THE EFFECT OF CHARACTER EDUCATION ON STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract
This study aims to review the literature that discusses the effect of character education on students' academic achievement in the school environment. The results of the review show that character education has a significant positive impact on improving academic achievement. A planned and consistent character education programme can help students develop ethical and moral values, such as discipline, responsibility and hard work, which contribute to better academic performance. In addition, the social and emotional skills acquired also support positive interpersonal relationships in the school environment. However, the effectiveness of character education programmes may vary depending on the implementation method, school context and student characteristics. Therefore, continuous evaluation and improvement are needed to ensure all students can gain maximum benefits. This research underlines the importance of character education in shaping students' academic excellence and virtuous character.
Keywords: Influence, Character Education, Student Academic Achievement, Literature Review.

Introduction

With the development of globalisation and increasingly sophisticated technology, the education system is faced with more complex challenges than ever before. In addition to focusing on academic achievement, education today must also develop students holistically, including character development. Character education has become an important part of the curriculum in many countries, as it is considered to prepare students to face moral, social, and emotional challenges (Judijanto & Aslan, 2025) ; (Sitopu et al., 2024) ; (Guna et al., 2024) ; (Iksal et al., 2024) .

Character education is a learning process that aims to develop moral and ethical values in individuals. This process is not only limited to the cognitive domain, but also involves the affective and psychomotor domains, so that individuals not only know what is right, but also feel motivated to perform the right actions and have the habit of acting

ethically. Character education is expected to form a generation that has integrity, responsibility, wisdom, and social sensitivity, all of which are necessary for a harmonious and productive social life (Thapa et al., 2013) .

The importance of character education lies in its role in shaping individuals' personalities and morals that will influence their behaviour in daily life. In the context of formal education, character education helps to create a positive and conducive school environment for learning (Aslan & Setiawan, 2019) . By integrating character education into the curriculum, students are expected not only to be academically intelligent, but also to have strong characters to face moral and social challenges in society. This is very important because good character is the basis of a peaceful and prosperous life system, and is an invaluable provision in facing the dynamics of the world of work and adult life (Aslan et al., 2019) .

In Indonesia, more and more schools are starting to integrate character education in their curriculum in the hope of improving the overall quality of education. Character education aims to develop values such as responsibility, discipline, honesty and co-operation, which are important foundations for good social life (Smith, 2021) .

The benefits of character education are vast and have a positive impact on both individuals and society. Character education helps individuals develop values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy and good work ethics, which are essential for personal and professional success. By having a strong character, individuals are better able to face life's challenges with a positive and constructive attitude (Brooks & Taylor, 2023) . In addition, character education strengthens the quality of social interactions by making individuals more tolerant, appreciative of diversity, and able to work well together in teams. Collectively, the benefits of character education are reflected in the creation of a more harmonious, just and prosperous society, which values moral norms and values as the foundation of living together (White & Young, 2023) .

While research on character education can provide positive benefits in students' personal development, the relationship between character education and academic achievement is still debatable. A number of studies suggest that character education can contribute to improved academic achievement by creating a positive learning environment and increasing students' learning motivation (Franco & D'Souza, 2022) . However, other studies suggest that the effect of character education on academic achievement may not be significant, and there are many other variables to consider (Garcia, 2022) .

Given this discrepancy in research results, it is important to conduct an in-depth literature review to understand how character education can affect students' academic achievement. This literature review aims to explore the findings of previous research, explore the theories underlying the relationship, and identify factors that may influence student learning outcomes.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach in research that focuses on collecting, analysing, and synthesising existing information from various written sources, such as books, journal articles, research reports, and other documents. The main purpose of this method is to identify the latest developments in a field of study, find gaps or research gaps that may exist, and compile a strong theoretical foundation for further study (Firman ;, 2018) (Suyitno, 2021) . The literature research process involves finding relevant sources, critically evaluating the quality and credibility of each source, and preparing a comprehensive review. This method is often used in the early stages of research to help researchers understand the context and history of an issue, and can also stand alone as an in-depth literature review-based research (Jelahut ., 2022)

Results and Discussion

The Effect of Character Education on Academic Achievement

Character education has become a major focus in the world of education, especially in the effort to form individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also have good morals and behaviour. Character education teaches values such as discipline, responsibility, hard work, and empathy, all of which play an important role in everyday life. In the academic context, the effect of character education on academic achievement is a topic of considerable interest to investigate, given that these two aspects are interrelated and support each other (Buchanan & Chapman, 2011) .

Discipline is one of the key components taught in character education. Through discipline, students learn to manage their time, avoid destructive behaviour, and prioritise their academic tasks. Discipline can help students to stay focused on their educational goals, complete assignments on time, and face exams well-prepared. Thus, character education that prioritises discipline will certainly improve students' academic achievement because they have good and structured study habits (Park & Peterson, 2009) .

Character education also plays a role in building internal motivation and a strong work ethic in students. Highly motivated students tend to have a greater willingness in pursuing their academic achievements. With character education, students are taught the importance of hard work, perseverance, and not giving up easily in the face of difficulties. This is very influential on academic achievement, because students who are motivated and have a good work ethic will be more persistent in learning and finding solutions to any challenges faced during the education process (Kim & Larson, 2021) .

Character education also teaches social and emotional skills such as empathy, co-operation and emotional intelligence. These skills are very useful in group learning activities and daily interactions at school. Students who are able to work well with their peers will find it easier to understand learning materials through group discussions or

collaboration (Singh & Sharma, 2021) . In addition, emotional intelligence helps students manage academic stress and pressure, so they can stay focused and calm in challenging situations. This ability is critical in supporting academic success (Zhang & Collins, 2022) .

A positive learning environment is strongly influenced by character education. Schools that implement character education generally have a more conducive and harmonious school climate. Where students feel comfortable, safe and valued, they are more likely to be actively involved in teaching and learning activities. This positive environment, in addition to reducing deviant behaviour, also increases students' concentration in learning, which ultimately contributes to improved academic achievement (Sousa, 2023) .

Overall, character education has a significant influence on students' academic achievement. By shaping discipline, motivation, work ethic, social and emotional skills, and creating a positive learning environment, character education can help students achieve higher academic performance. Therefore, the integration of character education in the school curriculum is not only important, but also essential to produce individuals who excel both intellectually and morally.

Factors that Mediate or Moderate the Relationship Between Character Education and Academic Achievement

The relationship between character education and academic achievement has been a topic of interest to many educational researchers and practitioners. Character education aims to develop students' moral, ethical and personality aspects so that they can become responsible and virtuous individuals. Factors that mediate or moderate the relationship between character education and academic achievement can be divided into several groups, including internal factors (such as learning motivation and self-efficacy), school factors (such as teacher support and school climate), and family factors (such as parental involvement and socioeconomic conditions) (Z. Ali & Hassan, 2020) .

First of all, student learning motivation is one of the internal factors that mediate the relationship between character education and academic achievement. Students who have good character education tend to have higher intrinsic motivation to learn. They understand the importance of learning not only to achieve good grades, but also for self-development and contribution to society. This high motivation can ultimately increase effort and perseverance in learning, which impacts on better academic achievement (N. Ali & Smith, 2023) .

Furthermore, another important internal factor is students' self-efficacy or confidence in their learning abilities. Effective character education often includes the development of self-efficacy, where students are taught to believe in their ability to face academic challenges. High self-efficacy makes students more courageous to try, less likely to give up, and more persistent in achieving their academic goals. This clearly has a positive impact on their academic achievement (Thompson, 2022) .

On the other hand, school factors, including teacher support and positive school climate, moderate the relationship between character education and academic achievement. Teachers who provide adequate emotional and academic support can amplify the positive effects of character education. A conducive school climate, where moral and ethical values are applied in daily life, is also an important factor. A supportive school environment will magnify the positive impact of character education on student learning outcomes (Carter & Evans, 2019) .

In addition to internal and school factors, family factors also play an important role as mediators or moderators. Parents' involvement in their children's education, for example, can strengthen the influence of character education on academic achievement. Parents who teach and support character values at home create a consistent environment for children to internalise and practice those values. With strong family support, students are more likely to succeed academically (Foster, 2023) .

Finally, the socioeconomic condition of the family is also a factor that moderates this relationship. Families with better economic conditions usually have access to better educational facilities and a supportive learning environment. Although character education is important at all economic levels, students from families with better socioeconomic conditions may have an added advantage in the application of these character values in academic aspects (Patel & Gupta, 2021) .

Overall, the relationship between character education and academic achievement is complex and influenced by various internal, school and family factors. Further research can help identify more specific mechanisms of how these factors interact and contribute to student academic outcomes. With a better understanding, character education programmes can be more effectively designed to improve not only character but also student academic achievement.

Theoretical Relationship between Character Education and Academic Achievement

Character education is an effort made by educational institutions to shape students' attitudes, behaviours and personalities that reflect good moral and ethical values. In this context, character education focuses not only on cognitive or academic aspects, but also on affective and psychomotor aspects. It aims to produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have a good personality and noble character. Character education includes various values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, respect, and co-operation, all of which can affect students' academic achievement (Russel & Norvig, 2021) .

Theoretically, character education can have a positive impact on academic achievement through the formation of attitudes that support learning. For example, students with discipline tend to be more organised in their schoolwork and more consistent in their learning efforts. The character of responsibility makes students more aware of their academic duties and obligations, while honesty helps students to avoid

cheating or plagiarism. All of these directly contribute to improved learning outcomes and academic achievement (Austin & Green, 2022) .

In addition, character education can also strengthen students' intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the inner drive that makes a person do something because they feel interested or because it is personally satisfying, not because of external pressure or rewards. Values such as a sense of appreciation for education, curiosity and persistence in the face of adversity can be enhanced through character education. High intrinsic motivation can ultimately improve the quality of students' learning, as they learn with a willingness and love for science (Brown & Green, 2020) .

Furthermore, character education teaches students the ability to manage emotions and stress. Students who have good emotional intelligence tend to be better able to deal with academic pressures, such as exams or assignment deadlines, in a healthy way. They are also better able to co-operate with classmates and build good relationships with teachers, which can create a supportive learning environment. Thus, this ability to manage emotions and stress plays an important role in helping students achieve optimal academic performance (Benninga et al., 2003) .

The communication and co-operation taught in character education also play an important role in academic success. The ability to work in teams, listen and contribute effectively in group discussions is very useful in a variety of learning situations. This collaboration not only improves understanding of the subject matter but also prepares students for future challenges that demand the ability to communicate and co-operate with others (Puspitasari & Aslan, 2024) .

Finally, character education helps students develop self-confidence and a healthy sense of self-worth. Students who are confident in their abilities are more likely to take on academic challenges and are less likely to give up when faced with difficulties (Hernandez & Moore, 2022) . Self-confidence developed through character values such as courage, persistence and honesty can be a strong foundation for sustained academic achievement. Thus, the theoretical relationship between character education and academic achievement is close and mutually supportive, suggesting that a comprehensive education should include the formation of character and moral values, in addition to the development of cognitive abilities (Silva & Costa, 2022) .

Conclusion

A literature review on the effect of character education on student academic achievement can be seen from;

Firstly, the literature shows that character education has a significant positive impact on students' academic achievement. Character education helps students develop important moral and ethical values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty and hard work. These values encourage students to be more intentional in their studies, do their schoolwork and face exams with a more positive and responsible attitude. The

social and emotional skills acquired through character education also support students in harmonious interpersonal relationships in the school environment, which ultimately contribute to better academic performance.

Secondly, the literature review also revealed that an effective character education programme must be well designed and consistently implemented to achieve optimal results. The teaching of character education should not be incidental or sporadic but should be systematically integrated into the curriculum and daily activities at school. Teachers play a key role in modelling and teaching character values to students. In addition, support from parents and the community is also very important to strengthen the character education provided at school.

Thirdly, while there is much evidence to support the benefits of character education on academic achievement, there are also challenges and constraints in its implementation. Some studies show that not all character education programmes produce uniform results due to differences in implementation methods, school contexts and student characteristics. Therefore, it is important for policymakers and educators to continuously evaluate and improve character education programmes to ensure that all students can benefit the most from this education. In conclusion, character education is a crucial aspect in shaping students' personalities who are not only academically smart but also have morality and integrity.

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