



The Transformation of the Teacher's Role in Creating a Social Environment that Supports Character Education

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the transformation of teachers' roles in creating a social environment for character education in elementary schools, highlighting the shift from an instructional model to an ecosystemic approach. The introduction emphasizes the importance of teachers not only as transmitters of values but also as role models and architects of classroom culture who foster students' moral growth. The main objective of this research is to analyze the multiple roles of teachers in shaping character, as well as to identify challenges and opportunities in sustaining effective character education. The study employs a qualitative descriptive method, drawing on literature reviews and recent empirical findings from case studies in Indonesian elementary schools. Data sources include previous research conducted, which provide insights into teacher practices, classroom management, and systemic constraints. The findings reveal that teachers play five complementary roles in character formation: educator, demonstrator, classroom manager, motivator, and evaluator. These roles contribute significantly to building an inclusive and value-based classroom atmosphere that enhances students' politeness, responsibility, and social care. However, challenges remain in terms of administrative pressures, lack of character-based training, and limited institutional support. In conclusion, the study underscores that teacher transformation in character education requires pedagogical, social, and reflective capacities, as well as strong collaboration among schools, families, and communities to ensure systemic and sustainable outcomes.

Keywords: Character Education; Teacher Role; Elementary School

1. Introduction

Character education in elementary schools serves as a crucial foundation for shaping students' personality, morality, and social values from an early age. In this context, teachers are not merely content deliverers but also social transformation agents who create a learning environment conducive to character development. The paradigm shift in education, which emphasizes values such as integrity, empathy, responsibility, and cooperation, requires teachers to adapt and expand their roles in establishing a learning ecosystem that supports children's character growth. According to (Dabbagh, 2024), teachers act as role models and facilitators who integrate character values into daily learning

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activities, even though challenges such as limited resources and external environmental influences remain obstacles. Meanwhile, (Hakim & Baihaqi, 2024) highlights the importance of internalizing social care values through thematic learning, where teachers function as motivators, guides, and evaluators in instilling students' social character.

The transformation of teachers' roles is also influenced by technological developments and the digitalization of learning. (Karataş & Ardiç, 2020) indicate that utilizing digital media, such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and digital-based projects, can reinforce character values like honesty and responsibility, while expanding the social learning space through digital communities. This demonstrates that the social learning environment is no longer confined to the physical classroom but extends into the virtual realm, which also requires teachers' active role in shaping students' character (Danang et al., 2020). Therefore, the transformation of teachers' roles in creating a social environment that supports character education in elementary schools is a strategic issue that requires in-depth examination (Sulistiawati & Fauziah, 2023) (Arbaiyah et al., 2023) (Júnior & Cruz, 2024). A holistic and contextual approach is essential to ensure that character education goes beyond mere discourse and is genuinely internalized in students' lives.

Character education has become a central focus in elementary education policies and practices; however, previous studies still reveal significant gaps in understanding and implementing the teacher's role in a transformative manner. Most research tends to emphasize formal instructional approaches, such as integrating character values into subjects or extracurricular activities, without thoroughly exploring how teachers actively shape a social learning environment that supports the internalization of these values (Asroni, 2022) (Lathere & Samuseviča, 2021) (Sudrajat, 2021). Moreover, the transformation of teachers' roles in the context of social change, educational digitalization, and the demands of the independent curriculum has not been comprehensively examined, even though teachers are required to be more flexible, innovative, and reflective in creating meaningful learning spaces (Kudiyarova, 2025). Another notable gap is the limited exploration of integrating local culture as a source of contextual character values, despite the considerable potential for teachers in local areas to use indigenous wisdom as a foundation for relevant and sustainable character education (Yang, 2025). Furthermore, few studies have produced systematic and practical models of social learning environments at the elementary school level, leaving teachers without concrete guidance in building a learning ecosystem that holistically supports students' character development (Rijal et al., 2022). Therefore, research is needed that not only describes teachers' roles but also examines their transformation contextually and develops a framework that can be implemented in character education practices in elementary schools.

The context of character education in an ever-changing digital and social era, recent studies indicate the emergence of new values that enrich the teacher's transformative role. One important value that is gaining prominence is digital character literacy, which refers to teachers' ability to use digital media ethically and educationally to shape students' character. (Masrifdah & Hakimy, 2025) (Yusnan, 2025) (Ava & Devi, 2022) emphasize that the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), educational social media, and digital-based projects can effectively instill values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and digital literacy. Another emerging value is cross-community collaboration,

where teachers no longer work in isolation but build learning ecosystems together with parents, local communities, and even digital communities to reinforce holistic character education. Furthermore, there is a shift toward pedagogical flexibility, which refers to teachers' ability to adapt character education strategies to students' social and cultural contexts. Research by (Hathazi & Argyropoulos, 2023) shows that teachers who integrate religious practices and social activities, such as providing aid to orphans, successfully foster students' religious, caring, and independent character. Contextual role modeling also gains attention, where teachers serve not only as behavioral exemplars but also demonstrate wise and reflective responses to social and technological challenges. Thus, these new values signify a paradigm shift from mere character instruction toward the creation of a dynamic, adaptive, and value-based social learning environment.

2. Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to depict the transformation of teachers' roles in creating a social environment that supports character education in elementary schools. The research subjects include classroom teachers, school principals, and students from three public elementary schools, purposively selected based on their active and contextual character education practices. The primary research instrument was the researcher, assisted by interview guides, observation sheets, and document analysis formats. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, as well as member checking with key informants. The data were analyzed thematically by identifying patterns of teacher role transformation and the forms of social environments established in the character education process.

Data were collected through multiple techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' transformative roles in fostering a social learning environment. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with classroom teachers, school principals, and selected students to explore their experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding character education practices. Observation sheets were used to systematically record interactions, classroom dynamics, and the manifestation of character values in daily learning activities. In addition, relevant documents such as lesson plans, school programs, and student activity reports were analyzed to complement and triangulate the interview and observational data. The data collection process emphasized ethical considerations and researcher reflexivity. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. Member checking was conducted with key informants to verify the accuracy and credibility of the information gathered. Triangulation across sources and methods was applied to reduce bias and strengthen the validity of the findings. The iterative data collection process allowed the researcher to refine questions and observation focus based on emerging patterns and insights.

The collected data were analyzed using a thematic approach to identify patterns and categories related to the transformation of teachers' roles and the social learning environments they create. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded systematically, highlighting recurring themes such as digital literacy, pedagogical flexibility, contextual role modeling, and collaborative practices. Observation notes and document analysis were cross-referenced to validate and enrich the emerging themes. The thematic analysis involved several stages: data

reduction, coding, categorization, and interpretation. Patterns of teacher behavior, interactions with students, and classroom social dynamics were compared across schools to identify similarities, differences, and context-specific practices.

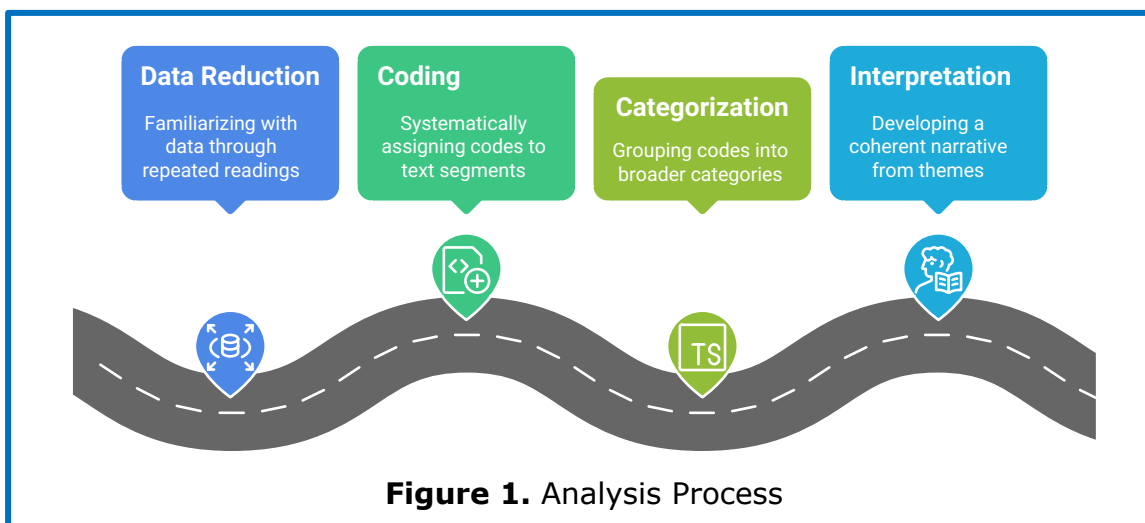


Figure 1. Analysis Process

The analysis focused not only on descriptive accounts but also on understanding the underlying processes and mechanisms through which teachers influence the development of character in students. This approach enabled a comprehensive depiction of how a dynamic and value-based social learning environment is cultivated in elementary schools.

3. Findings and Discussion

The findings indicate that the transformation of teachers’ roles in creating a social learning environment for character education in elementary schools occurs not only at the methodological level but also across relational and cultural dimensions. Teachers no longer function merely as content deliverers but serve as moral agents and managers of social ecosystems, shaping students’ character values through everyday practices. This aligns with the findings of (Chairunisa & Humaizi, 2024), who emphasize that teachers act as role models, discipline mentors, and liaisons between school and family in fostering children’s character. This transformation is reflected in teachers’ strategies for building positive social interactions, such as using polite language, providing reinforcement for good behavior, and creating inclusive classroom cultures that respect diversity. Teachers also increasingly integrate value-based activities, including charitable acts for orphans, religious practices, and value discussions within thematic learning, as highlighted by (Veronika & Dafit, 2022). Such approaches strengthen students’ religious values, empathy, and social responsibility in a contextualized manner.

3.1 Findings

The findings of this study indicate that the transformation of teachers’ roles in elementary schools encompasses methodological, relational, and cultural dimensions. Teachers no longer act solely as content deliverers but serve as moral agents and social ecosystem managers, shaping students’ character values through everyday practices. They integrate value-based activities, such as thematic lessons, charitable acts, religious practices, and value discussions, which strengthen empathy, social responsibility, and religious values in a

contextualized manner. In addition, teachers actively foster positive social interactions and inclusive classroom cultures by using polite language, reinforcing desirable behavior, and respecting diversity, enabling students to practice character values in real-life social contexts. Overall, these strategies demonstrate how teachers cultivate a dynamic, adaptive, and value-based social learning environment that holistically supports character development.

Transformation of Teacher Roles Across Methodological, Relational, and Cultural Dimensions

Teachers in elementary schools no longer serve merely as content deliverers; they act as moral agents and social ecosystem managers who shape students’ character values through everyday interactions. This transformation reflects a shift from traditional instructional roles to a more holistic approach, where teachers actively participate in nurturing students’ social and moral development alongside academic learning. Their expanded responsibilities require an understanding of both pedagogical strategies and the broader social context in which students grow. At the methodological level, teachers innovate by integrating character values into lesson plans, thematic activities, and classroom routines. These strategies move beyond conventional instruction, incorporating value-based projects, discussions on ethical dilemmas, and activities that promote cooperation, responsibility, and integrity. By doing so, teachers ensure that character education is embedded in practical learning experiences rather than taught as abstract concepts.

From a relational perspective, teachers foster positive interactions with students, peers, and parents. They serve as role models, providing guidance, reinforcement, and support in everyday social exchanges. Teachers also act as liaisons between school and family, ensuring that character education is consistent across home and school environments. This relational engagement helps students internalize values more effectively through observation, practice, and feedback within trusted relationships. The cultural dimension highlights teachers’ role in shaping inclusive and contextually relevant learning environments. By respecting diversity, integrating local wisdom, and responding reflectively to social and technological changes, teachers create a classroom culture that values empathy, cooperation, and social responsibility. This cultural awareness allows character education to be meaningful and relevant to students’ lived experiences, fostering a learning ecosystem where ethical, social, and academic development are interconnected.

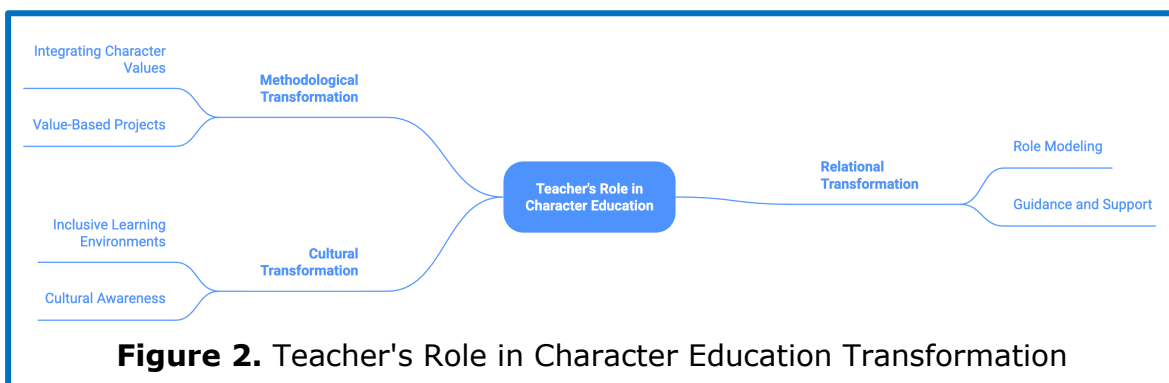


Figure 2. Teacher's Role in Character Education Transformation

Figure 2 illustrates the transformation of teachers’ roles in character education across three interconnected dimensions: methodological, relational,

and cultural. The concept of transformation in character education can be understood through three interconnected dimensions: methodological, relational, and cultural transformation. These dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for integrating character values into the educational process. Rather than treating character education as a separate subject, this approach emphasizes its integration into all aspects of teaching and learning. As a result, character formation becomes a continuous and meaningful process that is embedded in students' daily educational experiences.

Methodological transformation focuses on how character values are systematically incorporated into lesson planning and instructional practices. Teachers are encouraged to design lesson plans that explicitly include moral and social objectives alongside academic goals. This integration ensures that values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation are not taught in isolation but are connected to subject matter content. By doing so, character education becomes more structured and intentional, allowing students to engage with values in a clear and guided manner. In addition, the implementation of value-based projects is a key component of methodological transformation. These projects provide students with opportunities to apply character values in real-life or simulated contexts. For example, collaborative assignments, community service activities, and problem-solving tasks can foster teamwork, empathy, and accountability. Through such experiential learning, students are not only able to understand character values cognitively but also practice and internalize them through direct experience.

Relational transformation highlights the importance of interpersonal relationships within the learning environment. In this dimension, teachers play a central role as role models who demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors. Students often learn values not only from formal instruction but also from observing how teachers interact, communicate, and respond to various situations. Therefore, the teacher's consistency, fairness, and empathy significantly influence students' character development. Furthermore, relational transformation involves providing continuous guidance and emotional support to students. Teachers create a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere where students feel respected and valued. Through meaningful interactions, such as discussions, feedback, and conflict resolution, teachers help students develop social skills and moral reasoning. These everyday engagements reinforce positive behavior and encourage students to reflect on their actions and decisions.

Cultural transformation, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of context in shaping character education. It focuses on creating inclusive learning environments that respect diversity and promote mutual understanding. By acknowledging students' cultural backgrounds, schools can foster a sense of belonging and encourage students to appreciate differences. This inclusive atmosphere supports the development of tolerance, respect, and social harmony. Moreover, cultural transformation involves integrating local cultural values into the educational process. By incorporating culturally relevant content, traditions, and practices, character education becomes more meaningful and relatable to students. This contextualization helps students connect abstract values with their everyday lives, making it easier for them to internalize and practice these values in their social environments. Overall, the integration of methodological, relational, and cultural transformation creates a holistic

approach to character education. These three dimensions complement each other in ensuring that character values are not only taught but also modeled, practiced, and contextualized. When implemented effectively, this approach can foster students’ moral, social, and emotional development in a sustainable and impactful way.

Implementation of Value-Based and Contextual Activities

Teachers’ implementation of value-based and contextual activities serves as a bridge between academic content and real-life experiences. By incorporating values into thematic lessons, students are not only exposed to cognitive knowledge but also guided to internalize moral lessons. For example, topics on environmental care can be linked with values of responsibility and empathy, allowing students to understand the importance of protecting nature while developing ethical awareness. This approach ensures that character education does not remain theoretical but directly influences students’ behavior and attitudes. In addition, charitable acts such as programs to help orphans provide students with tangible opportunities to practice kindness and compassion. Through these activities, they are encouraged to empathize with others’ struggles and to contribute positively to their community. Such experiences nurture a sense of social responsibility, shaping students to become individuals who are sensitive to societal issues. In this way, learning is no longer confined to classroom walls but extended into meaningful social engagement.

Religious practices, as part of daily routines in schools, also play a crucial role in reinforcing students’ moral and spiritual development. Activities such as collective prayers, recitations, or reflections on ethical teachings strengthen their sense of discipline, gratitude, and integrity. By engaging in these practices consistently, students learn to embody values in their everyday actions, fostering a holistic approach to education that balances intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth. Finally, value-centered discussions create a safe space for students to critically reflect on real-life dilemmas and personal experiences. Teachers act as facilitators who guide students to analyze situations from ethical perspectives and make responsible decisions. This dialogic approach helps students build critical thinking skills alongside moral reasoning. As a result, students not only understand values conceptually but also learn to apply them contextually, ensuring that character education becomes an integral and sustainable part of their personal identity.

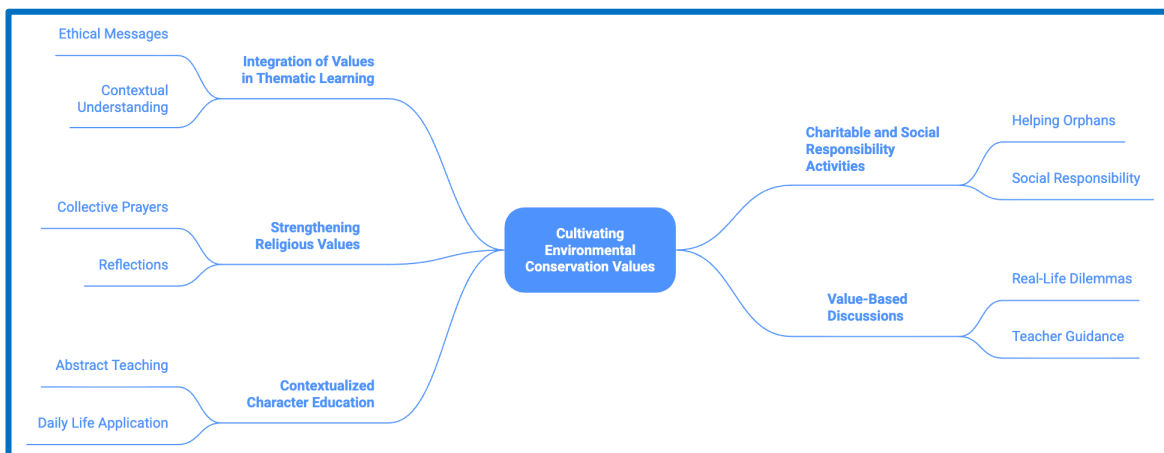


Figure 3. Strategies for Cultivating Environmental Conservation Values

The image illustrates strategies for cultivating environmental conservation values through various character education approaches. The strategies presented reflect a comprehensive approach to integrating character education within the learning process. These strategies are not limited to theoretical instruction but are embedded in various aspects of classroom and school activities. By incorporating values into thematic learning, strengthening religious practices, promoting charitable actions, facilitating value-based discussions, and applying contextualized character education, teachers create a holistic framework that supports students' moral and social development. This integrated approach ensures that character education becomes a lived experience rather than a conceptual understanding.

One of the key strategies is the integration of values into thematic learning. In this approach, academic content is closely linked with moral and ethical principles, allowing students to explore subject matter while simultaneously reflecting on values. For example, when discussing environmental topics, teachers can incorporate lessons on responsibility, care for nature, and sustainability. This method helps students see the connection between knowledge and values, making learning more meaningful and relevant to real-life situations. The strengthening of religious values also plays a significant role in shaping students' character. Activities such as collective prayers, reflections, and spiritual routines are used to instill discipline, sincerity, and a sense of accountability. These practices encourage students to develop inner awareness and moral consciousness, which serve as a foundation for ethical behavior. Through consistent engagement in spiritual activities, students learn to align their actions with moral and religious principles.

Charitable and social responsibility activities further enhance students' empathy and concern for others. Initiatives such as helping orphans, participating in community service, and engaging in acts of kindness provide students with direct experiences of caring and sharing. These activities allow students to practice compassion and understand the importance of contributing positively to society. As a result, they develop a stronger sense of social responsibility and solidarity. Value-based discussions are another important strategy that encourages critical thinking and moral reasoning. Through guided conversations, students are invited to reflect on ethical dilemmas, express their opinions, and consider different perspectives. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating these discussions, helping students analyze situations and make thoughtful, responsible decisions. This process not only deepens students' understanding of values but also enhances their communication and reasoning skills.

Contextualized character education ensures that values are closely connected to students' everyday experiences. Rather than presenting values as abstract concepts, teachers relate them to real-life situations that students encounter in school, at home, and in their communities. This approach helps students internalize values more effectively, as they can directly see their relevance and application in daily life. Consequently, character education becomes more practical and impactful. Through these strategies, students not only gain theoretical knowledge about environmental conservation but also learn to connect it with moral, spiritual, and social values. They begin to understand that caring for the environment is not solely a scientific issue but also a moral responsibility. By linking environmental awareness with ethical considerations,

students are encouraged to adopt sustainable behaviors and make responsible choices in their daily lives. Overall, the strategies described represent a comprehensive effort to shape a generation that is environmentally conscious and morally grounded. The active role of teachers in guiding, modeling, and supporting students is essential in this process. By consistently reinforcing ethical, social, and religious values through integrated and contextualized practices, education can effectively foster individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also responsible, empathetic, and committed to the well-being of their environment and society.

Promotion of Positive Social Interactions and Inclusive Classroom Culture

Teachers play a central role in promoting positive social interactions by modeling respectful communication and encouraging students to treat one another with kindness. The consistent use of polite language, both by teachers and students, helps establish a classroom atmosphere where mutual respect becomes the norm. This environment not only facilitates academic learning but also teaches students the importance of valuing others’ perspectives and feelings, laying the foundation for strong social relationships. Reinforcing desirable behavior is another key strategy in shaping positive classroom dynamics. By acknowledging and rewarding actions such as cooperation, honesty, and responsibility, teachers encourage students to repeat and internalize these values. Positive reinforcement in the form of verbal praise, recognition, or small rewards motivates students to behave constructively and contributes to the development of a supportive classroom community.

An inclusive classroom culture further enhances students’ social and emotional growth by embracing diversity and ensuring that every learner feels valued. Teachers who implement inclusive practices through collaborative group work, differentiated instruction, and the representation of diverse perspectives help students appreciate differences as strengths rather than barriers. This inclusive approach cultivates empathy, acceptance, and open-mindedness, preparing students to engage respectfully in diverse social settings beyond the classroom. Ultimately, promoting positive social interactions and inclusivity supports holistic character development by giving students opportunities to practice values in authentic social contexts. When students learn to cooperate with peers, respect diversity, and empathize with others, they develop essential life skills that go beyond academic achievement. Such experiences nurture well-rounded individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also socially responsible and emotionally intelligent.

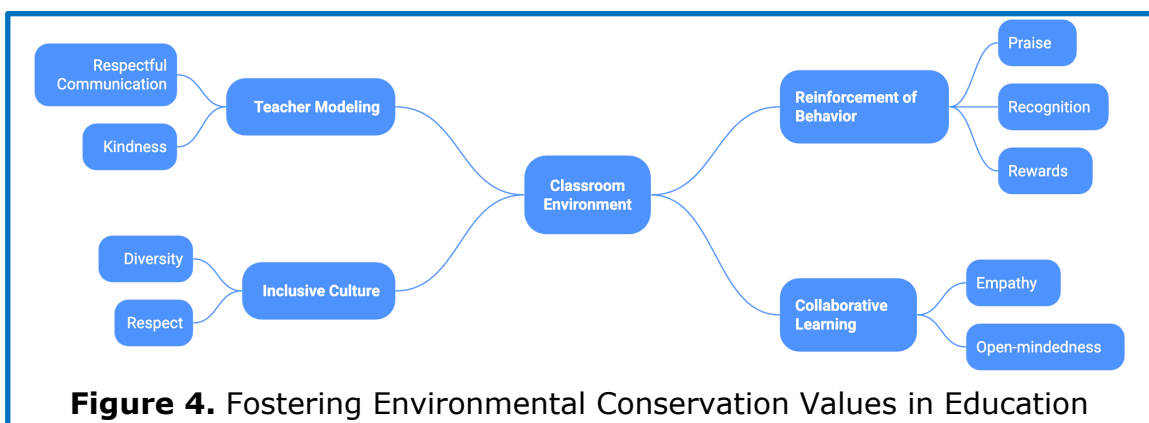


Figure 4. Fostering Environmental Conservation Values in Education

The image presents strategies for fostering environmental conservation values in education through the creation of a supportive classroom environment. One key aspect of effective character education is teacher modeling, where educators consistently demonstrate respectful communication, kindness, and ethical behavior in their daily interactions. Students tend to observe and imitate the attitudes and actions of their teachers, making the teacher's role crucial in shaping a positive classroom climate. When teachers actively practice these values, they establish clear behavioral standards that guide students in understanding how to interact respectfully with others.

Through consistent modeling, teachers help create a culture of respect that becomes embedded in the classroom environment. This culture is not formed through instruction alone but through repeated exposure to positive examples. As students witness fairness, empathy, and patience in their teachers, they are more likely to adopt similar behaviors in their own interactions. Over time, these behaviors become habitual, contributing to a harmonious and supportive learning atmosphere. In addition to teacher modeling, the promotion of an inclusive culture is essential in fostering character development. An inclusive classroom recognizes and values diversity in all its forms, including cultural, social, and individual differences. By ensuring that all students feel respected and supported, teachers help build a sense of belonging that encourages active participation and mutual respect among learners.

The emphasis on diversity and respect also helps students develop tolerance and open-mindedness. When students are exposed to different perspectives and backgrounds, they learn to appreciate differences rather than view them as barriers. This understanding fosters empathy and reduces the likelihood of discrimination or conflict, creating a more positive and cooperative classroom environment. Another important strategy is the reinforcement of positive behavior through praise, recognition, and rewards. Acknowledging students' good actions encourages them to continue practicing desirable behaviors. Positive reinforcement not only boosts students' confidence but also helps establish clear expectations regarding acceptable conduct within the classroom. By consistently applying praise and recognition, teachers can make environmental and social values part of students' daily habits. For instance, students who demonstrate responsibility in maintaining cleanliness or cooperation in group activities can be recognized as role models for others. This approach creates a cycle of positive behavior, where students are motivated to contribute actively to a respectful and environmentally conscious classroom.

Collaborative learning is highlighted as an effective strategy to cultivate empathy and open-mindedness. Through group work and shared tasks, students learn to communicate, negotiate, and respect different opinions. These interactions provide opportunities for students to develop social skills while working toward common goals. Overall, these strategies demonstrate that environmental conservation values can be effectively nurtured through holistic character education within the classroom. By combining teacher modeling, inclusive practices, positive reinforcement, and collaborative learning, educators can create meaningful learning experiences that integrate moral, social, and environmental values. This comprehensive approach supports the development of students who are not only academically capable but also socially responsible and environmentally aware.

3.2 Discussion

The transformation of teachers' roles in creating a social environment for character education in elementary schools reflects a significant shift from a purely instructional approach to a more ecosystemic perspective. In this view, teaching is no longer confined to delivering knowledge or explicitly transmitting values. Instead, teachers are positioned as key agents who design, influence, and sustain a learning environment that continuously shapes students' attitudes, behaviors, and social interactions. This shift recognizes that character formation occurs not only through formal lessons but also through the broader social context in which students learn and interact. Within this ecosystemic approach, teachers act as architects of the classroom's social climate. They intentionally create conditions that promote respect, cooperation, and positive relationships among students. This involves structuring interactions, setting clear expectations, and modeling appropriate behavior in everyday situations. By doing so, teachers help establish a learning environment where character values are not only taught but also experienced and practiced consistently by students in their daily school life.

This perspective is supported by the findings of Kalimullin & Valeeva (2022), which emphasize that teachers function as both role models and managers of meaningful social interactions. Their role extends to guiding students in navigating social situations, resolving conflicts, and developing empathy toward others. Despite facing challenges such as limited resources and negative external influences, teachers remain central figures in fostering a positive and value-oriented environment that supports character development. Furthermore, the discussion highlights that the teacher's role as a value demonstrator and classroom culture manager is crucial for the success of character education. Teachers who are able to build a safe, inclusive, and value-based classroom atmosphere contribute significantly to students' moral growth. Such environments encourage the development of positive traits, including politeness, responsibility, and social care. Ultimately, this transformation underscores that effective character education depends on the teacher's ability to integrate values into both the social and instructional dimensions of the learning process.

The discussion indicates that the transformation of teachers' roles in character education has not yet become fully systemic. Although teachers have begun to adopt more holistic approaches, their efforts are often constrained by administrative demands, such as extensive documentation and curriculum targets that prioritize academic achievement. These pressures limit the time and flexibility needed to design and implement meaningful character-based learning experiences. As a result, character education is sometimes treated as an additional component rather than an integral part of the educational process. Another significant challenge is the lack of structured training in character-based pedagogy. Many teachers have not received sufficient professional development on how to effectively integrate moral, social, and cultural values into their teaching practices. This gap affects their ability to apply innovative and contextually relevant strategies that can support students' character development. In addition, limited structural support from schools and communities further hinders the sustainability of character education initiatives, as teachers often work without adequate guidance or collaborative frameworks.

Research by Guarda & Mayr (2025) shows that, despite teachers' efforts to instill character values through religious practices and social activities, students still experience difficulties in applying these values outside the classroom. This finding suggests that character education has not been fully internalized by students and may lack reinforcement in broader social contexts. It highlights the importance of consistency between school-based learning and students' everyday environments, particularly within families and communities. Overall, the discussion emphasizes that the transformation of teachers' roles in character education requires more than pedagogical competence alone. Teachers must also develop social sensitivity, spiritual awareness, and reflective capacity to effectively guide students' moral development. By designing contextual and value-based social learning environments, teachers have the potential to shape a generation with strong character. However, achieving this goal requires a more integrative and collaborative approach that actively involves schools, families, and communities in a shared commitment to character formation.

The role of teachers in elementary school character education is undergoing a significant transformation, shifting from a traditional instructional model toward a more holistic and ecosystemic approach. In this perspective, teachers are no longer viewed merely as transmitters of knowledge but as key figures who actively shape the social environment in which students learn and develop. This transformation recognizes that character education is not solely about delivering moral lessons, but about embedding values within the daily experiences and interactions that occur in the classroom. According to Sudrajat (2021), teachers function as role models and facilitators of meaningful social interactions. Their influence extends beyond formal teaching, as students continuously observe and internalize the behaviors, attitudes, and values demonstrated by their teachers. This highlights that effective character education requires more than the delivery of moral content; it demands the consistent practice of values such as respect, empathy, and responsibility within the learning environment.

One of the key aspects of this transformation lies in the teacher's ability to manage classroom culture. Teachers play a crucial role in establishing norms, expectations, and routines that reflect positive values. By fostering open communication, mutual respect, and collaboration, teachers create a classroom atmosphere that supports both academic learning and character development. In such environments, students feel safe, valued, and encouraged to express themselves while adhering to shared moral principles. This view is supported by Ma'ruf & Marzuki (2022), who emphasize that teachers who successfully cultivate inclusive, safe, and value-based learning environments contribute significantly to students' moral growth. These environments not only promote positive behaviors such as politeness and responsibility but also strengthen students' social awareness and empathy. Therefore, the transformation of teachers' roles highlights the importance of integrating pedagogical practices with the intentional development of a supportive and value-oriented classroom culture.

Despite notable progress, the transformation of teachers' roles in character education has not yet become fully systemic. Many teachers continue to face significant constraints, particularly in balancing instructional responsibilities with administrative demands. Tasks such as reporting, documentation, and meeting curriculum targets often consume substantial time and energy, limiting

opportunities to design and implement meaningful character-based learning experiences. As a result, the integration of character education may remain incidental rather than deeply embedded in everyday teaching practices.

Another persistent challenge is the lack of adequate training in character-based pedagogy. While teachers recognize the importance of integrating values into learning, many have not received structured professional development that equips them with practical strategies and assessment tools. This gap reduces their ability to implement innovative, reflective, and contextually relevant approaches to character education. Consequently, much of the effort depends on individual initiative rather than a coordinated and well-supported system. In addition, insufficient institutional support further complicates the process. Schools may not always provide clear policies, resources, or collaborative platforms that prioritize character education as a core objective. Without strong leadership and systemic reinforcement, teachers may struggle to sustain consistent practices. This limitation highlights the importance of aligning school policies, curriculum design, and evaluation systems with the goals of character education. Research by Wotherspoon & Milne (2024) indicates that, although teachers have made efforts to reinforce values through religious practices and social activities, students still demonstrate gaps in applying these values outside the classroom. This finding suggests that character education has not been fully internalized and remains context-dependent. Students may exhibit positive behavior within structured school settings but face challenges in transferring these values to real-life situations.

These conditions underscore the need for a broader and more collaborative framework for character education. Effective value formation requires continuity and consistency across different environments, including schools, families, and communities. When these stakeholders work together, students receive reinforced messages and experiences that strengthen the internalization of moral and social values. Collaboration can take the form of parent engagement programs, community-based activities, and shared value initiatives that extend learning beyond the classroom. Overall, the transformation of teachers' roles in character education highlights the importance of not only pedagogical competence but also social awareness and reflective capacity. Teachers who are able to design contextual, value-centered learning environments have strong potential to shape well-rounded students who are academically capable, morally resilient, and socially responsible. Therefore, future efforts must focus on strengthening systemic support, enhancing teacher training, and fostering meaningful collaboration among all stakeholders to maximize the impact of character education in elementary schools.

4. Conclusion

The transformation of teachers' roles in elementary school character education demonstrates a shift from a purely instructional model toward a more ecosystemic approach. Teachers are no longer limited to transmitting values but are expected to act as role models, classroom culture managers, and architects of social environments that nurture students' moral growth. Research shows that when teachers successfully integrate respectful communication, inclusivity, and value-based practices into daily learning, students display improvements in politeness, responsibility, empathy, and social care. These findings highlight that the success of character education strongly depends on the teacher's ability to

create meaningful and sustainable learning environments. However, this transformation has not yet been fully systemic. Teachers continue to encounter challenges such as administrative demands, limited character-based pedagogical training, and insufficient structural support from schools and communities. To address these gaps, collaboration among teachers, families, and society is crucial in fostering consistent value internalization inside and outside the classroom. Ultimately, character education requires teachers to combine pedagogical expertise with social, spiritual, and reflective capacities to prepare future generations who are not only academically capable but also morally strong and adaptive to the dynamics of modern life.

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