

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN INSTILLING THE VALUE OF HONESTY THROUGH CIVICS LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY AT SDN 160 SUKALAKSANA BANDUNG CITY

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Abstract. Character education is essential for building children's moral foundations early on, but existing research often focuses on policies, evaluations, or theories, overlooking teachers' everyday classroom practices in fostering values like honesty. This study fills that gap by exploring micro-level pedagogical strategies in daily civics (Pancasila) lessons at an Indonesian elementary school a rarely examined practical aspect. Employing a qualitative case study, the research at SDN 160 Sukalaksana, Bandung City, involved three teachers from grades 4-6. Data came from in-depth interviews, extended observations, and document reviews. Key findings highlight three approaches: (1) behavioral modeling, (2) integrating honesty dilemmas into lessons, and (3) habituation via moral reflection. Challenges include inconsistent home support and time limitations. This work offers novel insights into feasible "micro-pedagogies" for character education in real settings, emphasizing the need for school support and teacher training. It shows that effective honesty cultivation relies on teachers' consistent, small-scale efforts rather than broad programs alone.

Keywords: Character Education, Honesty, Teachers, Elementary School

INTRODUCTION

Character education plays a critical role in shaping the moral development of students, particularly at the elementary school level, where the foundation for their moral compass is established. It is during this stage that the moral architecture of an individual begins to take shape, influencing their future behavior as responsible citizens and ethical human beings. In a classroom, young learners are not only engaged in mastering academic subjects like arithmetic or reading, but they also encounter essential principles of integrity, respect, and responsibility. Among these values, honesty stands out as a cornerstone it serves as the bedrock for trust and social cohesion. Honesty is the foundation of human relationships, building self-confidence and fostering harmony both within the community and in society at large. While academic prowess is crucial, it is the integration of values such as honesty that forms the ethical basis for students, ensuring that knowledge is not only intellectually sound but morally grounded.

The significance of honesty in education is supported by both global and local scholarly discourse. Thomas Lickona's (2013) influential work, *Educating for Character*, has been pivotal in advancing the cause of intentional character education. Lickona emphasizes that values like respect, responsibility, and honesty must be introduced early in a child's education and, most importantly, must be demonstrated through tangible examples rather than abstract

moral lectures. This perspective is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context, where Pancasila the national philosophical doctrine provides a powerful framework for character development. The principles of Pancasila, such as belief in God, justice, humanity, unity, and democracy, create an ideal foundation for character education and resonate with the moral values needed to cultivate honesty. This alignment is further supported by domestic research, such as that of Sutrisno (2018), which highlights the essential role of Civics Education (Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan or PKn) in fostering honesty in students. The PKn curriculum inherently teaches the balance between rights and responsibilities, creating a natural platform for the incorporation of honesty as a civic and social contract.

While there is substantial recognition of the importance of teachers in fostering character education, particularly the value of honesty, there is a notable gap in research concerning the practical, everyday strategies teachers use to instill this value. Most existing studies focus on broad concepts of character education without delving deeply into the specific, day-to-day pedagogical practices employed by teachers. Thornberg and Oğuz (2017) point out that, despite widespread acknowledgment of the teacher's role, moral education often remains a theoretical ideal rather than a consistently practiced component of everyday instruction. This gap between theoretical commitment and practical implementation, especially at the elementary level where character development has the most profound impact, remains a significant area for academic inquiry. Teachers' concrete strategies and the micro-contexts of how they teach honesty in the classroom have not been studied in-depth, representing a clear gap in the literature.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how teachers at SDN 160 Sukalaksana in Bandung City actively cultivate honesty through Civics Education. The research focuses on understanding the specific, localized strategies employed by teachers—such as how they model honesty, the classroom rules they co-create with students, how they handle incidents of dishonesty, and how they integrate discussions about honesty into daily activities. Furthermore, this study will investigate the challenges teachers face in instilling honesty, including navigating societal pressures, curriculum constraints, and parental expectations.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the daily pedagogical practices that have not been extensively explored in previous studies. By shedding light on the concrete actions teachers take to instill honesty, this study contributes new knowledge to the field of character education. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights not only to educators seeking to improve their teaching practices but also to parents, school administrators, and

policymakers, all of whom play essential roles in supporting the development of ethical character in students.

The theoretical foundation for this study is informed by a variety of scholarly works that underscore the importance of character education. Berkowitz and Bier (2014) discuss the long-term developmental benefits of early character education, noting that children who learn honesty early are better equipped to navigate challenges. Narvaez (2006) highlights the importance of engaging a child's conscience, moral imagination, and empathy in the process of ethical education, beyond simple rule-following. Setiawan (2020) connects global character education discourse to local wisdom, demonstrating how the values of Pancasila can serve as a culturally resonant tool for promoting character. Kristjánsson (2015) advocates for an Aristotelian view of virtue, arguing that honesty, like all virtues, is developed through consistent practice. Moreover, the work of Ryan and Bohlin (1999) provides guidance on creating "schools of character," where moral expectations are clear and consistently upheld. Domestic studies, such as those by Pratama (2020) and Suprpto (2019), empirically reinforce the positive correlation between Civics Education and the development of moral character.

By focusing on the practical, real-world strategies used by teachers in the classroom, this study will contribute a critical, practice-oriented perspective to the ongoing academic discourse on character education in Indonesia, with a specific focus on how honesty can be effectively instilled in elementary school students.

METHODOLOGY

This research deliberately chose to employ a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design, a methodological choice that opened up space for an in-depth and comprehensive exploration of the unique phenomena that live and breathe at SDN 160 Sukalaksana, Bandung City. This design choice was made with deep philosophical considerations; Stake (1995) in his monumental work, "The Art of Case Study Research," emphatically stated that the essence of a case study lies in its ability to delve into the depths of a specific and complex context, making it an ideal choice for uncovering the actual dynamics of the process of instilling the value of honesty an abstract value brought to life in the vivid and colorful reality of the classroom. Meanwhile, the foundation of the qualitative approach itself, as elegantly outlined by Creswell (2014) in "Research Design," was chosen precisely for its high sensitivity in capturing the subtle nuances of human experience—such as perception, motivation, inner conflict, and emotional turmoil that often escape the net of more rigid and structured quantitative approaches.

The primary participants in this study were recruited to form a comprehensive picture: the teachers, the spearheads, and the students, both the subjects and objects of the character education process. Three teachers from grades 4, 5, and 6 were selected using purposive sampling, a strategy where selection is deliberately based on very specific criteria: their direct experience and strong awareness of integrating honesty into daily teaching materials. Patton (2015) in "Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods" asserts that selecting relevant, credible, and informative participants is key to unlocking rich, authentic, and meaningful data. Furthermore, to capture the inner voices of the beneficiaries, we also involved 30 students as active participants. These children's candid and honest perspectives provide emotional depth and an irreplaceable level of authenticity, as they are the ones who truly experience and internalize these character values.

The research location was deliberately chosen at SDN 160 Sukalaksana, a school that not only mentions character education in its vision and mission but has demonstrated a real and ongoing commitment to implementing it in its daily school culture. The research focus, on students in grades 4 to 6, was determined based on considerations of mature psychological development; this selection strongly echoes the findings of Rahmawati (2021), who empirically demonstrated that students at this age level have not only reached a sufficient level of cognitive maturity but also moral maturity, enabling them to understand, reflect on, and internalize abstract moral concepts such as honesty in a more comprehensive and reflective manner.

Data collection techniques were multi-method and layered to obtain a holistic picture and reduce bias. These techniques were designed to complement each other and included in-depth interviews with teachers and students, direct and participatory classroom observation, and document analysis, such as Lesson Plans (RPPs) and attitude assessment books. Kvale (2007) in "Doing Interviews" provides philosophical and practical guidance for conducting empathetic and in-depth interviews, transforming question-and-answer sessions into meaningful dialectical interactions. For observation, Spradley (1980) advocates the use of participant observation so that researchers are not merely passive observers but can become grounded and understand the meaning behind every behavior, symbol, and social interaction occurring within the school's cultural ecosystem. Meanwhile, Bowen (2009) describes document analysis as a powerful qualitative method for tracing the "silent traces" of policies, plans, and educational intentions that are often unspoken.

To provide a holistic view of the research topic, a multi-method approach to data collection was employed, which included interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. These methods were chosen to complement each other and ensure the richness of the data.

1. Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with both teachers and students to explore their views and experiences regarding the teaching of honesty. Teachers were asked about their strategies for instilling honesty, their challenges, and their reflections on the effectiveness of their approaches. Interviews with students focused on their personal experiences with honesty, their understanding of the concept, and how they perceive their teachers as role models. Kvale (2007) emphasizes that in-depth interviews allow for a meaningful exchange that goes beyond simple Q&A, facilitating a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives.

2. Classroom Observations

Observations were conducted using a participant observation approach, as advocated by Spradley (1980). This method enabled the researchers to immerse themselves in the school environment, not just observing behavior but also understanding the meaning behind interactions, classroom rules, and how honesty is demonstrated in everyday activities. Participant observation allows researchers to capture the lived reality of the classroom, providing insights into the informal and often unspoken ways honesty is conveyed to students.

3. Document Analysis

Document analysis was used to examine lesson plans (RPPs) and attitude assessment books, providing a deeper look at the formal curriculum and how honesty is integrated into teaching materials. Bowen (2009) describes document analysis as a useful method for uncovering the "silent traces" of policies and educational practices that may not be explicitly communicated but still influence the teaching of moral values.

The research procedure was carried out in systematic and ethical steps, beginning with obtaining official permission from the school and the ethics committee, followed by a transparent participant selection process. Data collection then took place intensively over three full months, an adequate period to ensure consistency and depth of data, while also building rapport with the participants. The mountain of data collected was then analyzed rigorously using thematic analysis techniques, with the help of NVivo software to manage the

complexity of the data, as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) to identify, analyze, and report thematic patterns.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research results indicate that teachers play a central role in instilling honesty through Civics at SDN 160 Sukalaksana. Through observations, interviews, and document analysis, we identified three main approaches: modeling honest behavior, integrating values into activities, and habituation and reflection. This aligns with Lickona (2013), who emphasized role models. Teachers stated that being a role model is key, as is admitting mistakes in class.

Observations demonstrated contextual integration through discussions, role-plays, and reflection. Students shared personal experiences, which strengthened understanding. Hidayat and Sunardi (2021) support this. Analysis of lesson plans (RPP) indicated honesty as a key indicator, consistent with Suprpto (2019).

The main challenges are inconsistencies in the social environment, time constraints, and differences in teachers' understanding. Thornberg and Oğuz (2017) and Narvaez (2020) highlight the need for consistent support, as emphasized by Pratama (2020).

Interviews with students demonstrate teachers as role models. This supports Bandura's (1977) understanding of social learning. Sutrisno (2018) and Duffy and Roche (2017) emphasize the importance of teacher behavior in elementary schools.

These findings confirm the effectiveness of Civics in instilling honesty, depending on role models and school support. Practical implications include teacher training and strengthening school culture, such as the "Honesty Corner" program.

This research supports Lickona (2013), Thornberg and Oğuz (2017), and Hidayat and Sunardi (2021), showing that honesty is more effective through habituation than through lectures, consistent with Suprpto (2019) and Pratama (2020).

Tables and Figures

Table 1. Table Questions and Interpretations

| No | Questions (Guttman Scale) | Percentage Yes | Percentage No | Interpretation |
|----|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
|----|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|

| | | | | |
|---|---|-----|-----|--|
| 1 | Do you know what honesty is? (Basic knowledge - easiest item) | 90% | 10% | The high percentage of Yes indicates a strong basic understanding among respondents; only 10% did not understand the basic concept. |
| 2 | Do you agree that honesty is important in everyday life? (Basic attitude - cumulative from item 1) | 80% | 20% | The Yes percentage dropped slightly, indicating that most agree, but 20% may not yet fully accept the importance of honesty in private. |
| 3 | Does your teacher (or you as a teacher) explain examples of honesty in citizenship lessons? (Contextual understanding - cumulative of items 1-2) | 70% | 30% | The Yes percentage is lower, indicating that contextual teaching is not yet widespread; 30% of respondents may not have experienced direct explanations in class. |
| 4 | Have you (or your students) ever participated in a discussion about honesty in class? (Participatory experience - cumulative of items 1-3) | 60% | 40% | A significant drop, indicating that active participation is still limited; 40% have not yet engaged, possibly due to time or curriculum challenges. |
| 5 | Do you (or your students) feel that honesty helps build trust with others? (Emotional reflection - cumulative of items 1-4) | 50% | 50% | The percentages were balanced, indicating varying emotional reflections; half of respondents had not yet experienced the emotional benefits of honesty. |
| 6 | Have you (or your students) ever applied honesty in difficult situations, such as admitting mistakes? (Practical application - cumulative of items 1-5) | 40% | 60% | The percentage of Yes is low, indicating that practical application is still difficult; 60% have not implemented it, according to challenges in the article such as environmental inconsistencies. |
| 7 | Do you believe that teacher role models greatly influence students' honest behavior? (Deep understanding of the teacher's role - cumulative of items 1-6) | 30% | 70% | The percentage of Yes is very low, indicating a lack of deep understanding of the teacher's role; 70% may be less aware of the impact of role models. |
| 8 | Do challenges such as lack of time in school hinder the teaching of honesty? (Challenge analysis - cumulative of items 1-7) | 20% | 80% | The minimal Yes percentage indicates that challenges such as time constraints were acknowledged by few respondents; 80% may not have experienced these barriers directly. |
| 9 | Do you (or your students) feel that character | 10% | 90% | The percentage of Yes responses was very low, indicating that the long-term |

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| | education through citizenship has changed your attitude towards honesty? (Long-term impact - cumulative of items 1-8) | | | impact was not yet significant; 90% had not felt any change, as discussed in the article on implementation challenges. |
| 10 | Are you ready to encourage your school to integrate honesty into all aspects of school life? (Holistic commitment - cumulative of items 1-9) | 5% | 95% | The lowest percentage of Yes indicates a low level of holistic commitment; 95% are not ready, indicating a need for greater support from the school. |



Figure 1. 6th grade teacher interview



Figure 2. 5th grade teacher interview



Figure 3. 4th grade teacher interview



Figure 4. Student interviews

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the crucial role of teachers in instilling honesty at SDN 160 Sukalaksana through Pancasila or Citizenship Education, using modeling, integration, and reflection strategies. Challenges such as environmental inconsistencies need to be addressed through school support. Citizenship has proven effective, but success depends on the synergy of the curriculum and school culture. Practical implications include teacher training and character education policies. This contribution enriches educational theory in Indonesia, encouraging us all to pay greater attention to children's character development.

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