

Character Education Management Strategy as a Solution to the Moral Crisis in Elementary Schools

Endah Saraswati¹, Bambang Sudarsono², Enung Hasanah³

Magister Manajemen Pendidikan FKIP Universitas Ahmad Dahlan

Article Info

Article history:

Received: 30 March 2026

Publish: 1 July 2026

Keywords:

Educational Management;

Character;

Moral crisis;

POAC;

Elementary school.

Abstract

The decline in discipline, honesty, and responsibility among elementary school students demonstrates the need for a more focused approach to character education. This study examines the practice of character education management as an effort to address students' moral problems through the POAC management function approach. The study was conducted using a qualitative method using a case study design at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in the Colombo Complex. Data were obtained through interviews, observations, and document reviews, then analyzed interactively using triangulation to validate the data. The research findings indicate that character strengthening is implemented through planning based on students' moral needs, organizing the roles of all school members, implementing value inculcation in learning activities and school life, and ongoing supervision through monitoring and follow-up of student behavior. The implementation of these management functions creates a more systematic and sustainable character education pattern, thus contributing positively to reducing students' moral problems in elementary schools.

This is an open-access article under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)



Corresponding Author:

Endah Saraswati

Mahasiswa S2 MP UAD

Email Correspondent: endahbudiman77@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Basic education plays a strategic role in shaping students' attitudes and personalities, as it is during this phase that behavioral values begin to develop and form long-term habit patterns. (Hadiamsyah & Meidina, 2025) Character development is not only directed at knowledge but also at the formation of attitudes, morals, and social responsibility, which are reflected in students' daily lives. A school environment with a positive learning climate is crucial for sustainably instilling these values (Mitha & Zaka, 2021).

However, the reality on the ground shows that the character-building process has not been fully optimal. Based on internal school findings, various forms of student behavioral deviations are still found, such as low discipline, lack of responsibility, dishonesty, inappropriate language, and bullying between students. This condition is reinforced by teacher records that indicate weak internalization of moral values in learning activities. This phenomenon is influenced by various factors, including weak, consistent character reinforcement, limited family support, and the influence of uncontrolled digital media use (Anggraini et al., 2023).

Emerging moral issues directly impact the learning climate in schools. (Akman, 2021) Irregular behavior, low empathy, and increasing social conflict between students create a less conducive classroom atmosphere, making it difficult to achieve optimal learning outcomes. If this condition persists, negative habits have the potential to be carried over to

the next level of education and hinder the educational goal of developing students with good morals and personalities. (Taufiqur Rahman & Siti Masyarafatul Manna Wassalwa, 2019). This situation demonstrates the need for more planned and sustainable management of character education at the elementary school level.

Several recent studies confirm that strengthening character in elementary school students requires a consciously designed and continuous process. (Tanfidzi et al., 2021) Moral values cannot be conveyed normatively but must be internalized through habituation, role modeling, and integration into the school culture. The involvement of teachers as role models, support from the school environment, and collaboration with families and the community are crucial factors in building students' holistic character (Hidayat et al., 2022).

Based on the description above, it is clear that the moral crisis in elementary school students is a very important/urgent phenomenon/issue that needs to be resolved immediately because if the moral crisis in elementary school students is allowed to develop, it will cause social problems that are detrimental to many parties and threaten future generations of the nation. Therefore, as one step to resolve this problem, managing character education must be a primary focus in the field of education, especially at the elementary school level. The implementation of character education in elementary schools has actually been implemented by many schools, but it is not yet in-depth or optimal. There are still many schools that implement character education only as a routine without touching on the most important aspects of student moral change. For example, the activity of reading prayers together is only a formality before learning begins; the activities of smiling, greeting, being polite, and being courteous (5) S are also only routine activities. However, the implementation of character education in various schools still tends to be routine and symbolic. Several activities, such as daily habits or religious activities, are often carried out formally without touching on in-depth changes in attitudes. This condition shows that character education has not been fully managed systematically, especially when viewed from the perspective of educational management, which includes integrated planning, implementation, and evaluation (Effendi et al., 2024).

Character education strategies commonly implemented in elementary schools generally still face various obstacles, especially when viewed from a character education management perspective. Character education is often conducted separately and has not been fully integrated into educational management functions, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. (Ayu et al., 2023) Various studies show that the implementation of character education at the elementary school level is still symbolic and normative, such as the use of slogans, conveying moral appeals, or carrying out ceremonial activities, without being accompanied by consistent values in the learning process and school culture. This indicates weaknesses in strategic character education planning that do not meet the real needs of students and the conditions of the school environment (Jhon, Winarni, Sugito, Enny Zubaidah, 2021).

Previous studies have focused more on character education from the perspective of implementation activities or student behavioral outcomes. However, studies comprehensively exploring the role of educational management, particularly within the POAC framework at the elementary school level, are still very limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the ways in which the functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising character education are carried out in a managerial manner to overcome the problem of moral crisis among students.

Although various studies have discussed character education in elementary schools, most have focused on habituation activities, rather than on systemic character education management strategies to address the moral crisis. Previous studies have generally focused

on the form of character activities or student behavioral outcomes, while studies examining character education through a comprehensive managerial approach are still limited. In particular, research examining the application of the POAC management function in managing character education at the elementary school level is scarce. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the planning, organization, implementation, and supervision of character education are applied managerially as a strategy to respond to students' moral crisis, with a case study at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in the Colombo Complex.

Based on the explanation above, the research question addressed by the author is: What is an efficient character education management strategy for addressing the moral crisis occurring in elementary schools? The purpose of this research is to understand character education management strategies that can address the moral crisis in elementary schools. Furthermore, this research is expected to provide both practical and academic benefits for educational institutions, particularly elementary schools. From a practical perspective, this research is expected to help in designing a more effective character education approach that is able to touch the spiritual dimension of students. Meanwhile, from an academic perspective, this research is expected to develop scientific insight in the realm of Islamic education management.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research applied in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was chosen because the research objective was to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon of moral crisis occurring at the elementary school level and to explore in-depth the character education management strategies implemented by educational institutions in a natural environment. (Alya Malika Fahdini, Yayang Furi Furnamasari, 2021) This approach provides an opportunity for researchers to explore the process, meaning, and practice of character education management that cannot be explained by quantitative methods (Silvia Nur Priasti, 2021)

The research design applied in this study is a case study method, with the focus of the research being Muhammadiyah Elementary School, Colombo Complex. The case study was chosen because it provided the researcher with the opportunity to investigate in detail the character education management strategy, encompassing aspects of planning, implementation, and assessment in an effort to address student moral issues, as well as to understand the school's cultural and religious background that influences the implementation of character education (Silvia Nur Priasti, 2021).

Information collection methods included in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. The interviews aimed to obtain data on the school's and teachers' character education management policies and strategies. Observations were conducted to examine character education practices, interactions between school staff, and the school's culture. Document collection involved analyzing various school documents, such as the character education program, existing regulations, and records of student violations. The use of these various techniques aimed to obtain comprehensive and mutually supportive information (Hasan, 2024).

The data processing technique used by the researchers applies an interactive analysis model according to Miles and Huberman. This model includes data trimming, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and testing. This model was chosen because it can describe the data analysis process in an orderly and continuous manner, so that the research results can clearly explain effective character education management strategies to address moral issues among elementary school students (Miles, Matthew B, Huberman, A. Michael, Tjetjep Rohendi Rohidi (translator), 1992).

This study measures data validity using triangulation from various sources, methods, and times as developed by Lexy J. Moleong. Source triangulation is done by comparing information obtained from interviews with participants and relevant documents. Technical triangulation is done by comparing data collected through interviews with the results of observations and documentation. Meanwhile, the time triangulation technique is collecting information at various times to obtain uniform data. (Hariawan et al., 2025)

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Results

Based on the research data obtained by the researcher, the character education management strategy as a solution to the moral crisis of elementary school students can be implemented through the following steps:

Planning



Based on the results of the research coding, the character education management strategy for addressing student moral issues in elementary schools begins with organized planning tailored to the students' needs. Schools analyze moral issues by observing teacher and student behavior, then identify character values considered important, such as religious obedience, honesty, discipline, and responsibility. These values are outlined in the school's vision and mission and disseminated to all school members to serve as a foundation for developing a school culture. Furthermore, character education planning is implemented through policy establishment, character program development, and the incorporation of character values into the curriculum and lesson plans, so that these values can be internalized in the learning process and outcomes as a strategic basis for addressing student moral issues sustainably.

This is in accordance with the participant's statement:

"First, we must integrate it into the school curriculum. Of course, this curriculum development must include core character values, for example, by aligning it with the current curriculum. Second, we must include character values in lesson plans (RPP) or modules. Third, we must emphasize contextual learning and teacher role models." (Participant 1)

Schools strive to integrate good character values through careful planning, starting from formulating the vision, mission, and objectives of character education, identifying

students' moral problems and needs as the basis for planning character education, integrating character values into the curriculum, lesson plans, and school programs, as well as efforts to plan character education in the curriculum, school programs, and lesson plans.

Organizing

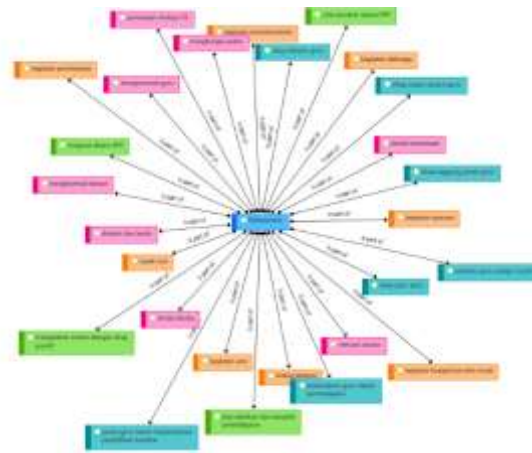


The results of the data processing indicate that the character education management strategy to address moral issues in elementary school students is carried out through the organization and collaboration of all elements within the school and external parties. This organization involves the principal and vice principal in charge of student affairs to determine the policy direction, class teachers and subject teachers as educators and role models, homeroom teachers in behavioral development, and the appointment of a coordinator and character education team so that the program runs in a planned and sustainable manner. In addition, the school establishes partnerships with parents, the school committee, and the community through a common vision, regular meetings, and the involvement of community leaders, so that character education arrangements are implemented collaboratively as a joint effort to address moral issues in elementary school students. This is in accordance with the following participant statements:

"Well, at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in the Colombo complex, the roles of teachers, educational staff, and parents in supporting character education are crucial and complementary. Collaboration between the three is key to successfully developing student character." (Participant 1)

"Schools can form teams or appoint character education coordinators consisting of the principal and teachers. The mechanism includes character program planning, implementing habituation activities, monitoring student behavior, and conducting regular evaluations to improve the program." (Participant 2)

Implementation



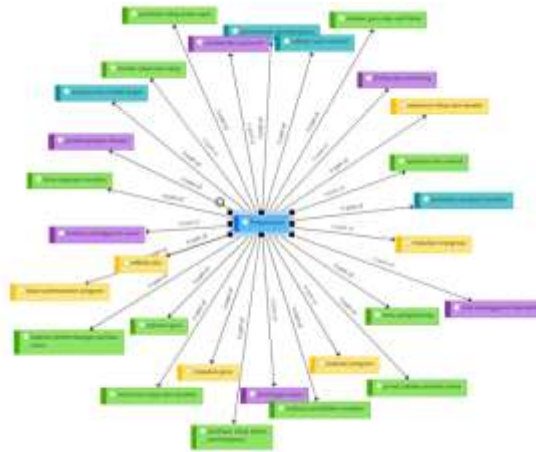
Based on the results of the research coding, the character education management strategy to address students' moral problems in elementary schools during implementation is seen through the integration of character values into learning activities and daily habits at school. Character education is implemented through strengthening religious values, discipline, responsibility, and honesty integrated into learning planning, teacher exemplary attitudes when teaching, and the habituation of positive behaviors such as ethics, respecting time, following rules, and mutual respect. In addition to intracurricular programs, character education is also reinforced through religious, social, artistic, sports, and extracurricular activities, and supported by religious habits such as prayer, congregational prayer, and dhuha prayer. The consistent implementation shows that character education does not stop at the discourse level, but is manifested in concrete actions as an effective effort to overcome students' moral problems in elementary schools. This is in line with the following participant statements:

"So, teachers include character values in learning objectives and lesson plans. Second, they provide a meaningful opening to the lesson. So, at the beginning of the lesson, teachers instill character values through prayer, apperception, motivation, and reinforcement of positive attitudes such as time management, politeness, and readiness to learn." (Participant 1)

"Activities that support character education include **extracurricular** (HW, Tapak Suci, sports, arts), **religious activities** (joint prayer, Dhuha prayer, congregational prayer), and **social activities** such as community service, social service, and concern for the environment" (Participant 2)

"The implementation of habituation is carried out through joint prayer, the application of 5S (smile, greet, say hello, be polite, be courteous), time discipline, and the example of all school residents" (Participant 3)

Supervision



Based on the research coding results, character education supervision at the elementary school level is carried out through continuous assessment of student attitudes and monitoring of their behavior. This monitoring process is carried out through integrated attitude and character assessments in learning, attitude assessments on report cards, observation sheets, student behavior journals, and notes from teachers and homeroom teachers. In addition, schools also reflect on the evaluation results, analyze rule violations, conduct dialogue and counseling, and provide special support for students who need more attention. This monitoring also involves feedback from teachers and parents through contact books, reports on student behavior development, and evaluation and improvement of character programs, so that supervision can function as a control and follow-up tool to address student moral issues on an ongoing basis. This is in line with the following participant statement:

"So, teachers and educational staff observe students' attitudes in class, in the school environment, and in religious or extracurricular activities. Second, through character development journals and notes, teachers record prominent behaviors, both positive and those that need development, in attitude journals or character development books as material for reflection and follow-up. Third, attitude assessment in learning, namely self-character values through assessment of spiritual and social attitudes integrated into learning, such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and cooperation" (Participant 1)

"The instruments used to assess the success of student character education include activity books, attitude observation sheets, student behavior journals or notes, attitude assessments in report cards, and input from parents and teachers" (Participant 2)

"The evaluation results are used as reflection material to develop a more effective character education strategy that is in line with students' future needs" (Participant 3)

3.2. Discussion

Planning

The coding results in terms of planning indicate that character education management at the elementary school level begins with a structured planning process based on student needs. This involves analyzing student needs and identifying moral issues through observations of student behavior in learning activities and social interactions at school. Based on this identification, the school then determines the main character values to be developed: religiousness, honesty, discipline, and

responsibility. The school develops a vision and mission based on these values, then socializes these values to the entire school community as a foundation for building a character-based school culture. These findings demonstrate that planning is an important initial step in developing a character education management strategy, ensuring that its implementation has clear and measurable goals.

Research findings also indicate that established character values are not limited to the formulation of the vision and mission, but are integrated into various educational components at school. Based on the coding results, this integration is carried out by adding character values to the curriculum, creating learning tools such as lesson plans or teaching modules, and developing context-appropriate learning activities accompanied by exemplary teacher examples. This integration allows character values to be cognitively understood by students and applied in daily learning practices. Good character must be developed through the learning process, curriculum, and school culture consistently to ensure the growth of appropriate moral values in students.

Furthermore, character education planning is also evident in the development of school programs aimed at continuously strengthening students' character formation. These programs are designed based on the results of an analysis of students' moral needs and aligned with the school's educational goals. By integrating the school's vision and mission, curriculum, learning tools, and programs, character education can be implemented more precisely and systematically. This finding aligns with Zubaedi's opinion that character education must be designed holistically by integrating character values into the curriculum, learning process, and school culture so that these values can be instilled in students' behavior. Careful thinking and sound planning are important strategies in managing character education to address various student moral issues in elementary schools.

Organizing

The coding results in terms of organization indicate that the management of character education in elementary schools is carried out by clearly dividing tasks among all elements within the school. The coding results show that the principal and vice principal for student affairs play a role in determining the policies and direction of the character education program, while class teachers, subject teachers, and homeroom teachers serve as educators and role models in fostering student behavior. 1. The character education program begins with activity planning, where the school appoints a coordinator or character education team responsible for coordinating the implementation of the program. This division of tasks shows that organizing is an important step so that the character education program can run regularly and continuously.

In addition to managing matters within the school, research also shows that schools collaborate with parties outside the school, such as parents, school committees, and the community. This partnership is built by improving shared understanding of character education, meeting regularly with parents, and involving community leaders in various school activities. This collaboration demonstrates that student character development is a shared responsibility between schools, families, and the community. This finding aligns with the concept of character education proposed by Thomas Lickona, who emphasizes that character education will be more effective when implemented through collaboration between schools, families, and the community. Therefore, collaboration involving multiple parties is an important

way to manage character education to address students' moral issues at the elementary school level.

Implementation

The results of the coding process during implementation indicate that character education is implemented in elementary schools by integrating character values into teaching and learning activities and daily school routines. Teachers incorporate character values into learning objectives, lesson plans, teaching modules, and classroom activities. At the beginning of the learning process, teachers shape character values by conducting several initial activities such as reciting prayers, recalling previous material, providing encouragement to learn, and reinforcing positive attitudes such as discipline in time management, being polite and courteous, and being mentally prepared to learn. Teachers' attitudes and behaviors during the learning process also serve as good examples for students. These findings indicate that character education is not only provided through subject matter but also through learning methods that focus on shaping students' attitudes and actions.

Character education is also reinforced through various school activities such as extracurricular activities, religious activities, social activities, as well as arts and sports activities. These activities provide opportunities for students to practice character values such as cooperation, responsibility, social awareness, and discipline in real-life situations. Therefore, character education is not just a concept but also implemented through students' direct experiences in various school activities. This finding aligns with Thomas Lickona's opinion that character education is more effective when moral values are not only taught but also applied in real-life activities and meaningful learning experiences.

Character education is carried out through the habituation of positive behavior in daily life at school, such as the implementation of the 5S culture (smile, greet, greet, polite, courteous), time discipline, joint prayer, and the implementation of worship, such as dhuha prayer and congregational prayer. These habits are carried out continuously until they become part of the school's habits. This shows that character education is not only carried out through official activities, but also through the creation of a school environment that encourages students to behave well. This research is in line with the concept of character education proposed by Ki Hajar Dewantara, which emphasizes the importance of role models, habits, and the educational environment in shaping students' character. Thus, teaching students' character by combining learning, school activities, and daily habits is an effective way to address moral issues in elementary schools.

Supervision

The results of the coding process at the monitoring stage indicate that the elementary school exercises control over character education by continuously monitoring student behavior. The coding image shows that supervision is carried out using various assessment tools, such as attitude and character assessments integrated into the learning process, attitude observation sheets, student behavior journals, and attitude assessments included in report cards. Teachers and homeroom teachers actively observe student behavior both during and outside of class. In this way, the school can understand the development of students' attitudes and character more comprehensively, thus understanding positive behaviors that need to be developed and behaviors that require additional guidance.

The research findings show that the supervision process not only functions as an assessment activity but also as a means of reflection to improve the character education process. Data obtained from observations, behavior records, and student progress books are then analyzed by teachers to identify any problems, such as rule violations or actions inconsistent with desired character values. The school then proceeds to address these issues by speaking directly, providing counseling, or providing special assistance to students who require more attention. Education must have long-term goals that are achieved through ongoing evaluation and development of educational quality. Stufflebeam, through the CIPP evaluation model, emphasizes that evaluation is not only aimed at assessing results, but also provides information that can be used to continuously improve the program.

Character education monitoring requires collaboration between schools and parents. This involvement is achieved through the use of liaison books, reports on student behavior development, and communication between teachers and parents regarding children's character development. This collaboration is important because student character formation occurs not only at school but is also influenced by the family environment. This finding aligns with Thomas Lickona's opinion that successful character education requires the participation of various parties, such as families and communities, so that the formation of students' moral values can occur continuously and consistently. Continuous and collaborative monitoring is a crucial strategy in ensuring the effectiveness of character education programs in elementary schools.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that character education management as a solution to the moral crisis in elementary school students is carried out comprehensively through the stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring. First, the planning stage is carried out with a systematic approach that focuses on student needs through moral problem analysis carried out by teachers, establishing key character values, such as religiosity, honesty, discipline, and responsibility, which are then aligned with the direction of school policies, curriculum, and learning plans as the basis for forming a school culture. Second, at the organizing stage, the role of each element of the school is clearly regulated through collaboration between the principal, teachers, and homeroom teachers, which is strengthened by the involvement of the character education team and the support of parents, the school committee, and the community, so that its implementation takes place in a directed and sustainable manner. Third, at the implementation stage, character strengthening is realized through the integration of moral values in learning activities, role models shown by teachers, habituation of positive behavior, and involvement in various school activities, both academic and non-academic, which provide real experiences for students. Fourth, supervision is carried out through continuous monitoring and assessment of student attitudes, reflection and follow-up on student behavior, and involving parents in monitoring the development of children's character. Overall, the implementation of character education management that is carried out in an integrated and consistent manner has a positive impact in overcoming moral problems of students in elementary schools.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank Ahmad Dahlan University, the Educational Management study program, and Muhammadiyah Elementary School, Colombo Complex, for their support in this research.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akman, Y. (2021). *The Relationship between School Climate and Students ' Aggressive Behaviors*. 17(2), 0–2. <https://doi.org/10.29329/ijpe.2021.332.26>
- Alya Malika Fahdini, Yayang Furi furnamasari, D. A. D. (2021). Urgensi Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Mengatasi Krisis Moral di kalangan siswa. *Articles, Volume 5 n*.
- Anggraini, F., Fitriyani, I., S, C. M., & Rofisian, N. (2023). Mengatasi Krisis Moral Dalam Pendidikan Sekolah Dasar Di Masa Kini. *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran (JTTP)*, 01(01), 164–170. <https://jurnal.kopusindo.com/index.php/jtpp/index> E-ISSN
- Ayu, G., Budi, P., Gede, D., Divayana, H., & Ratnaya, I. G. (2023). *Evaluation of Character Education in Public High School Using the CIPP Model*. 56, 349–358.
- Effendi, M., Warsah, I., & Bahri, S. (2024). Implementasi Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Adab di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu. *Dirasah : Jurnal Studi Ilmu Dan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 7(2), 513–523. <https://doi.org/10.58401/dirasah.v7i2.1332>
- Hadiamsyah, Y., & Meidina, A. R. (2025). *PERAN PENDIDIKAN DALAM MEMBETUK KARAKTER ANAK USIA*. 06(01).
- Hariawan, R., Rohiyatun, B., Najwa, L., Suhardi, M., & English, A. (2025). *Peningkatan Kompetensi Metodologi Kualitatif: Pelatihan Terpadu Manajemen Penelitian , Analisis Data , dan Triangulasi Program Studi Administrasi Pendidikan , Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika , menjadikan metode yang tepat untuk mengungkap makna di balik tindakan , pengalaman , dan dinamika dan temuan yang muncul selama proses penelitian berlangsung . Hal ini sangat*. 4(2), 93–103.
- Hasan, S. (2024). Integrasi Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Untuk Menghadapi Krisis Moral Generasi Z. *Journal Of Social Science Research Volume, 4*, 4949–4958. [file:///C:/Users/Hype GLK/Downloads/4949-4958.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Hype%20GLK/Downloads/4949-4958.pdf)
- Hidayat, M., Wijaya, R., Rozak, A., Hakam, K. A., & Depriya, M. (2022). Cakrawala Pendidikan Character education in Indonesia : How is it internalized and implemented in virtual learning? *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 41(1), 186–198.
- Jhon, Winarni, Sugito, Enny Zubaidah, A. M. (2021). *Challenges in the implementation of character education in elementary school : experience from Indonesia*. 20(87), 1351–1363. <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.01.130>
- Miles, Matthew B, Huberman, A. Michael, Tjetjep Rohendi Rohidi (penerjemah), M. (1992). *Analisis Data Kualitatif* (1st ed.). Universitas Indonesia (UI- Press), 1992.
- Mitha, A., & Zaka, R. (2021). Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Budaya Sekolah di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 5(5), 3(2), 524–532. <https://journal.uui.ac.id/ajie/article/view/971>
- Silvia Nur Priasti, S. (2021). Penerapan Pendidikan Karakter Gemar Membaca Melalui Program Literasi di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Kependidikan*, 7(2), 395–407.
- Tanfidzi, A., Putra, D., & Kasdi, A. (2021). *The Indonesian Journal of Social Studies through Social Studies Learning and School Culture*. 4(1), 27–35.
- Taufiqur Rahman, & Siti Masyarafatul Manna Wassalwa. (2019). Implementasi Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter dalam Pembinaan Akhlak Peserta Didik. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Indonesia*, 4(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.35316/jpii.v4i1.175>

