

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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### ABSTRACT

Persistent self-purification of individuals or subjects, learning how to use one's abilities to go to a more useful path in character education persevering attitude, learning how to use one's own abilities towards a more profitable path in character education Children who are relatively early are children who are still in the golden or golden growth stage, or in other words growth and maturation at this stage affect the life of each child. The secret as early is that the child is still growing in the golden or golden stage, or in other words the growth and maturation of this stage affects the life of each child. In fact, for experts, an early-age child is a child who is still in school. It grows up in the golden age or golden age. Character education is available for children at home and at school. When a child is in school, the teacher is the one who guides him, but when they are at home, their first teacher is their mother. The latter part of the ancient world was a time to the detriment of a child's future life. Let's look at that basis. This study aimed to investigate the literature review on the importance of character education for children's development. This research method uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. Data collection is done by documenting articles related to research. About 7 national journal articles accessed and used for this research were obtained from the Google Scholar database. In this era of globalization, a person's moral character is also one of the key success factors in building relationships in the social world.

**Keywords:** *Education, Character, Early Childhood.*

### INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia today contains a lot of knowledge and demands of modern global currents that override moral values and ethics in the formation of student character, thus producing students who are smart but less moral. Therefore, current conditions make it difficult for the education sector to produce a generation of benevolent children. (Devianti, sari & Nobility, 2020).

Early age is a golden age for children because at this time all aspects of growth such as the development of brain abilities, intelligence, personality, memory and other aspects are developing very rapidly. At this age, the development of the child's intelligence is already formed. Educators and parents must recognize how their students solve their problems. (Rosmaladewi, Haila, Darmawan 2023).

The role of early childhood education is to develop children's self-awareness and prepare them for later school. (Aras, 2021). Likewise, between family life and the large community, namely elementary schools and other neighborhoods, serves as a link between kindergartens. (Harahap et al., 2021).

Therefore, we must be careful when assessing body hygiene to keep it maintained. Character education in early childhood is a method of fostering students to develop all the potential possessed by students. This is in accordance with what Ardiatyas and Aditya Rigianti (2022) said.

Yang explains that character education for early childhood is education that focuses on developing students' potential in a holistic way so that they can become individuals who can overcome life's challenges and learn how to make good decisions. This way, as children grow older, they won't be able to use their social media accounts to make excuses for bad behavior or to engage in abuse. (Hasanah & Fajri 2022).

Character development usually begins in the family because the first interaction with others occurs in the child's immediate environment. Character education should be active from early childhood, because the child's ability to develop his potential proves to be very decisive. Due to the significant influence and contribution of teachers, the school is one of the few organizations fully committed to promoting character development in students. The main goal of education is to produce people capable of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth. As educational institutions, schools have a moral obligation to help children become pint-ar and intelligent according to the expectations of the general public and themselves. The teacher's approach is very strategic in helping children grow because the role of the teacher is not only to teach but also to guide. The role of the teacher as a teacher is to assist students in acquiring knowledge that is beneficial to students and society. It also helps students develop positive character and values that align with educational goals to develop students' ability to have self-control, self-awareness, and maturity. (Sadaryanti 2012).

The goals of modernization and technological progress led to social changes in people's lifestyles, which also negatively affected the lives of American Indian children. As we can see from the positive effects of education, early childhood is very comfortable using mobile phones to communicate. Use the computer to play games and display graphics. Positive reinforcement is also accompanied by negative reinforcement; For example, a child will play a game for hours if it is not understood or controlled by an adult. Kindergartners are generally more interested in watching TV shows, which sometimes remain unchanged, making this predisposition somewhat unfavorable for future younger generations. Other negative news that often appears makes them feel forced to take action against their subject. Observing the above cases and periodicals, educators are able to design and develop at that time. (Sadaryanti 2012).

The character education of ancient people guaranteed a proper transition because this was an era of important changes in human history. The growth and development of children during this period occurs very quickly and will have an impact on the characteristics or traits of the child in the future. The above statement is based on research conducted by Lawrence J. Schweinhart, which showed that the time period of early childhood can have a positive impact on children's later development. So, the early years are very important to form the characteristics of an individual. He hoped that the character education that emerged from the Ancient world would be able to shape the next generation of people who possessed strong character traits. which raised the characteristics of the Indonesian nation itself. In addition, it should be

noted that character development in the ancient world represented the period of time reserved for schooling at a later date. (La Hadith 2015).

Furthermore, During childhood, developing the baby's character is easier. For this reason, he is more skilled in absorbing inputs from the surrounding environment. At this age, brain development proceeds at a very fast pace. Therefore, a healthy environment will encourage positive traits. A child's early life experiences strongly demonstrate whether they will be able to cope with challenges in their daily lives and whether they can develop a strong desire to learn and succeed at their jobs. However, for most groups, the above-mentioned systematic process of character education is very difficult, especially for those who struggle with strict routines. Therefore, character education is also necessary when a child enters the school environment, especially for playgroups and small children. The story of the guru, referred to in Javanese philosophy as "digugu and imitated, is at stake.(Tin Rustini 2012).

The process and strategy to prevent children from dropping out of school has been carried out systematically in Indonesia. However, when it comes to the strategy for children returning to school still have difficulties, as well as several obstacles and dilemmas to requites the right strategy. The purpose of this study is to examined the strategies of eradicating out-of-school children and the best practices of alternative schools to provide inclusive and free education Qualitative methods were chosen in the research process, primary data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) with 28 informants, includes policy makers, principals, teachers and students. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis ( Rosmilawati, 2024 ).

Transformative learning is learning that can change students' perspectives in meaning life experience. This transformative learning lead students to have critical awareness in seeing, understanding, or make sense of life experiences or realities what is seen or felt. Transformative learning or transformative learning developed during this time focusing on efforts to resolve internal conflicts within oneself individual to achieve harmony, because the self is a central and integral part of totality of personality ( Mustaqin, 2023 ).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a literature review using the Systematic Review (SR) method, also known as Systematic Literature Review (SLR) informally. SLR is a systematic technique for collecting, critically evaluating, integrating, and structuring data related to a research question or topic that the researcher wants to address. Research begins by reading articles related to the research topic that will eventually be studied.

Systematic problem solving is a method of solving a problem by identifying, evaluating, and formulating the problem and asking clear questions based on predetermined criteria. It draws on previous research conducted with high quality and relevance to the research question.

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which is a systematic, elaborative, and repeatable approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesize research findings and preliminary investigation findings that have been completed by researchers and practitioners with the aim of analyzing, interpreting, and assessing all research findings. The research findings are divided into several phases, including:

The first question is: What is character in the education of an early childhood?

Second, the focus of population data in this study is on the importance of early childhood education to identify characteristics of early childhood education in developing countries. The literature review process begins with data available from Google Scholar, which highlights the importance of early childhood education by analyzing articles from 2019 to 2024.

Third, after receiving many articles. The study produced eighty articles related to the importance of education. After searching through the Google Scholar database, the boy found 20 articles related to the topics covered in several articles. Next, read the above article carefully and according to the importance of education. In the case of a child, 20 articles are carefully entered and examined to produce 7 articles that correspond to the topic of study, after which 60 articles are irrelevant to the study or assignment. Seven articles were found to be very relevant to the topics to be covered in the section on learning and applications. Below is a diagram showing the inclusion and inclusion process in Systematic Reviews (n: number of articles).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early childhood character education has many fundamental importanceEarly childhood is a critical period in a person's character development. Character education for a young young Dini aims to develop the potential of conscience, familiarize good behavior, instill the spirit of leadership, and form commendable habits. In addition, character education at an early age also helps children deal with personality conflicts, develop cultural values, and prepare them to interact with the surrounding environment. Internal and external factors, such as instincts, habits, education, and environment, influence the character formation of early childhood. Success in early childhood character education is reflected in everyday behaviors, such as patience, awareness, honesty, and independence.

Early childhood between 0 and 6 years old has a complex and rather unique phase of development. It cannot be repeated in the future because its growth and development are developing very rapidly. He also speaks of the Early era as the "golden age," where children from that era could easily absorb and apply a wide range of environmental knowledge, both positive and negative, so that during their lifetime, positive knowledge was more likely to be imparted. Gardner (1998), as cited by Mulyasa (2012), claims that infant mortality among white children is a critical concern due to the high mortality and morbidity rates among humans (80%). When a human child is born, their growth rate reaches 25%, until the age of 4 years, when it reaches 50%, and until the age of 8 years, when it reaches 80%, Selection develops immediately in 18 years. Therefore, character education is very important for character development starting from childhood. (Devianti, Sari & Nobility, 2020).

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Two words, "education" and "character," are used to describe character education. While character is more important in the nature of work, education is more important in working language. Through this educational process, later can develop some positive character traits. Sutrisno pendidikan is a translation of kaat educatio, which is knowing, educating, implementing the law of usefulness. (Etivali & Kurnia, 2019).

Character education It comes from two words: character and education. Education is the education of activities and towards and individuals of diverse aspirations developed into an independent, unshakable, imaginative, healthy, and enduring individualism. The purpose of educating character education is a way to conduct education in a particular organization. Character education is very important for human life, especially for the young generation of Indonesia who are currently affected by moral destruction in many institutions, including education. khaironi & Ramdhani 2017).

Referring to seven summaries of journal articles that have been carefully reviewed to meet inclusion criteria, here are the study's findings.

**Table. 1 Research findings on character education in early childhood**

Research and Research Years	Journal	Research Results
Anjar Fitrianingtyas & Jumi atmoko 2023.	Socialization of Early Childhood Character Education in the Digital Era.	The process of socialization produces the result that the average knowledge of people is 90.4 points. People understand the role played in group settings to improve the character education of a young man. This socialization is intended to give people a basic understanding of character education for Asian children, especially those who participate in character education at home because, during this period, character education is taught by teachers in schools.
Abdul Somad Momod 2021 .	The importance of Islamic Religious Education in shaping the character of children.	The results of this study support data and facts that show how important it is to teach character education from childhood, using appropriate methods in accordance with Islamic teachings to help children become good human beings who are knowledgeable, moral, and pious citizens who can benefit all mankind.
Nur Fajri & Uswatun Hasanah 2022.	Edukids Journal: The concept of early childhood character research.	The results of the research obtained from this study Training character values instilled in early childhood are: religion, integrity, mutual assistance, independence, and nationalism. Early childhood character education is a method of developing knowledge to change attitudes and behaviors into children who have strong dispositions, traits and personalities through teaching.

Yoyo Zakaria Ansori 2022.	Journal of Obsession: Educators' strategies in cultivating honest character in early childhood.	The findings of this study suggest that the integrated component of character education has a positive impact on students' behavior and skills, especially their assessment. The result of this study is that character traits should be prioritized as soon as possible to ensure that children are raised with positive role models from an early age.
Lia Ricka Primary 2022.	ECCE Character Education Management	According to research findings, character education plays an important role in shaping a person's behavior; In particular, character education management must be implemented in Early Childhood Education (ECCE) in order to properly shape children's attitudes.
M. Rezki Andhika 2021.	AT-TA'DIB: The role of parents as a source of education.	The results of this study suggest that parental behavior is an important factor in children's physical and mental development. In particular, parental behavior is the first and most important teacher for their children until they reach adulthood. In the process of developing knowledge, the various parenting styles that everyone expresses are very important. In the family, education has a very important role in promoting values such as respect, integrity, morals, religious, and dedication. The responsibility of adults to negatively affect the character of the child is no longer limited to giving advice to parents. Its influence on shaping the character of a child is considerable. Fathers are still asked to participate in their interactions with their children, such as playing, getting up, and tickling them.
Rahma, Annisa & Zulkarnaen, 2023.	Journal of Obsession: Character Building Efforts through the "When Bears Stand in Long Lines" Storytelling Method in Early Childhood.	The results of the analysis showed that the three good characters taken from the story "When the Bears Queue Long" are patient, polite, and not prejudiced. Challenges teachers face in creating characters through their stories include adult conditions that are not very sensitive to children's conditions and learning processes during class, household work that is not well coordinated with school work, and fluctuating quality of learning materials.

Based on the analysis of seven journals, it can be concluded that quality education has been provided since ancient times. Importantly, education A young person must have a positive attitude. On child development, such as helping children overcome obstacles they should not face and increasing their motivation to learn. Research also shows that parental guidance is an important factor in a child's development, both mentally and physically. Based on the articles reviewed, character education of children with disabilities has positive effects, such as helping children with disabilities overcome obstacles and increasing their motivation to learn. In accordance with previous research by (Anugraheni, 2018), character refers to how each individual should live their lives and interact with their communities, societies, nations, and families. A person with good character is one who can make decisions and is willing to take risks.

Character education in childhood is a solid foundation for the moral, social, and emotional development of children, preparing them to become good and responsible adults in the future. Characteristics are summed up in terms of discipline in the modern world, where there are many cases of people who become disobedient, undisciplined, or stuck in the rules of character discipline. Behavior shapes one's actions in certain situations and ways of thinking, in which habits are useful. Individual behavior in one's character can determine behavior not seen by others. The purpose of character education is to understand educational outcomes that focus on developing character traits and raising the standards of the learning process and the student body in relation to each other in a way that is fair, consistent, and appropriate to the competencies of each educational institution. The values embodied in education include tolerance. (Annisa 2019).

Character education needed for the Child (Andrianto, 2011, p. 121). The character of education is related to the process; this process must be done by process; this process needs to be done in a persistent and thorough way with the people residing in the surrounding area. (Devianti, Sari & Bangsawaan, 2020).

## CONCLUSION AND ADVICE

Character development begins from childhood, since childhood is characterized by critical individual growth. Children's character education is not limited to teachers; Parents also have the primary responsibility to conduct this education in their own homes. In character education, the teacher and child serve as models for the material to be discussed and studied. Young people can distinguish between models and speech. Therefore, children and teachers must be careful when making decisions or implementing drastic changes.

Instilling commendable attitudes that are in accordance with religious teachings, nationalism attitudes, society and the environment around children. As well as a commendable attitude for the benefit of the lives of children around. The following are the characteristics of Early childhood education. Consequences such as example, reinforcement, advice giving, and habituation to children from an early age every time they show attitudes or behaviors

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