Role Model Based Character Education Management in Elementary Schools: A Case Study of SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi and SDIT Adzkia

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Abstract. This study examines the strategic role of role-model–based management in character education to strengthen commendable conduct among fifth-grade elementary students. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research was conducted at SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi (West Jakarta) and SDIT Adzkia (Tangerang Regency), involving principals and homeroom teachers actively managing character programs. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis (teaching modules, program calendars, behavior journals/portfolios), and analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model (data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing/verification). Findings indicate that role-model–based character education when planned collaboratively, organized through distributed roles, implemented consistently in classroom routines and school culture, and monitored via formative assessment (portfolios, journals, reflection) significantly supports the internalization of core values (discipline, responsibility, honesty, care). The planning stage maps priority values and cross-subject behavioral indicators; organizing clarifies the roles of principals, teachers, and parents; implementation emphasizes habituation and authentic modeling; monitoring combines daily records, constructive feedback, and school–family partnerships. The study concludes that role-model–centered character management, underpinned by instructional leadership and a collaborative culture, can move character from slogans to habits and should be integrated into elementary school management systems.

Keywords: Character Education, Elementary School, Formative Assessment, Role Modeling, Instructional Leadership

1   Introduction

In facing the global challenges of the 21st century, education is no longer merely a means of knowledge transfer but a strategic platform for shaping the character of the younger generation. Character education has become an urgent need amidst the growing moral crisis, particularly at the elementary school level, which serves as a critical stage in the development of personal values and identity [1]. Elementary schools

1

are not only places for academic instruction but also social environments where students internalize norms, values, and habits from an early age[2].

One key strategy in character education is the role model approach, in which teachers, principals, and the broader school environment provide consistent, real-life examples of commendable behavior. Teachers, in this context, are not only knowledge transmitters but also moral figures whose attitudes and actions significantly influence students' character formation [3]–[5].

In this regard, the management of character education must be strategically planned, implemented, and monitored as a formal system within the school. It involves four core functions as outlined by G.R. Terry planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC) which provide a foundational framework for integrating character values into daily school life through modeling and habituation. This aligns with the understanding of character education as a holistic, systematic, and integrated process embedded in the school curriculum, culture, and real-life practices[6], [7].

However, in practice, many schools continue to face challenges in creating a consistent and sustainable character education ecosystem. Issues such as inconsistent teacher behavior, value discrepancies between home and school, and weak character assessment systems are common problems. Furthermore, existing studies often focus on specific character education programs or teaching methods but rarely examine how character education is systematically managed through a role model approach within the overall school management strategy [8], [9].

This research seeks to fill that gap by exploring the comprehensive management of role model-based character education in elementary schools. It analyzes how school leaders and teachers design, organize, implement, and monitor character education practices that promote students' moral development, particularly among fifth-grade students. The study emphasizes the importance of modeling behavior as a core pedagogical and managerial tool to build a school environment that consistently reinforces positive character traits[10].

The urgency of this study lies in the need to develop a practical and conceptual model for managing character education that is both integrated and sustainable. By examining role model-based strategies through the lens of educational management, the research aims to contribute to both theoretical discourse and practical implementation of character education in elementary schools in Indonesia and potentially in similar educational contexts worldwide.

2   Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to explore and understand the meaning behind human behavior and experiences in their natural and social contexts [11], [12]. The case study design is considered suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon within its real-life setting, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly defined [13].

The research was conducted in two elementary schools: SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi, a public school in West Jakarta, and SDIT Adzkia, a private Islamic integrated school in Tangerang Regency. These schools were purposefully selected based on their strong implementation of character education programs that emphasize role modeling as a core strategy. The research subjects include school principals and fifth-grade homeroom teachers who are directly involved in the management and implementation of character education.

Data were collected using a triangulation of methods, which included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis [14], [15]. In-depth interviews were used to gather rich narratives on the experiences and perspectives of teachers and school principals regarding the role-model-based character education practices. Participant observation allowed the researcher to observe how values were modeled and internalized in everyday interactions within the school environment. Document analysis involved reviewing educational planning documents, character education modules, portfolios, and other school records related to the character development programs.

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument (human instrument), engaging directly with the subjects and settings under study [16], [17]. To support the data collection process and ensure systematic execution, supplementary tools such as interview guides, observation checklists, instrument blueprints, and document review formats were developed.

To ensure data trustworthiness, this study applied the four criteria by Lincoln and Guba (1985):
1. Credibility, achieved through data triangulation and member checking;
2. Transferability, supported by providing detailed contextual descriptions (thick description);
3. Dependability, maintained by documenting the research process systematically;
4. Confirmability, ensured through an audit trail and reflexive documentation [18][19].

Data analysis was carried out using the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of three key stages:
1. Data Reduction, which involves selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data;
2. Data Display, where information is presented in narrative form, matrices, and visual formats;
3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification, carried out iteratively to ensure the accuracy and consistency of findings.

Data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection, allowing the researcher to respond flexibly to emerging patterns and dynamics in the field.

This study was carried out between january and june 2025, covering the stages of preparation, field data collection, and data analysis leading up to the final report writing. It is expected that this research will contribute meaningfully to the development of contextual and evidence-based character education management practices in elementary schools.

3   Results

3.1   Character Education Planning through Role Modeling

Based on the findings from SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi, character education planning was conducted systematically by integrating core character values into teaching practices and daily school routines. The emphasized values included discipline, honesty, cooperation, responsibility, and politeness, aligning with the Pancasila Student Profile framework introduced in the latest national curriculum [20].

The planning process was collaborative, involving the school principal, classroom teachers, and senior staff. Teachers actively contributed to discussions about the behavioral trends among students and helped determine which values needed to be prioritized each term. One teacher explained:

"Every semester, we meet with the principal to decide which character values to emphasize. It's based on what issues we observe in class and what values need strengthening." (Grade 5 Teacher, Interview, February 14, 2025)

Documentation from SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi showed a structured planning model, including monthly activity calendars, character-based lesson plans, and a character value integration matrix. The documents reflect an effort to create a learning culture where character development is not an add-on but embedded across subjects and daily routines[21], [22].

In SDIT Adzkia, character education planning was framed within an Islamic worldview, with the school's vision and mission emphasizing religious values, respectful behavior, and social responsibility. Planning was formalized through curriculum maps, teaching modules, and daily activity schedules developed jointly by the principal and teachers.

A Grade 5 teacher described the role of lesson plans in character development:

"We always embed values like honesty and responsibility in our lesson objectives. For example, when students prepare for presentations, we link it to accountability and respect." (Grade 5 Teacher, Interview, February 25, 2025)

Both schools adopted a context-responsive planning approach, tailoring character goals to the specific developmental and social-emotional needs of their students. Planning was not generic, but situationally adjusted, ensuring relevance to students' lived experiences. This aligns with the view that effective character education requires flexibility and responsiveness to the school environment [23]

Another key feature observed at SDIT Adzkia was family involvement in the planning process. The school held regular meetings with parents to align character expectations between school and home. This kind of school-family collaboration has been shown to support more consistent character development (Epstein, 2011).

Planning tools used by both schools included reflection journals, student character portfolios, and teacher evaluation notes, which allowed for periodic monitoring and adjustment of programs. These tools helped inform decisions about which values to reinforce and how students were progressing over time [24]

Importantly, both schools treated character education as a strategic institutional effort not as a ceremonial or incidental initiative. Planning was documented,

collaborative, and goal-oriented, reflecting strong educational leadership and organizational commitment. As DuFour and Eaker [25] emphasize, shared planning rooted in professional learning communities fosters a sustainable culture of character.

In conclusion, the study found that intentional and participatory planning processes formed the foundation for effective character education through role modeling. The synergy between leadership, teacher engagement, and contextual adaptation created an environment where moral values were not only taught but lived and reinforced daily.

3.2   Organizing Character Education through Role Modeling

The implementation of character education in both schools was supported by clear organizational structures that defined roles and responsibilities among school stakeholders. At SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi, the principal acted as the strategic leader who initiated programs and ensured alignment with national education policies. Teachers were positioned as primary role models, while parents were actively involved as partners in character development at home.

Each grade level had designated teacher coordinators responsible for monitoring the integration of character values into lessons and school activities. The school also distributed tasks such as leading class routines, organizing group work, and assigning student responsibilities (e.g., class duty rosters) to promote a culture of cooperation and accountability.

"We try to involve everyone students, teachers, even janitors in modeling good behavior. For example, students on duty are expected to lead prayers, clean the classroom, and set a good example for their peers." (Grade 5 Teacher, Interview, February 18, 2025)

The organizational model promoted horizontal collaboration among teachers. Coordination meetings were held regularly to discuss classroom observations, character issues, and strategies to reinforce values through daily routines. This reflects a distributed leadership model, where the responsibility of moral education is shared, not centralized.

At SDIT Adzkia, the organizational structure was more formal and integrated with religious values. The school established a Character Development Unit led by a teacher-coordinator who worked closely with the head of Islamic studies. The principal provided macro-level direction, while daily implementation was overseen by homeroom teachers and subject-specific mentors (ustadz/ustadzah).

"Every staff member has a role not just in teaching subjects, but in guiding behavior. Even during recess, we're expected to model patience and kindness." (Islamic Studies Teacher, Interview, February 26, 2025)

The school also implemented a peer role modeling system where older students mentored younger ones during religious and social activities. This approach leveraged student leadership and strengthened the culture of mutual guidance, which research has shown to be effective in building prosocial behavior.

Organizing efforts at both schools also included parent involvement strategies. At SDN Kalideres 01, teachers maintained communication journals and conducted regular meetings with parents to synchronize expectations about student behavior. At SDIT

Adzkia, parents participated in moral education workshops and character award programs that reinforced school values at home.

The integration of character education into organizational culture was reflected in school rituals, visual materials (posters, slogans), and standard operating procedures. These elements acted as informal reinforcers of expected behavior and contributed to an environment conducive to moral learning [26].

Both schools demonstrated that effective organization of character education requires not only defined roles and schedules but also shared cultural commitment. Embedding values into the fabric of school life through structure, people, and routines ensures that character development is consistent, visible, and sustainable.

In summary, the organizing phase in both SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi and SDIT Adzkia showcased a collaborative, multi-level approach to role modeling. By aligning school leadership, teacher practices, student participation, and parental support, both schools fostered a holistic ecosystem for character formation.

3.3 Implementing Character Education through Role Modeling

The implementation of character education in both SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi and SDIT Adzkia relied heavily on consistent and visible role modeling by all school stakeholders. Teachers, as the primary figures in daily student interaction, intentionally demonstrated values such as honesty, discipline, empathy, and cooperation through their speech, actions, and classroom management styles.

At SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi, character education was practiced through daily routines such as greeting teachers, being punctual, maintaining classroom cleanliness, and participating in communal prayers or flag ceremonies. These routines were not just regulations but intentional learning moments where values were reinforced repeatedly.

"We don't just teach students to say 'please' or 'sorry' we do it ourselves. They watch how we treat each other, how we solve problems. That's what really shapes them."(Grade 5 Teacher, Interview, February 20, 2025)

Teachers integrated character values into lesson delivery. For instance, during group work or discussions, students were encouraged to listen actively, respect differing opinions, and take turns practices that build a democratic and respectful classroom climate. These efforts align with Lickona's [22] view that values are best learned when taught, modeled, and practiced simultaneously.

In SDIT Adzkia, character implementation took on a religious and cultural dimension, with daily activities such as reciting prayers before and after lessons, performing congregational Dhuha prayers, and memorizing short surahs. These rituals were supported by real-life modeling from teachers who emphasized akhlakul karimah (noble behavior) in all interactions.

"When we speak gently and patiently even when students make mistakes they notice. It's not about fear, but respect and love. That's how we build character here." (Islamic Education Teacher, Interview, February 27, 2025)

Beyond formal classroom learning, both schools utilized school-wide activities such as class duty rosters, student assemblies, field trips, and social service projects as

platforms for character building. Students learned responsibility and leadership through real-life application rather than abstract instruction.

Another important aspect was behavior reinforcement through praise and reflection. At SDIT Adzkia, students who demonstrated exceptional behavior received verbal recognition during morning assemblies or character badges. At SDN Kalideres 01, teachers used daily reflection moments at the end of class to encourage students to share what values they practiced that day.

Both schools emphasized that character education must go beyond slogans or wall posters it requires habitual action and consistency. This implementation style mirrors the principle of habituation (ta'dib) in Islamic education and social learning theory in Western frameworks, both of which stress the power of repeated, modeled behavior [27]

Moreover, character values were not taught in isolation but linked to academic subjects, ensuring integration into the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. For instance, a science lesson on pollution became a moment to emphasize responsibility and stewardship of the environment.

In conclusion, the study found that character education was most effective when implemented through daily lived experiences, reinforced by real behavior, and reflected in both teacher and student conduct. The use of modeling intentional, consistent, and contextual created a natural pathway for moral internalization in students at both schools.

3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation in Character Education through Role Modeling

The monitoring and evaluation (controlling) of character education programs in both SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi and SDIT Adzkia were conducted through structured yet context-sensitive mechanisms. At both schools, teachers and principals emphasized the importance of daily observation, documentation, and regular reflection to assess the progress of students' moral behavior.

At SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi, monitoring was done informally but consistently. Teachers observed students' behavior throughout the day in the classroom, during breaks, and during extracurricular activities and documented notable actions or concerns. These were later discussed in weekly teacher meetings or during one-on-one consultations with parents.

 "I always write down notes when a student shows a change in behavior whether positive or negative. These notes help me understand patterns and respond appropriately." (Grade 5 Teacher, Interview, March 2, 2025)

The school also utilized student character portfolios, where teachers compiled reflections, behavioral records, and examples of student participation in value-driven activities. These portfolios served both as evaluation tools and as conversation aids during parent-teacher meetings. This method aligns with formative assessment principles and supports the continuous development of students' character.

At SDIT Adzkia, monitoring was more formalized. Teachers were required to fill out daily behavior logs, which included categories such as discipline, honesty, cleanliness,

cooperation, and religious practice. These logs were submitted weekly to the school's Character Development Unit for review and follow-up.

"We have a behavior journal for every student. It's not to punish them, but to reflect and guide. When students see their own progress, they feel motivated." (Homeroom Teacher, Interview, March 5, 2025)

In addition, SDIT Adzkia conducted monthly evaluations that involved parents, where students' moral development was discussed through both quantitative scores and qualitative feedback. This data-informed approach reflects best practices in character education evaluation, which emphasize both observation and stakeholder involvement.

Both schools demonstrated that effective monitoring requires more than rule enforcement it demands relational trust, consistent feedback, and meaningful dialogue. Teachers were not acting as disciplinarians but as mentors, guiding students to reflect and improve on their own behavior choices.

The schools also emphasized positive reinforcement, where good behavior was publicly acknowledged during flag ceremonies or class discussions. Students were encouraged to internalize values not for rewards, but because they saw their role models practicing the same values with sincerity.

These monitoring systems also acted as early warning tools. When students began showing signs of behavioral decline, teachers and parents could intervene early. At SDN Kalideres 01, for example, a teacher reported that behavioral issues were often linked to problems at home, and early detection helped prevent escalation.

Overall, the findings show that character education monitoring at both schools was carried out through a blend of formal tools and informal relational strategies. This hybrid approach allowed for both structure and flexibility, ensuring that the character development process remained continuous, responsive, and meaningful.

In conclusion, the controlling function in character education was effectively implemented when it combined documentation, observation, reflection, and parental engagement. By fostering accountability and support, both schools created systems that not only tracked behavior but nurtured long-term internalization of core values.

4   Discussion

The findings of this study affirm that structured role modeling within a school management framework can serve as a primary lever for shaping the character of fifth-grade students. This aligns with Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes the attention retention reproduction motivation sequence: students observe salient behaviors modeled by teachers, retain them, and then replicate them in relevant social contexts when consistently reinforced [27], [28]. In both schools, daily routines (greetings, punctuality, cleanliness) functioned as "social learning situations" that facilitated the internalization of values.

From a moral development perspective, observed practices reveal a bridge from rule-based compliance to more autonomous moral reasoning. When teachers facilitate reflective dialogue and provide consistent exemplars rather than relying solely on sanctions students move from a punishment/reward orientation toward shared norm-

based reasoning [29]. The emphasis on classroom reflection and positive reinforcement supports the formation of dispositions rather than mere momentary compliance [30].

Managerially, successful implementation was underpinned by consistent planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC). School leadership that distributes roles rather than centralizing them creates a form of distributed instructional leadership: teachers, coordinators, and parents become co-actors in culture building [23]. This practice strengthens program resilience because it does not depend on a single figure.

School culture is a key medium that "normalizes" character values in daily life. Symbols, rituals, and routines (assemblies, communal prayers, duty rosters) deepen the meaning of values and narrow the gap between values taught and values lived. At the Islamic integrated school, the dimension of ta'dib the ordering of conduct through value-laden habituation provides a normative-religious foundation that harmonizes with modern character formation.

Integrating character into curriculum and instruction rather than treating it as an add-on increases the likelihood of transfer across subjects. Teachers link character goals to academic objectives (e.g., using group work as a vehicle for respect and responsibility), consistent with the PPK/Pancasila Student Profile framework that calls for integration across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. This approach avoids fragmentation between "instruction" and "habituation."

Regarding character assessment, the use of portfolios, behavior journals, and structured reflection underscores an assessment for learning orientation promoting formative feedback that guides improvement rather than mere classification. Micro-level member checking through teacher–student conversations and teacher–parent meetings enhances assessment accuracy and students' intrinsic motivation.

Parent participation reduces value dissonance between home and school. When expectations and routines align, the consistency of children's experiences increases, accelerating value internalization and reducing contradictory behaviors [31], [32]. These findings underscore that character is a product of the social ecology, not merely the result of classroom instruction.

Nevertheless, the study notes constraints: variability in teachers' modeling consistency, curricular time pressures, and student heterogeneity. Effective interventions require strengthening professional learning communities (PLCs) to calibrate practice standards and provide spaces for inter-teacher reflection (DuFour & Eaker, 2009; Wahyudi, 2019). At the policy level, protected time for character development and teacher collaboration would improve implementation coherence[33]

Theoretical implications position these findings at the intersection of social learning (observational learning), moral development (reasoning and disposition), and distributed instructional leadership (organizing for culture). In combination, they yield a more stable change mechanism: values are imitated, reasoned, and institutionalized. Practically, schools are advised to build a data-informed character roadmap, maintain regular PLCs, and employ monitoring protocols that are lightweight yet meaningful.

Finally, the sustainability of the program rests on the consistency of role modeling and the coherence of the system: curriculum, school culture, assessment, and parent partnerships must mutually reinforce one another. When these four pillars are aligned,

schools can move character from slogans to habits, from mere compliance to personal virtue a goal affirmed by both the PPK framework and Islamic pedagogical traditions

5 Conclusion

This study shows that role-model–based character education, when managed through coherent POAC processes planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling shapes students' moral dispositions in authentic, sustainable ways. Intentional planning, distributed leadership, and culture-building practices embedded in daily routines moved character formation from slogans to lived habits. Across both SDN Kalideres 01 Pagi and SDIT Adzkia, teachers' consistent modeling, curriculum integration, formative assessment (portfolios, behavior journals, reflection), and parent partnerships created a mutually reinforcing ecosystem that supported students' growth from simple rule compliance toward personal virtue.

At the same time, sustainability hinges on maintaining modeling consistency among staff, protecting time for collaboration, and aligning home–school expectations. Schools seeking to replicate these outcomes should establish clear role distributions, data-informed roadmaps for character goals, and lightweight monitoring protocols that prioritize feedback over punishment. Future research could extend these findings through multi-site or mixed-methods designs to estimate long-term impacts on both character outcomes and academic achievement, strengthening the evidence base for role-model–centered character education in diverse contexts.

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