

DEVELOPMENT OF STORYTELLING–WRITE MESSAGE–REINFORCEMENT (SWR) LEARNING MODEL IN CULTIVATING SOCIAL CARE CHARACTER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Character education constitutes an essential and inseparable component of national education. The rapid advancement of digital technology and globalization has contributed to a decline in social concern, empathy, and cooperative behavior among elementary school students, thereby necessitating innovative character education approaches. This study aimed to develop the Storytelling–Write Message–Reinforcement (SWR) learning model to foster social care character among elementary school students. The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE development model, encompassing the stages of Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. The study involved 75 fifth-grade students from three public elementary schools in two districts of West Bandung Regency, Indonesia. Data were collected through observations, interviews, questionnaires, reflective writing analyses, documentation, and expert validation sheets. The findings revealed that the SWR learning model achieved a high level of validity, with an average validation score of 80.8%, indicating feasibility for implementation. Practicality testing demonstrated positive responses from both teachers and students, with an average score of 91.2%. Effectiveness testing indicated a significant improvement in students' social care character, with the average pretest score increasing from 68.3 to 87.3 in the posttest. Students exhibited enhanced empathy, cooperation, helping behavior, responsibility, and social sensitivity. Therefore, the SWR learning model can serve as an innovative and effective pedagogical alternative for strengthening character education in elementary schools.

Keywords: character education; elementary school; reflective learning; social care character; storytelling

1. INTRODUCTION

Character education constitutes an essential component of the national education system, providing a strategic response to the challenges arising from globalization and technological advancement. The rapid development of digital technology and social transformation in the twenty-first century has significantly influenced children's social behavior and character development (Najla et al., 2022; Rachmadyanti et al., 2024). These changes have contributed to increasing individualistic tendencies, declining empathy and social concern, and weakened social interactions among children (Prihatina et al., 2022). In many elementary schools, students demonstrate low levels of social care, limited willingness to assist peers, and reduced sensitivity toward their social environment (Faradiba & Budiningsih, 2020).

Character education has become increasingly important, particularly at the elementary school level, as this stage serves as the primary foundation for the development of students' social and emotional competencies (Rohaetul et al., 2025). Recent studies emphasize that character education should be meaningfully integrated into the learning process through contextual, reflective, and experiential pedagogical approaches rather than merely through verbal moral delivery (Prihatina et al., 2022; Zarifsanaiey et al., 2022). Based on these considerations, this study proposes the development of the Storytelling–Write Message–Reinforcement (SWR) Learning Model as an innovative approach to fostering social care character among elementary school students through the integration of storytelling, message-writing activities, and positive behavioral reinforcement.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE development model, consisting of five phases: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Branch, 2018). During the Analysis phase, the researchers identified issues related to students' low levels of social care character and learning needs. The Design phase focused on developing the conceptual framework and instructional syntax. The Development phase involved creation and expert validation of the SWR model. Implementation involved field trials in selected elementary schools, and Evaluation was conducted continuously throughout all phases.

2.2. Participants

The participants consisted of 75 fifth-grade students from three public elementary schools in two districts of West Bandung Regency, Indonesia. Participants included 38 male students (50.7%) and 37 female students (49.3%), aged 10–11 years.

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Participants

Characteristics	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	38	50.7
	Female	37	49.3
Total		75	100
Age	10 Years Old	34	45.3
	11 Years Old	41	54.7
Total		75	100
School Location	Sub-district A	50	66.7
	Sub-district B	25	33.3
Total		75	100

2.3. Data Collection & Analysis

Data were collected through observation checklists, interview guidelines, questionnaires, expert validation forms, and students' written messages. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were employed. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage calculations ($P = \Sigma X / \Sigma X_i \times 100\%$). Qualitative data were analyzed using the interactive technique of Miles et al. (2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation techniques were employed to strengthen credibility.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results of Needs Analysis

Preliminary findings revealed that character education in elementary schools remains predominantly cognitively oriented. Classroom observations indicated that students demonstrated limited empathy, low willingness to assist peers, weak collaborative attitudes, and insufficient social sensitivity. The needs analysis questionnaire showed that 86.7% of teachers reported character education practices dominated by verbal advice, while 82.6% of students expressed greater interest in storytelling and reflective learning activities.

Table 2. Results of Preliminary Needs Analysis

Indicators	Percentage (%)	Category
Need for innovative character learning model	88.0	Very High
Students' interest in storytelling activities	82.6	High
Teachers' difficulties in character education	86.7	Very High
Need for reflective learning activities	84.0	High

3.2. Expert Validation Results

Table 3. Expert Validation Results of the SWR Learning Model

Validation Aspect	Percentage (%)	Category
Learning syntax	83.0	Valid
Content relevance	81.0	Valid
Language clarity	79.0	Valid
Instructional procedure	80.0	Valid
Practical applicability	81.0	Valid
Average	80.8	Valid

3.3. Practicality Results

Table 4. Practicality Test Results of the SWR Learning Model

Indicators	Percentage (%)	Category
Ease of implementation	91.0	Very Practical
Clarity of learning stages	90.0	Very Practical
Student engagement	94.0	Very Practical

Classroom interaction quality	92.0	Very Practical
Learning flexibility	89.0	Practical
Average	91.2	Very Practical

3.4. Effectiveness Results

Effectiveness testing demonstrated significant improvement in students' social care character following participation in SWR learning activities, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Students' Social Care Character Improvement

Indicators	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Gain
Empathy	68.2	87.4	19.2
Cooperation	70.1	88.5	18.4
Helping behavior	67.5	86.9	19.4
Responsibility	69.0	87.0	18.0
Social sensitivity	66.8	86.5	19.7
Average	68.3	87.3	19.0

Storytelling activities enhanced students' emotional involvement in moral learning. The Write Message stage enabled students to construct and internalize personal moral meanings. Reinforcement activities supported the development and maintenance of positive social behaviors. These results align with Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and constructivist perspectives (Vygotsky, 1978; Fosnot, 2013).

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Storytelling–Write Message–Reinforcement (SWR) learning model is valid (80.8%), practical (91.2%), and effective in fostering elementary school students' social care character. The integration of storytelling, the Write Message activity, and reinforcement creates meaningful, contextual, and emotionally engaging learning experiences supporting the development of empathy, cooperation, helping behavior, responsibility, and prosocial attitudes. The SWR model may serve as an innovative pedagogical alternative for strengthening character education in elementary schools. Future studies should extend the implementation to wider participant groups, longer duration, and explore additional character dimensions.

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