Character-Based Education in the Modern Era

Made Sadiana[1], Ni Nyoman Rahmawati[2]
[1] Universitas Palangka Raya, [2] IAHN Tampung Penyang Palangka Raya
[1]made_sadiana@chem.upr.ac.id, [2] ninyomanrahmawati@iahntp.ac,id

ABSTRACT

Character education is a crucial aspect of the education system because it plays a role in shaping students who are not only academically excellent but also possess moral integrity and social responsibility. This article aims to examine the concept of character education in the modern era, its implementation in school settings, and the various challenges faced in strengthening it. The study employs a qualitative approach using library research, analyzing various scientific articles, books, and relevant documents. The findings indicate that character education in the modern era is understood as a holistic process of internalizing values through the development of students' moral, social, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Its implementation is achieved by integrating character values into the learning process and school culture. The main challenges faced include the development of digital technology, declining social awareness, a crisis of role models, the influence of globalization, weak synergy within the educational environment, and the dominance of an academic orientation. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen character education in a way that is contextual, collaborative, and sustainable.

Keywords: character education, modern era, educational implementation, students, educational challenges.

I. Introduction

The modern era, marked by rapid advancements in digital technology, has brought significant changes to various aspects of life, including the world of education. The use of digital technology not only expands access to information and learning resources but also creates more flexible, interactive, and innovative learning models. Amid these conveniences, technological advancements also present new challenges in shaping students' character. The increasingly high intensity of digital media use has the potential to influence the attitudes, behaviors, and moral values of the younger generation if not balanced by adequate character-building efforts. Various phenomena such as a decline in social empathy, poor discipline in technology use, cyberbullying, the spread of unverified information, and weak ethical standards in digital communication indicate that technological

progress has not yet been fully matched by students' moral maturity. Furthermore, easy access to various forms of digital content also requires students to adopt a critical and responsible approach when utilizing technology. As noted by Sumarni et al. (2025), the digital age presents complex challenges for character education, particularly in addressing the crisis of empathy, discipline, and moral values among students.

This reality has become increasingly evident through various viral cases that have occurred in Indonesia's educational environment in recent years. For example, the viral case of student bullying on social media which was recorded and disseminated by peers demonstrates a decline in empathy and social concern among students. Furthermore, the widespread use of Artificial Intelligence to complete school assignments without engaging in critical thinking reflects the gradual erosion of the values of honesty and academic integrity. There have also been numerous cases of students engaging in hate speech, cyberbullying, and even acts of violence against teachers and fellow students, which have subsequently spread widely through platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook. This phenomenon demonstrates that the digital space has become a new arena for shaping the behavior of the younger generation behavior that is not always aligned with the nation's moral and cultural values.

This situation is reinforced by various empirical data indicating a decline in the character of students. The phenomenon of violence in educational institutions in the modern era has become a serious issue, indicating that the education sector has not yet been fully able to provide a safe and character-building learning environment. As noted in the 2025 report by the Indonesian Teachers' Union Federation (FGSI), there were 60 cases of violence in educational institutions from January through December 2025. This number represents a significant increase compared to 2024, which recorded only 36 cases, and 2023, which recorded 15 cases. Across all these cases, there were 358 victims and more than 100 perpetrators from various segments of the educational community, ranging from students and teachers to school principals and support staff.

FSGI also revealed that the most prevalent form of violence was physical violence at 45%, followed by sexual violence, psychological violence, bullying,

discrimination, and school policies containing elements of violence. These cases occurred at all levels of education, from early childhood education (PAUD) to senior high school/vocational high school (SMA/SMK), with elementary school being the level with the highest number of reported cases. These data are further supported by reports from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the Indonesian Education Monitoring Network (JPPI). In their 2025 reports, KPAI noted that approximately 35% of cases of violence against children occur within educational institutions, indicating that schools remain vulnerable to acts of violence and bullying. Meanwhile, JPPI recorded a surge in cases of violence in educational institutions, reaching 641 cases in 2025 a sharp increase compared to previous years. This situation indicates that educational development in the modern era, characterized by technological advancements and access to information, has not yet been fully balanced by the reinforcement of moral values, empathy, and character education within school life.

Based on various phenomena emerging in the digital age, character education has become an increasingly important aspect in the process of holistically shaping students' personalities. Technological advancements that are not balanced by the reinforcement of moral values have the potential to cause various problems, such as a decline in empathy, low discipline, weak social responsibility, and an increase in various forms of behavior that do not conform to norms and ethics. In this context, character education serves not only as a means of instilling moral values but also as a preventive measure to shield students from the various negative impacts of digital technology (Maryam, 2023; Tsoraya et al., 2023). Character values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, empathy, and ethical conduct in digital media use need to be systematically internalized through the educational process so that they become an integral part of students' personalities. Furthermore, character education must be integrated with the development of digital literacy so that students are not only able to use technology effectively but also possess the ability to think critically, act responsibly, and make wise decisions when encountering various types of information circulating in the digital space. In line with this, Sumarni et al. (2025) emphasize that strengthening character education in the digital age is a crucial strategy for addressing the crisis of empathy, discipline,

and moral values faced by the younger generation. Thus, character education plays a strategic role in shaping the generation one that is not only digitally competent but also possesses strong moral integrity and a sense of social responsibility.

Although the urgency of character education is receiving increasing attention in the digital age, its implementation in educational practice still faces various challenges. Character education is often not optimally integrated into the learning process or school culture, so the values taught have not been fully internalized in students' behavior. On the other hand, the rapid development of digital technology demands an adaptive educational approach that is relevant to the characteristics of the current generation. The lack of guidance in technology use, low digital literacy, and the prevalence of various negative behaviors in digital spaces such as the spread of unverified information, hate speech, and cyberbullying are challenges that require serious attention. Furthermore, the process of character development is often not supported by strong synergy between schools, families, and the community, resulting in inconsistent moral value formation. Aziz et al. (2025) emphasize that character education in the digital age requires a more comprehensive strategy through the integration of character values into learning, the strengthening of digital literacy and online ethics, the development of spaces for student creativity, and collaboration among various stakeholders to create an environment that supports character development. Therefore, the strengthening of character education must be implemented in an innovative, collaborative, and contextual manner to address the various challenges arising from the development of digital technology and to shape a generation that is not only academically and technologically competent but also possesses strong ethics, responsibility, and moral integrity.

Although various studies have addressed character education, most still focus on conceptual or partial aspects, such as moral education, digital ethics, or the impact of technology on student behavior in isolation. In fact, current educational challenges demand research capable of comprehensively integrating the conceptual, implementational, and strategic dimensions of character education within the context of digital transformation. Consequently, there remains a research gap in the development of a character education model that is adaptive to the challenges of the

modern era, particularly within the school environment. Based on this, the novelty of this article lies in its effort to integrate conceptual analysis, practical implementation, and strategies for strengthening character education within a single framework that is contextual to the challenges of the digital age. This article aims to describe the concept of character education, analyze its implementation in school settings, and formulate strategies for strengthening students' character that are adaptive, collaborative, and relevant to technological developments and the social dynamics of modern society.

This study employs a qualitative approach using a descriptive research design to understand the implementation of character-based education in schools in the modern era. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a holistic and contextual examination of social phenomena (Creswell & Poth, 2020). This study is a literature review that utilizes secondary data in the form of journal articles, academic books, conference proceedings, and relevant education policy documents. Data sources were selected purposefully based on thematic relevance, source credibility, and the recency of publication, particularly those published between 2020 and 2025. The data obtained were then analyzed descriptively to identify concepts, challenges, and implementation strategies for character education in the modern era.

Data collection was conducted through a literature review by searching for, identifying, and examining literature related to the concepts, implementation, and strategies of character education. This process included the stages of selecting, classifying, and organizing data based on the main research themes to ensure that the data was valid and focused. The data analysis technique employed the interactive analysis model proposed by Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña (2014), which comprises three main stages: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) drawing conclusions and verification. Data reduction is carried out by filtering and focusing on information relevant to the research objectives, while data presentation is conducted in the form of a systematic descriptive narrative. The final stage drawing conclusions is carried out reflectively, taking into account the consistency and interrelationships among the data.

II. Discussion

2.1 The Concept of Character Education in the Modern Era

Character education in the modern era has become an essential component of Indonesia's national education system. Technological advancements, the tide of globalization, and shifts in patterns of social interaction have presented various challenges to the moral and character development of students. Under these circumstances, education is not only directed toward the mastery of knowledge and skills but also toward the development of individuals who are virtuous, have strong character, and possess a sense of social responsibility. This aligns with the objectives of national education as outlined by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia through Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. In this regard, education in addition to transferring knowledge is also intended to develop students' potential so that they may become individuals who have faith in and are devout to God the Almighty, possess noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible. This formulation indicates that character education is at the core of the national education goals; therefore, strengthening moral values, ethics, discipline, tolerance, and social responsibility is essential in navigating the dynamics of life in the modern era.

Conceptually, character education is an educational process aimed at shaping and developing students' moral values, ethics, and personality so that they are able to act in accordance with the norms and values that apply in social life. Character education is not only understood as a process of transferring knowledge about values of goodness but also as an effort to build awareness, attitudes, and behaviors that reflect positive character in daily life. In this context, character is viewed as a combination of ways of thinking, behaving, and acting that define a person's identity in their interactions with themselves, others, and their environment. Therefore, character education has a broader purpose than mere academic achievement: it aims to shape individuals who possess integrity, responsibility, honesty, discipline, social concern, and the ability to make decisions based on moral considerations. Chardinal et al. (2025) explain that character education is an integral part of the

educational process oriented toward the holistic development of students' personalities, thereby supporting the formation of individuals who are of high quality both intellectually and morally. In line with this, Saputri et al. (2025) emphasize that character education is, in essence, a continuous process of internalizing values to foster positive habits and behaviors in students' lives. Thus, character education can be understood as a crucial foundation for human development—one that produces individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also possess moral and social maturity in navigating the various dynamics of modern life.

Character education in the modern era is, in essence, an educational process oriented toward the holistic development of the individual through the integrated cultivation of moral, intellectual, social, emotional, and civic dimensions. This concept is based on the view that the purpose of education is not merely to produce individuals with academic abilities but also to shape individuals of integrity, who are responsible and capable of living in accordance with the values prevailing in society. Character education is understood as a continuous process of internalizing values so that these values are not merely known but also internalized and manifested in daily behavior. In this context, character encompasses various important values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, compassion, cooperation, tolerance, and respect for others. Annisa and Dewi (2024) explain that character education is a fundamental part of the educational process because it plays a role in shaping students' personalities through the development of values such as discipline, honesty, compassion, and brotherhood, which form the foundation of social life. In line with this, Ambarita and Jamaludin (2025) emphasize that character education is related to the development of moral intelligence, which enables students to understand, internalize, and apply virtuous values in social life. Thus, character education in the modern era can be understood as a process of shaping values and personality aimed at producing individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess the moral and social maturity to face the increasingly complex challenges of life.

Over time, the concept of character education in the modern era is no longer understood as a one-way process of instilling values, but rather as a process of

personality development that involves students' awareness, experiences, and interactions with their social environment. Character education is viewed as a dynamic process that unfolds through students' active engagement in understanding, internalizing, and practicing the values that guide their daily lives. Therefore, character is not merely about knowledge of virtuous values but also encompasses the development of attitudes, habits, and moral responsibility reflected in an individual's behavior. From a modern educational perspective, character development is an integral part of the educational process aimed at fostering students' ability to live responsibly, respect others, and make decisions based on ethical and moral considerations. Ningsih et al. (2022) explain that character education is an effort to build students' personal qualities through the development of moral values integrated throughout the entire educational process. In line with this, Wulandari and Dewi (2023) emphasize that character education plays a role in shaping individual identity while strengthening social awareness and responsibility as members of society. Meanwhile, Marzuki (2012) explains that character education is, in essence, a process of instilling values aimed at shaping individuals who possess moral intelligence, integrity, and the ability to act in accordance with ethical principles. Thus, the concept of character education in the modern era views personality development as a continuous, contextual, and comprehensive process, ensuring that students not only develop intellectually but also possess the moral and social maturity necessary to face the various challenges of modern life.

2.2 Implementation of Character Education in the School Environment

Character education, which has been developed as the foundation for students' character development, requires concrete implementation within the educational setting. Schools, as formal educational institutions, play a strategic role in instilling, developing, and reinforcing character values through various planned and sustained educational activities. The implementation of character education is not limited to the delivery of instructional content in the classroom but is also realized through school culture, the exemplary conduct of educators, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and the social interactions that take place in daily

school life. Thus, character education is an integral part of the entire educational process, which aims to shape students so that they not only possess strong academic abilities but also strong character, integrity, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to live harmoniously in society. Therefore, the success of implementing character education in the school environment is largely determined by the involvement of the entire school community in creating an educational environment that supports the continuous internalization of moral and social values.

One way to implement character education in schools is by integrating character values into the learning process. This integration is achieved by embedding various character values into every learning activity so that learning is not only focused on mastering knowledge but also on shaping students' attitudes and behaviors. In practice, teachers play a role in connecting learning materials to values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, tolerance, and social awareness that are relevant to students' lives. Thus, the learning process becomes a means of developing cognitive abilities while simultaneously shaping students' moral and social awareness. The integration of character education can also be achieved through various learning approaches that encourage active participation, reflection, and meaningful learning experiences, thereby providing students with opportunities to understand and practice character values in real-life situations. Hidayat and Syarifuddin (2024) explain that character education will be more effective if the values taught are integrated throughout the entire learning process and become part of the school's academic culture. In line with this, Astuti et al. (2025) emphasize that the learning process plays a strategic role in shaping students' character because it provides space for the development of attitudes, values, and behaviors that support a harmonious social life. Meanwhile, Marzuki (2011) explains that character education in the learning process must be implemented in a planned and sustainable manner so that the values learned do not remain merely as knowledge but are internalized into students' habits and character. Therefore, integrating character values into the learning process is a crucial step toward achieving educational goals that produce students who are not only academically excellent but also possess strong character and noble moral values.

The integration of character values into the learning process must also be carried out systematically, from the planning stage through implementation to the evaluation of learning. During the planning stage, teachers can identify character values relevant to learning outcomes and integrate them into the objectives, content, methods, and learning activities. Next, during the implementation stage, teachers create a learning environment that encourages students to apply character values through various forms of interaction and learning experiences. Attitudes such as respecting others' opinions during discussions, taking responsibility for completing tasks, and collaborating in group activities are examples of character values that can be developed throughout the learning process. Furthermore, learning assessment is not limited to knowledge and skills but also includes attitudes as indicators of students' character development. According to the Ministry of National Education (2011), character education will be effective only if the values instilled are integrated into all learning activities.

The success of integrating character values into the learning process is greatly influenced by the teacher's ability to connect lesson content with students' experiences and real-life situations. Character values are more easily understood and internalized when presented in contexts relevant to daily life, enabling students to recognize the connection between what they learn and the behaviors they should apply in their social environments. Therefore, learning must be designed contextually so that it not only focuses on achieving academic competencies but also fosters the development of positive attitudes and character. Through contextual learning, students have the opportunity to connect knowledge with real-life experiences, reflect on the values they have learned, and apply them in various life situations. Aminah, Hairida, and Hartoyo (2022) explain that a contextual learning approach can strengthen character education because it provides meaningful learning experiences that are closely tied to students' lives. In line with this, Bambang, Rustam, Handayani, and Heltien (2023) found that student-centered learning through the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model can increase students' active engagement while strengthening the internalization of character values such as responsibility, cooperation, and discipline. Furthermore, Marzuki (2016) emphasizes that character education is more effective when the values taught are

not merely conveyed theoretically but are embodied in learning activities that allow students to experience, understand, and practice those values directly. Thus, the integration of character values into learning serves not only as a means of knowledge transfer but also as a process of value internalization that helps students develop moral awareness, form positive habits, and make character values a guiding principle in their thinking, attitudes, and actions. Through this ongoing process, school-based learning can become an effective vehicle for shaping students' character in a holistic and sustainable manner.

In addition to structured learning activities, the integration of character values is also reflected in the educational interactions that develop between teachers and students during the learning process. These interactions provide a vital space for students to observe, understand, and develop various character values through direct learning experiences. Attitudes such as mutual respect, openness in expressing opinions, honesty in completing assignments, responsibility toward academic obligations, and the ability to collaborate are values that can flourish through positive interactions in the classroom environment. From a modern learning perspective, the learning process is not only directed toward the mastery of knowledge but also toward the development of attitudes and character that support students' holistic development. Therefore, teachers need to create a democratic, inclusive, and participatory learning environment so that students have the opportunity to develop character values through meaningful social experiences. Hidayati and Suryana (2022) explain that character education will be more effective if integrated into all learning activities so that students can experience and practice character values directly in school life. In line with this, Chardinal et al. (2025) emphasize that the development of students' character is not achieved solely through the delivery of content but also through modeling, educational interactions, and a learning environment that supports the growth of positive values. Thus, the interactions that occur during the learning process serve not only as a means of conveying knowledge but also as a medium for the internalization of values that help students build character gradually and sustainably. Through a conducive learning environment , character values can be instilled more deeply, thereby becoming an integral part of students' personalities in their daily lives.

In a broader context, the integration of character values into the learning process demonstrates that character education is not a standalone subject but rather an integral part of all educational activities at school. Every subject has the potential to foster character values in accordance with the characteristics of the material and the learning objectives to be achieved. Science courses can foster objectivity, curiosity, and academic responsibility, while social studies and humanities courses can develop empathy, tolerance, and concern for community life. Similarly, religious education plays a role in reinforcing the spiritual and moral values that form the foundation of students' behavior. This cross-curricular integration enables character education to be implemented comprehensively and continuously in every learning experience. Thus, the success of character education is largely determined by a school's ability to integrate character values into its entire educational program so that students gain consistent experiences in understanding and practicing these values. Consequently, the learning process must be designed holistically so that the development of knowledge, skills, and character can occur in a balanced manner. Thus, the integration of character values into learning is a fundamental strategy for achieving educational goals oriented toward shaping individuals who are knowledgeable, possess noble character, and are responsible for their social lives.

2.3 Challenges and Strategies for Strengthening Character Education in the Modern Era

Rapid technological advancements, globalization, and social changes in the modern era have had various impacts on the character development of the younger generation. On one hand, these advancements offer extensive opportunities for improving the quality of education and access to information. On the other hand, however, various challenges have emerged that could potentially undermine moral values, such as rising individualism, declining social concern, and the misuse of digital technology. These conditions position character education as a crucial aspect of the educational process, aimed at shaping students who possess not only academic competence but also moral integrity and social responsibility. Therefore,

effective strategies are needed to strengthen character education so that it remains relevant and capable of addressing the challenges emerging in the modern era.

One of the main challenges in strengthening character education in the modern era is the rapid development of digital technology and social media, which has transformed the patterns of interaction, communication, and behavior among the younger generation. The presence of various digital platforms facilitates access to information, expands social networks, and supports a more flexible and innovative learning process. However, technological advancements that are not balanced by adequate digital literacy and character development have the potential to cause various problems, such as the spread of unverified information, cyberbullying, a decline in communication ethics, and consumerist behavior influenced by digital media. Furthermore, the high intensity of social media use can also influence students' behavioral patterns, including a tendency to prioritize their presence in virtual spaces over direct social interaction. Nurhabibah et al. (2025) explain that the digital era presents complex challenges for the character development of the younger generation because extensive access to information is not always accompanied by the ability to filter and utilize information wisely. In line with this, Fazriyah et al. (2025) emphasize that adolescents are the group most vulnerable to the negative influences of digital media, thus requiring character development focused on digital literacy, responsibility, and moral awareness. Therefore, character education efforts should be directed toward developing critical thinking skills, digital ethics, and a sense of responsibility in utilizing technology. Through this approach, students are expected to be able to use digital technology wisely without losing the moral values that guide their daily lives.

The decline in social awareness among students also poses a significant challenge to strengthening character education in the modern era. Technological advancements, changing lifestyles, and the growing dominance of virtual interactions have influenced the patterns of social relationships among the younger generation. In many cases, students interact more through digital media than through face-to-face communication, thereby reducing opportunities to develop empathy, solidarity, and concern for their social environment. This situation has the potential to weaken the values of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and social

responsibility, which have long been an integral part of the Indonesian national character. The growing phenomenon of individualism may also encourage students to prioritize personal interests over the common good. Nugraha et al. (2024) explain that one of the impacts of the digital era is a declining trend in social interaction, which weakens students' social values and character. In fact, character education aims not only to shape independent individuals but also individuals who possess social concern, empathy, and the ability to live harmoniously alongside others. Therefore, efforts to strengthen character education must be directed toward fostering values of social concern, cooperation, tolerance, and solidarity so that students can fulfill their roles as responsible members of society.

The next challenge in strengthening character education in the modern era is the crisis of role models occurring across various social environments. Role models play a crucial role in the character-building process because students tend to learn from and imitate the behaviors they observe in daily life. However, developments in modern society often reveal various phenomena that highlight a disconnect between the moral values taught and the practices observed in society. Various cases of dishonesty, abuse of authority, intolerance, verbal and nonverbal violence, and unethical behavior displayed by public figures can influence students' perspectives on moral values. Furthermore, easy access to information through digital media exposes students to various forms of behavior that do not always align with the expected character values. Pratama et al. (2025) emphasize that the success of character education is greatly influenced by the exemplary behavior demonstrated by educational and social environments, as students internalize values more easily through real-life examples than through advice alone. Therefore, the crisis of exemplary behavior poses a serious challenge that requires attention in efforts to strengthen character education. The presence of role models who are consistent in both word and deed is a crucial factor in helping students understand and internalize moral values in their daily lives.

Globalization is one of the phenomena that has had a major impact on the development of character education in the modern era. Advances in information and communication technology have accelerated the flow of information, culture, and values from various parts of the world, transcending geographical boundaries. This

situation allows students to become familiar with diverse cultures, ways of thinking, and lifestyles, thereby broadening their horizons and enhancing their ability to adapt in an increasingly open society. However, on the other hand, globalization also presents challenges in the form of the influx of values that do not always align with national norms, culture, and character. This phenomenon has the potential to influence the behavior patterns of the younger generation, such as an increase in consumerist and individualistic attitudes and a decline in appreciation for local culture. Akbar and Alkhadafi (2025) explain that the era of disruption and globalization demands character education capable of strengthening students' identity, moral values, and cultural awareness so they do not lose their way in the face of rapid social changes. If not balanced by a strong understanding of the nation's cultural values and character, students risk experiencing a disorientation of values that can affect the formation of their personalities. Therefore, the influence of globalization must be critically understood so that students can wisely filter various external influences without losing their sense of self and the cultural values that form the foundation of social life. Thus, globalization is not merely viewed as a challenge but also as a learning space that can be leveraged to strengthen students' character within the context of global life.

One of the challenges in strengthening character education in the modern era is the lack of optimal synergy among schools, families, and the community the three primary environments in the educational process. Character education is often still viewed as the sole responsibility of schools, while the involvement of families and the community in supporting students' character development has not been fully realized. In reality, students do not only learn in the school environment but also interact and spend most of their time in family and community settings, which also influence the development of their attitudes, values, and behaviors. Inconsistencies between the values taught in school and those encountered in the family or social environment can hinder the process of internalizing the character traits instilled through formal education. Furthermore, the dynamics of modern life marked by parents' increasing busyness and a decrease in the intensity of family interactions also influence the effectiveness of character education. Therefore, a strengthening strategy is needed through the development of harmonious partnerships among

schools, families, and the community to ensure alignment in the character development of students. Schools can establish ongoing communication and cooperation with parents through various educational and mentoring programs, while the community can play a role in creating a social environment that supports the growth of positive moral and social values. According to Epstein (2011), family and community involvement in education makes a significant contribution to students' development, both academically and in terms of character. In line with this, Lickona (2013) emphasizes that character education will be more effective if there is consistency in values and strong cooperation among schools, families, and the community. Thus, synergy among these three educational environments is a crucial strategy in building an educational ecosystem capable of supporting the sustainable and comprehensive development of students' character.

Another challenge in strengthening character education in the modern era is the lack of optimal synergy among schools, families, and the community the three primary environments in the educational process. Character education is often still viewed as the sole responsibility of schools, while the involvement of families and the community in supporting students' character development has not yet been maximized. In reality, students do not only learn in the school environment but also interact and spend most of their time in family and community settings, which also influence the development of their attitudes, values, and behaviors. Inconsistencies between the values taught in school and those developed within family and community environments can hinder the process of internalizing the character traits instilled through formal education. Furthermore, the dynamics of modern life marked by parents' increasing busyness and a decline in the intensity of family interactions also affect the effectiveness of character development for students. Hasniati et al. (2025) emphasize that the success of character education requires the involvement of all elements of the educational system, including families and the community, because character formation is an ongoing process that takes place across various environments in students' lives. In line with this, Akbar and Alkhadafi (2025) explain that collaboration between schools, families, and the community is a crucial strategy for addressing the challenges of character education in the modern era. Therefore, a harmonious and sustainable partnership is necessary to ensure

alignment of values in the educational process. With strong synergy among these three environments, character education can proceed more effectively, consistently, and sustainably.

The next challenge in strengthening character education in the modern era is the dominance of an academic orientation within the education system, which often prioritizes cognitive achievement as the primary indicator of student success. An excessive emphasis on test scores, academic grades, and learning outcomes can result in character development receiving less attention than the cultivation of intellectual abilities. Consequently, students tend to be directed toward pursuing academic achievement without a corresponding focus on strengthening the moral, social, and emotional values that form a crucial foundation for life in society. This situation indicates that educational success cannot be measured solely through academic achievement but also through students' ability to apply character values in their daily lives. Nugraha et al. (2024) explain that one of the challenges of character education in the digital age is the continued strong focus of education on cognitive aspects, meaning that character development has not received proportional attention. In line with this, Fazriyah et al. (2025) emphasize that fostering a generation of noble character requires a balance between the development of intellectual abilities and character building so that students can face life's various challenges wisely. Therefore, strategies to strengthen character education are needed through a holistic educational approach that balances cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Schools need to integrate character development into the entire educational process so that students not only excel academically but also possess integrity, responsibility, discipline, social awareness, and the ability to make decisions based on moral values. Thus, a balance between academic achievement and character development is a crucial factor in realizing educational goals that produce students who are both intelligent and of good character.

Based on this discussion, it is clear that character education in the modern era faces various challenges stemming from the development of digital technology, rising individualism, a crisis of role models, the influence of globalization, weak synergy between schools, families, and the community, and the dominance of an

academic orientation within the education system. These challenges demonstrate that character development cannot be achieved instantly but requires a continuous process involving various stakeholders. Therefore, strengthening character education must be carried out through comprehensive strategies, ranging from the development of digital literacy, the strengthening of social awareness, the promotion of role modeling, the preservation of local cultural values, the building of partnerships between schools and families, to the implementation of a balanced education that integrates academic and character aspects. These efforts are crucial to ensuring that students not only possess adequate intellectual abilities but also demonstrate integrity, responsibility, social awareness, and the ability to make decisions based on moral values. In this context, character education serves as a vital foundation for preparing a generation capable of navigating the various changes and complexities of modern life without losing their sense of identity or the humanistic values that underpin social life. Thus, strengthening character education must be positioned as an integral part of an educational process aimed at shaping individuals who are intelligent, of noble character, and responsible toward themselves, their community, their nation, and their country.

III. Conclusion

Based on this discussion, it can be concluded that character education in the modern era is a holistic process of shaping students' personalities, comprehensively encompassing moral, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Character education is not only oriented toward the transfer of knowledge about virtuous values but also toward the process of internalizing those values so that they become ingrained attitudes and behaviors in daily life. The implementation of character education in the school environment is carried out through the integration of character values into the learning process, school culture, teachers' exemplary behavior, as well as co-curricular and extracurricular activities. The learning process does not focus solely on cognitive aspects but is also directed toward shaping attitudes and behaviors through contextual and meaningful learning experiences. Teachers play a crucial role in internalizing values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and social concern in every learning activity.

Furthermore, the success of character education implementation is largely determined by the school environment's consistency in fostering a positive culture that supports the sustained practice of character values, enabling students to internalize them in real life. Character education in the modern era faces various challenges, such as the development of digital technology, declining social awareness, a crisis of role models, the influence of globalization, weak synergy between schools, families, and the community, and the dominance of an academic orientation within the education system. These challenges indicate that the development of students' character cannot proceed optimally without the support of various stakeholders and a consistent environment. Therefore, a comprehensive strategy to strengthen character education is needed through the development of digital literacy, the reinforcement of social values, the promotion of role models, the preservation of culture, and the strengthening of collaboration among schools, families, and the community. With this strategy, character education is expected to shape a generation that is not only intellectually superior but also possesses integrity, responsibility, and social awareness in facing the complexities of modern life.

Bibliography

Akbar, R., & Alkhadafi, R. (2025). *Penguatan pendidikan karakter dalam pendidikan slam: Tantangan dan strategi di era disrupsi*. *Al-Ahnaf: Journal of Islamic Education, Learning and Religious Studies, 2*(2), 257–272. https://doi.org/10.61166/ahnaf.v2i2.25

Ambarita, M. P. R., & Jamaludin. (2025). *Praktik baik berkarakter siswa berdasar pada teori Michele Borba dalam membangun kecerdasan moral pada aspek pengetahuan civic knowledge di sekolah*. *Indonesian Journal of Education and Development Research, 3*(1), 716–725. https://doi.org/10.57235/ijedr.v3i1.4875

Aminah, A., Hairida, H., & Hartoyo, A. (2022). *Penguatan pendidikan karakter peserta didik melalui pendekatan pembelajaran kontekstual di sekolah dasar*. *Jurnal Basicedu, 6*(5), 8349–8358. https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i5.3791

Annisa, F., & Dewi, D. A. (2024). *Membangun karakter yang baik bagi para siswa melalui pendidikan kewarganegaraan*. *Konstruksi Sosial: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial, 2*(2), 39–45. https://doi.org/10.56393/konstruksisosial.v1i8.237

Astuti, N., dkk. (2025). *Implementasi pendidikan karakter dalam proses pembelajaran untuk membangun profil pelajar berkarakter*. *Cetta: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, 8*(3). https://doi.org/10.37329/cetta.v8i3.3996

Aziz, M. A. Z., Hayuning, N., Fitrian, N. I., & Anggraeni, R. (2025). *Strategi menciptakan generasi beretika di era digital*. *JIPTEK: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Teknik dan Kejuruan, 18*(1), 115–123. https://doi.org/10.20961/jiptek.v18i1.88336

Chardinal, D. V., Hidayatullah, M., Auliya, A. F., Safitri, S., & Syarifuddin. (2025). *Membangun karakter melalui pendidikan: Strategi pengembangan peserta didik yang efektif*. *Afeksi: Jurnal Penelitian dan Evaluasi Pendidikan, 6*(3), 479–491. https://doi.org/10.59698/afeksi.v6i3.477

Dirgantara, T. (2024). *Peran pendidikan karakter dalam mencegah krisis moral Generasi Z pada era disrupsi digital*. *Jendela Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmiah Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, 14*(2), 57–62. https://doi.org/10.55129/jp.v14i2.3160

Fazriyah, A. U., Dewi, R. R., & Hidayat, R. (2025). *Tantangan dan strategi pendidikan karakter pada remaja di era digital*. *Bhinneka: Jurnal Transformasi Pendidikan*. https://doi.org/10.64724/bjt93n17

Hasniati, Mashfufah, K., Alfirdo, T., & Sari, H. P. (2025). *Tantangan dan strategi dalam pendidikan karakteristik Islam di era digital*. *Jurnal IHSAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 3*(2), 349–358. https://doi.org/10.61104/ihsan.v3i2.932

Herak, R. (2025). *Character education in the digital age: Challenges and opportunities amidst technological developments*. *Majority Science Journal, 3*(2), 245–252. https://doi.org/10.61942/msj.v3i2.367

Hidayat, A., & Syarifuddin. (2024). *Integrasi pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran sebagai upaya membentuk generasi berakhlak mulia*. *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset dan Kajian Keislaman, 12*(1). https://doi.org/10.35878/islamicreview.v12i1.690

Hidayati, N., & Suryana, D. (2022). *Implementasi pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran di sekolah dasar*. Dalam *Prosiding Seminar Nasional PGSD* (Vol. 1, No. 1). https://doi.org/10.25134/prosidingsemnaspgsd.v1i1.16

Maryam, N. S. (2023). *Urgensi pendidikan karakter bagi mahasiswa di era digital*. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sang Surya, 9*(1), 95–106. https://doi.org/10.56959/jpss.v9i1.92

Marzuki. (2011). *Integrasi pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran di sekolah*. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter, 1*(1), 33–44. https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v0i1.1450

Marzuki. (2012). *Pengintegrasian pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran di sekolah*. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 0(1), 33–44. https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v0i1.1287

Marzuki. (2016). *Pendidikan karakter dalam pembelajaran di sekolah*. *Jurnal Pendidikan Jasmani dan Olahraga, 2*(2). https://doi.org/10.21831/jppfa.v2i2.2658

Bambang, S. E. M., Rustam, R., Handayani, R., & Heltien, D. (2023). *Model Project Based Learning (PjBL)*

Ningsih, E. W., Kholisotul, H., & Munir, M. (2022). *Konsep pendidikan karakter dalam perspektif pendidikan Islam*. *Trilogi: Jurnal Ilmu Teknologi, Kesehatan, dan Humaniora, 3*(1). https://doi.org/10.33650/trilogi.v3i1.3396

Nugraha, M. A., Amanda, D., Qolbi, S. K., & Qodratullah, W. (2024). *Strategi penguatan pendidikan karakter di era digital: Tantangan dan solusi dalam implementasi di sekolah*. *Masagi: Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter, 1*(2), 136–148. https://doi.org/10.29313/masagi.v1i2.4993

Nurhabibah, S., Sari, H. P., & Fatimah, S. (2025). *Pendidikan karakter di era digital: Tantangan dan strategi dalam membentuk generasi berakhlak mulia*. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Pendidikan Agama Islam, 3*(3), 194–206. https://doi.org/10.61132/jmpai.v3i3.1099

Pratama, S. N., Iswanto, T., Hasyanti, F., Qotrunnada, E., & Kaisan, M. Z. (2025**).** *Strategi pembentukan karakter santri menyikapi tantangan dan peluang zaman: Studi kasus di Pondok Pesantren Bustanul Makmur II*. *CBJIS: Cross-*

Border Journal of Islamic Studies, 7(1), 196–204. https://doi.org/10.37567/cbjis.v7i1.3948

Saputri, S., Ardivanto, A., & Rofian, R. (2025). *Penanaman pendidikan karakter pada peserta didik di sekolah dasar*. *Journal of Education Research, 6*(1), 166–173. https://doi.org/10.37985/jer.v6i1.2293

Sumarni, S., Widiasari, F., Azizah, N. F., & Firmansyah, Y. (2025). *Pendidikan karakter di era digital: Tantangan dan strategi mengatasi krisis empati, disiplin, dan nilai moral peserta didik*. *Educatum: Jurnal Dunia Pendidikan, 3*(1), 45–55. https://doi.org/10.62282/je.v3i1.45-55

Wulandari, D., & Dewi, D. A. (2023). *Urgensi pendidikan karakter dalam membentuk kepribadian generasi muda di era modern*. *Belaindika: Pembelajaran dan Inovasi Pendidikan, 7*(2). https://doi.org/10.52005/belaindika.v7i2.355