

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children movement in strengthening elementary school students' character through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) supported by bibliometric analysis using the VOSviewer software. Data were obtained from national and international scholarly articles published between 2015 and 2025, sourced from databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ, and Sinta. Article selection was conducted using inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure relevance to the topics of character education and habit formation in elementary schools. The findings reveal that the application of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children has effectively reinforced key character values, including discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence. The most frequently employed habituation strategies include morning routines, daily reflection activities, teacher role modeling, and collaboration with parents. Bibliometric analysis indicates a growing trend in research on character education at the elementary school level, although studies that specifically integrate the Seven Habits framework remain relatively limited. This suggests the need for further research to develop more innovative approaches aligned with 21st-century educational demands. Supporting factors for program success include school commitment, teacher consistency, and parental involvement, while inhibiting factors involve time constraints, limited resources, and insufficient continuity of habituation outside the school environment. These findings indicate that program success depends not only on schools but also on broader environmental support. Thus, the implementation of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children movement has the potential to serve as an effective strategy in fostering morally upright, independent, and adaptive elementary school students prepared for contemporary challenges.

Keywords: *Character Education, Elementary School, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Children, Systematic Literature Review (SLR), VOSviewer.*

INTRODUCTION

Character education in elementary schools constitutes a fundamental foundation for shaping a child's personality, as childhood represents a critical period in which habits, values, and behavioral patterns are established and often persist into adulthood. Rasyid et al. (2024) emphasize that the integration of character education into everyday school practices extends beyond moral development; it also fosters socio-emotional growth, academic readiness, and civic competence. These multifaceted outcomes strengthen the strategic rationale for positioning character education as a priority at the elementary level. Elementary schools hold a central position as spaces for habituation, where teachers, curricula, and school culture collectively shape routines that cultivate discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. Sofyan et al. (2024) demonstrate that structured habituation programs (e.g., morning routines, classroom rituals, and communal activities) are effective in instilling character values that can be both observed and measured. Accordingly, interventions at the elementary school level provide significant opportunities for building long-term character capital. Nevertheless, empirical realities reveal serious challenges. Many schools are experiencing a decline in students' discipline, sense of responsibility, and collaborative skills, largely influenced by shifting social environments and increased exposure to digital technologies. Studies by Caesaria et al. (2024) and Aldi et al. (2025), which examine school conditions in the post-pandemic and digital era, report trends of distraction, diminished awareness of shared rules, and weakened consistency of positive habituation both at school and at home.

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Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

These phenomena highlight the urgent need for adaptive and contextually responsive character education strategies. Since character is fundamentally formed through the repetition of behaviors that eventually become habits, the habituation approach has been widely recommended by scholars in character education. A well-designed habituation model that integrates positive reinforcement, teacher role-modeling, and the incorporation of values into both curricular and extracurricular activities has been shown to be more effective than one-time interventions or ad hoc measures. Studies by Mufidah et al. (2023) and Indrianingrum et al. (2024) underscore the importance of developing programs that are consistent, measurable, and actively involve key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the broader community. One habituation model that has gained particular attention in the Indonesian context is the localized adaptation of the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids.” This framework emphasizes cultivating habits such as being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, prioritizing what is most important, adopting a win-win mindset, striving to understand others, synergizing, and continuously sharpening the self (Zuliana & Sumanto, 2025). Such a model is considered especially relevant for primary education, as it translates daily routines into concrete practices for example, structured morning agendas, regular self-reflection exercises, and collective assignments, that can be seamlessly integrated into school activities.

Suptapti et al. (2025) reported positive outcomes when the principles of the Seven Habits were contextually adapted, including improvements in time discipline, a heightened sense of responsibility toward academic tasks and religious obligations, as well as enhanced collaboration and communication skills among students. However, their study also noted that the variability of outcomes was contingent upon teacher commitment, parental support, and the availability of supporting facilities. Consequently, the effectiveness of the program necessitates more systematic evaluation and a broader research design. In practice, the role of teachers extends beyond delivering instructional content; they function as facilitators, observers, and role models in cultivating a character-based school culture. Filiansi et al. (2024) emphasized that the success of habituation programs is sustained by teachers’ capacity to design routines, provide constructive feedback, and coordinate the involvement of parents and community stakeholders. Nevertheless, the absence of adequate training or the burden of excessive workloads frequently emerges as a critical obstacle, which must be addressed through managerial support and continuous professional development (Nisa et al., 2025).

Family and community involvement constitutes another decisive factor; character education proves ineffective if confined solely to the school environment without alignment with parenting practices at home. Pirmansyah et al. (2025), in their study on morning habituation programs and school-parent collaboration, demonstrate that clear communication, consensus on values, and practical collaboration (such as homework designed to reinforce school habits) significantly enhance the likelihood of transferring positive behaviors into the home setting. Consequently, intervention design must incorporate strategies for parental empowerment as well as mechanisms for systematic feedback. Another dimension requiring attention concerns resource and infrastructural challenges. Limited facilities, overloaded instructional schedules, and the need for differentiated materials to address diverse developmental stages often pose barriers to implementation. Studies on the execution of character education programs consistently report that, in the absence of explicit allocations of time and resources (such as structured habituation schedules, simplified teaching materials, and standardized assessment tools), such initiatives tend to be episodic, with outcomes that are difficult to sustain. This underscores the necessity of realistic planning at the school level, supported by broader policy frameworks to ensure continuity and long-term effectiveness.

The Seven Habits Movement for Children, rooted in the concept of The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids and the Leader in Me framework, has been interpreted within the Indonesian educational context as a series of intentional positive habits aimed at shaping children’s dispositions, both attitudes and behaviors, beginning from the elementary school level. In its adaptation by the Ministry of Education, these habits are packaged into forms that can be easily integrated into school and household routines. The purpose extends beyond the mastery of academic competencies, emphasizing instead the holistic development of character that encompasses independence, responsibility, empathy, and social competence. This initiative is further developed as a systematic habituation approach, integrated with the national curriculum policy on the Pancasila Student Profile. Conceptually, Covey’s model underscores the importance of cultivating habits such as being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, prioritizing what matters most, adopting a win-win mindset, seeking first to understand before being understood, synergizing, and continuous self-renewal. These values are designed to foster critical thinking, personal responsibility, and collaborative skills. Within the Indonesian context, the adaptation of this movement incorporates healthy routines (e.g., waking up early, engaging in physical exercise, consuming nutritious food, and cultivating a love for learning) as concrete vehicles for instilling these values in students’ daily lives. Field studies indicate that embedding such habits into school activities such as flag ceremonies, classroom projects, daily journals, and morning

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

exercise, facilitates the internalization of character traits, thereby enhancing behaviors such as discipline, social awareness, and independence. The relevance of implementation in Indonesian elementary schools is particularly strong, as this movement can be carried out across multiple sectors, including schools, families, and communities. Such cross-sectoral engagement ensures message consistency and practical reinforcement, thereby enabling sustainable habit formation. Several case studies and action research conducted in elementary schools have reported improvements in key character indicators such as discipline, collaboration, and initiative when teachers received proper training and parents were actively involved. Nonetheless, practical challenges remain, including inconsistency in reinforcement at home and the continuing need for comprehensive teacher training, both of which must be addressed to ensure program scalability and sustainability. These empirical findings support the proposition that the Seven Habits program, when contextually adapted and collaboratively implemented, holds significant potential to strengthen character education at the elementary level. Based on this rationale, the present study aims to provide a detailed description of how the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children movement is implemented in elementary schools, to identify specific aspects of student character that improve through the program, and to examine the various obstacles encountered during implementation along with the strategies employed to overcome them. Accordingly, this research is expected to offer a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the Seven Habits movement in shaping student character, while also providing practical recommendations for schools, teachers, and parents in reinforcing character education at the primary level.

LITERATUR REVIEW

Character Education in Elementary Schools

Character education in elementary schools is commonly understood as the cultivation of values, morals, ethics, and personality traits aimed at helping students distinguish between good and bad in their everyday actions. Rahmi (2024) explains that character education through social studies (IPS) instruction enables the internalization of character values in an applicative and contextual manner in students' daily lives. This reinforces the notion that character is not merely theoretical but must be consistently reflected in observable behavior. The importance of character education at the elementary level cannot be overstated, as this stage represents a critical period for shaping children's mindset and attitudes. Julian et al. (2024) emphasize that character education is directed toward developing moral, ethical, and dignified personalities capable of facing contemporary challenges. This demonstrates that character should not be reduced to a soft skill but rather regarded as a fundamental foundation for students' future development. Furthermore, in the context of current educational policy, the imperative to cultivate the Profil Pelajar Pancasila underscores that character education is not limited to universal moral principles but also involves the internalization of national values. Herwani (2023) highlights how the implementation of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila seeks to instill attitudes reflecting Pancasila values such as mutual cooperation, creativity, and critical thinking through both school rituals and daily activities in elementary education.

Theory of Character Formation

Character education is understood as a systematic effort to instill stable moral and social values in students through teaching, role modeling, and repeated practice. In the context of primary schools, character education serves as the foundation for personality development during the formative stage when norms and habits are being established. Evidence from various elementary schools in Indonesia indicates that integrating character education programs into routine school activities such as morning assemblies, habituation practices, and teacher role modeling has a positive impact on student behavior. Observable outcomes include improvements in discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect, as schools provide a consistent environment for the practice of these values. The theory of habituation, or habit formation, within educational psychology explains how behaviors that are repeated within a stable context gradually transform into automatic habits. This process involves contextual stimuli, repetition, and consistent reinforcement, thereby making moral responses or social behaviors more readily accessible when relevant situations arise. The effectiveness of habituation methods in fostering specific character traits such as religiosity, responsibility, and discipline depends on the extent to which habituation activities are systematically designed, supported with documentation, and accompanied by regular evaluation. Thus, habituation transcends mere ritual and becomes a measurable instrument for character education. The moral development theories of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg provide a comprehensive framework for understanding children's capacity for moral reasoning and the sequential stages through which they evaluate right and wrong. During the elementary school years, children generally progress from a heteronomous morality, where rules are perceived as absolute directives imposed by adults, toward a more autonomous understanding of norms. At this stage, considerations of empathy, intention, and

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

consequences begin to inform their evaluative judgments. The application of these theories in character education necessitates developmentally appropriate interventions, such as the use of moral stories, structured case discussions, and the habituation of prosocial behaviors. Such approaches facilitate the internalization of values in ways that transcend ritualistic practice, fostering cognitive comprehension and personal meaning for the child. When these theoretical perspectives are linked to the framework of the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids,” their relevance becomes evident. The seven habits provide a practical structure for cultivating values such as proactivity, goal-oriented thinking, prioritization, win–win orientation, empathic understanding, synergistic collaboration, and continuous self-renewal. These habits align closely with the principles of value habituation and the progressive stages of children’s moral development, thereby offering a bridge between theoretical insights and practical pedagogical strategies.

The Concept of the 7 Habits for Highly Effective Kids

The concept of the 7 Habits originates from the work of Stephen R. Covey, who defines habits as patterns of action and thought that, when practiced consistently, shape one’s character and personal effectiveness. Within the educational literature, Covey’s framework is understood not merely as a set of behavioral techniques but as a value-based paradigm that emphasizes personal responsibility, long-term vision, and harmonious interpersonal relationships. This orientation makes the framework particularly relevant for adaptation in primary schools as an effort to cultivate character capacity from an early age. The adaptation of this concept for children is widely known in the literature as The 7 Habits for Kids or the Leader in Me program. This version is designed to be communicative and practical for elementary students, whereby each habit is formulated into daily activities that are easy to understand and practice. The language and examples are translated into concrete forms; for instance, the habit of being proactive is expressed through small daily initiatives, while beginning with the end in mind is introduced through class projects that are oriented toward tangible outcomes. Field studies in several Indonesian elementary schools indicate that this adaptation is effective when embedded into school routines and reinforced through consistent teaching practices.

The articulation of the seven habits being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, putting first things first, thinking win–win, seeking first to understand before being understood, synergizing, and sharpening the saw serves as a practical framework for teachers and curriculum policymakers in designing systematic habituation activities. From a pedagogical perspective, each habit embodies distinct character competency targets. Proactivity emphasizes decision-making and initiative, beginning with the end in mind relates to long-term planning and motivation, while synergy and seeking to understand highlight the cultivation of social skills and empathy. Empirical studies in primary schools indicate that when teachers are trained to adopt this approach and when activities are organized across subject areas with the involvement of parents, indicators such as discipline, collaboration, and social concern show measurable improvement. Theoretically, the integration of the seven habits model into elementary school practice is supported by theories of habituation and moral development, which underscore the importance of repetition, role modeling, and consistent environments in fostering long-term behavioral change.

Implementation of the 7 Habits Movement in Elementary Schools

The 7 Habits Movement for Great Indonesian Children, adopted as part of the national Strengthening Character Education initiative, is regarded as a systematic habituation framework designed to instill core values such as responsibility, discipline, initiative, and cooperation from the primary education level. Empirical studies in elementary school contexts demonstrate that this program is not merely a collection of mottos, but rather a structured approach intentionally integrated into school routines and instructional policies, thereby forming a sustainable school culture. The learning strategy emphasizes habituation and role modeling, positioning structured repetitive practices and teacher exemplars at the center of the character-building process. In practical terms, this includes consistent daily activities such as morning routines, brief reflections, and habit journals, as well as the adoption of pedagogical models that connect academic content with the application of habits. Consequently, children learn through concrete actions reinforced by positive affirmation. Several local studies confirm that this approach enhances value internalization when teachers are provided with adequate training and clear implementation guidelines. The integration of the movement into school activities is achieved through formal instruction, extracurricular programs, and broader school culture, ensuring that the values of the 7 Habits are embedded across various contexts. Classroom projects can foster synergy, physical education lessons (PJOK) serve as a medium for developing healthy and disciplined lifestyles, while morning assemblies or classroom rituals function as moments of habit reinforcement. Field-based research highlights that planned integration facilitates monitoring of character development while

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

simultaneously strengthening the consistency of messages conveyed between teachers and students. The success of implementation is highly dependent on the simultaneous roles of teachers, students, and parents. Teachers serve as facilitators and role models, students act as active participants and self-reflectors, while parents function as reinforcers at home. The implementation of the “Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children” in elementary schools is fundamentally aimed at cultivating positive routines that support the character development of students. The first habit is waking up early, which instills discipline and fosters children’s time management skills from an early age. By developing the habit of rising early, children have the opportunity to begin their day in a more organized manner and become better prepared to engage in learning activities. The second habit is engaging in religious practices, which instills spiritual values, gratitude, and a sense of closeness to God. This serves as an essential foundation for moral and ethical conduct that will guide children’s behavior in their daily lives.

The third habit is engaging in regular physical exercise, which not only promotes physical health but also cultivates sportsmanship, cooperation, and mental resilience. Through consistent participation in sports, children learn to maintain their physical well-being while simultaneously developing effective emotional regulation skills. The fourth habit is maintaining a nutritious diet, which educates children to prioritize personal health through balanced eating patterns. Adequate nutrition equips children with both the physical stamina and cognitive readiness necessary to actively and effectively engage in the learning process at school. The fifth habit is a love of learning, which cultivates curiosity, independence, and a continuous drive for knowledge enhancement. Through this habit, children are not limited to formal education within the classroom but also develop the capacity to explore new experiences beyond school settings. The sixth habit is social engagement, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal interaction, empathy, and collaboration within the community. This habit enables children to appreciate diversity, practice compassion, and foster a sense of social responsibility. The seventh habit is early bedtime, which instills discipline and promotes a healthy lifestyle. By obtaining adequate rest, children are able to recharge both physically and mentally, ensuring optimal readiness for the following day’s activities. These seven habits are interrelated and collectively form an integrated system of habituation. When consistently implemented at the elementary school level, these practices have the potential to foster the development of children’s character, shaping them to be disciplined, healthy, intelligent, religious, and socially responsible. Furthermore, the program serves as a practical mechanism for schools to instill character values not merely through theoretical instruction, but also through experiential learning embedded in students’ everyday lives.

METHOD

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach combined with bibliometric analysis. This methodological design was chosen because it enables the researcher to systematically synthesize findings from previous studies while simultaneously mapping the evolution of the topic through quantitative publication data. By adopting this dual approach, the study not only provides a conceptual review of character education in elementary schools but also offers a comprehensive overview of trends, patterns, and interconnections among concepts related to the implementation of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children movement. The data sources for this research are derived from national and international scholarly articles and journals relevant to character education, elementary schools, and habit formation based on the Seven Habits framework. The databases consulted include Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ, Sinta, as well as institutional repositories that provide access to academic publications. The use of multiple databases was intended to broaden the scope of literature coverage, ensure comprehensive representation of sources, and minimize potential bias arising from reliance on a single database.

To ensure the rigor and quality of the review, the researcher established explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Eligible articles consisted of scholarly publications issued between 2015 and 2025, written in either Indonesian or English, that directly addressed character education, the implementation of the seven habits framework, or character-building habituation models among elementary school students. Conversely, articles limited to opinion pieces, editorials, or reports lacking empirical evidence were excluded from the analysis. Likewise, studies focusing on secondary or higher education were disregarded if they did not demonstrate direct relevance to the elementary school context. The literature search procedure was conducted by formulating precise keywords such as “character education in elementary schools”, “7 habits children”, and “elementary school students’ character habituation”. Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) were employed to broaden or narrow the search results according to the research needs. The retrieved articles were then documented, categorized, and further screened using the PRISMA flow framework to ensure that the selection process was transparent and systematically structured. The data analysis technique commenced with a screening phase, which involved the selection of titles, abstracts, and article contents in accordance with predetermined criteria. Subsequently, a coding process was conducted by

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

categorizing the articles into major thematic clusters, such as program implementation strategies, forms of habituation practices, the roles of teachers and parents, as well as observable outcomes in student character development. This stage was essential for formulating the structure of the findings to ensure alignment with the research focus.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (TNR, 12 BOLD)

General Description of Literature Search Findings

Based on a literature search conducted through the ScienceDirect database, a total of 1,260 articles were identified as relevant to the topics of character education, elementary schools, and the implementation of habituation programs such as The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids. This number indicates that character education at the elementary school level has received considerable attention in academic discourse, although not all articles directly address the specific context of the 7 habits framework or the practice of habituation within Indonesia. The volume of available literature simultaneously provides opportunities for researchers to apply further screening measures to ensure that the scope of the study remains aligned with its intended objectives. Following an initial selection process based on titles and abstracts in accordance with predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, only a subset of the articles was retained for subsequent analysis. Articles that did not meet the criteria, such as opinion pieces, editorials, or studies focusing on non-elementary school levels, were excluded. This approach ensured that the present study relied exclusively on articles with robust empirical foundations or strong conceptual frameworks that were directly relevant to the implementation of character education through habituation practices. The distribution of articles by publication year indicates that the majority of recent studies were published between 2024 and 2025. For instance, the earliest article retrieved from the search is a 2025 publication discussing policy support for the application of the Rasch model in assessing character education in primary schools during the post-pandemic “new normal” era. In addition, there are 2024 publications highlighting the social dimensions of primary education. This pattern suggests a growing scholarly interest in character education over the past two years. Overall, the research trend reflects a shift from the traditional inculcation of moral values toward more structured, data-driven habituation models, reinforced by policy support. The issue of character education in primary schools is increasingly examined within the broader context of social change, technological advancement, and educational policy reform.

Bibliometric Analysis Using VOSviewer

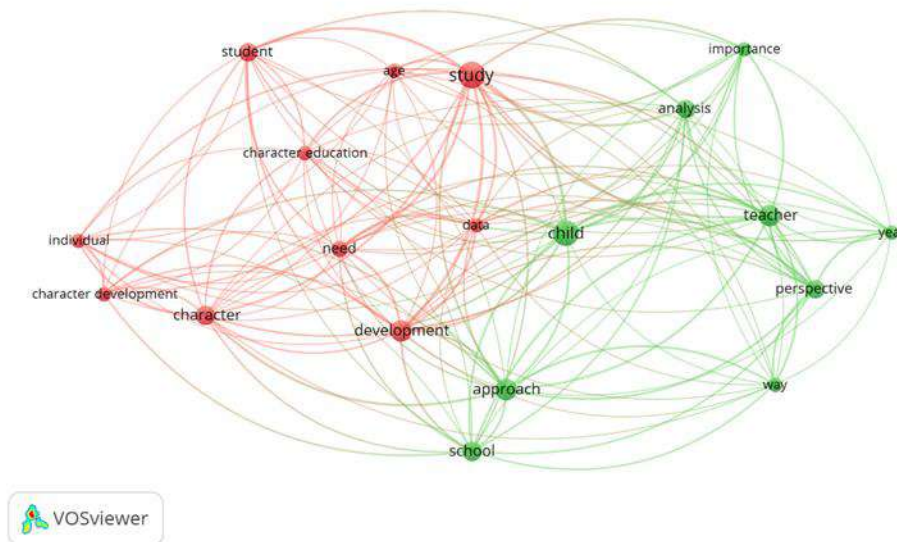


Figure 1. Results of Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis Using VOSviewer

The bibliometric analysis conducted with VOSviewer in this study illustrates the interconnectedness of key terms such as character education, child, school, teacher, and development, which are embedded within a complex network. The co-occurrence visualization highlights that research on character education in primary schools continues to emphasize habituation practices, the role of teachers, and the developmental needs of children as central themes. Frequently appearing keywords such as study, student, and approach further indicate that much of the

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

scholarship focuses on implementation strategies and their implications for student behavior. This pattern suggests that the "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children" initiative can be positioned as a character habituation strategy that aligns closely with children's developmental needs. Furthermore, the cluster analysis reveals a more specific mapping of research themes. Several clusters highlight the importance of cultivating character through school policies, while others emphasize the role of teachers in guiding students, and still others underscore parental involvement as a supporting factor. Collectively, these clusters illustrate that the implementation of character education, including the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Children”, is not solely the responsibility of schools but requires collaboration among teachers, parents, and the broader community. Accordingly, recent research trends tend to integrate multiple perspectives in shaping children's character.

In addition, the co-authorship and citation analyses demonstrate the presence of authors and institutions that are actively contributing to the discourse on character education. Highly cited articles serve as key references in the development of new approaches, including the integration of the 7 Habits within the context of elementary education. The network of collaborating authors also indicates an increasing trend of cross-institutional publications, thereby strengthening the significance of this field of research on both national and international scales. Thus, bibliometric analysis not only maps the core concepts but also delineates the trajectory of research development that supports the application of the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Children” movement in enhancing character formation among elementary school students.

Main Findings of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

The systematic review indicates that the implementation patterns of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children movement in elementary schools are predominantly manifested through routine activities designed to foster positive habits from an early stage. Such implementation is commonly realized through morning activities conducted prior to classroom instruction, daily reflection sessions that enable students to evaluate their own behavior, and the consistent modeling of exemplary conduct by teachers in their everyday interactions at school. Moreover, collaboration with parents emerges as a critical strategy to ensure that these habituation practices extend beyond the school environment and are sustained within the home setting. This synergy fosters continuity in character development and strengthens the overall effectiveness of the program. The character values most frequently examined in various studies include discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence. These four values were found to improve significantly after students participated in the habituation program of the “7 Habits.” Discipline was reflected in students' compliance with school regulations, responsibility emerged in their awareness of completing assigned tasks, cooperation was demonstrated through group interactions, and independence developed through the courage to make simple decisions. These findings indicate that structured habituation is capable of fostering the fundamental character traits necessary for both daily life and the learning process. In practice, the effectiveness of the program is influenced by both supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include the consistent role of teachers, the school's commitment to integrating the program into the curriculum, and the active involvement of parents in accompanying their children. Conversely, the main challenges lie in the limited time allocated for implementation, insufficient supporting resources, and the lack of consistency in habituation when students are outside the school environment. These conditions suggest that the success of the “7 Habits for Great Children” initiative does not solely depend on the school program itself, but also requires broader environmental support to ensure that habituation truly becomes embedded in children's character formation.

Discussion

The discussion of the implementation of the "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children" in elementary schools reveals a strong connection with character education theory. This concept aligns with the notion that character formation cannot be achieved solely through the transfer of knowledge, but must also be cultivated through concrete habituation and direct experience. The seven habits such as being proactive, disciplined, responsible, cooperative, and able to synergize with others are rooted in Lickona's theory of character education, which emphasizes three core dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Accordingly, the implementation of this program can be regarded as an operationalization of this theoretical framework within the context of primary education. When compared to international studies, national findings reveal similarities in the enhancement of students' fundamental character traits, such as discipline, responsibility, and independence. Across various countries, habituation strategies through school routines and teachers' role-modeling are also regarded as effective approaches. Nevertheless, contextual differences emerge in their implementation. International research tends to emphasize integration with digital technologies and project-based learning, whereas national studies are

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

more focused on routine activities such as morning assemblies, collective prayers, or daily reflection sessions. This contrast illustrates how cultural contexts and educational policies shape distinct patterns of character education across nations. A bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer indicates that research trends on character education in primary schools have increased over the past five years. The most frequently examined themes concern the habituation of values such as discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. In contrast, studies exploring the integration of the “7 Habits of Highly Effective Children” as a comprehensive model remain relatively limited. This gap highlights potential avenues for further research, particularly in linking the “7 Habits” framework with 21st-century education approaches, including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. Accordingly, there remains a wide scope for advancing scholarly inquiry into the integration of character-building programs with modern skills essential for the contemporary era. Although there is substantial evidence of success, the implementation of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Children movement continues to encounter several challenges. Limited instructional time constrains teachers from consistently integrating all habituation activities into daily learning practices. Supporting resources such as teaching materials, instructional media, and teacher training are also frequently inadequate. Furthermore, the lack of consistency in practice outside the school environment, particularly at home, poses a significant obstacle that diminishes the overall effectiveness of the program. This critical analysis underscores that the implementation efforts still require broader multi-stakeholder support to achieve more optimal outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The findings derived from the Systematic Literature Review combined with bibliometric analysis demonstrate that the implementation of the “Seven Habits of Highly Effective Students” movement in elementary schools provides a tangible contribution to strengthening students’ character formation. Core values such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and independence emerge as the most significantly enhanced aspects through this program. The common implementation patterns are carried out through routine school activities, daily reflection practices, teacher role modeling, and collaboration with parents. In contrast, international contexts reveal a broader variation, often employing technology-driven and project-based approaches. The analysis of research trends indicates that attention to character education at the elementary level continues to grow. However, studies that explicitly integrate the concept of the seven habits remain relatively limited. This gap presents opportunities for future research to design more contextually relevant models of character habituation, particularly those aligned with 21st-century competencies, including critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. Nevertheless, several challenges remain, including time constraints, limited resources, and the inconsistency of character habituation beyond the school environment. These factors impede the overall effectiveness of implementation. Therefore, strengthening school commitment, enhancing teacher support, and ensuring active parental involvement are essential to achieve sustainable outcomes. In this regard, the “Seven Habits” initiative holds strong potential as a strategic framework for cultivating intelligent, virtuous, and future-ready elementary school students.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN” MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sauriyah Haryati and Ana Fitrotun Nisa

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