



Implementation Strengthening Education Character Student School Al-Anwar's Foundations Through School Culture

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Abstract

The nexus between education quality and the formation of quality human resources underscored by the values of Karakul Karima is pivotal in today's world, where moral crises seem increasingly prevalent. The research conducted at SDN Al-Anwar in Pasuruan City's Panggungrejo District for the academic year 2023/2024 delves into the intricate relationship between school culture and character education. By adopting a qualitative approach, this study illuminates how school culture can be both a boon and a bane to developing students' character, depending on its implementation. The findings of this research are multi-faceted, revealing that implementing character education through school culture requires a holistic approach. This includes the customary practice of core values, role modelling by teachers and staff, active stakeholder involvement, adherence to school regulations, strategic school branding, literacy efforts, and extracurricular activities. These components are vital in creating an environment that nurtures character development. However, challenges such as the varying capabilities of teachers in guiding and motivating students, the complexity in measuring the success of character value instillation, and the inconsistency of character education between school and home environments pose significant hurdles. Despite these obstacles, the study identifies critical supporting factors that can enhance the effectiveness of character education. These include the commitment of parents and teachers to instilling core values, the availability of tools to monitor achievements, and the consistent application of character education principles. The outcome of successfully implementing character education is profound, resulting in students who are not only academically competent but also embody high moral integrity and noble character. This research underscores the critical role of school culture in shaping the future generation. It highlights the need for concerted efforts to overcome challenges and maximize the benefits of character education.

Keywords: Character, Culture, Education, Elementary School, Implementation.

Introduction

Indonesia's commitment to nurturing a generation equipped with commendable qualities and 21st-century skills underscores the nation's strategic approach to education (Sutarman, 2020;

Syahrul, 2022; Tang, 2019). The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia emphasizes the critical role of character education as a cornerstone for human resource development and, ultimately (Nurindarwati et al., 2022), the foundation of national progress (Malini & Taufikin, 2023). This perspective is not only pragmatic in addressing the current moral crisis but also visionary in preparing students for the competitive landscape of the future, particularly with the anticipation of Indonesia's golden generation by 2045. The emphasis on the 4C competencies—Critical Thinking and problem-solving (Misiaszek, 2020; Williams, 1981), Creativity (Mahagna et al., 2023), Communication Skills (Amiyani, 2018), and Ability to Work Collaboratively—highlights the need for a holistic development approach that integrates intellectual and moral growth (Demir-Lira, 2020; Samad, 2021; Sourmelis, 2017).

The mechanisms for instilling character—through internalizing values, habituation and repetition, exemplary actions, and enforcing rules and discipline—reflect a comprehensive strategy to cultivate integrity, morality, and a collaborative spirit among students (Gadea-Blanco, 2016; Prawiyogi et al., 2023). This approach resonates with the educational philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantoro, who envisioned schools as nurturing grounds for moral, intellectual, and physical development (Jia, 2020; Mohamad, 2020; Ziliotto, 2016). By focusing on the simultaneous growth of personality, thinking, and actions, Indonesian education aims to produce well-rounded individuals who are academically proficient, morally grounded, and socially responsible.

The emphasis on character education in Indonesia is a testament to the country's recognition of the intricate link between individual development and societal progress. By investing in its youth's moral and intellectual growth, Indonesia is laying the groundwork for a generation equipped to face the complexities of the 21st century and committed to contributing positively to society (Bilek, 2018; Huang, 2017; Zoumpourlis, 2020). As Indonesia moves towards realizing the vision of the golden generation in 2045, the focus on strengthening character education will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping a resilient, innovative, and ethical society.

The implementation of character education within educational institutions, particularly schools and madrasas, has emerged as a critical agenda in many governments' educational policies. This initiative transcends the traditional boundaries of moral education by striving to instill positive habits and virtues in students, fostering their cognitive, emotional, and behavioural development. The essence of character education lies not merely in teaching students the distinction between right and wrong but in nurturing a comprehensive development that encourages students to internalize and exhibit positive values in their daily lives. This approach to education is underpinned by the belief that habit formation plays a crucial role in developing a student's character, as argued by (Jaya, 2022)

However, the path to realizing the goals of character education is fraught with challenges, as evidenced by the persistence of issues such as brawls, bullying, cheating, and a general decline in student discipline and moral values. These problems underscore the complexity of shaping young individuals' characters so that they understand the concepts of good and evil and embody these ideals in their conduct. Establishing a school or madrasa culture, as Mulyasa advocated in 2016, aims to address these challenges by cultivating an environment that promotes shared values, behaviours, traditions, and habits among all educational community members (Mulawarman, 2021). This culture is envisioned to reflect the institution's identity, personality, and public perception, fostering a conducive character development atmosphere (Maftuhin, 2024; Rahmadhanitya, 2021; Sungkawati et al., 2023).

Several strategies have been proposed to enhance the effectiveness of character education, including integrating value instillation into daily classroom routines and modelling exemplary behaviour. Several strategies have been proposed to enhance the effectiveness of character education, providing educational opportunities that align with school customs and creating a supportive school administration (Agius, 2020; Arifianto, 2021; Yezli, 2020). Additionally, encouraging student participation in extracurricular activities and providing ample opportunities for literacy development are vital components of a holistic character education program. These strategies, as outlined by Kemdikbud in 2018, are aimed at equipping students with the skills and dispositions necessary to navigate the complexities of modern society while upholding their moral and ethical values.

Character education is a fundamental aspect of a child's development, shaping their personality, ethics, and behaviours as they grow. At Al-Anwar Elementary School in Panggungrejo Subdistrict, Pasuruan City, character education is not merely an additional curriculum but an integral part of the school's ethos. The school's vision and mission are crafted with a keen emphasis on character education, aiming to mould students into well-rounded individuals from an early age. This dedication to character education reflects the school's commitment to academic excellence and its students' moral and ethical development.

Al-Anwar Elementary School has adopted a comprehensive approach to character education, integrating it into the academic curriculum and students' daily activities. This approach aligns with the cultural values of Indonesia, ensuring that students not only excel academically but also embody the principles and values cherished in Indonesian society. The school's efforts to instill good habits and values in its students are evident in the school environment, where respect, responsibility, and community service are encouraged and practiced. These efforts testify to the school's dedication to providing a holistic education that prepares students for future challenges.

The research interest in the character education practices at Al-Anwar Elementary School underscores the importance of school culture in developing character education programs. By examining the implementation of character education at Al-Anwar, researchers hope to gain insights into practical strategies for integrating character education into school culture. This research could be a valuable reference for other educational institutions seeking to enhance their character education initiatives. Through a detailed exploration of Al-Anwar Elementary School's approach, the study aims to highlight the significance of aligning school culture with character education goals to foster the development of ethical, responsible, and well-rounded individuals.

Method

A qualitative research approach plays a role in understanding complex phenomena by exploring subjects' experiences, opinions and behaviour in depth. This approach is critical in fields where understanding human interaction and perception nuances is critical. This research process can be seen in Figure 1 (Sugianto et al., 2022, 2023).



Figure 1. A qualitative research approach plays a role in understanding complex phenomena by exploring in depth the experiences, opinions and behaviour of subjects

The research process for a qualitative study, as depicted in Figure 1, proceeds in several carefully planned steps to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the subject. These steps include Data

Collection, Data Reduction and Classification, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing, each serving a unique purpose in the holistic qualitative data analysis.

Data collection in qualitative research differs significantly from quantitative methods because these methods focus on collecting rich descriptive data, not numerical data. Techniques such as in-depth interviews, field notes, memos, and document reviews capture the complexity of the phenomenon under study (Afiyanto & Winanti, 2022; Djuhari & Bezaliel, 2020; Khatib, 2022). This method allows researchers to gather insights directly from participants, offering a depth of understanding that numerical data often cannot provide. The iterative nature of qualitative data collection, in which researchers may ask follow-up questions to clarify or expand initial responses, emphasizes this research approach's interactive and dynamic nature (Shabir, 2018).

Once the data is collected, the data reduction and classification process begins, which aims to organize a large amount of data into manageable categories for analysis (Mulyana, 2021; Tottoli, 2023). This is followed by data display, a step that involves visualization or structuring information to facilitate understanding and interpretation. The final step, concluding, consists of synthesizing the data to make appropriate statements regarding the research question. The role of researchers is critical in this process, as they must remain engaged and reflective, continually interpreting and reinterpreting data based on new insights. This approach, pioneered by Miles and Huberman, underscores the importance of qualitative descriptive analysis in providing a detailed and nuanced picture of the subject under study, ultimately enriching our understanding of complex human experience.

Results and Discussion

Results

Since its establishment in 2012, SD Al-Anwar has steadfastly committed to integrating character education within its curriculum, reflecting its foundation as an Islamic educational institution. The school's dedication to fostering moral development is evident through its comprehensive program that includes regular prayers (Apriansyah & Syaputra, 2021; Shadnam, 2011a), memorization of hadiths, and the daily reading of one juz of the Koran. This rigorous spiritual regimen aims to instill basic moral principles in students, ensuring that they grow in academic prowess and ethical integrity.

The evolution of character education at SD Al-Anwar demonstrates the school's adaptability and commitment to maintaining relevance with national educational standards while preserving Islamic values. Initially aligning its character education framework with karakul Karima, the school seamlessly integrated the 18 Character values introduced by the government, showcasing a remarkable ability to blend religious principles with governmental and educational policies. This flexibility was further evidenced when the government streamlined these values into five main character traits. SD Al-Anwar responded by refining its focus to four central character values, a testament to its innovative approach to education.

SD Al-Anwar's tailored adaptation of character education, from the broad framework of karakul karma to a more focused set of four central values, underscores the school's dedication to producing well-rounded individuals. This approach aligns with governmental expectations and ensures that the essence of Islamic moral teachings remains at the heart of the school's educational philosophy. Through this balanced integration of religious values and national character education standards, SD Al-Anwar continues to foster an environment where students can thrive academically and morally and be prepared to contribute positively to society.

The implementation of character education through school culture at Al-Anwar Elementary School

Strengthening character education through school culture at Al-Anwar Elementary School is a comprehensive strategy combining various methods and approaches to develop student character. This is a vital step in forming a person who excels academically and has good moral strength and character.

First, habituation is the primary key to character formation. Daily activities teach students to internalize positive values such as honesty, responsibility and respect. The example of teachers and school staff is also significant (Loftus & Molenberghs, 2022; Shadnam, 2011b). Students can learn the importance of good character through their behaviour and actions. Involving interested stakeholders, such as parents and the community, is also needed to support school efforts in character education. Involving them in school activities and building good communication can strengthen the values taught.

Furthermore, implementing a strict and consistent school discipline system helps students understand the importance of discipline and compliance with rules. A strong school brand that reflects the values and vision of character education is also essential in building school identity and pride (Green, 2010; Taufik, 2022). The literacy program focuses on reading and writing skills and integrates values and character education through the material taught. Extracurriculars, both academic and non-academic, are another effective means of developing various aspects of student character, such as teamwork, leadership and empathy.

The implementation of character education through school culture at Al-Anwar Elementary School shows a solid commitment to developing a young generation who is intellectually intelligent and rich in character values. Through conditioning, role modelling, stakeholder involvement, discipline, school branding, literacy, and extracurricular activities, this school seeks to produce individuals ready to face future challenges with integrity and strength of character. Furthermore, the implementation of strengthening character education through school culture at Al-Anwar Elementary School is described as follows.

Strengthening character education at Anwar Elementary School

Character education at Anwar Elementary School is a comprehensive approach that involves habituation, example, and stakeholder engagement. Through a structured program of daily and procedural habits, students are immersed in an environment that promotes the development of moral and Islamic values. The curriculum is designed to instill habits such as studying and reciting the Quran, practicing Islamic teachings, and exhibiting school discipline. These daily routines are complemented by programmed habituation that includes a variety of Islamic practices and social behaviours aimed at fostering a well-rounded individual. The school's commitment to these values is evident in its detailed habituation plan, carefully monitored and adjusted through triangulation involving interviews, observations, and documentary analysis.

The role of teachers, staff, and school leaders as role models is a critical component of character education at Anwar Elementary School. Observations have shown that the behaviour of these individuals significantly influences students. By demonstrating exemplary behaviour in areas such as discipline, Islamic moral values, and personal hygiene, the school staff sets a powerful example for students to follow. This approach is further supported by activities designed to reinforce these behaviours, such as congregational prayers and promoting a reading culture. The school's efforts to create a positive and conducive learning environment are reflected in these practices, integral to the curriculum's personal development goals.

Engaging stakeholders, particularly parents and guardians, is critical to the success of Anwar Elementary School's character education program. Recognizing families' vital role in reinforcing character values, the school has developed tools to enable parents to monitor and support their children's character development at home (Feinberg, 2013). This collaborative approach ensures that the values taught at school are reinforced in the home environment, creating a consistent message about the importance of character education. The partnership between the school, parents, and other stakeholders, such as PIATA and the Department

of Education and Culture, highlights a community-wide commitment to nurturing students' moral and Islamic values (Nuraeni, 2020; Swiecka, 2020), autonomy, and a sense of community. Through these concerted efforts, Anwar Elementary School aims to cultivate individuals who are not only academically proficient but also morally grounded and socially responsible.

Anwar Elementary School is a beacon of holistic education, integrating character education seamlessly into its curriculum and extracurricular activities. By prioritizing values such as religiosity, independence, and integrity, the school aims to excel academically and cultivate individuals of strong character. The school's adherence to its motto, "Excellence in Achievement Based on Devoted Personality and Karimah morals," is evident in its rigorous academic framework and commitment to instilling discipline and religiosity among its students (Kawamura, 2021; Vamos, 2020). This holistic approach has garnered the institution city-level accolades, underscoring its success in melding academic excellence with moral integrity.

Literacy activities at Anwar Elementary School serve as a cornerstone for character education. Recognizing the importance of reading and writing in academic success, the school has instituted a daily 15-minute literacy segment. This initiative bolsters students' academic abilities and nurtures values like curiosity, sharing, tolerance, and respect for differing perspectives. Through this, Anwar Elementary School ensures that character development is not sidelined but is instead a fundamental aspect of the educational journey, fostering a sense of responsibility and a well-rounded persona in its students.

Extracurricular activities at Anwar Elementary further enrich the character education framework, offering students a broad spectrum of opportunities to explore their interests and talents. The school extends learning beyond the classroom by partnering with local clubs and professionals in sports like badminton, swimming, and pencak silat (Bottazzi, 2021; Li, 2020). This strategic collaboration addresses logistical challenges such as space and supervision and ensures a diverse and enriching extracurricular program. Through these activities, Anwar Elementary School empowers its students to pursue personal growth and development while reinforcing the core values of its educational philosophy, making it a model of comprehensive character education.

Strengthening character education in schools is a multifaceted process influenced by various coercive and supporting factors.

Strengthening character education in schools is a multifaceted process influenced by various coercive and supporting factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for educators, policymakers, and communities aiming to foster environments that promote moral and ethical development among students.

Coercive factors often stem from external and internal pressures to conform to specific educational standards or societal expectations. These may include legislative mandates requiring the integration of character education into the curriculum, societal demands for schools to address perceived declines in moral values, or the educational institution's policies and expectations. While these pressures can act as catalysts for implementing character education, they may also lead to a more compliance-based approach rather than fostering a genuine culture of character development. Schools might focus on ticking boxes to meet external requirements rather than embedding character education into the fabric of school life, which can dilute its effectiveness.

On the other hand, supporting factors play a critical role in the successful implementation of character education. These include strong leadership from school administrators who are genuinely committed to character education, the involvement of teachers who are not only trained in delivering character education but also passionate about its importance, and the creation of a supportive school culture that values and rewards character development

(Marsh & Sharpe, 2020; Saptanto & Dewi, 2020). The engagement of parents and the wider community is also essential, as it creates a consistent message about the value of character both within and outside the school environment. Moreover, integrating character education into the curriculum in a relevant way that resonates with students' real-life experiences can significantly enhance its impact.

In conclusion, balancing coercive and supporting factors is delicate and requires careful navigation. For character education to be truly effective, it must transcend mere compliance with external pressures and be embraced by the school's leadership, faculty, students, and the broader community as a vital component of education. By fostering a supportive environment and integrating character education in meaningful ways, schools can develop individuals who are not only academically competent but also morally and ethically grounded (Amelia & Winanda, 2021; Myntti, 2021).

The challenges in implementing such programs are notable.

Strengthening character education through school culture is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a deep understanding of the potential obstacles and supporting factors. The challenges in implementing such programs are notable. Firstly, the variability in teachers' abilities to effectively advise, influence, or motivate students can significantly impact the uniformity and effectiveness of character education across different classrooms. Secondly, the lack of appropriate instruments to measure the success or failure of character development initiatives makes it difficult to gauge progress and make necessary adjustments (Ojeda, 2020; Sweeny, 2016). Finally, a discrepancy between the values and habits promoted at school and those reinforced at home can create confusion among students and hinder the internalization of desired character traits.

On the flip side, the success of character education programs is bolstered by several key supporting factors. Internally, a solid commitment to the program, the availability of instruments to monitor outcomes, and the consistent application of character-strengthening techniques by teachers and students are crucial. Externally, the commitment of parents or guardians to reinforcing these character traits at home, along with the presence of rewards or incentives for demonstrating positive character, significantly enhances the effectiveness of these initiatives. These factors ensure that character education is not confined to the school environment but is supported through a collaborative effort between the school and the home.

School culture plays a pivotal role in shaping students' personalities and reinforcing the impact of character education. By creating a school environment that promotes respect, responsibility, empathy, and integrity, educators can foster a sense of belonging and community among students (Dimiyati, 2020; Latif, 2022). This culture supports the internalization of positive character traits and enhances students' academic achievements and well-being. To successfully implement more vital character education, schools must navigate the challenges while leveraging the supporting factors effectively. This ensures that the school culture and the broader community are aligned to nurture well-rounded, ethical individuals.

The implementation of strengthening character education within schools, particularly at the elementary level, as seen in Al Anwar schools, is a pivotal factor in moulding the personalities and behaviours of students. This initiative, deeply woven into the fabric of school culture, not only aims to enhance academic achievements but also to foster the holistic development of students, emphasizing moral and ethical values. However, the journey towards achieving a robust character education system is fraught with challenges and requires a concerted effort from internal and external stakeholders to overcome these obstacles.

One of the primary challenges in cultivating character education lies in the disparity of teaching abilities among educators.

Not all teachers possess the same skill level in advising, influencing, or motivating students, which can lead to inconsistencies in the delivery and effectiveness of character education. Furthermore, the assessment of character development presents its own set of difficulties due to the need for suitable instruments for evaluation. This is compounded by the discrepancy between the values and behaviours taught at school and those imparted by parents at home, creating a fragmented foundation for character-building in students.

Despite these challenges, significant supporting factors contribute to the successful implementation of character education. Internally, the commitment of teachers, the availability of instruments to monitor program achievements, and consistency in the application of character education principles by teachers and students form a solid foundation for progress (Dimiyati et al., 2020; Woods, 2022). Externally, the involvement and commitment of parents or guardians in reinforcing character values and implementing rewards play a crucial role in supporting the character education initiative. The synergy between these internal and external factors is essential in shaping the school culture towards one that prioritizes and effectively implements character education, ultimately leading to the development of well-rounded individuals.

The implementation of strengthening character education within schools is a nuanced process deeply embedded in the school's culture.

The implementation of strengthening character education within schools is a nuanced process deeply embedded in the school's culture. This culture plays a pivotal role as both a facilitator and a barrier to the effective integration of character education. To navigate this landscape, it's essential to identify and understand the coercive and supporting factors inherent in the school environment.

Coercive factors often manifest as resistance to change. This resistance can stem from various sources, such as established traditions, existing disciplinary strategies, and the prevailing mindset among staff that academic achievements outweigh character development. Additionally, the pressure of standardized testing and curriculum demands can sideline character education initiatives, viewing them as secondary or unnecessary. Overcoming these coercive factors requires strong leadership, a clear vision of the importance of character education, and a coherent strategy that integrates character development seamlessly into the academic curriculum and daily school life.

On the flip side, supporting factors can significantly enhance the implementation of character education. A positive school culture, where values such as respect, integrity, and empathy are taught and embodied by all school community members, lays a strong foundation. Engagement and buy-in from all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students, are crucial. Teachers need adequate training and resources to incorporate character education effectively. Moreover, creating an environment that celebrates diversity, encourages open dialogue, and fosters a sense of belonging can enhance the receptivity towards character education. Rather than treating it as an add-on, integrating character education within the curriculum and extracurricular activities promotes a more holistic approach to student development.

The successful implementation of character education is intricately linked to the school's culture. Schools can create an environment where character education thrives by recognizing and addressing the coercive factors while simultaneously nurturing and capitalizing on the supporting factors. This requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders to re-envision education as a tool for holistic development, preparing students not just academically but also as moral and socially responsible individuals.

Implementing character education through school culture is an

essential but challenging endeavour. It is integral to shaping students into well-rounded individuals who can contribute positively to society. However, several compulsory factors must be addressed to implement this initiative successfully.

Firstly, addressing the variability in teachers' abilities to guide, influence, or motivate students is crucial. Not all educators possess the same skill or natural talent for nurturing character development. This disparity can lead to inconsistency in the delivery and effectiveness of character education. Therefore, schools must invest in comprehensive professional development programs that equip all educators with the tools, strategies, and confidence required to contribute to character education effectively. Such programs could include workshops, mentoring, and collaborative planning sessions that emphasize the role of educators in character development.

Secondly, the challenge of assessing character development is significant due to the need for appropriate instruments. Traditional assessment methods may need to capture the nuances of character growth effectively. To overcome this, schools could adopt a more holistic approach to assessment, incorporating self-assessments, peer reviews, and reflective practices. These methods can provide a broader perspective on a student's character development, highlighting areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

Lastly, the discrepancy between the values taught at school and those learned at home can create confusion and hinder the character education process. Schools should actively engage with parents and guardians to bridge this gap, fostering a collaborative approach to character education. This could involve regular communication, parent workshops, and community events that promote shared values and behaviours. By aligning the efforts of educators and parents, schools can create a consistent and supportive environment for character development.

In conclusion, overcoming the obstacles in implementing character education through school culture requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach. By focusing on professional development for educators, adopting holistic assessment methods, and engaging with parents, schools can create a conducive environment for effective character education. This benefits the students and contributes to a more harmonious and respectful society.

Results of Implementation of Strengthening Character Education through School Culture Shaping the personality of educational participants.

The implementation of strengthening character education through developing school culture at Al-Anwar Elementary School has significantly influenced its students' daily character and behaviour. By fostering a culture that emphasizes high moral standards, the school has successfully cultivated a student body that understands the importance of ethics and lives by them. The introduction of mental training programs aimed at building character has been proven to have long-term benefits, even though they may not be immediately visible. These programs encourage students to consistently follow rules and regulations, fostering a community where students look out for one another and are committed to upholding values such as peace, truth, and integrity.

Cultivating moral character through school culture has led students to demonstrate integrity in various ways. Behaviors such as empathy, humility, honesty, and self-confidence are consistently encouraged, allowing students to develop a strong sense of self and a deep understanding of justice. This focus on character education ensures that students prioritize honesty and justice in all aspects of their lives, acting by established moral standards. The emphasis on integrity training encourages students to reflect on their actions and make ethical decisions, positively impacting their personal development and behaviour in everyday life.

The positive outcomes of this character education program

extend beyond the classroom. Students who distinguish right from wrong serve as role models for their peers, creating a supportive and ethical school environment. This peer-led reinforcement of moral values strengthens the school's culture, making it a powerful agent in shaping the personalities of its students. By prioritizing the development of high ethical standards, Al-Anwar Elementary School is enhancing the academic experience and preparing its students for a successful and moral life beyond school. The comprehensive approach to character education, embedded within the school culture, is a testament to the long-term benefits of instilling ethics and integrity in young learners.

Discussion

Implementation of Strengthening Character Education Through School Culture

Al-Anwar Elementary School stands as a beacon of character education, rooted deeply in the belief that schools are pivotal in shaping their students' moral and ethical foundations. With a curriculum meticulously designed to weave character-building into the fabric of daily school life, Al-Anwar does not merely educate; it moulds. Daily habits and procedural plans for habituation underscore the school's commitment to instilling virtuous behaviours and Islamic teachings. From reciting the Quran to the practice of sadaqah and infaq, every aspect of the school day is thoughtfully structured to nurture a solid moral compass within its students.

The school's approach to character education is comprehensive, integrating cognitive awareness with developing positive habits. Students learn to internalize values such as respect, responsibility, and compassion through constant practice and repetition. Implementing strategies such as the 3S (saying greetings, saying hello, smiling), tadarus, and collective prayers further reinforces these values, fostering a sense of community and mutual respect among students (Zahroh et al., 2023). This methodical habituation is about teaching right from wrong and creating a lifestyle that embodies the essence of Islamic teachings and moral integrity.

Moreover, the school's administration and faculty role is crucial in this ecosystem of character building. By embodying the values they wish to instill, teachers and staff serve as living examples for students to emulate. Their dedication to academic excellence and moral and spiritual guidance reflects Al-Anwar Elementary School's holistic approach to education. Through the collective efforts of its community, the school aspires to cultivate individuals who are not just academically proficient but also morally upright and socially responsible, thereby contributing positively to society at large.

Al-Anwar Elementary School exemplifies a holistic approach to character education, where stakeholder engagement is pivotal in cultivating a robust school culture. Al-Anwar has implemented a rigorous character education program that aligns with the principles outlined by Kemdikbud in 2018, which stresses the importance of optimizing partnerships across various educational centers (Darmayanti et al., 2023). This program is deeply embedded within the school's regulations and culture, emphasizing piety, autonomy, and integrity. These virtues define the school's identity and set a high standard for its students, propelling Al-Anwar to achieve recognition at the provincial level.

Central to Al-Anwar's approach is integrating literacy activities into the daily routine, underscoring the importance of reading and writing skills in academic success. By dedicating the first 15 minutes of each day to literacy exercises, the school fosters essential character traits such as curiosity, respect for others' opinions, sharing, and responsibility. This not only enhances students' academic abilities but also instills values that are crucial for personal development and success beyond the classroom.

Moreover, Al-Anwar's commitment to character education extends to its extracurricular programs, offering diverse activities designed to nurture students' core values and interests. Recognizing that extracurricular involvement is critical for optimal personal

development, the school provides an environment where students can explore and realize their potential. As Welly Hartati articulates, such an environment is instrumental in inspiring students and aiding in realizing their capabilities. Through this comprehensive approach, Al-Anwar Elementary School successfully leverages stakeholder engagement and diverse educational strategies to foster a culture of character, preparing its students for success in all facets of life.

Obstacles and Supporters for Implementing Strengthening Character Education.

The implementation of character education, particularly at institutions like Al-Anwar Elementary School, is influenced by myriad factors that can hinder or support its effectiveness. A significant obstacle identified is the compulsion factor, where the translation of character values into tangible, measurable outcomes poses a challenge. The ability of teachers to effectively communicate and embody these values is crucial. Nevertheless, it is often complicated by varying attention spans and the necessity of reinforcing these lessons both in the educational setting and at home (Darmawati et al., 2024). The research by Silvy et al. (2018) underscores the importance of a holistic approach to character education that spans beyond the confines of the classroom, involving not only formal education but also informal interactions within families and the broader community.

Conversely, internal and external supporting factors build character education's success. Internally, teacher commitment, the availability of tools for monitoring program results, and the consistency of students and teachers in embodying character values play pivotal roles. Externally, appreciation and the commitment of parents or guardians to foster character development are indispensable. Anggraini (2017) highlights the positive impact of high student enthusiasm, parental support, and most teachers' active participation in cultivating a school culture conducive to character education. Furthermore, the engagement of the entire school community, including direct student participation, teacher commitment to the Strengthening Character Education Program (PPK), and the supportive infrastructure, are all instrumental in facilitating the implementation process.

The juxtaposition of these challenges and supporting factors elucidates the complex landscape of character education. It becomes evident that success is contingent upon a collaborative effort that bridges the gap between school and home, emphasizing the need for a unified approach to nurturing and instilling values that contribute to the holistic development of students (Bischoff, 2021; Putra et al., 2024; Sungkawati & Suarniati, 2022). Such insights are vital for educators, policymakers, and parents as they navigate the intricacies of character education, striving to create environments that promote academic excellence and foster moral and ethical growth.

Implementation Results.

The implementation of character education within the school culture, particularly at SD Al-Anwar, showcases a comprehensive approach to nurturing well-rounded individuals. This initiative is about academic excellence and instilling moral values and behaviours that shape students into responsible, empathetic, and morally upright individuals. As highlighted by Welly Hartati (2017), the emphasis on character education goes beyond classroom teachings to encompass everyday actions and interactions among students and teachers. This approach fosters a sense of responsibility, punctuality, and respect for others, crucial elements in personal and social development.

Delving deeper into the outcomes of character education, it is evident that the program at Anwar Elementary School profoundly impacts students' moral development. Cultivating a solid moral compass, exemplified by an understanding of right and wrong, high self-esteem, empathy, humility, and honesty, is a testament to the effectiveness of character education (Soeswoyo et al., 2022; Sutanto et al., 2022). These traits are not just abstract values but are actively practiced within the school environment, guiding students in their daily decisions and interactions. The consistent reinforcement of

these values, such as the importance of religious practices and adherence to school rules, fosters a culture of mutual respect and discipline. This holistic approach, as supported by Muchlas, S. (2017), underscores the importance of integrating knowledge, emotions, and actions in character education, thereby nurturing individuals who are knowledgeable, morally grounded, and socially responsible.

Moreover, the emphasis on moral character, especially in a religious school context, highlights the importance of spirituality in character formation. The routine performance of spiritual activities and integration of moral values in everyday practices, such as community service and environmental stewardship, reflect a deep commitment to developing morally upright students with a strong sense of devotion to God and the community (Aini, 2020; Marengke, 2020). This alignment with the goals of the National Education System underscores the broader impact of character education in fostering individuals who are not just academically proficient but also possess the moral and ethical foundations to contribute positively to society. Through these concerted efforts, schools like SD Al-Anwar are pivotal in shaping the next generation of individuals who are well-equipped to face future challenges with integrity and compassion.

Conclusion

Al-Anwar Elementary School's successful character education-focused school culture is a model for others. Al-Anwar Elementary School has built a robust character education framework through routines, teacher and staff behaviour, active stakeholder engagement, adherence to regulations, innovative marketing and literacy initiatives, and community involvement. This framework promotes academic success and overall development by instilling purity, morality, and manners in students.

Students at SD Anwar have changed thanks to "Strengthening Character Education through School Culture." Students are prepared to be responsible, empathic, and ethical citizens by being educated to be people of faith with high moral standards. This success story shows other schools, especially those in SD Al-Anwar's cluster or Pasuruan City's Panggungrejo District, that similar school culture can improve character education.

This holistic approach to character education has proponents but faces hurdles and obstacles. School administrators, teachers, parents, and the community must work together to overcome these obstacles. Other schools might apply Al-Anwar Elementary School's ideas to their situations to spread character education through a positive school culture. This collaboration can help raise academically, morally, and socially responsible children.

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