Teachers' Pedagogic Competence in Strengthening Character Education of Students in Elementary Schools: Exploring Effective Strategies

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Abstract: This study aims to explore effective strategies for improving teachers' pedagogical competence to strengthen learners' character education at the primary school level. The research method used was a literature study with a qualitative approach. Primary and secondary data were obtained from books, documents, and journals that were of the same relevance as this research. After the data was obtained, the data analysis technique for this research used content analysis. The results of the study found that teachers must master educational technology to improve teaching effectiveness and student engagement. It involved using digital tools for assessment, teaching, and communication with students and parents. Teachers needed to develop 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. These skills were important to help students become individuals who are ready to face future challenges. Teachers should apply an adaptive pedagogical approach, tailoring teaching methods to students' individual needs, interests and abilities. It includes differentiated learning, formative assessment and the use of adaptive technology. Character education should be integrated in the curriculum by teaching universal and contextual values. A holistic approach, including project-and problem-based learning, is important to develop a strong student character relevant to modern challenges. Continuous professional training and development for teachers is key to ensuring they are up-to-date with best practices and innovations in education. This involves workshops, online courses, mentoring and collaboration within communities of practice. Modern assessment and reflection are important for monitoring student progress and evaluating teaching effectiveness. The use of formative and summative assessments, technology in assessment, and regular reflection by teachers and students can improve the quality of learning. Collaboration with parents, communities, educational institutions, government and non-profit organizations can strengthen character education and support teachers' pedagogical competencies.

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Introduction
Education is considered a lifelong experience, and the educational process is recognized as a dynamic of behavior change towards adulthood. This shows that education is not only limited to the classroom but involves lifelong learning. The educational approach emphasizes the important role of education in guiding children to achieve happiness, safety, and the development of their potential (Retnasari & Sumaryati, 2021; Sumaryati & Retnasari, 2021). Education is considered a means to guide children towards happiness and salvation. The focus is not only on the academic aspect but also on their personal development and social abilities. Educational activities also involve improving the spirit of leadership and character growth, especially in the school environment. It emphasizes the importance of not

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only the knowledge aspect but also the development of personality and leadership skills. Every Indonesian citizen is recognized as having the right to education, and the government must provide educational facilities that can support the learning process (Azizah, 2017; Lyngfelt, 2023). It reflects the principle that education is the human right of every individual. The government is required to provide adequate educational facilities and infrastructure to support the educational process. These facilities include everything needed to create an effective learning environment. Education is seen as the main instrument that shapes individuals and active contributors to society. This approach includes cognitive, emotional, and social aspects, creating a holistic foundation for personal development and community well-being (Herlambang, 2021; Quarsebo, 2022).

The development of education and technology is now more advanced, students in today's era are far different from students in previous times. Many strategies and methods are used in achieving the education expected by this nation. Various policies are implemented to educate the nation's life in accordance with the development of the times. The government makes it easier for its people to obtain an education, and the number of the best graduates produced from time to time, but is it strong in awakening the golden generation in the future, therefore the role of schools and the community environment around the nation and the State needs to instill habits, awareness, and insight into diversity in the souls of students so that they are able to become individuals with character in the future who have national insights, qualified science and intelligence in using technology wisely and wisely, loving and respecting others, a dignified person (Retnasari & Sumaryati, 2021; Sumaryati & Retnasari, 2021).

The latest developments in education and technology in producing superior future generations. The development of education and technology today has created a big difference between today's students and the past. It reflects the importance of adapting to the times to ensure educational relevance. The use of various educational strategies and methods is recognized as an effort to achieve the educational goals expected by the nation. It shows a response to the needs of students who have unique learning styles and challenges. The government implements education policies to educate the people of the nation. This includes efforts to facilitate community access to education. The role of schools and the community environment is very important in shaping the character of future generations. Instilling habits, awareness, and insight into diversity is considered crucial to forming a person with character (Rajagukguk et al., 2022).

In addition to qualified science, students also need to have national insight, intelligence in using technology, and the ability to love and respect others. Education can measure the extent to which the best graduates today can form a golden generation in the future. It reflects concern for the sustainability of positive values instilled in the current education system and the importance of producing individuals with dignity and character. It includes not only cognitive aspects, but also moral and social aspects in personality formation (Jaka Nugraha & Mega Adyna Movitaria, 2022; Khasanah & Setiawan, 2022; Munfadilila et al., 2022). Thus, the complexity of the challenges and responsibilities faced in directing the development of modern learners towards a better future.

Today, the term "pedagogic" is more often associated with the concept of education and teaching in general. In the modern context, pedagogy includes teaching methods, learning strategies, and approaches to educating children or students. Understanding pedagogy involves knowledge of developmental psychology learning theory, as well as active involvement in designing effective learning experiences. The development of the meaning of
this term reflects the evolution of views on education and teaching from a historical perspective towards a broader and more comprehensive concept in the world of education today (Handayani, 2022; Soro et al., 2022; Sukasman, 2020).

Education must consider the various dimensions of the interconnectedness of human life, as explained in the pedagogical concept that involves a relationship with God, oneself, other human beings, and nature. Pedagogy not only addresses secular aspects but also includes spiritual and religious dimensions. The relationship between humans and God or the religious dimension plays an important role in shaping the character and moral values of students. The educational process also involves understanding and developing students. It includes an understanding of identity, personal values, life goals, and the development of individual skills and potential. Education is not only about the acquisition of knowledge but also involves social interaction. The ability to communicate, cooperate, and understand others is an important aspect of education to form individuals who can contribute positively to society (Fajri & Mirsal, 2021; Kollo et al., 2024).

The connection of humans with nature and the context of the times also needs to be considered. Education must include an understanding of the environment, sustainability, and changing times to prepare students for future challenges. By considering these four dimensions, education can create a holistic and relevant learning experience. The focus on the golden generation emphasizes the importance of providing an education that not only meets academic needs but also shapes the character, personality, and skills necessary to succeed in daily life and contribute positively to society.

Not only one dimension of the relationship between life owned by a human being, in the educational process, pedagogic as a science that studies the essence of human beings has various scopes, namely the relationship between humans and their gods (religious), the relationship between humans and themselves (self-existence), the relationship between humans and other humans (social), and the relationship between humans and nature (times) (Herlambang, 2021). Intact and contextual, the quality of education is adjusted to the needs of students. Students in this day and age are the golden generation in the future.

The importance of the role of educators in shaping individual character, knowledge, and skills shows that education is not only about information transfer, but also involves the formation of a person's personality and abilities (Herlambang, 2021; Jönsson, 2023; Wallengren-Lynch, 2022). Therefore, the educator profession has a great impact in forming a quality generation and is able to contribute positively to society. As a human being who understands science, an educator is expected to have a deep understanding of the empowered field of science. It includes a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of knowledge in the field. An educator must transfer the knowledge he has to others. It can be done through a variety of effective learning and teaching methods according to the needs and characteristics of students. Educators are directed to focus on the goal of benefiting the ummah. This means that the transfer of knowledge is not solely for personal interests but rather for a positive contribution to society, nations, and people. Educators not only play a role in the classroom or formal educational institutions, but can also help in the education of the wider community. Providing knowledge and understanding to the community can increase collective awareness and knowledge. In addition to transferring knowledge, educators also have an important role in shaping the character of students. Educators are expected to be able to set an example, guide, and provide moral values to the generation they foster. The contribution of educators in transferring knowledge is not only limited to certain individuals or groups, but can also have an impact on the development of the nation as a whole (Solekha & Suyatno, 2022;
A well-educated generation has the potential to bring positive changes in the development of the nation. Through the understanding and implementation of this responsibility, an educator can become an agent of significant change in advancing society and improving mankind's standard of living. This approach creates a close relationship between science, social obligations, and character building, which together contribute to the welfare of the ummah and the development of the nation (Fatonah et al., 2024; Saputri & Purnasari, 2023).

The urgency of investigating teachers' pedagogic competence in strengthening character education among elementary school students lies in the evolving educational landscape that increasingly emphasizes holistic development. Character education is crucial for fostering ethical behavior, social responsibility, and emotional well-being among young learners, yet effective strategies for enhancing teachers' pedagogic competence in this domain remain underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring innovative and effective strategies that empower educators to integrate character education seamlessly into their teaching practices. By identifying and examining these strategies, this research seeks to provide practical insights that can enhance educational outcomes and contribute to the broader discourse on nurturing well-rounded individuals in elementary education.

Results and Discussion

The Importance of Pedagogic Competence in Strengthening Character Education

Improving teachers' pedagogic competence in strengthening character education for students in elementary school is a crucial step to ensure that students are not only academically superior but also have strong character. Teachers can improve their pedagogical competence in strengthening character education so that they can produce students who are not only academically intelligent but also have a strong character—in this subchapter, based on the results of the content analysis of the journals that have been selected using the literature study method, which will further reveal the findings of the research so that the author can contribute to providing suggestions or inputs related to Improving teachers' pedagogic competence in strengthening character education for students in elementary schools (Lailatil Fadla et al., 2022; Suprapto, 2023).

First of all, the author presents a review of a journal that discusses schools as a center for fostering literacy in students. First, the results of research (Wallengren-Lynch, 2022) entitled "Is there a shared social work signature pedagogy cross-nationally? Using a case study methodology to explore signature pedagogy in England, Israel, Finland, Spain and Sweden" revealed that the first empirical study aimed to fill the gap by applying the concept of signature pedagogy in social work education to explore the similarities of social work...
pedagogy in various countries. This study shows the existence of the same principles in social work pedagogy that nurture social work students to think and behave like social workers and develop professionalism through relationship development and dialogue, professional practice, group work, self-reflection, and critical thinking. Furthermore, the results of the research (Jönsson, 2023) entitled "Introduction: Aesthetic och pedagogic" show that the history of children's literature is indeed closely related to the history of pedagogical ideas. The processes that contributed to separating aesthetics from pedagogy began in the period of Romanticism and for Swedish-speaking children's literature in the mid-19th century. However, it was only in the 20th century that children's literature really tried to break free from the pedagogical context.

Then the results of a study from (Lyngfelt, 2023) entitled "Aesthetics in Practice: About the Relationship Between Aesthetics and Pedagogy When Reading Lisen Adbåge's Samtidigt som", revealed that to investigate the relationship between aesthetics and pedagogy by focusing on the aesthetic design of picture books and students' understanding of time as an abstraction. Play research is proposed as a starting point for understanding children's interpretation of books pictures, that is, as a mind game. It also implies that aesthetic means are important for developing an understanding of the pedagogic pedagogics historia och pedagogic. Sedighetsfostran disciplinerings och våldsbruk i den tidigrnodem skolan. 1560-1820 is as abstract as time. Furthermore, the results of the study (Quarsebo, 2022) are entitled". It is argued that the history and pedagogy of school disciplines between 1560-1820 reflect developments and challenges in the early modern education system. Politeness education, strict discipline, and the use of physical violence are the main characteristics of this period. However, the criticisms and changes that emerged during this period also paved the way for more humanist and progressive educational reforms in the future.

Improving teachers' pedagogic competence in accordance with the challenges of the times is important to ensure that student character education remains relevant and effective. Here are some crucial steps that can be taken to achieve this goal (Purwatiningsih, 2020; Rajaguugkug et al., 2022).

Table 1. Steps to achieve pedagogic competency goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of Educational Technology</td>
<td>a. Integration of Technology in Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers need to master the use of technology such as computers, tablets,</td>
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<td>and educational software to create engaging and interactive learning</td>
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<td>experiences.</td>
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<td>b. E-Learning dan Blended Learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implementing e-learning and blended learning methods to provide flexibility</td>
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<td>in the learning process and utilizing digital resources for character</td>
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<td>education.</td>
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<td>21st Century Skills</td>
<td>a. Critical and Creative Thinking Skills</td>
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<td>Development</td>
<td>Teachers must develop critical and creative thinking skills in students</td>
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<td>through a variety of challenging activities and projects.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. Collaboration and Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teaching students effective collaboration and communication skills, both</td>
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<td>face-to-face and online, to face global challenges.</td>
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<td>Adaptive Pedagogic</td>
<td>a. Differentiated Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>Adapting teaching methods to meet the diverse learning needs of each student,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>so that all students can develop according to their abilities and potential.</td>
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b. Project-Based and Problem-Based Learning
Using a project-based approach (PBL) and problem-based learning (PBL) to teach students how to solve real problems and apply their knowledge.

Character Education Relevant to the Times

a. Universal and Contextual Values
Teaching universal values such as honesty, responsibility, and cooperation, as well as values relevant to the local context and current global challenges.
b. Social and Emotional Development
Focus on developing students’ emotional intelligence, including empathy, self-control, and other social skills.

Continuing Professional Training and Development

a. Workshops and Periodic Training
Holding periodic trainings and workshops that focus on developing pedagogic competencies in accordance with the times.
b. Community of Practice
Forming a community of practice where teachers can share experiences, strategies, and resources to improve their teaching skills.

Modern Assessment and Reflection

a. Formative and Summative Assessment
Using modern formative and summative assessments to measure students’ overall academic and character development.
b. Professional Reflection
Encourage teachers to conduct regular professional reflection to assess and improve the effectiveness of their teaching.

Collaboration with Stakeholders

a. Parent Involvement
Invite parents to actively participate in the educational process by providing information and training on how to support character education at home.
b. Cooperation with Industry and Community
Collaborate with local industry and communities to provide relevant and practical learning experiences for students.

Strategies for Improving Teachers' Pedagogic Competence in Elementary Schools

Mastery of educational technology by teachers is very important to improve the quality of learning and strengthen the character education of students. Integrate technology in daily learning by using tools such as projectors, interactive whiteboards, and learning software to make the classroom more interactive and engaging and creating and using multimedia content such as videos, animations, and simulations to enrich learning materials and help students understand concepts better (Kiki Aulia Rahma, 2022; Nelly et al., 2022). Utilizing educational apps and games to make learning more fun and engaging, as well as to reinforce concepts through interactive practices. Use technology to hold interactive activities that teach character values such as teamwork, empathy, and responsibility through role-playing, simulations, and collaborative projects. Teachers can increase mastery of educational technology, which not only increases the effectiveness of learning but also strengthens the character education of students (Nelly et al., 2022).

An adaptive pedagogic approach is a teaching method that adapts to each student's needs, interests, and abilities to ensure all students can learn in the most effective way for them. Some of the things that teachers can do with an adaptive approach are to create lesson plans that can be adjusted to various levels of student ability. It can involve the provision of
diverse teaching materials and different assessment methods (Marzuki et al., 2023; Salmiah et al., 2023). Teachers can divide students into small groups based on their learning needs and assign assignments that match their ability level. Teachers can use diagnostic assessments early in learning to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers provide constructive and continuous feedback to help students understand areas they need to improve. The use of project-based learning (PBL) is where teachers implement PBL to provide students with learning opportunities through relevant and interesting projects that require the application of various skills. Problem-Based Learning: Teachers Use PBL to encourage students to solve real problems in creative and critical ways, developing their analytical skills (Mery et al., 2022).

Teachers apply differentiated learning by adapting learning materials to meet the individual needs of students, whether by deepening the content for more advanced students or providing additional support for those in need. They varied Teaching Methods where teachers use various teaching methods such as discussions, group work, independent learning, and hands-on learning to meet different learning styles. Teacher Skills Development needs to be done to make teachers more professional by providing professional training that focuses on adaptive and differentiated teaching strategies to ensure teachers can apply this approach effectively. Motivate teachers to participate in communities of practice where they can share experiences, strategies, and resources to develop adaptive pedagogic approaches (Munfadilila et al., 2022). By implementing an adaptive pedagogic approach, teachers can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment where each student has the opportunity to reach their maximum potential.

Character education that is relevant to the times is essential to equip students with the values and skills necessary to face the challenges of the modern world. Teach universal values such as honesty, responsibility, respect, and empathy that are relevant throughout time and in a variety of cultural contexts. Adapting character education to reflect values that are important in the local context and current global challenges, such as tolerance, sustainability, and environmental awareness. Integrating character education into all subjects, so that character values are taught in a context relevant to the subject matter (Aminah et al., 2022; Fajri & Mirsal, 2021; Kollo et al., 2024).

Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) of the SEL program, focuses on the development of emotional intelligence, social skills, and the ability to manage emotions. It is using project-based learning that allows students to develop character through teamwork, problem-solving, and the application of knowledge in real-life situations. It uses problem-based learning to encourage students to think critically and creatively in solving real problems that teach values such as empathy and honesty (Mujtaba et al., 2022).

Developing character education modules in a digital format that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, allowing students to learn independently and according to their needs. Make use of educational apps and games designed to teach character values through interactions and fun experiences. It is building a school culture that supports character values by involving the entire school community, including teachers, staff, and students, in activities that promote these values (Jaka Nugraha & Mega Adyna Movitaria, 2022; Mery et al., 2022; Nugraha & Hasanah, 2021). Develop extracurricular programs that can strengthen students' character, such as social activities, scouting, debate clubs, and sports. Using holistic assessments that assess not only academic abilities but also student character development, such as portfolio assessments, observations, and reflection reports. Provide constructive and continuous feedback to students regarding their character development, helping them
understand areas that need improvement. Invite parents to be actively involved in character education by providing guidance and training on how to support character formation at home (Kollo et al., 2024). Work closely with local communities and non-profit organizations to provide programs and activities that can enrich students' character experiences.

Developing Character Education Programs, Schools need to develop and implement character education programs that are comprehensive and in accordance with local contexts and global challenges. Provide training to teachers to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach character education effectively. Conduct periodic evaluations of character education programs and make adjustments based on feedback from students, teachers, and parents (Mery et al., 2022; Rizkasari, 2023; Sumaryati & Retnasari, 2021; Widiyani, 2023). Character education will become more relevant to the times, preparing students to become individuals with integrity and able to face the challenges of the modern world with strong values.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training and development is essential to ensure that teachers always have up-to-date skills and knowledge. The following are steps to implement effective CPD for teachers in the context of improving pedagogic competence and character education: conducting periodic training needs assessments to identify areas that need improvement, both in terms of pedagogic competence and character education (Rizkasari, 2023; Sumaryati & Retnasari, 2021; Widiyani, 2023). Gather feedback from teachers on the type of training and support they need to improve the effectiveness of their teaching. Conducting workshops and seminars focused on the latest teaching techniques, the use of technology in education, and character education strategies. It offers online courses and self-paced learning modules that teachers can access at their own time and convenience, allowing them to learn without having to leave the classroom. Using simulation and role-playing methods to train teachers in real-life teaching situations, helping them develop practical skills in a controlled environment. Implementing project-based learning for teachers, allowing them to experience and develop the same skills they expect from students. Establish a mentoring program where more experienced teachers can mentor newer teachers or those who need additional support. Offer individual coaching sessions to help teachers overcome the specific challenges they face in teaching and professional development (Nelly et al., 2022). Forming teacher working groups in schools to share experiences, strategies, and resources, and discuss challenges and solutions. Encourage teachers to join relevant professional networks and associations, where they can learn from their peers and keep up with the latest developments in the field of education.

Provide webinars and training videos that teachers can access at any time, allowing them to learn from experts in their fields. It uses an e-learning platform to organize courses and training, as well as provides an online discussion forum where teachers can ask questions and share knowledge. Evaluate the effectiveness of each training session to ensure that training objectives are met and identify areas that need improvement. Using teacher performance assessments to measure the impact of training on their competencies in teaching and character education. Provide certification and awards to teachers who have completed training and demonstrated improvement in their teaching (Ghina Ulpah et al., 2024). Provide financial incentives and career development opportunities for teachers who are active in CPD programs and demonstrate a commitment to their professional development. Teachers can continuously improve their pedagogic competence, stay up-to-date with best practices, and develop effective strategies for character education, which in turn will improve the quality of education they provide to students.
Implementation of Strengthening Character Education in Learning Activities

Modern assessment and reflection are key components in improving teachers' pedagogic competence and supporting student character education. Effective assessment measures not only student learning outcomes but also the learning process itself, while reflection allows teachers to improve their teaching practices continuously. Use formative assessments regularly to monitor student learning progress and provide constructive feedback (Suprapto, 2023). Summative assessment is used to measure students' final achievement after a specific learning period. Leverage learning analytics to track student progress, identify patterns, and provide more personalized feedback. Tools like analytics dashboards can help teachers see student progress in more depth. Use online assessment platforms such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, or other LMSs to manage and grade student work efficiently. Using real projects relevant to students' lives to assess their understanding and skills. It helps students apply their knowledge in a broader context. Using a digital portfolio where students can collect their best work, reflections, and feedback from teachers. It provides a comprehensive overview of their progress over a given time.

Teachers need to conduct regular reflection on their teaching practices. Encourage students to reflect on their learning. Provide specific, detailed, written and verbal feedback and focus on ways in which students can improve. Hold individual conferences between students and teachers to discuss student development, challenges faced, and next steps. The data from the assessment results can be used to identify trends and patterns that can be used to improve teaching strategies (Rajagukguk et al., 2022; Suprapto, 2023; Utiarahman, 2020). Develop an action plan based on data analysis to help students who need additional support. By implementing modern assessment and reflection, teachers can be more effective in supporting students' learning and developing their character, as well as improving their pedagogic competence.

Collaboration with various stakeholders is a key element in improving the quality of education, including in developing teachers' pedagogic competence and student character education. The stakeholders in question include parents, communities, educational institutions, governments, and non-profit organizations. Develop community engagement programs that involve students in local projects, such as environmental cleanliness, fundraising for social activities, or community service. Establish partnerships with local businesses to provide internships, industry visits, or guest speakers who can provide practical insights to students. Collaboration with stakeholders can provide more comprehensive support for the development of teachers' pedagogic competencies and student character education, as well as create a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the literature sources presented it can be concluded that Teachers must master educational technology to improve teaching effectiveness and student engagement. It involves using digital tools for assessment, teaching, and communication with students and parents. Teachers need to develop 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. These skills are important to help students become individuals who are ready to face future challenges. Teachers should apply an adaptive pedagogical approach, tailoring teaching methods to students' individual needs, interests and abilities. It includes differentiated learning, formative assessment and the use of adaptive technology. Character education should be integrated in the curriculum by teaching universal and contextual values. A holistic approach, including project- and problem-based
learning, is important to develop a strong student character relevant to modern challenges. Continuous professional training and development for teachers is key to ensuring they are up-to-date with best practices and innovations in education. This involves workshops, online courses, mentoring and collaboration within communities of practice. Modern assessment and reflection are important for monitoring student progress and evaluating teaching effectiveness. The use of formative and summative assessments, technology in assessment, and regular reflection by teachers and students can improve the quality of learning.

**Recommendation**

Collaboration with parents, communities, educational institutions, government and non-profit organizations can strengthen character education and support teachers' pedagogical competencies. By focusing on effective implementation strategies, it is expected to provide practical guidance for schools and teachers in strengthening character education and contribute to improving the quality of education at the primary level.

**References**


