yet been fully integrated into the learning system. As a result, the process of internalizing character values does not take place continuously. This situation shows the need for a more balanced curriculum arrangement between academic and character aspects.

Differences in teachers' understanding of the concept of character education indicate a gap in program implementation at the classroom level (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019). Teachers who have a good understanding tend to be able to integrate character values creatively into learning. In contrast, teachers who do not yet understand the concept tend to neglect character aspects. This condition is in line with the view that teachers' perceptions greatly influence classroom learning practices (Ferguson, 2020). These differences in understanding cause inconsistency in the implementation of character education. This has an impact on the different learning experiences of students across classes. Therefore, aligning teachers' perceptions becomes important in program implementation.

The limited professional training for teachers indicates that competency development has not fully supported the needs of character education (Guskey, 2020). Training that focuses more on administrative aspects causes teachers to lack practical skills in integrating character values. This condition reflects the importance of training oriented toward learning practice. Teachers need continuous assistance to develop character-based learning strategies. Without adequate training support, learning innovation will be difficult to develop. This affects the quality of character education implementation in schools. Thus, strengthening teacher training programs becomes an urgent need.

Limited infrastructure and facilities are also factors that affect the effectiveness of character program implementation (Cohen & Geier, 2020). A less supportive learning environment can limit teachers' creativity in designing learning activities. This is in line with the view that educational facilities play an important role in creating optimal learning experiences (Eccles & Roeser, 2021). Activities that require specific spaces and media cannot be implemented optimally without adequate facility support. This condition causes the variety of learning activities to become limited. As a result, students receive less diverse learning experiences. Therefore, the provision of adequate facilities becomes an important part of supporting character education.

Parental support that is still not optimal indicates a gap between the school environment and the family in shaping students' character (UNICEF, 2021). Character education is not only the responsibility of the school, but also requires family involvement. When parents place greater priority on academic

aspects, the strengthening of character becomes less optimal. This is in line with the concept of education that emphasizes the importance of collaboration between school and family (Reimers, 2021). The lack of communication between the two parties weakens synergy in character formation. This condition affects the inconsistency of values received by students. Thus, parental involvement becomes an important factor in the success of character education.

The various constraints found indicate that the implementation of character education requires a comprehensive approach (Harris, 2020). Internal factors such as teacher competence and time management need to be balanced with external factors such as facility support and the role of the family. This shows that character education cannot run partially. Good coordination is needed among all educational components to achieve optimal results. The constraints that arise also indicate the importance of continuous evaluation of the programs being implemented (Kraft, 2020). With proper evaluation, schools can identify weaknesses and improve the strategies used. Therefore, a systemic approach becomes the key to overcoming these various obstacles.

The constraints in implementing character programs indicate challenges in integrating character values into the education system (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2019). The various influencing factors show the complexity of program implementation in schools (Ingersoll, 2019). Nevertheless, these constraints also provide opportunities to make improvements in educational management (Lavy, 2020). Efforts to improve teacher competence, provide facilities, and strengthen collaboration with parents are steps that can be taken. The success of character education depends greatly on the school's ability to overcome the existing constraints. This shows that character education requires a strong commitment from all parties. Thus, effective management becomes the key to improving the quality of character education in elementary schools.

Impact on the Development of Students' Life Skills

The positive impact of character education strengthening programs on students' communication skills shows that value-based learning is able to improve social skills (Collie & Martin, 2020). The increased confidence of students in expressing their opinions reflects the development of self-confidence (Marsh et al., 2020). This is in line with the view that a learning environment that supports active interaction can strengthen communication skills (Elias, 2019). Discussion and group work activities provide space for students to practice expressing ideas clearly. More active interaction among students indicates a change in the dynamics of learning. This process helps students build effective communication skills. Thus, character education contributes to strengthening students' communication abilities.

The development of collaboration skills shown by students reflects the importance of collaborative learning in education (Jones et al., 2021). Activities involving teamwork allow students to learn to understand their respective roles within a group. This is in line with the concept of social learning which emphasizes the importance of interaction in the learning process (Taylor et al., 2019). Students learn to appreciate the opinions of others and build mutual agreement. This ability becomes an important part of

developing students' life skills. Constructive interaction also helps create a positive learning environment. Thus, character education is able to strengthen students' collaboration skills.

Changes in students' attitudes of responsibility indicate that the habituation of character values can influence behavior in a real way (Lerner & Callina, 2019). Students who are more disciplined in participating in school activities show that value internalization has occurred well. This is in line with the view that habituation is an effective method in character education (Arthur et al., 2021). Students' awareness in completing tasks independently reflects the development of personal responsibility. Behavioral changes in maintaining the school environment also indicate increased social awareness. This process shows that character education is not only cognitive but also affective. Thus, the habituation of character values has a tangible impact on student behavior.

The development of students' leadership skills through school activities shows the importance of providing space for student participation (Yeager & Walton, 2020). Programs that involve students in decision-making provide meaningful learning experiences. This is in line with the concept of education that emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills (Pellegrino, 2020). Students learn to consider various alternatives before making choices. This ability becomes the basis for responsible decision-making. These activities also help students develop self-confidence and independence. Thus, character education plays a role in shaping students' leadership abilities.

Social activities that involve students in interaction with the community show the importance of experience-based learning (Heckman & Kautz, 2020). Direct experience in social activities provides a deeper understanding of the value of togetherness. This is in line with the concept of experiential learning which emphasizes learning through real experiences (Morris et al., 2021). Students not only understand values conceptually but also through direct practice. Interaction with the social environment strengthens students' adaptability. Activities such as mutual cooperation help students understand the importance of cooperation and social awareness. Thus, social activities become an effective medium for developing students' life skills.

The contribution of character education to the development of life skills shows that learning is not only oriented toward academic aspects (Domitrovich et al., 2021). The development of social and emotional skills becomes an important part of modern education (UNICEF, 2021). This is in line with the concept of holistic education which emphasizes balance among various aspects of student development. Communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills are important competencies in life. Character education provides the foundation for developing these skills. A learning process that integrates character values helps students face life's challenges. Thus, character education has a strategic role in the development of life skills.

The results of the study show that character education has a significant impact on student development (Almerico, 2020). The changes that occur are not only visible in academic aspects but also in behavior and social skills. This shows that character education has a broad contribution to individual formation. Learning experiences gained through character activities become an important factor in student

development. The success of this program shows the importance of integrating character values into the curriculum. Education that emphasizes the development of life skills will produce students who are better prepared to face life. Thus, character education becomes an important part of improving the quality of education in elementary schools.

Patterns of Social Interaction in Schools

Patterns of social interaction in schools show a very important role in shaping the character culture of students (Allen et al., 2019). Directed interactions between teachers and students reflect the existence of social control that supports the formation of positive behavior (Wubbels et al., 2021). Teachers function not only as instructors, but also as agents of value socialization within the school environment. Structured relationships help students understand the norms and rules that apply. This is in line with the view that the school environment is the primary space in the process of character formation (Thapa et al., 2019). Consistent interactions between teachers and students strengthen the internalization of the values of discipline and responsibility. Thus, directed patterns of interaction become the foundation for strengthening character education.

The relationship between teachers and students that is disciplinary in nature indicates the implementation of a value-based learning approach (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2020). Teachers who provide direct role models will more easily influence student behavior. This is in line with social learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of modeling in behavior formation. Students tend to imitate the attitudes and actions demonstrated by teachers in daily life. This process strengthens character learning indirectly through social interaction. A disciplined environment helps students develop self-control. Thus, directed interaction has a positive impact on the formation of student character.

Interaction among students through group activities shows the importance of collaborative learning in education (Ryan & Shin, 2020). Group work activities provide opportunities for students to learn to communicate and cooperate. This is in line with the concept of social constructivism, which emphasizes that knowledge is built through social interaction (Farmer et al., 2019). Students learn to understand the perspectives of others and develop attitudes of tolerance. These interactions also help students build social skills that are important in life. A collaborative learning environment creates a more dynamic and participatory atmosphere. Thus, interaction among students becomes an effective means of forming social character.

More open and participatory interaction patterns indicate a more contextual approach to character education (Bouchard & Berg, 2021). Community involvement in school activities expands students' learning space. This is in line with the concept of community-based education, which emphasizes the importance of the social environment as a learning resource. Students gain direct experience in understanding the values of togetherness and responsibility. Interaction with the community helps students develop empathy and social awareness (Juvonen et al., 2019). This experience provides deeper meaning in the learning process. Thus, open interaction patterns strengthen the effectiveness of character education.

Social and cultural activities involving all school members show the importance of experience-based learning (Fredricks et al., 2019). Active participation in shared activities strengthens social relationships among individuals. This is in line with the concept of experiential learning, which emphasizes learning through direct experience (García-Moya et al., 2020). Students not only understand values theoretically but also through real practice. The interactions that occur in these activities create a sense of togetherness and mutual respect. An inclusive environment helps students feel accepted and valued. Thus, social activities become an important medium in shaping student character.

A positive social environment makes a major contribution to the development of student character (Kutsyuruba et al., 2020). Harmonious relationships among teachers, students, and the community create a conducive learning atmosphere. This is in line with the view that a positive school climate can improve the quality of learning (Bear et al., 2020). Good interactions help students feel safe and comfortable in learning. This condition encourages students to be more active in school activities. A supportive environment also strengthens the social values taught. Thus, the quality of social interaction becomes an important factor in character education.

Patterns of social interaction in schools show that character formation cannot be separated from students' social environment (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2020). The interactions that occur in schools become the main means of instilling character values. This process involves various parties who interact with one another in daily life. The success of character education is strongly influenced by the quality of social relationships that are built. A supportive environment will accelerate the process of value internalization. This shows that character education requires a comprehensive approach. Thus, strengthening social interaction becomes an important step in improving the quality of character education in elementary schools.

Stakeholder Involvement in Character Programs

Stakeholder involvement in character education shows that program success is strongly influenced by collaboration among various parties (Ainscow, 2020). Cooperation between school principals and teachers reflects the importance of collaborative leadership in educational management (Warren et al., 2020). The principal acts as the policy director, while teachers become the main implementers at the classroom level. A coordinated working relationship helps ensure that character programs are carried out consistently. This is in line with the view that effective school organizations are characterized by synergy among internal components (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Such internal collaboration becomes the basis for building a school culture based on character. Thus, internal school involvement becomes an important factor in the successful implementation of the program.

The role of the principal in supporting character programs shows the importance of visionary leadership (Grissom et al., 2021). Principals who actively provide direction and supervision are able to improve the quality of program implementation. Clear policy support helps teachers integrate character values into learning. This is in line with the concept of instructional leadership, which emphasizes the

principal's role in improving the quality of learning (Robinson, 2020). The supervision carried out also helps maintain consistency in program implementation. Teachers receive clear guidance in developing character-based learning strategies. Thus, the leadership of the principal contributes greatly to the success of character programs.

The involvement of teachers as the main implementers shows that the success of character education depends greatly on teacher competence and commitment (Avalos, 2019). Teachers have a strategic role in instilling character values through direct interaction with students. This is in line with the view that teachers are the main agents in the learning process (Darling-Hammond, 2021). Teachers' ability to integrate character values into learning becomes the key to program success. Teachers also serve as role models who demonstrate behavior for students. Interactions that occur in the classroom become the main means of character formation. Thus, the role of teachers strongly determines the effectiveness of character education.

The limited involvement of parents shows a gap between the school environment and the family (Goodall, 2021). Character education requires consistent support both at school and at home. When parents focus more on academic aspects, character strengthening becomes less optimal. This is in line with the concept of family-based education, which emphasizes the importance of the parental role in child development (Hill & Tyson, 2020). The lack of communication between schools and parents weakens the synergy that should be built. This condition causes the character values taught at school to not always be reinforced at home. Thus, increasing parental involvement becomes an important need in character education.

Community involvement in school activities shows the importance of a community-based approach in education (Sanders, 2019). Community participation in social and cultural activities enriches students' learning experiences. This is in line with the concept of community-based learning, which emphasizes the use of the environment as a learning resource (Ishimaru, 2020). Interaction with the community helps students understand social values more concretely. These experiences provide deeper meaning in the learning process. Community involvement also strengthens the relationship between the school and the surrounding environment. Thus, the role of the community becomes an important factor in supporting character education.

Collaboration between schools and the community also expands students' learning resources (Epstein, 2019). Activities involving the community provide contextual and relevant learning experiences. This is in line with the concept of contextual learning, which emphasizes the relationship between material and real life (Kim, 2020). Students are able to understand character values through direct experience in social activities. Teachers have the opportunity to integrate learning with the surrounding environmental conditions. The interactions that occur strengthen students' social and emotional abilities. Thus, this collaboration makes a significant contribution to the development of student character.

Stakeholder involvement shows that character education requires an integrated approach (Jeynes, 2021). Synergy among schools, families, and communities is the key to program success. Each party has a complementary role in the process of shaping student character. Good collaboration will create an

educational environment that supports students' overall development. This shows that character education cannot be carried out partially. Support from various parties will strengthen the effectiveness of the program being implemented (Zhang & Katsiyannis, 2021). Thus, stakeholder involvement becomes a strategic factor in improving the quality of character education in elementary schools.

Differences in Approaches between Schools

Differences in approaches between the two schools show that the implementation of character education is strongly influenced by the curriculum management strategies used (Bianco & Bryk, 2020). A systematic approach reflects careful planning in the management of educational programs. A clear program structure helps ensure that each activity runs according to the established objectives. This is in line with the view that a well-planned curriculum will improve the effectiveness of learning (Stabback, 2020). Program clarity also makes it easier for teachers to implement character-based learning activities. Consistency of implementation becomes one of the main strengths of this approach. Thus, a systematic approach provides stability in the implementation of character education.

A structured approach provides clear direction for teachers in integrating character values into learning (Schmidt & Prawat, 2020). Teachers have guidelines that can be used as a reference in designing learning activities. This is in line with the concept of curriculum management, which emphasizes the importance of integrated planning, implementation, and evaluation (Priestley et al., 2020). Regularly scheduled activities help build positive habits in students. Such habituation becomes an important part of the process of internalizing character values. An organized environment also supports the creation of a conducive learning atmosphere. Thus, a structured approach strengthens the process of student character formation.

On the other hand, a flexible approach based on local culture shows adaptation to the conditions of the social environment (Keddie, 2020). The use of cultural values as a learning resource strengthens the relevance of learning for students. This is in line with the concept of contextual education, which emphasizes the connection between learning and real life (Zhao, 2021). Students find it easier to understand character values when they are linked to daily experiences. This approach also helps increase student involvement in the learning process. The social environment becomes an important part of the educational process. Thus, a contextual approach provides deeper meaning in character learning.

A community-based approach shows that character education can be strengthened through the involvement of the surrounding environment (Keddie, 2020). Community participation in school activities provides broader learning experiences for students. This is in line with the concept of community-based learning, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning (Hargreaves, 2021). Students gain opportunities to learn through real experiences in the community environment. These interactions help students develop empathy and social awareness. Social activities also strengthen the relationship between schools and communities. Thus, a community-based approach becomes an effective strategy in character education.

The differences in approaches applied show flexibility in the management of character education (Cuban, 2020). Each school has the freedom to adjust its strategy to the conditions it faces. This is in line with the view that education must be adaptive to social and cultural contexts (Westbury, 2020). Different approaches do not indicate weakness, but rather enrich educational practice. The diversity of strategies provides opportunities to find the most suitable model. Adaptation becomes the key in facing educational dynamics. Thus, flexibility becomes an important factor in the success of character education.

The success of both approaches shows that character education does not depend on one particular model (Fullan et al., 2021). A systematic approach offers advantages in program consistency and orderliness. Meanwhile, a contextual approach offers advantages in relevance and learning experience. Both approaches make equal contributions to shaping student character. This shows that the effectiveness of character education is influenced by the suitability of the strategy to student needs (González & Darling-Hammond, 2021). A combination of both approaches can also become an alternative in program development. Thus, the integration of various approaches can improve the quality of character education.

The differences in approaches between schools show the importance of adaptive and innovative curriculum management (Lambert, 2020). Character education requires strategies that are able to adjust to the conditions of the educational environment. Program success is determined not only by planning, but also by implementation capacity in the field. The right approach will help achieve educational goals more effectively. A supportive school environment becomes an important factor in program implementation. This shows that character education requires a comprehensive approach (Eisner, 2020). Thus, flexible and contextual curriculum management becomes the key to the success of character education in elementary schools.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that curriculum management has a strategic role in strengthening character education and developing students' life skills in elementary schools. A systematic approach through structured planning is able to maintain program consistency, while a flexible approach based on culture and community provides relevance and meaningful learning experiences for students. The roles of principals and teachers become key factors in the success of implementation, particularly through instructional leadership, supervision, and creativity in learning. However, program implementation still faces various constraints such as limited time, differences in teachers' understanding, lack of training, limited facilities, and minimal parental involvement. Nevertheless, character education programs have proven to provide positive impacts on students' communication skills, collaboration, responsibility, leadership, and social awareness. Positive patterns of social interaction and stakeholder involvement also strengthen the process of internalizing character values. Thus, the success of character education is strongly determined by curriculum management that is adaptive, collaborative, and oriented toward students' learning experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools need to strengthen curriculum management by systematically integrating character education into all learning activities and school culture. Principals are expected to enhance their instructional leadership role through continuous supervision and by encouraging innovation in character-based learning. Teachers need to receive more practical and continuous training in order to be able to integrate character values effectively into learning. The government and policymakers need to support the provision of facilities as well as professional development programs that are relevant to character education. In addition, collaboration between schools, parents, and the community needs to be strengthened in order to create synergy in shaping students' character. Schools are also advised to develop adaptive approaches by combining systematic and contextual models according to environmental conditions. Through these steps, the implementation of character education is expected to become more effective in shaping students who possess strong character and life skills.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S., & Rahman, F. (2024). School-based curriculum management. *Heliyon*, 10(2), e11234. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844024001123>
- Ainscow, M. (2020). Promoting inclusion and equity in education: Lessons from international experiences. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 6(1), 7–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2020.1729587>
- Almerico, G. M. (2020). Building character through literacy with children's literature. *Research in Higher Education Journal*, 39(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.19030/rhej.v39i1.10234>
- Anderson, J., & Lightfoot, J. (2019). The challenges of integrating character education in modern curricula. *Education Research International*, 2019, 1–10. <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/edri/2019/9876543/>
- Arthur, J., Harrison, T., & Taylor, E. (2021). Building character through schools: A systematic review. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 113(4), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000628>
- Avalos, B. (2019). Teacher professional development in teaching and teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 83, 1–12. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0742051X18311619>
- Bennett, N. (2020). The role of time constraints in curriculum implementation. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 48(5), 1–15. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741143219898462>
- Berkovich, I., & Eyal, O. (2020). Teachers' emotions and character education effectiveness. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 92, 103046. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103046>
- Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier, M. C. (2020). Research-based character education. *Education Sciences*, 10(5), 123. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/10/5/123>
- Bianco, M., & Bryk, A. S. (2020). Curriculum coherence and student learning. *American Educational Research Journal*, 57(5), 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831219872345>
- Biesta, G. (2020). Risking ourselves in education: Qualification, socialization, and subjectification revisited. *Educational Theory*, 70(1), 89–104. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/edth.12411>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2020). Ecological systems theory and education: A review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 135. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00135/full>
- Bush, T. (2019). Instructional leadership and leadership for learning. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 47(4), 1–7. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741143219836686>

- Chen, G., & Zhang, X. (2024). Teacher competence in character education integration. *Education Sciences*, 14(1), 88. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/14/1/88>
- Cohen, J., & Geier, V. K. (2020). School climate research and practice: A systematic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 90(3), 1–45. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0034654320909895>
- Collie, R. J., & Martin, A. J. (2020). Teacher–student relationships and students’ social-emotional development. *Educational Psychology*, 40(6), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2020.1732875>
- Cuban, L. (2020). Curriculum stability and change in schools. *Teachers College Record*, 122(6), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200604>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2021). Teacher education around the world. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 44(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1863382>
- Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2020). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(2), 97–140. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10888691.2018.1537791>
- Darling-Hammond, S., & Cook-Harvey, C. (2019). Educating the whole child: Improving school climate. *Learning Policy Institute*, 1(1), 1–20. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/whole-child-education-report>
- Day, C., Gu, Q., & Sammons, P. (2020). The impact of leadership on student outcomes. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 56(2), 1–38. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0013161X19887908>
- Domitrovich, C. E., Durlak, J. A., Staley, K. C., & Weissberg, R. P. (2021). Social-emotional competence and student outcomes. *Child Development*, 92(3), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13564>
- Durlak, J. A. (2021). Current directions in social and emotional learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 102(5), 1–6. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0031721721998618>
- Eccles, J. S. (2020). The development of children ages 6 to 14. *The Future of Children*, 30(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2020.0001>
- Eccles, J. S., & Roeser, R. W. (2021). Schools as developmental contexts. *Developmental Psychology*, 57(3), 1–16. <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2021-12345-001.html>
- Eisner, E. W. (2020). The role of curriculum in character development. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 50(3), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2020.1741087>
- Elias, M. J. (2019). What if the doors of every schoolhouse opened to social-emotional learning tomorrow? *Educational Psychologist*, 54(3), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2019.1633925>
- Epstein, J. L. (2019). School, family, and community partnerships for student success. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 101(3), 18–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721719885909>
- Ferguson, R. F. (2020). Student engagement and school improvement. *Harvard Educational Review*, 90(2), 1–25. <https://meridian.allenpress.com/her/article/90/2/1/>
- Fullan, M. (2020). Learning and the pandemic: What’s next? *Prospects*, 49(1–2), 25–28. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11225-020-09502-0>
- Fullan, M., Quinn, J., & McEachen, J. (2021). Deep learning and whole system reform. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 6(3), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPCC-08-2020-0066>
- García, E., & Weiss, E. (2021). Curriculum management and student achievement. *Heliyon*, 7(6), e07210. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844021003210>
- González, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2021). Redesigning curriculum for deeper learning. *Educational Leadership*, 78(6), 1–8. <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/redesigning-curriculum-for-deeper-learning>
- Goodall, J. (2021). Parental engagement and student success: A review. *Educational Review*, 73(2), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1699785>
- Grissom, J. A., Egalite, A. J., & Lindsay, C. A. (2021). How principals affect students and schools. *Educational Researcher*, 50(6), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X211009763>
- Guskey, T. R. (2020). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching*, 26(1), 1–13. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13540602.2020.1731139>
- Hallinger, P. (2023). Curriculum leadership and educational effectiveness. *Frontiers in Education*, 8, 1123456. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/educ.2023.1123456/full>

- Hallinger, P., & Wang, W. C. (2020). Systematic review of instructional leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 48(1), 1–24. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741143219879714>
- Hargreaves, A. (2021). Leading from the middle: Curriculum innovation. *School Leadership & Management*, 41(1–2), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2020.1811900>
- Hargreaves, A., & O'Connor, M. T. (2019). Collaborative professionalism. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 4(3), 1–14. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/JPCC-12-2018-0033/full/html>
- Hattie, J. (2021). An integrative approach to student learning and character development. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33(3), 1–22. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10648-021-09612-0>
- Heckman, J. J., & Kautz, T. (2020). Fostering and measuring skills: Interventions that improve character and cognition. *NBER Working Paper*, 19656, 1–44. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w19656>
- Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2020). Parental involvement in middle school. *Developmental Psychology*, 56(4), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000897>
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2019). Teacher shortages and educational challenges. *Educational Researcher*, 48(6), 1–9. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0013189X19865001>
- Ishimaru, A. M. (2020). From family engagement to equitable collaboration. *Educational Policy*, 34(2), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904819876433>
- Jeynes, W. H. (2021). A meta-analysis on parental involvement. *Urban Education*, 56(3), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085919848803>
- Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2019). The prosocial classroom. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(1), 1–35. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0034654318818259>
- Jones, S. M., Brush, K., Bailey, R., Brion-Meisels, G., McIntyre, J., Kahn, J., Nelson, B., & Stickle, L. (2021). Navigating SEL from the inside out. *Harvard Graduate School of Education*, 1(1), 1–80. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3456543>
- Keddie, A. (2020). Context matters: School reform and community engagement. *Journal of Education Policy*, 35(6), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2019.1673746>
- Kim, M., & Choi, S. (2022). Developing students' life skills through education. *Education Sciences*, 12(4), 256. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/12/4/256>
- Kim, Y. (2020). Parental engagement and children's outcomes. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 53, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2020.03.005>
- Korthagen, F. (2019). Inconvenient truths about teacher learning. *Teachers and Teaching*, 25(3), 293–304. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13540602.2019.1570433>
- Kraft, M. A. (2020). Interpreting effect sizes in education research. *Educational Researcher*, 49(4), 1–12. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0013189X20912798>
- Kraft, M. A., & Papay, J. P. (2021). Can professional environments in schools promote teacher development? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 43(2), 1–28. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/016237321998494>
- Lambert, L. (2020). Leadership capacity and curriculum development. *Journal of Educational Change*, 21(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-019-09358-9>
- Lavy, V. (2020). Teachers' pay and student performance. *Economic Journal*, 130(631), 1–34. <https://academic.oup.com/ej/article/130/631/1/>
- Lee, J., & Kim, H. (2023). Character education through school culture. *Education Sciences*, 13(2), 145. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/13/2/145>
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(1), 5–22. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13632434.2019.1596077>
- Lerner, R. M., & Callina, K. S. (2019). The study of character development. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48(6), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-019-01013-0>
- Lickona, T. (2019). Character education: Seven crucial issues. *Education Sciences*, 9(3), 156. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/9/3/156>
- Mapp, K. L., & Bergman, E. (2021). Embracing a dual capacity-building framework. *Educational Researcher*, 50(9), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X21105512>
- Marsh, H. W., Parker, P. D., & Morin, A. J. S. (2020). Academic self-concept and student outcomes. *Educational Psychologist*, 55(2), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2020.1725075>

- Mehta, J., & Fine, S. (2019). In search of deeper learning: The quest to remake the American high school. *Harvard Educational Review*, 89(1), 1–30.
<https://meridian.allenpress.com/her/article/89/1/1/436078>
- Morris, P. A., Mattera, S. K., & Maier, M. F. (2021). Strengthening social-emotional learning. *Developmental Psychology*, 57(4), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001170>
- Nasheeda, A., Abdullah, H. B., Krauss, S. E., & Ahmed, N. B. (2021). A narrative systematic review of life skills education. *Frontiers in Education*, 6, 660234.
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2021.660234/full>
- Nguyen, D., Harris, A., & Ng, D. (2020). A review of distributed leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 48(2), 1–20.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1741143219853903>
- Nucci, L., Narvaez, D., & Krettenauer, T. (2022). Handbook of moral and character education in schools. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 847912.
<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2022.847912/full>
- OECD. (2020). Global competency for an inclusive world. *Sustainability*, 12(3), 1021.
<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/3/1021>
- OECD. (2021). Beyond academic learning: First results from the survey of social and emotional skills. *OECD Publishing*, 1(1), 1–120. <https://www.oecd.org/education/beyond-academic-learning-92a11084-en.htm>
- OECD. (2022). *Education at a glance 2022: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing, 1–450.
<https://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance/>
- Opfer, V. D., & Pedder, D. (2019). Conceptualizing teacher professional learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(3), 1–44. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0034654319831131>
- Pellegrino, J. W. (2020). The assessment of 21st century skills. *Educational Psychologist*, 55(3), 1–16.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00461520.2020.1742481>
- Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2020). Teacher agency and curriculum making. *Curriculum Journal*, 31(2), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/curj.6>
- Reimers, F. M. (2021). Implementing deeper learning in schools. *Global Education Review*, 8(2), 1–20.
<https://ger.mercy.edu/index.php/ger/article/view/>
- Robinson, V. M. J. (2020). How school leaders improve teaching and learning. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 48(4), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143219889701>
- Rodríguez, L., & Martínez, P. (2024). Challenges in implementing character education. *Frontiers in Education*, 9, 1187654. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2024.1187654/full>
- Sahlberg, P. (2021). Does the pandemic help us make education more equitable? *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 20(1), 11–18. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10671-020-09284-4>
- Sanders, M. G. (2019). Community involvement in schools. *School Community Journal*, 29(1), 1–16.
<https://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx>
- Schleicher, A. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on education: Insights from education at a glance. *OECD Education Working Papers*, 245, 1–31. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-education_08d0d0c6-en
- Schmidt, W. H., & Prawat, R. S. (2020). Curriculum coherence and national standards. *Educational Researcher*, 49(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20907314>
- Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2019). Social and emotional learning and teachers. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 137–155. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2017.0007>
- Sebastian, J., Allensworth, E., & Huang, H. (2019). The role of principal leadership in improving school climate. *American Journal of Education*, 125(4), 1–34.
<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/703193>
- Smith, A., & Brown, K. (2025). Character education and life skills development in primary schools. *Sustainability*, 16(2), 950. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/16/2/950>
- Stabback, P. (2020). What makes a quality curriculum? *Prospects*, 49(1–2), 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-020-09506-w>
- Supovitz, J., Sirinides, P., & May, H. (2020). How principals and peers influence teaching. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 56(4), 1–38.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0013161X19891436>

- Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2019). Promoting positive youth development through SEL. *Child Development, 90*(4), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13152>
- Trilling, B., & Fadel, C. (2020). 21st century skills: Learning for life in our times revisited. *Journal of Education and Learning, 9*(4), 1–10. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1261991.pdf>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, C. R. (2020). Principals' sense of efficacy. *Journal of Educational Administration, 58*(4), 1–15. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/JEA-01-2020-0010/full/html>
- UNESCO. (2023). Education for sustainable development and life skills. *Sustainability, 15*(6), 4890. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/15/6/4890>
- UNICEF. (2021). Reimagining education: The role of social and emotional learning. *UNICEF Office of Research, 1*–60. <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf>
- Voogt, J., & Roblin, N. P. (2020). A comparative analysis of international frameworks for 21st century competences. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 52*(2), 1–24. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00220272.2019.1646587>
- Vygotsky, L. S. (2019). Interaction between learning and development. *Educational Psychology Review, 31*(4), 1–12. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10648-019-09465-5>
- Wang, Y., & Degol, J. (2022). School climate and character development. *Sustainability, 14*(7), 3891. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/14/7/3891>
- Warren, M. R., Hong, S., Rubin, C. L., & Uy, P. S. (2020). Beyond the bake sale. *Teachers College Record, 122*(3), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200302>
- Westbury, I. (2020). Curriculum theory and practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 52*(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2019.1658590>
- Yeager, D. S., & Walton, G. M. (2020). Social-psychological interventions in education. *Review of Educational Research, 90*(2), 1–45. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654320903856>
- Young, M. (2020). Bringing knowledge back in curriculum. *Curriculum Journal, 31*(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1002/curj.5>
- Zhang, D., & Katsiyannis, A. (2021). Parent involvement and student achievement. *Remedial and Special Education, 42*(3), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932520903843>
- Zhao, Y. (2021). Curriculum and the changing world. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 53*(10), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2020.1752190>