



Cultivating *elok budi* character value in elementary school

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Article info	Abstract
Keywords: value, <i>elok budi</i> character, elementary school	Character education in primary schools is essential to shaping children's moral values and good behavior. This research uses the literature study method to understand how the character values of Elokah Budi can be effectively applied in the daily lives of elementary school students. Data were obtained from various sources, such as books, journal articles, and educational policies, which were analyzed to describe practical approaches to integrating character values. The results show that character education focusing on the concept of "Elokah Budi" in primary schools emphasizes the development of cognitive and academic aspects and the formation of dignified and highly ethical character in students. Approaches through the formal curriculum and extracurricular activities have proven effective in teaching students honesty, responsibility, politeness, and empathy. The holistic approach to character education also recognizes local cultural and religious values as key elements in building a strong and diverse character.

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1. Introduction

The central aspect that makes a country developed or not can be seen in the quality of education in that country. Education is the nation's backbone (Alam, Forhad, & Ismail, 2020). Education is the key to all quality progress and development because, with it, humans can realize all their potential as themselves and as a society. This is in line with the opinion (Kuswari et al., 2019) that education is an effort that is guiding, which is carried out consciously by educators (including parents) towards students to develop the potential of students to form a perfect personality. Education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation to educate the nation's life (Utomo, Hasruddin, & Murad, 2020) so that students are active in developing their potential to have religious, spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation, and state. Education can bring children a better life (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System).

The instruction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Joko Widodo, emphasized the importance of Indonesia being ready to carry out a "Mental Revolution," namely a fundamental change in the roots of this nation's generation, especially by strengthening character learning in various aspects of life throughout life. Presidential Regulation No. 87/2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education was followed by a Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of

Indonesia Number 20/2018 concerning Strengthening Character Education in formal education units. This shows that the government emphasizes the importance of implementing character education in educational institutions without exception. The demand for teachers today is to have responsibility for building national character and culture.

However, research shows a gap in the application of character values in education, especially in integrating traditional values into the curriculum. Although the government has issued policies supporting character education, many schools have not optimally implemented these values in daily practice, so the expected good character is not internalized properly in students. Research by (Davidson, Johnson, Lizarralde, Dikmen, and Sliwinski, 2007) found that character plays a role in all types of school achievement, both curricular and non-curricular. The study was conducted in 24 good schools in the United States. The results concluded that character consists of two major parts, namely performance character and moral character. Performance character consists of all the values that make a person capable of achieving very high potential actualization in a performance environment (in the classroom). Furthermore, research conducted by (Benninga, Helmantel, and Sarig, 2005) on the relationship between the implementation of character education and academic achievement in elementary schools in California, United States, concluded that elementary schools that implement character in the learning process seriously and well designed tend to have high academic achievement.

Based on interviews with teachers in primary schools in Kuantan Singing Regency, Riau Province, several significant challenges were revealed in the effort to foster *elok budi* character in students. One of the main problems is the shift in traditional values, particularly values passed down through the Malay *tunjuk ajar*, such as trustworthiness, role modeling, and integrity. Teachers indicated that these values are being eroded by the influence of modern values coming from outside. In addition, implementing local wisdom values in the learning process is still not optimal. Despite efforts to integrate these values into the curriculum, many teachers feel that delivering teaching materials is ineffective enough to internalize these values in students. This has led to the significant absence of *tunjuk ajar Melayu* character in students' daily lives. There is a need for concrete steps to raise awareness of the importance of these traditional values in shaping children's character and developing their skills in an increasingly modern context. This is reinforced by research conducted (Affandy, 2017) that the current learning process has not maximized the values of local wisdom as a step and learning process, delivering teaching material to students so that local wisdom values have begun to be eroded by modernity values from outside.

Based on the background description above, the author is interested in studying and fostering the character values of elementary school students. Changes in applying these character values are a significant concern in basic education. This research aims to understand how *elok budi* character values can be effectively applied in the daily lives of elementary school students. Through an ethnopedagogical approach, this research will explore integrating traditional values in the education curriculum and their impact on students' character development in a modern, increasingly globalized context. Hopefully, this article can contribute to forming a young generation with integrity, morality, and a responsible attitude for a better future.

2. Method

The research method used in this study is an in-depth literature study focusing on the character values of elementary school students. The literature study approach was chosen to search for, collect, and analyze data from various relevant sources. These sources include books, journal articles, education reports, and school policies. The initial step in this method is to conduct a comprehensive literature search on the character values of *elok budi* applied in elementary schools. The search process is carried out through academic databases. The data collected will cover various aspects, such as the character education approach, effective teaching strategies, evaluation of results, and challenges and solutions in building student character. The stages in this study consist of:

1. Source Identification
Determine and collect relevant sources based on established criteria.
2. Data Collection
Collect information from identified sources, focusing on data related to the character values of eloklah budi.
3. Content Analysis
Conduct content analysis of collected data to identify patterns, key themes, and concepts emerging from the literature.
4. Report Preparation
Organize the results of the analysis in the form of a report that presents findings and recommendations.

Using this literature study method, this research is expected to contribute to increasing understanding of the importance of character education in forming students' personalities in elementary schools. The results of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for educators and stakeholders to increase the effectiveness of character education in Elokla Budi in the future.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Character

Character or disposition is a combination of permanent human traits, which becomes a distinctive mark that distinguishes one individual from another (Dewantara, 2011). This means that character reflects the unique essence distinguishing one human being from another. Teaching character is an effort to support the development of students' lives physically and mentally based on their nature toward civilization (Dewantara, 1977). Humans cannot be separated from their character in their roles as individuals and social beings. This character will affect the pattern of human interaction in the environment. As stated by Lickona (2014), a strong personal character will form a reasonable individual in providing services to organizations and society and supporting public life. Strong character not only shapes individuals with integrity and responsibility but also plays a vital role in strengthening social structures and building healthy communities.

In other terminology, character can be understood as values manifesting in individual behavior (Kesuma et al., 2011; Muslich, 2013). This concept is closely related to human relationships with God Almighty, himself, fellow humans, the environment, and nationality. This character is reflected in various aspects of life, including thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions, all based on norms governed by religion, law, manners, culture, and customs. In other words, the character manifests values in one's attitudes and actions, which are always related to society's social norms and standards. This shows that character is not just a person's internal quality but reflects conformity with the values and rules in a particular social and cultural context.

Sources of character values can be identified and developed from various aspects, including religion. In Indonesia, most people adhere to religion; religious teachings are essential in shaping and guiding the lives of individuals, society, and the nation. Religion provides moral and ethical guidelines, forms a deep outlook on life, and influences daily actions and behavior. In addition to religion, Pancasila is also a very significant source of values in the context of Indonesian political and state life. As the foundation of the state, Pancasila not only functions as a principle of life and nationality but also as a guideline in formulating policies, social interactions, and forming the character of the nation. The values of Pancasila reflect the aspirations and shared goals of the Indonesian people in the nation and state. The third source of values is cultural values and universal values. Cultural values reflect local traditions, customs, and habits that play an essential role in social life and character education in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, universal values—such as human rights, justice, and tolerance—also play an essential role in shaping the character of individuals and society. These values are often used as a

reference in character education to ensure that individuals appreciate their cultural heritage and understand and adhere to globally applicable principles. Combining these three sources of values contributes to developing a holistic and integrative character in Indonesia.

Thus, character development is an essential aspect of education because strong character will form individuals who are responsible, caring for others, and able to contribute positively to society and the nation.

3.2 Cultivating the character of eloklah budi

Eloklah Budi's character is a concept that emphasizes good and dignified behavior. The concept was introduced by Efendi in 2008 as a form of advice and admonition for humans. The term "Eloklah Budi" refers to a high quality of ethics, where a person with good ethics will exhibit noble traits such as politeness, gentleness, and kindness. Individuals with this character are known for their respectful and considerate attitude towards others and ability to act in a way that reflects noble ethical and moral values.

In practice, the character of *Eloklah Budi* teaches that good and dignified behavior should be seen in various aspects of a person's life. This includes relationships with family, where they show compassion and responsibility; relationships with friends, where they show loyalty and support; and relationships with society in general, where they behave reasonably, empathetically, and contribute to the common good. This character requires individuals to maintain good behavior in favorable situations and consistently carry out high moral values in various conditions. By adopting the Eloklah Budi principle, one is expected to be a role model for others and positively impact the environment around them.

In addition, *Eloklah Budi's* character is also considered a mandate that must be upheld because this good behavior is not only for the individual but also for the surrounding environment. This character is also an example or role model who inspires others to follow in his footsteps and behave well and responsibly. According to Suwardi (2005), the character of Eloklah Budi is also considered advice that guides humans in the right direction and earns the pleasure of Allah. This shows that good behavior following Eloklah Budi's character is considered a way for God to bless humans and provide protection and safety both in this world and in the afterlife.

Suwarman (2007) asserts that the character of *Eloklah Budi* reflects commendable attitudes and behaviors that can make others feel respected. This character reflects the importance of sound and dignified behavior in building positive social relationships and harmonious individual interactions. Attitudes and actions that follow Eloklah Budi's principles reflect high ethics and affect the social environment.

By adopting *Eloklah Budi's* behaviors, individuals can create a more harmonious and respectful atmosphere. This shows that good actions, politeness, and kindness significantly impact interpersonal and community relationships. Individuals who exhibit commendable attitudes and behaviors not only build a positive image of themselves but also exert a good influence on others, making them role models in society.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Eloklah Budi character manifests good behavior that shows a person has deep ethics in every action and deed. This character serves as a reflection of commendable attitudes and behaviors that not only increase mutual respect but also contribute to the formation of a more harmonious and civilized social environment.

Cultivating *Eloklah Budi's* character values requires a planned and comprehensive approach involving various aspects and related parties. The following is a discussion of strategies that can be used to achieve this goal:

1) Character education

Character education plays a significant role in instilling Eloklah Budi values among individuals. Educational programs, whether formally organized in schools or informally organized in the community, aim to integrate learning about ethics, morality, and social values with individuals from

an early age to adulthood. Thus, character education focuses on cognitive and academic development and forming good and dignified character.

A person with character is an individual who has a specific personality, behavior, nature, disposition, or character. This explanation shows that character is closely related to a person's personality or morality (Samrin, 2016). Character education instills and develops positive character values in students (Mubin, 2020; Lestari & Handayani, 2023; Antonius, 2022). In the context of character education, the abilities that need to be developed in students include various aspects that make them godly individuals (submit to the concept of divinity) and can carry out the mandate as leaders in the world. In addition, they also need to have the ability to live in harmony with fellow humans and other creatures and make this world a place that supports common welfare and well-being (Rofi'ie, 2017).

In schools, character education is an integral part of the education curriculum. This is reflected in the cultivation of moral values such as honesty, tolerance, responsibility, and respect for others. Through subjects such as religious education, civic education, or extracurricular activities such as social activities and environmental hygiene, schools help build awareness of the importance of attitudes and behaviors following *Eloklah Budi's* values.

In addition, character education is also carried out through informal approaches in the community. As the first unit in a child's character formation, the family plays a central role in conveying values essential for *Eloklah Budi's* character development. Through good parenting and positive role models, parents help children understand and internalize values such as empathy, humility, and kindness.

Character education aims to instill individual values and build the individual's ability to apply those values in daily life. This means not only teaching about what is right and wrong but also about how to make moral and responsible decisions in various situations. Overall, character education in the context of *Eloklah Budi* requires cooperation between schools, families, and communities to create an educational environment that supports the formation of sound and dignified character. With an integrated and comprehensive approach, it is hoped that individuals can grow into members of society who have integrity and respect and can positively impact their surroundings.

2) The Role of religion and culture (ethnapedagogy)

Religion and local cultural values are essential in forming *Eloklah Budi's* character. Values instilled by religion, such as honesty, humility, and tolerance, and cultural values, such as customs and politeness, can be a strong foundation for forming dignified attitudes and behaviors. Integrating religious and cultural values into character education is important so individuals can internalize these values more effectively.

Oktaviani and Ratnasari (2018) said that ethno-pedagogy is actualizing education oriented toward instilling local wisdom values. As an approach, ethno-pedagogy in elementary schools must be implemented with innovative educational strategies or media that can attract students' attention to master and apply local wisdom. The learning curriculum in Indonesia, although it has faced several curriculum changes, is expected to contain ethnopedagogical content where educational activities are required to emphasize the local wisdom of student participants. Ethno pedagogy views local knowledge or wisdom (local knowledge, local wisdom) as a source of innovation and skills that can be empowered for the welfare of society (Muzakkir, 2021). This aligns with the opinion of Putra (2017), who states that ethno-pedagogy is local culture-based learning, which creates a learning environment and designs learning experiences that integrate local culture as part of the learning process. Local culture-based learning: culture is integrated as a tool for the learning process to motivate students to apply knowledge. Ethnopedagogy as an educational practice based on local wisdom is used as a source of innovative knowledge and has skills that can be empowered for the welfare of society, namely local wisdom related to how knowledge is produced, applied, managed, and then passed on to the next generation (Susilaningtiyas & Falaq, 2021). Therefore, it is appropriate for education in

Indonesia to implement Ethnopedagogy-based learning and local wisdom as a source of moral learning (Fakhroh, Suprijono, & M, 2020).

Fua (2015) states that there are several traditional learning applications (ethnodidactics) based on local culture that are proven to be effective in shaping good character (personality). The form of culture in a community is the binder of its supporters in experiencing their environment, both near natural and social areas. The form of culture reflects a citizen's pattern of thinking and the overall attitude in living his life.

Then Dewi (2015) reported in her research that the implementation of local wisdom in the education process can be integrated into subjects, can also be a special subject or implemented in school culture, leadership, and school management, or synergistic ties with the local cultural background community around the school have an essential role in applying the values developed. This perspective is further confirmed by (Ilahi, 2016 Offorma, 2016) claiming that education today should be viewed as an effort to transmit cultural values from the older to the younger generations so that these values can continue to evolve in society. This quickly has an influence on everyone around the world, including students. This aligns with previous research showing that intense exposure to Korean media contributes to students' better cultural knowledge of Korea than local culture (Ri'aeni, 2019; Simbar, 2016). Learning by using real-world contexts and integrating various sciences will affect students' mastery of concepts (Glynn & Winter, 2004). Therefore, teachers must improve the mastery of students' competence while still paying attention to students' cultural backgrounds (Sugara & Sugito, 2022).

Thus, to develop character education, it should be based on local culture (ethnopedagogical). The goal is to shape behavior that is adapted to the local culture so that students can easily interact and adapt to the surrounding environment while not forgetting the universal values that are still used.

4. Conclusion

Elokiah Budi's character education in elementary schools is essential in forming the foundations of moral values and good behavior in children. The character education program focuses on developing cognitive and academic aspects and forming dignified and highly ethical characters. Character education in elementary schools can be implemented through various approaches, including the formal curriculum and extracurricular activities. In the formal curriculum, subjects such as religious education or citizenship often become platforms for teaching students values such as honesty, responsibility, politeness, and empathy. Through this learning, children are taught to recognize and practice these values daily.

Apart from that, character education in elementary schools also utilizes an informal approach through interactions with teachers, school staff, and fellow students. The role models provided by teachers and school staff are very important in shaping children's behavior, while social interactions with peers help them understand the importance of cooperation, honesty, and empathy in building positive relationships.

A holistic approach to character education in elementary schools also recognizes the critical role of local cultural and religious values in shaping children's character. Values such as cooperation, politeness, diversity, and justice are taught as theory and implemented in daily school activities and life in the local community. Thus, *Elokiah Budi's* character education in elementary schools aims not only to produce academically intelligent students but also to have moral integrity, be responsible, and contribute positively to their surroundings. Through an integrated approach between formal and informal education, it is hoped that the young generation of Indonesia will grow into individuals with strong characters, able to maintain noble values, and ready to face future challenges with confidence and integrity.

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