

Elementary School Physical Education Teachers' Perceptions of Strengthening Character Education in Physical Education

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Abstract. The government has been implementing the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) program since 2016, mandating teachers, including Physical Education (PE) teachers, to integrate character values into the learning process. However, practical implementation often needs to be improved, with character values being documented mainly in administrative records like learning plans. Preliminary studies in the Sumedang district reveal a need for more emphasis on the affective domain, as PE teachers tend to focus on the psychomotor domain. So, in-depth research must be conducted on this topic. This research, a case study involving 10 PE teachers in Sumedang Regency, explores their perceptions of character education. The data were collected by distributing short questionnaires to collect participant demographic data; ten people participated in semi-structured interviews. Through inductive and thematic data analysis, themes voiced by participants were identified, evaluated, and created with the help of NVivo 12 Pro. Significant findings emerged through open questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which included teacher understanding, urgency, challenges, learning strategies in integrating character values, and PPK's contribution to improving holistic student development. This research contributes to improving the quality of physical education learning in elementary schools, which is oriented toward strengthening character education. These insights are crucial for policymakers, curriculum writers, and educators to enhance character education in physical learning.

Keywords: Strengthening Character Education, Teacher Perceptions, Physical Education Learning, Character Values, Case studies

1. Introduction

High-quality education yields graduates who contribute to the availability of skilled human resources (HR) capable of enhancing living conditions. The objectives of education evolve swiftly, contingent upon the exigencies of the era. Higher ability requirements directly affect the education system (Bojović et al., 2020; Hanum & Robandi, 2023; Ratten, 2020; Zhao & Watterston, 2021). *Character education* is an aspect that is increasingly being paid attention to in education systems in various parts of the world. In the era of globalization and rapid social change, a nation needs to have the next generation who not only excel in knowledge and skills but also have strong character and morals. Teachers play an important role in accompanying students in class (Nahar et al., 2022). The duties and responsibilities of teachers include not only the task of educating, teaching, and guiding students but also the ability to assess and understand the conditions and character of students (Amelia et al., 2022). Teachers assume a pivotal role in the execution of education. This is because the caliber of educators influences the success of education. The relationship between educators and students is very close, and with continuous efforts to help students realize their maximum potential, educators must continue to improve their performance. The quality of students results from high-quality education. By providing high-quality education, educators become the determining factor for success (Hartini et al., 2018). Every teacher must possess the fundamental qualifications and competencies that serve as the foundation for the execution of education. As such, in a genuinely expert profession, teaching entails possessing effective teaching strategies and

teaching competencies (Suhadi et al., 2014). The Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 87 of 2017 concerning Strengthening Character Education (PPK) contains five central character values that must be implemented: religious, nationalist, integrity, independence and cooperation. So, all subjects must be instilled with character values as a whole, meaning these character traits must be outlined in the lesson plans and practised in the teaching and learning process. The government expects teachers or schools to instil character education in the classroom by including it in the teaching materials used to teach subject matter, as previously stated (Aghni et al., 2020). Character education must be incorporated into learning and consistently taught by all teachers. However, the reality is that teachers and students in schools currently place more emphasis on developing students' skills rather than their character being involved in academic activities (Aghni et al., 2020).

1.1. Problem Statement

The government policy on Strengthening Character Education (PPK) began to be implemented in 2016 in schools in stages. This policy aims to improve students' character through an approach to harmonizing emotions, feelings, thoughts and physical health (Ahmadi et al., 2020). However, at the practical level, the integration of character values only manifests itself in administrative records, namely in learning plans alone. The results of preliminary studies in the field indicate that physical education (PE) teachers in Sumedang Regency have yet to focus on strengthening character values as a practical domain. The emphasis tends to be on the psychomotor domain alone. This is correct, but more importantly, they can implement PPK in physical education learning. The tendency to focus solely on psychomotor aspects has the potential to ignore moral, moral and character aspects, which is not an educational concept because education is not only a transfer of skills or a transfer of knowledge but also a transfer of values (Muhtar et al., 2019; Suherman et al., 2019). In this regard, it is essential to investigate how teachers perceive strengthening character education included in the affective domain of Physical Education learning. This is reinforced by Baharun & Maryam (2018) that physical education and character formation are two concepts that are always closely related. Sports have the potential to shape students' character. Thus, this research aims to investigate teachers' perceptions regarding strengthening character education, considering that perceptions will determine teacher actions in implementing the Physical Education learning process. Character is also a moral concept consisting of several traits that can be developed through involvement in sports activities (Rosmi, 2016).

1.2. Related Research

In conducting a study of teacher perceptions regarding strengthening character education in Physical Education learning, several relevant studies were explored and reviewed; for example, Birhan et al. (2021) from Ethiopia conducted a study on the components of children's moral and character education, as well as the pedagogy or methodology used by parents and educators in instilling character and moral education in children. Using mixed methods, 18 schools, 272 kindergarten and elementary school teachers, and 272 parents participated in this research. The results of his research show that parents emphasize children's honesty and responsibility, while teachers focus on teaching respect, fairness, and concern for others. Parents and teachers also often advise using fairy tales with animal characters and songs to teach character education. Yıldırım & Gürpınar (2023) from Turkey conducted a study exploring physical education teachers' views on the concept of character education. Using a phenomenological design, 15 physical education (PE) teachers taught in private and state schools. His research shows the importance of character education in fostering positive behaviour and preventing negative actions, thereby encouraging students' development of superior character traits. Then, research conducted by Sukidin et al. (2022) from Indonesia studied the perceptions and self-efficacy of teachers and students towards character education. They used quantitative descriptive methods involving 134 teachers and students from various educational and professional profiles. The research results showed that there was agreement among the participants regarding the need to implement character education; however, there is ambiguity regarding the effectiveness of this task. Most participants still had doubts about their ability to provide significant beneficial changes to students' characters.

Furthermore, Hershberg et al. (2016) from the United States studied stakeholder perspectives regarding the processes involved in character development at Williamson University. A qualitative approach involved 43 students, 16 lecturers, five administrators, and 96 alums. The results of his research show that educational and environmental factors influence character, and the critical role of intrapersonal relationships and practical support or collaboration can develop strong character.

Responding to previous studies, research by Birhan et al. (2021) has yet to explore integrated character education in subjects. Then, research by Yıldırım & Gürpınar (2023) explored the perceptions of Physical Education teachers who teach at all school levels regarding the concept of character and character education. Furthermore, research by Sukidin et al. (2022) only focuses on perceptions and self-efficacy towards character education. Likewise, Hershberg et al. (2016) focus on stakeholders' perspectives on character development in higher education environments. Therefore, this research focuses on Physical Education (PE) teachers' perceptions regarding Strengthening Character Education (PPK) within elementary school physical education learning. While previous studies have explored various aspects of character education and its implementation, this research uniquely addresses PE teachers' perspectives in the elementary school setting.

1.3. Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to examine the views of physical education teachers regarding integrating character education into physical education learning. This research explicitly investigates the understanding physical education teachers have regarding character education and the approaches they use to incorporate it into physical education successfully. Furthermore, this research investigates the challenges that physical education teachers face when integrating character education into physical education learning and the perceived influence of character education on students' comprehensive growth.

2. Theoretical Framework

Character refers to a person's cognitive and ethical attributes. The character can be described as a comprehensive collection of psychological traits, partly developed through cognitive growth and enabling a person to behave as a moral agent (Aghni et al., 2020; Goodwin et al., 2014) In addition, character refers to the internal composition of an individual as a cohesive and well-defined entity, as demonstrated through his actions, habits, and cognitive processes in the realm of human emotions (Prandini, 2015). A prosperous society and an optimistic outlook for individuals in this era of globalization can be achieved through character education.

The main goal of character education is to build a strong foundation for continuous learning and foster harmonious relationships in the family, community and workplace. In addition, character education plays a vital role in cultivating personal values and virtues that enable individuals to engage sustainably in the global world (Abdullah et al., 2019). Character education is a deliberate and sincere effort by a teacher to instil values in his students. Ki Hajar Dewantara emphasized that the education process must include the cultivation of heart, feeling, thinking and exercise. Education must address these four domains (Saputra & Budimansyah, 2022).

The government formulated a "Strengthening Character Education (PPK)" policy to prepare for unpredictable changes proactively as a means to combat the decline of moral values in the modern global era (Fauzi et al., 2017). Strengthening Character Education (PPK) is an educational movement that is the responsibility of education to improve students' moral and ethical development by promoting the integration of their emotions, preferences, intellectual abilities and physical activity. This is achieved through collaboration and cooperation between educational units, families and communities, as an integral aspect of character education by the National Mental Revolution Movement (GNRM) (Puri et al., 2022). The PPK movement prioritizes character education as the most fundamental aspect of national

education, serving as the central pillar around which primary and secondary education are implemented. Moreover, the PPK Movement is essential in developing, strengthening, integrating, and harmonizing the different character education initiatives and activities put into place thus far. In this relationship of integration can take the following forms: combining activities that take place in the classroom, outside of the classroom, and in the community or society; integrating extracurricular, co-curricular, and intracurricular activities; involving school personnel, families, and the community all at the same time; deepening and expanding through the addition and intensification of activities aimed at developing student character; adding and exposing activities related to student learning; and rearranging student study time at school or outside of it; finally, aligning the primary responsibilities of teachers, Based Management Schools, and the functions of the School Committee with PPK needs (Atika et al., 2019).

Teachers significantly impact students' character after parents (Tutkun et al., 2017). Students consider their teachers and friends role models because they spend part of their time at school and are influenced by their teachers' presence. Therefore, educational institutions and teachers are the primary targets for implementing character education. Teachers can effectively carry out character formation in physical education learning by implementing physical activities, play activities and sports activities (Pramono et al., 2023). The effectiveness of the learning process is greatly influenced by the teacher's performance during the lesson, and someone who has completed a particular study program intended to prepare them to teach can carry out learning effectively and accurately. This statement implies that teaching is a profession and a professional job. To carry out any professional work, a person must have certain skills or competencies. Teachers are individuals who are granted the authority and hold the responsibility for the instruction and learning of their students. This implies that teachers must possess fundamental proficiency, power, and capability to fulfil their responsibilities. Hence, teachers must possess competence regarding abilities, skills, and expertise in administering education (Latifah, 2021). Teachers must have pedagogical competence, personality, social skills and professional expertise. Pedagogical competence is the main skill that teachers must have. To fully demonstrate his educational achievements, he needs to master these competencies well. These competencies must be complemented by personality and social skills to carry out their professional work effectively. By thoroughly understanding pedagogical capabilities, teachers will have the skills necessary to design, implement, and evaluate learning processes effectively. Teachers can investigate and improve students' abilities (Djuwita, 2019).

The perceptions and experiences of physical education (PE) teachers are a valuable source of information to support strategic contributions in instilling character values, especially in physical education learning. The integration of teachers' understanding of character values and their experience in designing and implementing Physical Education learning activities can be the primary basis for developing effective strategies to instil positive characteristic values in students. Perception influences individual behaviour and reactions to an event (Rosyidah et al., 2022).

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

Case studies are used to achieve research objectives. This design was chosen because case studies examine real-time phenomena in their natural environments, considering that these environments will have an impact (Rashid et al., 2019). This approach was selected because it enables a careful examination of the data within a specific context (Werang, Agung, et al., 2023; Werang, Suarjana, et al., 2023). Also referring to the definition of a case study is a comprehensive examination of a setting, certain documents, or unique events (Aydin & Tonbuluğlu, 2014). This allows researchers to understand in-depth and contextually how

physical education teachers (PE) perceive themselves in encouraging student character development.

3.2. Participants

The participants of this research were physical education teachers from state elementary schools located in the Sumedang Regency area. Using Google Forms, a simple and secure online data collection tool, short response questionnaires were distributed to collect participant data and information (Moises Jr, 2020). Research partners who had access to Physical Education teachers in elementary schools helped distribute questionnaires to teachers. Before collecting data from educators, the research objectives and level of teacher participation were explained in writing. A short questionnaire was used to view descriptive data on characteristics such as age, gender, education level, and teaching experience. Ten physical education teachers who meet these criteria were selected and asked to be interviewed (Kosasih et al., 2022; Rasmitadila et al., 2020). The ten subjects selected had criteria such as a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience and an age range of 25-60 years, consisting of 7 male physical education teachers and 3 female physical education teachers. Study participant demographics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants Demographic Information

Participants	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Level of Education
Teacher 1	Male	57	>10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 2	Female	38	>10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 3	Male	37	6-10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 4	Female	60	>10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 5	Male	35	6-10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 6	Male	29	3-5 years	Bachelor
Teacher 7	Male	25	6-10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 8	Female	60	>10 years	Bachelor
Teacher 9	Male	30	3-5 years	Bachelor
Teacher 10	Male	36	6-10 years	Bachelor

3.3. Data Collection

The process of data collection was conducted in two distinct phases. Data collection in the initial phase involved disseminating questionnaires to physical education instructors, which included inquiries about descriptive data on attributes such as gender, age, educational attainment, and teaching background. After acquiring the questionnaire data, study participants were chosen to conduct interviews. Data collection in the second stage was conducted via semi-structured interviews, employing an interview guide to ensure participants stayed focused on the subject while offering more comprehensive responses (Kavenuke & Muthanna, 2021; Kosasih et al., 2022; Muthanna, 2019). At this stage, all physical education comes with predetermined criteria for who will be interviewed. This measure of the number of subjects is accepted in a qualitative approach (Kosasih et al., 2022). Before conducting the interview, the researcher explained the purpose of this research and then asked permission to record the conversation. Interviews were conducted at a time and place previously agreed

upon by each teacher. In the data collection process, interviews were conducted from December 16, 2023 to January 6, 2024.

3.4. Data Analysis

Inductive and thematic analysis was used to examine data to discover, assess, and create themes expressed by research subjects (Rasmitadila et al., 2020; Roberts et al., 2019). Participant's responses, especially in the early stages, were tagged using keywords to prevent overlap. The researcher's coding and categorization efforts were facilitated by NVivo 12 Pro software. Nodes were used to organize survey and interview data into categories with specific codes. This inductive method allows themes provided by participants as answers to research questions to be identified (Kosasih et al., 2022; Rasmitadila et al., 2020). Figure 1 presents the results of physical education teachers' perceptions regarding the implementation of PPK.

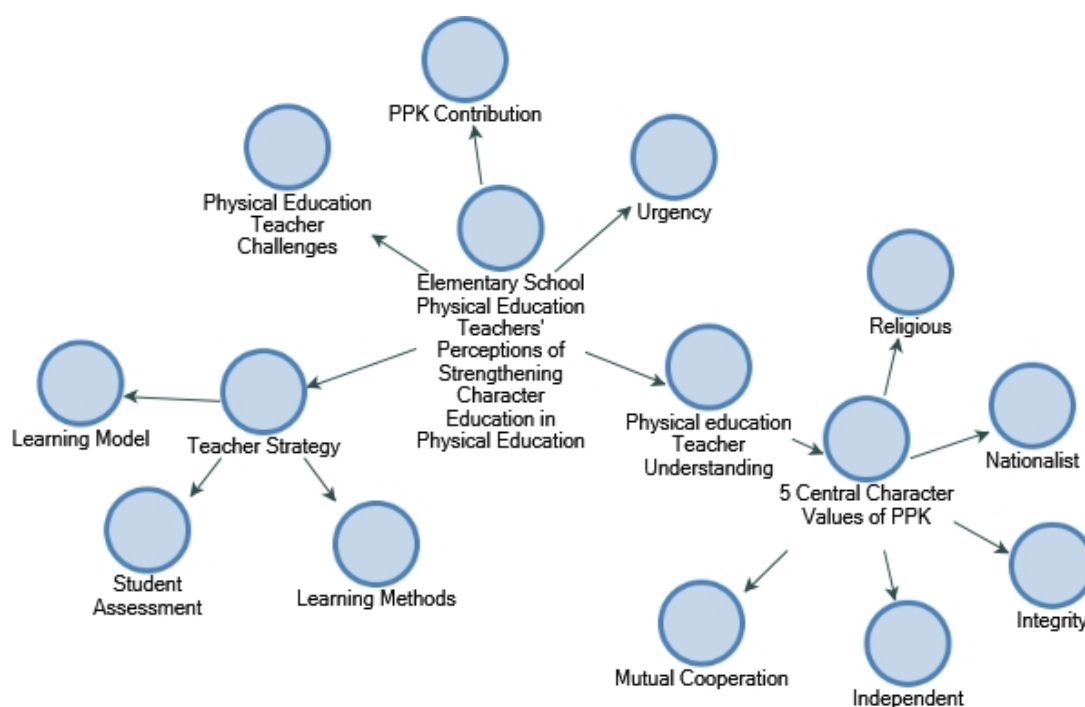


Figure 1. Thematic Inductive Concept of Physical Education Teachers' Perceptions Regarding PPK

3.5. Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability, known in quantitative research, in contrast to qualitative research, are replaced by trustworthiness (Kosasih et al., 2022; Peterson, 2019). Trust consists of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Amin et al., 2020). The data collection tool cites relevant literature, demonstrating the reliability and authenticity of the data. In addition, several experts were involved in designing the instrument, including experts in character education, language, and physical education. The results of the interview transcripts are conveyed to teachers individually via WhatsApp. Triangulation between researchers involves three researchers at each stage of the research process by holding regular conferences or organizing focus groups to discuss methods to improve the defence of the research (Natow, 2020).

4. Findings

Based on the methodology adopted and interview data processed and analyzed, this research produced five critical themes to explore. The five themes found in this research can be described as follows:

4.1. Physical Education Teachers' Understanding of Strengthening Character Education (PPK)

Strengthening character education at the elementary school level is the foundation for forming children's attitudes and behaviour when they grow up. Optimal quality character education will form children's independent, responsible personalities and give them the courage to face risks in pursuing the goals they want to achieve (Baehr, 2017). Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 12 of 2018 states that there are several dimensions of character development contained in this PPK, including heart exercise (ethical), taste exercise (aesthetic), thought exercise (literacy) and exercise (kinesthetic). PPK's priority characteristics have five central values: religion, nationalism, integrity, independence, and cooperation. In addition, implementation in Indonesia must run effectively by the practices mandated by Law Number 20 of 2003. National education is vital in developing potential and forming humans with dignity, character and contribution to civilization—nation in order to improve people's lives. Education aims to maximize pupils' capacity to develop strong faith and devotion to God Almighty, possess exemplary character, maintain excellent health, acquire knowledge and skills, foster creativity, cultivate independence, and ultimately become democratic and responsible citizens.

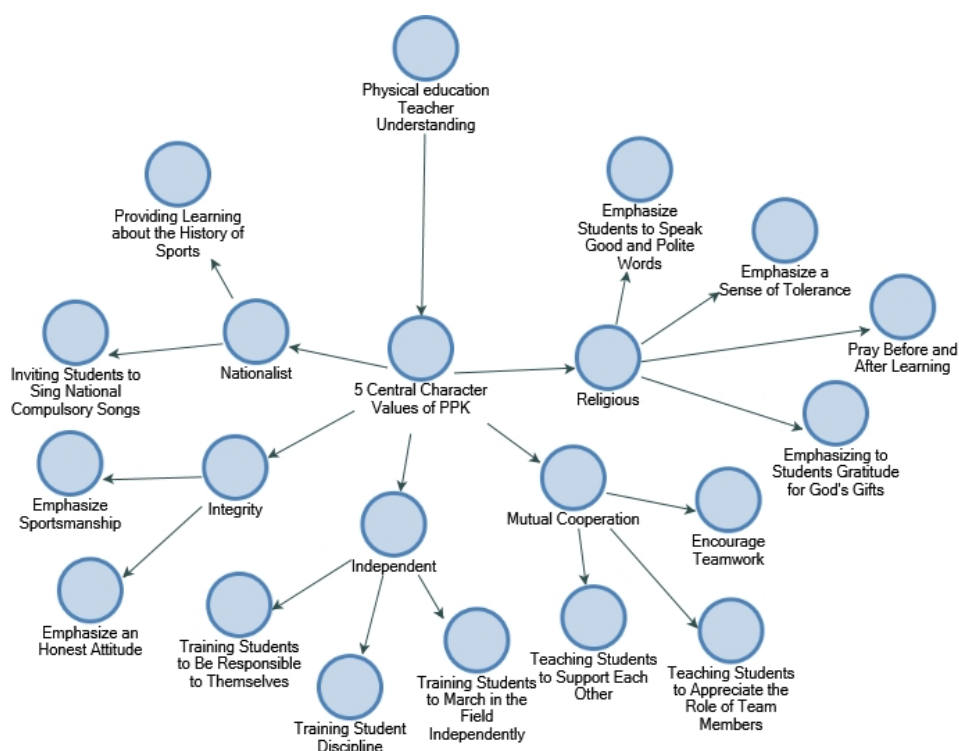


Figure 2. Concept Map of Physical Education Teachers' Understanding of PPK

In implementing strengthening character education (PPK) in physical education learning, a teacher must understand this PPK's concept, objectives and benefits. Understanding this concept involves recognizing the moral and ethical values instilled in students. Strengthening character education aims to form quality individuals with a positive attitude, integrity and responsibility. Teachers who understand its benefits can direct students toward holistic development, build a solid moral foundation for daily life and create a learning environment that supports positive character growth. This aligns with teacher 2's opinion that character formation starts from exercising the heart.

Teacher 2: "Strengthening character education is based on Ki Hajar Dewantara's five philosophies, namely exercise of the heart, exercise of thought, exercise of will and exercise. Among all these values, the most important one is exercise of the heart. Why is

exercising the heart first? Character formation starts from the heart or ethics. If the ethics are not good, the other values will not follow. However, that does not mean ignoring other values."

Teacher 2 views strengthening character education as very suitable for elementary schools.

Teacher 2: "Strengthening character education is good to implement in elementary schools, especially in physical education learning. Because physical education is the foundation and can also be said to be the core subject of all subjects, such as Sport for Development (S4D), physical education is said to be the foundation or main character of all subjects to shape students' character."

The application of strengthening character education (PPK) can be implemented in all subjects and grade levels, one of which is physical education learning. The five central values contained in PPK can be applied to every physical education learning session.

First, to apply religious values, the teacher invites students to pray before starting learning. It also provides an understanding that students must maintain a healthy body by exercising; this is an example of being grateful for God's gifts. Teacher 3 instills religious values during learning and emphasizes students' daily lives.

Teacher 3: "In every lesson, I like to give apperception to students, such as learning to be grateful for something that is owned. For example, it gives the understanding that these body parts are a gift from God; how can we keep them healthy by exercising? Apart from learning, I encourage children to embed it in their daily lives."

Apart from building a good relationship with God, students are also encouraged to have good relationships with each other, including being tolerant and speaking kind words.

Teacher 9: "There are also several religions here. For example, the first example is, "Before exercising, let us pray first so that we will be given safety, praying in our hearts according to our respective beliefs."

Teacher 2: "Students also learn to express themselves using good language. When language is not good or appropriate to say, we can immediately correct it."

Second, applying nationalist values is carried out by inviting students to sing the mandatory national song and providing knowledge about the song being sung. Apart from that, the teacher also provides lessons related to the history of sports in Indonesia.

Teacher 3: "Before starting physical education lessons, students sing the national obligatory song; after that, they can be given reinforcement about the meaning of the song."

Teacher 9: "For example, football material is taught and not directly put into practice. However, starting with the history of what it was like, up to what the clubs were like, including the national team, now why there is something called the Indonesian national team, the children were given an explanation. Continue to tell stories about the athletes who defended the country in providing achievements to the country."

Third, the value of integrity is applied by instilling an attitude of sportsmanship, fairness and ethics in a game. A concrete example is that students can play by obeying the rules, avoiding cheating and accepting defeat or victory with a good attitude. Teachers 4 and 5 emphasize the value of integrity by providing advice and a personal approach.

Teacher 4: "Indeed, an attitude of honesty must be instilled in children from an early age because small lies or cheating often occur when students play, for example, in the cat

throwing ball game where the student who is hit by the ball must become a cat. However, the child did not admit that the ball hit him. So it is our job as educators to understand to students that this is unacceptable behaviour."

Teacher 5: "When a student makes a mistake or cheats and we know that the student is wrong, we cannot reprimand him directly in front of his other friends. This can bring down the student's mentality and embarrass him in front of his friends. To reprimand him, you can chat privately. Then, provide understanding to other students that lying is not good. Usually, a story is given about someone who lied and suffered the consequences. From there, students will understand that this should not be done."

Fourth, the value of independence can be instilled through individual learning sessions so that teachers can see which students can solve their problems without depending on their friends. Independent values can also be reflected when students participate in physical activities according to their capacity; students participate in learning by arriving on time and daring to express opinions in learning activities.

Teacher 3: "An example of an independent attitude is that students can solve their problems; for example, some students oversleep because their sleep hours are disturbed because they play online games too late. So the student can find out how to avoid being late for school again. Of course, by reducing, students must have self-discipline; when it is time to study, it is time to study, it is time to play, it is time to play."

Teacher 5: "When physical education lessons begin, students can line up neatly on the field without being ordered by the teacher, which is an example of an independent attitude."

Finally, in implementing the value of cooperation, teachers often use group or team learning methods, for example, through team games requiring cooperation or mutual cooperation. One of the team games is soccer, students can learn to work together with teammates to put the ball into the goal, students have the courage to lead the team and students provide support to teammates. From these activities, teachers can identify whether the value of cooperation among students has emerged in physical education learning and whether students are seen helping each other, supporting each other, and even achieving goals together.

Teacher 4: "In almost all games or sports, physical education learning applies a cooperation attitude. For example, in football and volleyball, it requires cooperation between team members."

Teacher 5: "Traditional games such as dragons also foster a sense of teamwork in students because students do not just play alone in trying to beat their opponents."

4.2. The Urgency of Physical Education Learning is Oriented to Strengthening Character Education (PPK)

Character education focuses on instilling values and morals in students to enhance their capacity to make sound judgments, uphold what is virtuous, and recognize the positive aspects of daily existence (Thoma & Walker, 2017). The concepts and qualities that have been formally established as the goals and objectives of national education are regarded as crucial for students in Indonesian society. This guarantees their capacity to confront life's challenges both presently and in the future. The micro-level character development can be divided into four primary elements: instructional activities within the classroom. These daily activities embody the school's values and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (Amini et al., 2017).

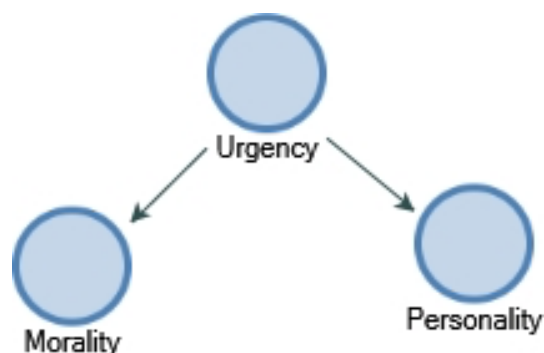


Figure 3. PPK Urgency

Teachers responded that strengthening character education was very important for physical education learning. Thus, teachers support the implementation of this PPK program in schools. Teachers 1, 3 and 9 expressed their opinions on the importance of strengthening character education.

Teacher 1: "Strengthening character education is essential; we even want to support it during and outside class hours. Because character education is dominant in preparing students for life in society later, even now they are dealing with society at school, in the social and family environments.

Teacher 3: "Integrating strengthening character education into Physical Education learning is very important because this character is the foundation for us as humans to live in society. As the saying goes, manners are higher than knowledge. Civilized people are undoubtedly knowledgeable, while knowledgeable people are not necessarily civilized."

Teacher 9: "Because elementary school is the most basic level, the character must be taught from the basics. Because it is very influential in their daily life, socializing with their peers and upper-level students."

4.3. Physical Education Teachers' Challenges in Integrating Strengthening Character Education (PPK)

In the implementation stage, teachers face several challenges in integrating and strengthening character education into physical education learning. These challenges relate to teachers facing each student's different character, limited learning time, technology's influence, and classroom management. Figure 4 shows these findings.

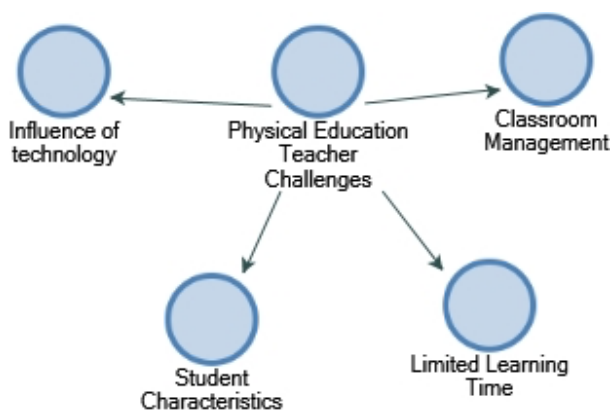


Figure 4. Physical Education Teachers Challenges

Teachers 2 and 10 faced challenges related to expanding the teacher's role in adapting teaching methods to each student's unique characteristics.

Teacher 2: *"Of course, there are many challenges. For example, in this school, there are 28 students in one class, which means that of the 28 students, there are 28 different characters, and everyone cannot be the same from an intellectual perspective, such as students who understand the material easily. Some understand it too late."*

Teacher 10: *"Physical education teachers do not only teach in one class but from class 1 to class 6, so there are many characters to deal with. Teachers must recognize the character of each student."*

Forming a child's character can take a long time. Teacher 3 also expressed his opinion regarding limited learning time.

Teacher 3: *"Students' time at school is only from 7 to 12, while students spend more time in the family environment. Teachers cannot control student behaviour outside of class hours."*

The time allocation for physical education is 140 minutes per week, and a teacher's time is taken up by administrative tasks, thus impacting their performance in carrying out a learning process oriented towards strengthening character education (Kosasih et al., 2022). The support of schools and parents plays a vital role in implementing strengthening character education. Schools can develop learning programs that support character values so they are not limited to one subject. While parents can involve themselves in supporting and strengthening these values at home, remember Teacher 3's question that students spend more time at home. The synergy between schools and parents can create an environment that supports students' development of positive character.

Nowadays, the influence of technology is a challenge for physical education teachers in integrating and strengthening character education.

Teacher 7: *"Because in this era, the character has to be shaped because there is so much content that students watch that it is not good."*

Teacher 9 stated that physical education teachers have challenges maintaining a conducive classroom.

Teacher 9: *"Physical education teachers mostly teach outside the classroom, so there are difficulties in managing student discipline because they have to create conducive classroom conditions when learning takes place."*

4.4. Teacher Strategy in Integrating Strengthening Character Education (PPK) in Physical Education Learning

Learning strategies combine learning elements used in learning activities to achieve certain instructional goals (McConnell et al., 2017). The learning strategy in this research is categorized into five components, specifically design, approach, techniques, phases, and student assessment.

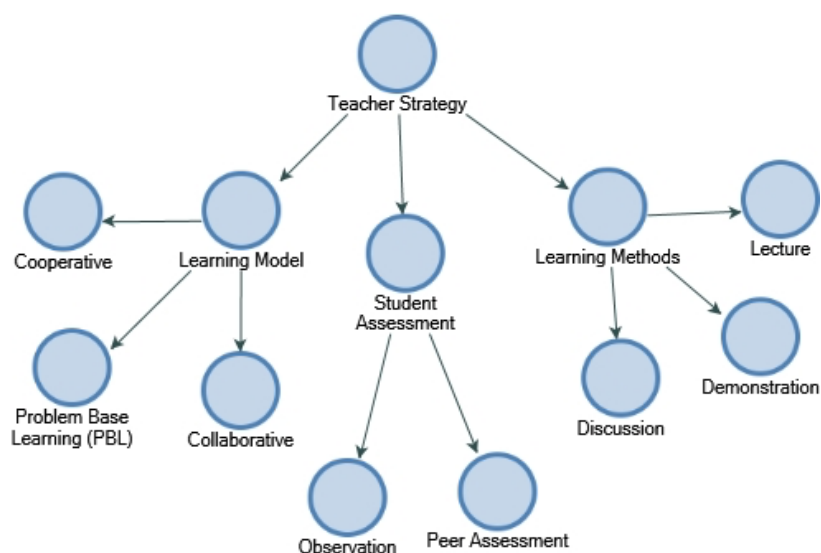


Figure 5. Teacher Strategy

Teachers use learning designs by integrating strengthening character education (PPK) in physical education, problem-based learning (PBL), and differentiation models. In the approach used in physical education with the integration of PPK, teachers use four approaches, namely inquiry, scientific, social interaction, and contextual approaches. Teachers 2 and 6 use a learning design that leads to group learning.

Teacher 2: "In integrating strengthening character education in physical education learning, problem-based learning (PBL) learning designs with a scientific approach are often used. For example, the teacher gives a problem or raises a problem to encourage students to think for themselves and think critically. "PBL is not only carried out in classroom learning, in the field, for example, we can create groups and then give clues or keywords to encourage students to think and interact."

The teacher uses discussion, lecture and demonstration methods in the learning method. This was supported by Teacher 3, 6 and 8, who stated that the learning method was chosen according to the learning objectives, one of which was to bring out student character.

Teacher 3: "In physical education learning, the group method is often used because it emphasizes cooperation and discussion. This character will be visible if students are in a social environment, unlike students who only study individually without interacting with other people. The character needs to be more visible. Therefore, teachers prefer to see students studying in groups so that their character can be seen. "The point is that the learning method adapts to the character of each student."

Teacher 6: "Sometimes it is a team game tournament, sometimes the jigsaw method. In the jigsaw method, there is a core group and a group from which students can be more confident in appearing in front of the class. Can model movements on other students. In practice, we often use the Team Game Tournament method."

Teacher 8: "I usually use lecture, question and answer and demonstration methods."

Furthermore, teachers use learning media that adapts to their students. As is the case for students with a visual learning style, in providing learning material, the teacher uses learning media in the form of exciting videos.

Teachers assess students' character in physical education learning by directly observing and considering the assessments of their peers.

Teacher 8: "I assess it by directly observing students' behaviour during learning."

Teacher 2: "I also observe whether the student behaves well. I can also pay attention to which students are following the lesson well and which are not so that you can see the emerging character. Apart from that, measure it with results in the field, like giving me a worksheet. So, there, I asked students to rate their friends. Has his friend done anything good or not."

4.5. Contribution of Strengthening Character Education (PPK) to Physical Education Learning

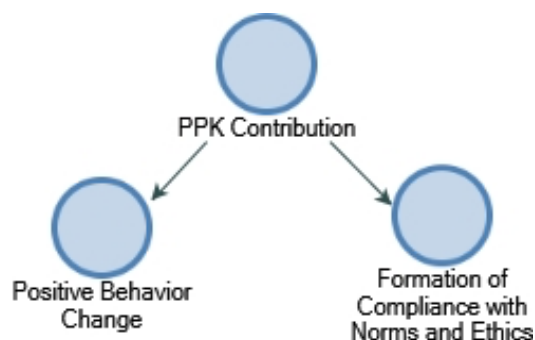


Figure 6. PPK Contribution

Physical education learning by integrating strengthening character education (PPK) in the teacher's perception has a crucial role in shaping students' personalities and morals.

Teacher 4: "Of course, it is relevant because strengthening character education helps strengthen students' morals, shape them into positive individuals, and develop social skills."

Even though students have not shown significant behavioural changes immediately, PPK in physical education learning in elementary schools has a valuable long-term impact.

Teacher 4: "The impact is not seen significantly, but there is a change in children's attitudes when children are given character education. Students their parents previously pampered have changed to become independent, but the process takes a long time and cannot change drastically."

Teacher 1: "The character education strengthening program is capital for children in the future, one of which is that their life skills will grow."

Through physical education learning, students continue to be instilled with the values of sportsmanship, cooperation and discipline, which can permeate aspects of their daily lives as time goes by. With consistency and continuous support from family, school and community, it is hoped that students will show positive behavioural changes over time. Apart from that, students will have compliance with existing norms and ethics starting from the school environment and its surroundings.

Teacher 2: "We have certainly done our best, but again, we only accompany a few per cent of students. We are not 100% there to accompany us. The parents at home are the teachers. So we return it to the family, but at least we provide or emphasize good characters in learning so that they can be applied in everyday life. Apart from that, this character will be carried forward forever."

Teacher 8: "Students will know what to do and what not to do when learning or in their daily environment."

5. Discussion

The findings above show teacher understanding and teacher responses in strengthening character education (PPK) in physical education learning. Teachers involved in strengthening character education (PPK) in physical education learning demonstrate a deep understanding of PPK's concepts, objectives and benefits. Teachers recognize that character formation starts from the heart or ethics, with religious values as the primary foundation. Character education, apart from playing a role in shaping the morals of the nation's children, is expected to be the primary foundation in increasing the status and honour of the Indonesian nation (Rosyid, 2023). The application of nationalist values, integrity, independence and cooperation is also carried out through concrete activities in learning, such as praying before starting, singing the national anthem and instilling an attitude of sportsmanship in games.

The understanding that physical education is the main foundation for shaping students' character and the policy of implementing PPK in elementary schools shows awareness of the integral role of physical learning in students' holistic development. By understanding these values, teachers positively contribute to creating a learning environment that supports the growth of students' character towards individuals of quality, positivity, integrity and responsibility (Dewantara et al., 2020). Qoyyimah (2016) stated that character education involves all actions taken by teachers to influence their students. Teachers play an essential role in shaping students' character, including religious attitudes, honesty, tolerance, democracy, love of the country, etc.

Therefore, the integration of strengthening character education becomes an essential need in educational institutions, covering all aspects of school life. The teachers firmly stated that strengthening character education is urgent, mainly when applied to physical education learning. They believe that character education should not only be part of class hours but must also be integrated into activities outside class hours. Teachers realize that character strengthening is an essential provision for students facing society, both now and in the future (Grimalda et al., 2021).

The challenges teachers face in integrating strengthening character education in physical education include several challenging aspects. First, teachers face the complexity of students' different characters in each class. This challenge requires the teachers to adapt teaching methods to each student's unique characteristics, thus requiring a diverse approach to strengthen character (Irawati et al., 2022). Furthermore, more learning time is needed. Limited physical education time allocation also limits teachers' opportunities to provide in-depth character learning (Kurniawan & Rianto, 2021). In addition, the support of schools and parents is critical in overcoming this challenge. The synergy between schools and parents can create an environment that supports positive character development in students. However, this requires strong collaboration and shared commitment to achieve holistic character strengthening. Syahroni (2017) states that informal education in the family/parents and formal education in schools ideally need to work together to develop students' character in school and family environments.

As an educator, you must have a learning strategy so students can learn effectively and efficiently, especially in bringing out the expected character values. In implementing learning methods in the school environment, teachers can use different approaches from one class to another. Therefore, teachers need skills and mastery of various learning methods. The better the method, the more effective it will be in achieving learning objectives (Mahmudah, 2016; Sianipar et al., 2020). The learning strategies applied in integrating strengthening character education (PPK) in physical education learning show a variety of approaches.

The integration of Strengthening Character Education (PPK) in physical education learning in elementary schools significantly shapes students' personalities and morals. Teachers have a crucial role in conveying positive values, such as religious, nationalist, integrity, independence and cooperation, through physical activities such as sports. Even though changes in student behaviour may not be visible immediately, teachers provide maximum consistency in instilling these values so that they have a long-term impact. Furthermore, there is an understanding that character education is not only the responsibility of teachers but also the family, school and community environment together, emphasizing the importance of collaboration in forming individuals with integrity and responsibility (Munawwaroh, 2019; Sari, 2017). Thus, physical education is about developing motor skills and forming a solid foundation for students to adopt positive values daily (Yuliawan, 2016).

6. Conclusion

This research concludes that the character education strengthening (PPK) program, which prioritizes five central values, namely religious, nationalist, integrity, independence and cooperation, especially in physical education learning, has received a positive response from teachers and has become a necessity in physical education learning at this time. Teachers perceive PPK as essential in shaping and developing student character through physical education. Their understanding of PPK is profound, and at the implementation level, they have successfully integrated character education into learning practices, including designing lessons, adopting relevant approaches, and utilizing appropriate learning media to instill desired character values. However, challenges arise in accommodating differences in student characteristics, suggesting a need for further support to enhance the efficient implementation of character education.

Judging from the teacher's perception, the aim of strengthening character education (PPK) aligns with teachers' beliefs regarding the role of physical education learning in shaping and developing student character. Understanding of strengthening character education for Physical Education teachers is already deep. At the implementation level, Physical Education teachers have integrated strengthening character education into physical education learning, starting from learning design, approaches and learning media that bring out the expected character values. The weakness lies in the challenges experienced in dealing with differences in student characteristics. Therefore, it is clear that further efforts are needed to assist teachers in implementing strengthening character education efficiently.

Limitation

This research is limited by the small number of participants, namely ten educators, thereby limiting the ability to apply these findings to the larger population of Indonesian educators. The study was carried out within a specific framework, emphasising the viewpoints and experiences of physical education teachers in primary schools. Therefore, the results of this study may not comprehensively describe the diversity of educators in various regions and school levels in Indonesia.

Recommendation

Based on these findings, educational policymakers, curriculum developers, and Physical Education learning practitioners must provide comprehensive teaching materials or guidelines through effective professional development programs to provide ongoing support for Physical Education teachers. The focus must be given to developing the knowledge and skills of Physical Education teachers in integrating character values into the learning process. In addition, education stakeholders are expected to strive to create a culture of sustainable change in the school environment, which encourages innovation, collaboration, and lifelong learning, especially in physical education. Regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the

learning modalities that have been implemented also needs to be carried out to ensure continuity and improvement of character education in Physical Education learning.

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Conflict of Interest

Researchers do not have a conflict of interest in terms of writing and publication of this study.

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