

Character Analysis Based on Student Self-Assessment and Teacher Perception at Junior High School 35 Medan

Joice Evelyn Simamora ¹

Tania Azzahra Daulay ²

Syahrira Hapsyah ³

Reva Nesiya Tarigan ⁴

Natasya Nurbalqis ⁵

¹⁻⁵ Bilingual Pendidikan Kimia,
Fakultas Matematika dan Ilmu
Pengetahuan Alam, Universitas
Negeri Medan, Kota Medan,
Indonesia

*email: joicesimamora80@gmail.com

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Abstract

Character can be defined as an individual's personality, which is shaped by a combination of positive beliefs and values, providing a foundation for perspective, thought, attitude, behavior, and action. This research employs quantitative descriptive data analysis techniques to examine the character of students at SMPN 35 Medan. The data sources for this study were students' self-assessments and teachers' perceptions. The dimensions under investigation include honesty, responsibility, empathy, social aspects, and self-confidence. The data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observations involving a sample of 25 students. The results demonstrated that the dimensions of discipline and social aspects exhibited the highest levels of development, with a value of 64%. This was followed by the dimensions of responsibility and empathy, which demonstrated a percentage of 60%. Finally, the dimension of self-confidence exhibited the lowest level of development, with a percentage of 28%. This study recommends the crucial role of teachers in shaping students' character through literacy programs, interactive methods, and educational sanctions.



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INTRODUCTION

Character education is the development of positive habits and values to enhance children/students' awareness and understanding of virtue in everyday life. Character education aims to enhance the quality of educational processes and outcomes, fostering the holistic, integrated, and balanced development of students' character and noble character in alignment with the competency standards of graduates in education units (Mulyasa, 2022). It is evident that character education, when considered within the context of education, is of significant importance. In order to achieve this, a character education strategy is essential for fostering positive character traits in the nation's children. Educators bear a crucial responsibility for educating and shaping a generation with commendable character traits (Sirait et al., 2021).

The Ministry of Education (2010), states that character is a person's nature, character, morals, or personality, which is formed from the combination of the combination of the good that is believed and used as a guideline for the way of seeing, thinking, behaving, behavior, and actions. Meanwhile, character education is education that develops national character values in students, so that they can implement the values and character as their character, implement these values in their lives, as members of society, and values in their lives, as members of society and citizens who have religious attitudes, values, and attitudes. Citizens who have religious attitudes, nationalist values and attitudes, productive values and creative values, nationalist, productive, and creative values (Fadilah *et al.*, 2021). To achieve good character in students as well as having good manners, special attention is needed regarding. In addition to good manners, special attention needs to be paid to the implementation of character education in schools. Implementation of character education in schools. Character education is a system of naming character values that includes the components of knowledge, awareness or willingness, and action to carry out these values, both toward God Almighty, self, others, the environment, and nationality (Omeri, 2021). Character education is also known as values education, ethics education, moral education, and character education. The goal is to equip students with the skills they need to give advice to others, identify what is good, and act on that advice in their daily lives with integrity (Damayanti, 2023).

Character education is related to the understanding, appreciation, and attitude toward values that are considered noble, which are manifested in good behavior. values that are considered noble, which are manifested in good behavior toward God, man, and nature. toward God, man, and nature (Saputri & Prasetyo, 2024). Character itself comes from the Greek language and means how good values are applied in the form of actions and behavior. In English, "character" has a similar meaning as nature, behavior, morality, nature, character, and personality. The Big Indonesian Dictionary explains that character refers to personality, disposition, psychological traits, morals, or character traits that distinguish a person from others. This definition emphasizes that character is an enduring identity for an individual or entity that makes it different from others (Hanafiah *et al.*, 2024). Character can be defined as a combination of morals, ethics, and moral principles. Morality pertains to the quality of human actions, behaviors, or conduct, and whether they can be classified as good or bad, or right or wrong. In contrast, ethics entails an evaluation of moral goodness and badness based on the norms that prevail in a specific society. The moral order, however, posits that at the core of human existence is an inherent belief in the coexistence of both moralities .

According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, the actualization of character in the form of behavior is the result of a combination of biological character and the results of interaction with the environment. character can be formed through education because education is the most effective tool to realize individuals in their human identity. education produces a human quality that has a refined mind and soul, brilliance of mind, dexterity of body, and awareness of its own creation. compared to other factors, education has a two to three times stronger impact on the formation of human quality (Annur *et al.*, 2021). Character building is currently an attraction for parents to send their children to schools that have begun to emphasize the importance of character building, where schools are willing to instill character education so that children slowly have good character. Because parents often have difficulty in educating their children, most parents choose schools that have a good influence on forming their children's character into good people and on the right path. In addition, busyness is an excuse for parents when their children's behavior becomes naughty. So parents choose schools that also pay attention to the character of their students one by one (Utami *et al.*, 2020). The characters that students need to have are very different. These characters are certainly good characters that can be used as guidelines for life. Megawani divides the characters to be possessed into nine pillars, namely love for God and all His creations; responsibility, discipline, and independence; honest/trustworthy and wise; respectful and polite, generous; helpful and cooperative; self-reliant, creative and hardworking; leadership and fairness; kind and humble tolerant; peace-loving and united (Fadilah *et al.*, 2021) .

Character can be defined as a trait that manifests itself in the ability to push from within to display commendable behavior and contain virtues. The cultivation of character values can be implemented and made into school culture. An effective process to build a school culture is to involve and invite all parties or stakeholders to jointly give their commitment. There are numerous values that can and should be built in schools, including, but not limited to, caring and creative values, honesty, responsibility, discipline, healthy and clean living, and caring for each other (Widodo, 2021). Character education is a deliberate and intentional endeavor to influence the way students think and behave. It is the process of developing and

nurturing the characteristics that enable individuals to live and work together harmoniously within the family, community, nation, and state (Suanda & Nugroho, 2021). In accordance with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Article 3, the objective is to educate the nation and to instill the character of the Indonesian nation. It is insufficient for education to merely facilitate the intellectual development of children; it must also instill noble values and a sense of national identity. Consequently, the cultivation of noble values or character must commence at an early age, ensuring that they will become proud children of the nation. In light of the troubling phenomenon of moral decline and the erosion of character among children in school, it is imperative to pursue innovative strategies for instilling positive character traits in children, with the aim of mitigating the prevalence of moral crises. The cultivation of character in students can be effectively pursued through a multifaceted approach, encompassing both structured and unstructured activities within the school environment, as well as the role of teachers. The implementation of character-building activities within the school setting can be achieved through a range of structured and unstructured routines and spontaneous events. These activities, when designed with the objective of fostering positive behavioral values, can play a pivotal role in shaping children's conduct and attitudes (Nantara, 2022).

In order to cultivate positive values and character traits, it is essential that learners develop a constructive self-concept. The term "self-concept" is used to describe an individual's awareness of themselves, encompassing all ideas, perceptions, and values that contribute to their unique characteristics. The self-concept plays an instrumental role in shaping individual behavior, self-perception, and character. It influences all aspects of an individual's conduct and interactions. An individual's awareness and views of themselves, as manifested in their actions and behaviors, are shaped by their self-concept. This concept encompasses the individual's perceptions and attitudes towards themselves, which in turn influence their perception of life and their subsequent behaviors. These behaviors may be either positive or negative, depending on the individual's positive or negative self-concept. Individuals who possess a positive self-concept tend to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors, whereas those with a negative self-concept often display negative behaviors (Fitriyani, 2019).

Teachers have a significant influence on students' behavioral and character development. They serve as invaluable guides and mentors, influencing students' understanding of moral principles and their application in daily life. Through their guidance and exemplary conduct, teachers can foster a positive and nurturing learning environment, where students can internalize and practice the values they learn (Nantara, 2022). Teachers' perceptions of student characters play an important role in knowing the various characters of students. Perception can be defined as the experience of objects, events, or relationships gained through the process of inferring information and interpreting messages. Perception is a process by which relevant past sensory clues (experiences) are organized to provide a structured and meaningful representation of a particular situation. The term "perception" is typically employed to denote the experience of an object or an event. Perception can be defined as a process that integrates and organizes the data obtained from our senses (vision) in a manner that enables us to be aware of our surroundings, including our own selves. In accordance with Indonesian Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, Article 1, Paragraph 1, defines a teacher as a professional educator whose primary responsibility is to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess, and evaluate students in formal early childhood education, basic education, and secondary education. Teacher perception can be conceptualized as a process through which teachers select, organize, and interpret information and experiences to create a meaningful overall picture. Perception is the process of organizing and interpreting existing information and experiences in order to create a meaningful overall picture. It can be defined as a person's ability to perceive something in question. However, perception is fundamentally dependent on one's attitude (Martines, 2022). Accordingly, the author requires teacher perceptions in evaluating student character, thereby facilitating the acquisition of more comprehensive and precise data. Furthermore, this approach allows for a comparative analysis between teacher perceptions of students and students' self-assessments. Based on the other researcher's results, the character development of students has an impact on the ability of educators to manage learning environments that are not only focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also on the cultivation of strong character traits (Rosmalah, 2020).

SMP Negeri 35 Medan, as an educational institution that plays a role in shaping students' character, is committed to instilling these character values to its students. The role of teachers as facilitators and role models in students' character building is very important. This study aims to analyze students' character at SMP Negeri 35 Medan by focusing on the dimensions of honesty, responsibility, sympathy and social, and self-confidence. By selecting five of the nine characters that

have been tested through questionnaires, as well as by direct observation, the nine characters have been covered in the five-character test, where the five characters are the basis for students to be able to fulfill other character values. In addition, this research will also dig deeper into the role of teachers in student character building. The analysis will be based on students' self-perceptions and teachers' perceptions. Through this research, a clearer picture of the character profile of students in schools will be obtained, as well as the identification of factors that influence students' character development, including the role of teachers as facilitators, role models, and creators of a conducive learning environment.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs quantitative descriptive data analysis techniques to examine the character of students at SMPN 35 Medan. The quantitative descriptive data analysis method is a technique that enables the description, illustration, or summary of data in a constructive manner, with a statistical description that facilitates the comprehension of the data's intricacies. The study sample consisted of 25 students from Class VII-8 and their respective subject teachers at SMPN 35 Medan. The data collection method employed in this study involved the administration of questionnaires, interviews, and direct observation. The questionnaires were utilized to ascertain the students' self-character, while the interviews aimed to elucidate the students' character in the context of the application of character values and the role of teachers in developing students' character. Direct observation was employed to augment the data obtained through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire data were analyzed using quantitative methods, the interview data were analyzed using descriptive methods, and the observation data were analyzed using qualitative methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the respondents involved consisted of 25 students of class VII-8 at SMPN 35 Medan. In order to gain insight into the character of students at SMPN 35 Medan, the author conducted a survey of students' self-perception. The questionnaire, which was designed to elicit responses related to students' self-confidence, discipline, empathy, social aspects, and responsibility, was administered to a sample of students at the school, which can be seen in figure 1. The results of the questionnaire are presented in table 1, which provides a comprehensive account of the characteristics of the respondents who participated in the survey.



Figure 1. Questionnaire processing by students of class VII-8 at SMPN 35 Medan.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Always	Percentage	Often	Percentage	Sometimes	Percentage	Rarely	Percentage
Self-Confidence	7 samples	28%	3 samples	12%	10 samples	40%	5 samples	20%
Discipline	16 samples	64%	1 sample	4%	4 samples	16%	4 samples	16%
Responsibility	15 samples	60%	6 samples	24%	4 samples	16%	-	-
Empathy	15 samples	60%	10 samples	40%	-	-	-	-
Social	16 samples	64%	3 samples	12%	4 samples	16%	2 samples	8%

In addition, to understand the character of students at SMPN 35 Medan, it can be seen from the results of teacher interviews with Mr. Muhammad Dolly Harmen Lubis, S.Pd as a subject teacher to find out the perceptions of teachers in assessing students, which can be seen in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. Interview process with Mr. Muhammad Dolly Harmen Lubis, S.Pd

Additionally, observations were conducted to provide the author's perspective on the comparison of learners' self-assessment of themselves and the teacher's perspective on learners. The results of these observations offer insight into the researcher's perception of the learning process, as observed during the researcher's participation in the activities at SMPN 35 Medan, , can be seen in the following figure 3.



Figure 3. Observation Process with Learning While Playing in class VII-8 SMPN 35 Medan.

Self-confidence can be defined as an attitude or belief in one's own abilities, which allows an individual to act with composure and assurance. One should feel at liberty to engage in activities that align with one's aspirations and obligations. He engages in polite interactions with others, demonstrates a drive for achievement, and is able to discern his own strengths and weaknesses. The individual is able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, and to recognize achievements. The development of self-confidence is a process of learning how to respond to a variety of situations. These stimuli are external and are perceived through interaction with the surrounding environment (Amri, 2018). Through an interview with Mr. Muhammad Dolly Harmen Lubis, S.Pd as a subject teacher at SMPN 35 Medan, a statement was obtained that the character of students at SMPN 35 is very diverse. Regarding self-confidence, the interviewee conducted an assessment by forming study groups where the interviewee obtained the results that some students could lead and be competent as group leaders, and some students were active in working together in groups. However, there are some students who do not want to be active and choose to depend on the group leader, work when asked, not because they realize their responsibilities. The results of this interview are supported by the results of the questionnaire, where 7 out of 25 or 28% students chose always confident, 3 out of 25 or 12% students chose often, 10 out of 25 or 40% students chose sometimes, and 5 out of 25 or 20% students chose rarely. In addition, the next questionnaire question also shows the lack of confidence of students in facing problems where 4 out of 25 or 16% students choose to solve the problem themselves, 4 out of 25 or 16% students choose to ask for help from others, and 17 out of 25 or 64% students choose depending on the problem, which means lack of confidence in facing the problem to be faced. Furthermore, again supported by questionnaire questions, it shows that students describe

themselves in groups where 4 out of 25 or 16% students choose active leaders, 4 out of 25 or 16% students choose supportive members, 15 out of 25 or 60% students choose members who follow instructions, and 2 out of 25 students choose to work alone. This shows that students still lack confidence in leading a group, some even cannot work together in a group. This is also supported by the results of the interview where the informant said that sometimes there are children who have no confidence at all. He only depends on his friends. In the group, he is only a complement because he waits to be called and told to work first, and even when he does, he sometimes cheats. He lacks self-confidence and cannot understand himself. This is in line with the expression in another sources that shows that confidence is seen when students present in front of the class, where students still lack confidence in giving presentations and interacting with those attending the presentation. Students also tend to be shy about asking questions of the teacher when they feel unclear about the teacher's explanation. Many students also still feel that they are not confident in their abilities. It can be said that students still lack confidence in their appearance and abilities, and not only that, the rampant culture of cheating among students is difficult to eliminate as a form of low self-confidence among students (Amri, 2018).

Discipline is an action that shows orderly and obedient behavior to various rules and regulations. The level of discipline of students based on the results of interviews, the interviewees said that discipline in each class has a different level, such as in one class where the boys are hyperactive, noisy, like jail and others while the girls like to tell stories and pout. And in other classes, have good discipline. Where these results are in accordance with the results of the questionnaire where students choose 16 out of 25 or 64% students are always disciplined, 1 out of 25 or 4% student often, 4 out of 25 or 16% students sometimes, and 4 out of 25 or 16% students rarely where, in the next question, namely how students deal with the problem of tasks that cannot be understood, 10 out of 25 or 40% students choose to try to understand themselves, 14 out of 25 or 56% students choose to find a quick way, and 1 out of 25 or 4% student do not continue their assignments. This proves the interviewee's statement. This is also supported by the results of the researcher's observations, where some students are disciplined, but others are less disciplined in their attitude, behavior, and speech.

Empathy can be defined as the capacity to comprehend and vicariously experience the emotional states, cognitive processes, and lived experiences of others. It represents a crucial element of healthy social functioning and is instrumental in fostering harmonious interpersonal relationships. Empathy encompasses not only the ability to discern the emotional states of others but also the capacity to respond emotionally in a manner that is congruent with the situation and to engage in supportive actions. In the meantime, social character can be defined as the collective behavior of individuals who exhibit specific tendencies in their interactions with a variety of situations. It postulates that every individual possesses a unique set of behaviors, including attitudes, abilities, customs, skills, habits, and actions that remain consistent over time. From a sociological perspective, character is shaped through a process of socialization that commences at birth and continues throughout an individual's lifespan. This process facilitates the formation of appropriate attitudes and behaviors. The individual's attitudes and behaviors are shaped in alignment with the norms and expectations of the social group. The collective behavior of a group (Wardati, 2019). Regarding empathy and social character, where based on the results of interviews, it was found that some students usually express emotions in a negative direction, such as fighting, mocking friends and disturbing friends, as well as gossiping. This means that some students still lack empathy and socialization. However, based on the results of the questionnaire, on the question of how students behave when friends are in trouble, 15 out of 25 or 60% students chose to help directly, which means they have great empathy, and 10 out of 25 or 40% students chose to ask first if they need help, which means they have enough empathy. In addition, as to how learners solve conflicts, 16 out of 25 or 64% students choose to talk directly and find solutions together, then 4 out of 25 or 16% students choose to avoid conflict and let the problem pass, 3 out of 25 or 12% students choose to seek help from others to solve the problem, and 2 out of 25 or 8% students choose to ignore the problem and keep silent. This is consistent with the results of the interviews, where some learners solve problems by talking directly, but solve the problem in the wrong way, namely by fighting, mocking, and disturbing. Some ask others for help, but in the wrong way, by gossiping with other friends. On the other hand, based on the results of interviews, some smart and caring students become peer tutors in groups or become examples for other groups.

In general, responsibility can be defined as a state of being obliged to bear everything, so that responsibility is interpreted as being obliged to bear, to carry, to bear everything and to bear the consequences. Responsibility is man's awareness of his intentional or unintentional behavior or actions. Responsibility also means doing as a manifestation of awareness of obligation. realization of obligation (Yasir & Susilawati, 2021). Regarding the sense of responsibility based on

the interview results, where the group leader plays an important role in the success of the group, which means that the group leader must be responsible for its members. Where in the questionnaire results on the question of how students are responsible for their work and duties, 15 out of 25 or 60% students chose very responsible, 6 out of 25 or 24% students chose quite responsible, and 4 out of 25 or 16% students were sometimes responsible. Furthermore, on the question of how students deal with mistakes in their work, 23 out of 25 or 92% students choose to admit mistakes and correct them, 1 out of 25 students choose to make excuses in order not to be blamed, and 1 out of 25 or 4% students choose not to care and continue working. When students make mistakes in the game, they immediately correct their mistakes, which is consistent with the observation results. For some students who choose not to care about the results of each questionnaire question, interview results, and observation results, based on the results of the interview, this happens because junior high school students still have a childish mindset, so they have not thought about the effects of this behavior.

The cooperation of parents, educational institutions and the community is necessary, the three elements support each other well, the cultivation of character education will be optimally created. There are four ways in which character education can be implemented: 1). Application to all existing and compulsory subjects and local content in schools; 2). Application to daily extracurricular activities such as mandatory ceremonies, national holidays, religious events, and random events; 3). Planning in short and long term school programs; 4). Communication especially with all parts of the school to the students' families and thus the effect of character education can be implemented in the school. character education can be implemented in the school. The implementation of character education in schools cannot be separated from all school members (Cahyanto *et al.*, 2022). In addition to their responsibilities as educators, teachers serve as role models for their students. It is, therefore, imperative that teachers maintain a positive attitude in their interactions with students. Furthermore, teachers should provide positive reinforcement for students' positive behaviors, such as through the use of awards or prizes. This approach can help students maintain their positive attitudes and actions over time. Conversely, negative behaviors should be addressed through disciplinary measures, such as reprimands, to ensure that students do not repeat their actions (Melati *et al.*, 2021). The role of teachers at SMPN 35 Medan is of great consequence in the formation of students' character. Based on interview results, teachers employ a range of strategies, including classroom management, group assignments, sanctions, and literacy programs, with the aim of enhancing students' character values. In addition to their responsibilities as educators, teachers serve as role models for their students. It is, therefore, imperative that teachers maintain a positive attitude in their interactions with students. Furthermore, teachers should provide positive reinforcement for students' positive behaviors, such as through the use of awards or prizes. This approach can help students maintain their positive attitudes and actions over time. Conversely, negative behaviors should be addressed through disciplinary measures, such as reprimands, to ensure that students do not repeat their actions.

CONCLUSION

The students at SMPN 35 Medan have exhibited positive character traits, including responsibility, empathy, social and discipline, in their learning processes and group work. However, it should be noted that there are still students who exhibit insufficient levels of self-confidence, necessitating further attention. A survey of 25 students in class VII-8 at SMPN 35 Medan revealed that 7 students (28%) consistently demonstrated self-confidence, while 18 students (72%) exhibited occasional self-assurance. In terms of discipline, 16 out of 25 students (64%) demonstrated consistent adherence to disciplinary norms, which is indicative of a positive attribute in this character trait. With regard to responsibility, 15 out of 25 students (60%) indicated that they always feel responsible, while 10 out of 25 students (40%) demonstrated a lack of sense of responsibility. With regard to empathy, 15 out of 25 students (60%) exhibited positive behavior by choosing to assist friends in need, whereas 10 out of 25 students (40%) demonstrated a lack of empathy, as evidenced by negative behaviors such as fighting or displaying ignorance with regard to the social aspect, it was observed that students tend to express negative emotions. However, 17 out of 25 students, representing 68% of the total sample, demonstrated the capacity to interact socially in a positive manner, as evidenced by their willingness to assist their peers. There are four ways in which character education can be implemented by application to all existing and compulsory subjects and local content in schools; application to daily extracurricular activities such as mandatory ceremonies, national holidays, religious events, and random events; planning in short and long term school programs; and communication especially with all parts of the school to the students' families

and thus the effect of character education can be implemented in the school. character education can be implemented in the school. The implementation of character education in schools cannot be separated from all school members.

The role of teachers at SMPN 35 Medan is of great consequence in the formation of students' character. Teachers employ a range of strategies, including classroom management, group assignments, sanctions, and literacy programs, with the aim of enhancing students' character values. Effective strategies include the use of interactive media, division of roles in groups, and the conferral of awards to motivate students to behave in a positive manner. In an educational environment such as a school, there are compelling reasons why a teacher should incorporate aspects of character education into their curriculum. Firstly, not all students receive character education within the family environment. Secondly, character education can facilitate the formation of positive relationships between individuals. Thirdly, character education can play a pivotal role in fostering a positive school environment. Fourthly, character education is a relatively straightforward concept to grasp, and the skills and knowledge gained from it can be used to effect positive change in the world. The preceding five points have demonstrated the necessity of character education in schools. This evidence substantiates the assertion that individuals who have undergone such an education will experience a multitude of beneficial outcomes (Haluti *et al.*, 2023).

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