Strategic Interventions for Character Development in the Era of Society 5.0: A Systematic Literature Review of Indonesian Higher Education

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Abstract: Strategic Interventions for Character Development in the Era of Society 5.0: A Systematic Literature Review of Indonesian Higher Education. Globalization has introduced foreign cultures that threaten students' moral integrity, making character education essential to shaping and preserving their identity. **Objectives:** This study analyzes strategic efforts in the campus environment as drivers of student character formation in the era of globalization. **Methods:** This study used a systematic literature review with a descriptive-qualitative approach to synthesize and analyze existing research on student character development. Data were collected from Google Scholar, Scopus, and ERIC databases, focusing on journal articles published over the last 10 years (2015-2025). The literature search used several databases with relevant keywords, applying inclusion and exclusion criteria based on study type, language, and publication period. From an initial search using the keyword "Student Character," based on title and abstract relevance, 27 articles focusing on practical character-building efforts were ultimately selected for thematic analysis. **Findings:** A critical evaluation reveals common methodological weaknesses in Indonesian character education studies: predominantly qualitative designs lacking quantitative validation, small sample sizes limiting generalizability, the absence of longitudinal studies for long-term assessment, and insufficient control groups to establish causality. Publication bias is evident, with studies predominantly reporting positive outcomes while minimizing limitations. The quality of evidence remains moderate, with few studies employing rigorous measurement instruments or validated character assessment tools. The quality of evidence remains moderate, with few studies employing rigorous measurement instruments or validated character assessment tools. Despite these limitations, this review highlights the effectiveness of integrating character-building through courses and extracurricular activities. **Conclusions:** Holistic models incorporating local wisdom, along with organizational activities such as scouting, student associations, and anti-corruption education, effectively foster essential traits involving tolerance, responsibility, critical thinking, independence, creativity, and honesty that support student identity in globalization contexts. However, future research requires more rigorous designs, standardized tools, and transparent reporting to strengthen the evidence for character education in Indonesian higher education.

Keywords: analysis, student character, globalization.

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■ INTRODUCTION

The flow of global information is moving faster, so the younger generation now lives in a trend that shapes the penetration of foreign cultures, including their perspectives, attitudes, and actions (Rudiyanto & Kasanova, 2023; Setiyaningsih, 2020). The world has now entered a new era known as Technology 5.0. In the context of education, the main focus of this era is to shape individuals who are knowledgeable, capable of critical thinking, and have strong morals and ethics in line with the development of modern technology (Tanjung et al., 2023; Yuan & Liu, 2023; Tanjung et al., 2024). The Society 5.0 era has brought major changes in the world of education by placing humans at the center of various innovations (Hamedani et al., 2024; Tavares et al., 2022). It cannot be denied that these changes have had various impacts, both positive and negative. However, for the younger generation, the negative effects tend to be more dominant. This condition shows that our nation is facing a moral decline. The phenomenon of moral degradation is increasingly prevalent among young people as the future generation of the nation and the general public, as reflected in deviant behaviors such as promiscuity, drug abuse, corruption, fighting, and radicalism. These issues have caused concern among many parties, mainly because one of the main causes is the growing loss of character education in education (Hart, 2022; Setiyaningsih, 2020).

This problem requires a fundamental solution (Setiyaningsih, 2020). Character refers to human behavioral values related to God, oneself, others, the environment, and the nation, which are reflected in thoughts and actions and are manifested in accordance with the rule of law, norms of decency, religious teachings, customs, and prevailing culture (Macaranas, 2021; Yudkin et al., 2021). The educational process plays an important role in gradually shaping students' character. Higher education institutions, as official educational institutions, have the function of continuing the process of instilling these character values. Character education has several functions, namely: (1) building a multicultural national life; (2) building a civilized nation that is intelligent, has a noble culture, and can contribute to the life of humanity; (3) developing basic potential to have a good heart, correct thinking, and commendable behavior while setting an example; and (4) shaping the attitudes of citizens who love peace, are creative, diligent, and honest (Yunanto & Kasanova, 2023).

These values are reflected in thoughts and actions, based on laws, norms, religious teachings, customs, and prevailing culture (Elsayed, 2024). The implementation of character education in higher education institutions is one solution to address various emerging issues (Dabdoub et al., 2024; Setiyaningsih, 2020). To properly analyze and categorize character values, we adopt a framework for character-consistent development (Liu et al., 2025) that emphasizes the alignment between character traits and behavioral patterns. This framework ensures that character education interventions align with students' cognitive development and cultural contexts, providing a structured approach to systematically analyze and reinforce character formation through educational practices.

The educational process is essential for gradually shaping students' character. Character education aims to develop individuals who not only possess intellectual abilities but also communication skills, creativity, and an appreciation for aesthetic values, leading to an orderly and meaningful life (Hayqal & Najicha, 2023). Although the government has established various regulations and technical guidelines to support character-based learning (Mucinskas et al., 2025), its implementation often falls short. Many educational institutions still focus primarily on cognitive aspects through conventional methods emphasizing memorization, which limits

the development of character and personality. As a result, graduates from primary to higher education frequently demonstrate weaknesses in personal growth and competitiveness, compared to graduates from other countries (Gu & Jin, 2025).

Students are seen as agents of change, the hope for advancing national education. They are expected to bring innovation, fresh ideas, and a new spirit that will encourage improvements in the quality of education at the national level. With their scientific knowledge, students also bear a great responsibility to bring about change, especially in education (Spires et al., 2022; Tanjung et al., 2025). In reality, many students are still unaware of their role and do not exhibit academic characteristics. This can be seen from various undesirable behaviors, such as disrespecting lecturers, choosing a free lifestyle without boundaries, getting caught up in drug abuse, engaging in promiscuity, participating in demonstrations without obeying the applicable rules, and even simple actions that reflect dishonesty, such as cheating on exams (Martin-Alguacil et al., 2024). This phenomenon shows that the character education provided has not been fully internalized in students' real lives. To improve their morality and build their character, character education must not be taught only as theory; it must be put into practice daily.

However, despite extensive research on character education in higher education, a significant gap remains in understanding how technological advancements and globalization affect students' character formation. While prior studies have extensively covered the theoretical aspects of character education (Elsayed, 2024; Oldham & McLoughlin, 2025), few have examined how these traditional character values interact with the rapidly evolving technological landscape and the global influences shaping students today. This gap is especially noticeable in the context of the Society 5.0 era, where the

interplay between human-centered technological innovation and the need for moral integrity is not adequately addressed.

This gap in the literature highlights the need for a systematic literature review to integrate and analyze current character education strategies within the context of Society 5.0 and the ongoing technological transformation. While existing frameworks provide a foundational understanding of character education (Liu et al., 2025), they often overlook how technological shifts and globalized cultural influences are reshaping students' moral and ethical development in higher education. As a result, the character education interventions in many educational institutions remain disconnected from the dynamic challenges posed by global connectivity and technological advances.

Campuses play a strategic role in human resource development by implementing the *Tridharma* of Higher Education, namely education and teaching, research, and community service (Ramaditya et al., 2023; Yusup et al., 2021). Then, effective character education within higher education institutions requires more than theoretical instruction; it demands integrating character-building practices into campus life to establish an academic culture rooted in strong moral values (Arthur, 2024). In this context, lecturers play a pivotal role in shaping student character. Lecturers who exhibit good character themselves can serve as role models for students, influencing their moral development (Löper & Hellmich, 2024).

The process of character formation in higher education is multifaceted and involves various interventions. These interventions can be categorized into curricular integration, school culture approaches, and explicit character education programs. Curricular integration involves embedding character development within academic subjects, with moral and ethical themes addressed in course content (González-Doðan

et al., 2024). This approach allows character education to be woven directly into students' learning experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of values in a real-world context. School culture approaches focus on creating an environment that embodies character development through campus norms, peer interactions, and extracurricular activities. These initiatives emphasize the importance of a positive campus atmosphere where values such as respect, responsibility, and collaboration are practiced daily. Lastly, explicit character education programs are structured initiatives that directly teach students about values and ethical behavior, often through seminars, workshops, or dedicated courses (Lin et al., 2025). These programs complement the other approaches by providing focused opportunities for reflection and personal growth.

While all these approaches contribute to character development, it is their integration that proves most effective. Lecturers and student organizations also play crucial roles in this process, with campus activities providing additional platforms for students to develop both academically and morally (Davidovitch & Dorot, 2023; Le, 2024). As the next generation of leaders and innovators, students need to be equipped not only with knowledge but also with the values and skills that will support their success in a globalized world (Assefa & Mutjaba, 2025; Bhardwaj et al., 2025). By combining theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and strong moral values, students can serve as agents of positive social change (Bertolini et al., 2024). Regular assessment of students' character development is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and refine teaching strategies. These evaluations enhance students' self-awareness and enable continuous improvement. Through systematic character education, higher education institutions can cultivate well-rounded individuals prepared to contribute meaningfully to society in both academic and non-academic (Siregar et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2022).

This study aims to explore the strategic efforts in university settings that shape student character, focusing on the integration of educational approaches, including Pancasila education, character education, and other teaching methods. It will examine how these efforts foster critical thinking, positive behavior, and the development of values like tolerance, responsibility, and independence, which are essential for students to thrive in the era of globalization. To achieve this objective, the following research questions guide this systematic literature review:

RQ1: What intervention strategies are implemented to develop student character in higher education?

RQ2: What specific character traits are developed through these intervention strategies?

RQ3: Which intervention strategies are most effective in fostering specific character traits, particularly responsibility and independence?

■ METHOD

Research Design

This study used a systematic literature review with a descriptive-qualitative approach to synthesize and analyze existing research on student character development. A systematic review involves a thorough, methodical process of identifying, selecting, and evaluating pertinent studies related to a particular research question or topic (Muka et al., 2020). Systematic reviews are vital tools in evidence-based practice because they synthesize research findings to inform decision-making. However, evaluating the quality of these reviews is critical to avoid misleading or biased findings (Shaheen et al., 2023). Systematic reviews remain frequently used in the literature, as they offer broad coverage and the flexibility to

address evolving knowledge and concepts. This approach involved searching databases, applying inclusion criteria, assessing study quality, and synthesizing findings to minimize selection bias.

Data Collection

Data were collected from Google Scholar, Scopus, and ERIC, focusing on journal articles and books that address efforts to build student character published within the last 10 years (2015–2025) to ensure inclusion of the most recent research. The combination of these three databases provided a comprehensive and diverse pool of sources, enhancing the reliability and breadth of the literature review. The literature search used several relevant keywords, including "character development," "character education," "higher education," and "student character building." The initial search yielded 260 articles from Google Scholar, 407 from ERIC, and 150 from Scopus databases, which were then filtered based on the relevance of their titles and abstracts, resulting in a narrowed selection of 190 articles. All selected studies were verified for availability and cited correctly in the reference list (Shaheen et al., 2023). The flowchart of the literature selection process is presented in Figure 1.
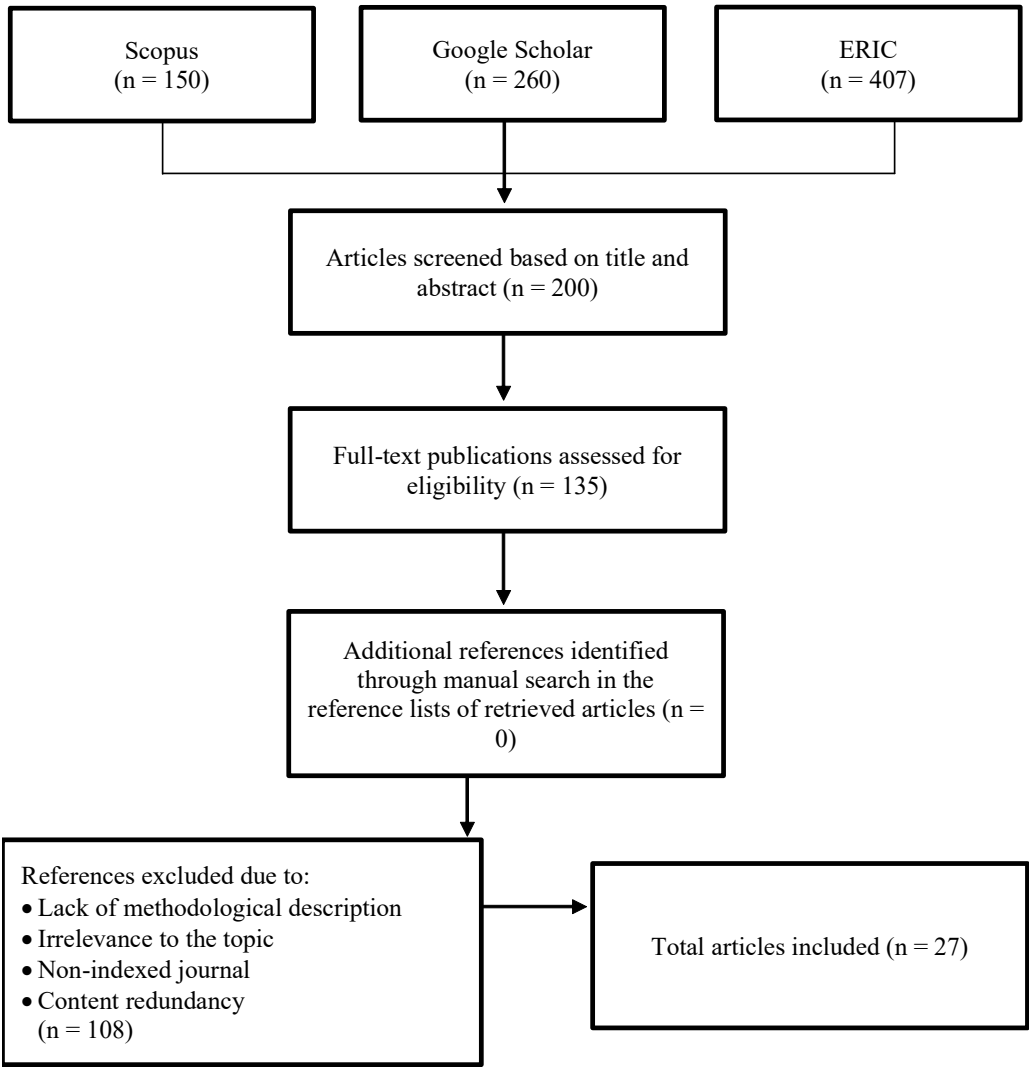
Scopus (n = 150) | Google Scholar (n = 260) | ERIC (n = 407)

Articles screened based on title and abstract (n = 200)

Full-text publications assessed for eligibility (n = 135)

Additional references identified through manual search in the reference lists of retrieved articles (n = 0)

References excluded due to:
• Lack of methodological description
• Irrelevance to the topic
• Non-indexed journal
• Content redundancy
(n = 108)

Total articles included (n = 27)

Figure 1. Flowchart of literature selection process

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria for this study encompassed: (1) journal articles and books published between 2015 and 2025; (2) studies focusing on character development models, methods, and character values in higher education; (3) articles written in English or Indonesian; and (4) empirical studies, conceptual papers, and literature reviews relevant to the research topic. While national journals were prioritized in the selection process, this approach may still limit the scope and relevance of the review by underrepresenting some international studies that could provide valuable context and comparisons in character education in higher education. The exclusion criteria included: (1) articles published before 2015; (2) studies not directly related to character development in educational settings; (3) duplicate publications; and (4) articles with insufficient methodological information or unavailable full texts. Articles that met the eligibility criteria were analyzed in depth, ultimately selecting the 17 most relevant articles. Regarding the methodological quality assessment, not all articles had the same quality. Some articles used more qualitative approaches, such as opinion studies or conceptual literature reviews. In contrast, others employed quasi-experimental designs or quantitative methodologies to measure the effectiveness of character development strategies.

Data Analysis

Data from these articles were extracted and synthesized using thematic analysis to identify key themes, strategies, and outcomes related to character development, and content analysis to examine character traits such as integrity, empathy, and responsibility that were frequently mentioned. The thematic analysis followed an iterative process of coding, categorizing, and identifying patterns across the selected studies. The findings from the articles were synthesized to provide an overview of effective strategies for promoting student character, while also identifying gaps in the existing literature. The diversity in methodologies used provides a more comprehensive view of the various ways to foster student character, but also introduces challenges in integrating these findings consistently. Therefore, differences in methodological quality among the included studies must be considered to provide a more critical interpretation of the findings and recommendations. This systematic literature review provided a comprehensive framework for understanding diverse perspectives and strategies related to student character development, while also highlighting areas for future research and for improving educational practice.

■ RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Intervention Strategies Implemented to Develop Student Character in Higher Education

The systematic literature review identified 18 distinct intervention strategies employed across 26 studies to foster student character development in Indonesian higher education contexts. These strategies can be categorized into three main approaches: curricular interventions, co-curricular activities, and pedagogical innovations. Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of study characteristics and methodological approaches used to examine these interventions.

Table 1. Study characteristics and methodological overview

Author(s)	Year	Research Design	Participant	Data Collection	Key Findings
Maisyaroh et al.	2023	Qualitative Research with a Case	Teachers, Education Personnel,	Interviews and document review	The program impacts students' character, affecting their daily lives and

		Study design	and Committees		surroundings.
Karmelia	2020	Descriptive Qualitative	University Student	Interviews, Observations, and Documentation	The findings show that applying Pancasila values fosters tolerance and helps students become responsible, disciplined citizens.
Hayqal & Najicha	2023	Qualitative Descriptive	University Students	Document analysis	Developed imaginative intelligence, moral character, and noble ethics aligned with Pancasila ideals
Kurdi	2018	Quantitative - Survey	University Students	Pre-post survey	Humanistic approach: 75-89% reported personal growth, self-awareness, life purpose clarity, and potential exploration.
Faiz & Soleh	2020	Qualitative	University Students	Interviews, observation	Local wisdom-based education instilled cultural appreciation and developed entrepreneurial/leadership skills.
Sonika et al.	2020	Qualitative Research with a Case Study design	University Students	Questionnaire, Interviews, and Document analysis	85%+ demonstrated conceptual understanding; students became character education volunteers
Yunanto & Kasanova	2023	Qualitative-Literature review	Sources	Document analysis	Character education is crucial in higher education, with teachers serving as role models and supporting both academic and personal growth to help students navigate globalization.
Rasyi d etal.	2024	Qualitative-Literature review	Sources	Document analysis	Contextual learning developed critical thinking and connected theory with practice.
Damayanti	2021	Qualitative Research with a Case Study design	University Students	Observation, language analysis	Language courses shaped honest, disciplined, responsible, polite, and confident behavior.
Setiyaningsih	2020	Quantitative - Survey	University Students	Survey	64% reported strong character contribution; 67% needed role models; 62% influenced by faculty behavior
Arfiah & Sumardjoko	2017	Qualitative Research with a Case Study design	Students, Alumni, and Stakeholders	Surveys, interviews, observation	Scouting reinforced independence and responsibility
Suparni	2016	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	University Students	Observation, Pre-post test, Reflection	Integrated teaching materials enhanced critical thinking and articulation skills.

Perdana & Adha	2020	Qualitative - Conceptual analysis	Sources	Document analysis	Blended learning improved communication, time management, responsibility, and integrity.
Setiawan	2023	Qualitative	Not specified	Interviews	Anti-corruption education cultivated national concern and commitment to be agents of change.
Basri & Dwiningrum	2020	Descriptive Qualitative	University Students	Observation, interviews	Student organizations developed independence, creativity, responsibility, honesty, and time management.
Pertiwi et al.	2021	Qualitative-Literature review	Sources	Document analysis	Organizations fostered critical thinking essential for preserving national character in the digital age.
Nastiti	2023	Qualitative Research with a Case Study design	University Students	Observation, Interviews, and Documentation	Organizations built democratic attitudes, discipline, responsibility, and decision-making skills.
Sholeh et al.	2025	Mixed Method	Various School	Pre- and post-tests	The approach shows equitable impact across different socioeconomic groups and school types.
Wijaya et al.	2020	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Senior High School Students	Essay questions, questionnaires, and observation	Cooperative learning strategies (STAD and Group Investigation) facilitated integration with the community and parents.
Syahrial et al.	2022	Mixed Method	Primary School Students	Questionnaires and interviews	Significant positive correlation between the implementation of the traditional game "Congklak" and students' character development
Yunitasari et al.	2025	Qualitative Research with a Case Study design	Elementary School Teachers and Students	Observation, Interviews, and Documentation	Students were more motivated and engaged, creating a productive classroom atmosphere.
Nuryadi et al.	2023	Qualitative-Literature review	Sources	Document analysis	The importance of equipping teachers to support the development of nationalism character in students amid challenges posed by the digital era
Sarifah et al.	2025	Quantitative - Survey	Elementary School Students	Questionnaires and test	Indicates a critical need for ongoing character education embedded in both curricular and non-curricular activities
Sakti et al.	2024	Qualitative Research with a Case Study design	Teachers, parents, and school principals	Interviews and document analysis	Ethnopedagogy is recommended for early childhood education to foster character

					development through local wisdom.
Sartika et al.	2024	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	University Students	Pre-action analysis	Provides practical guidance for educators to develop responsibility in civic education
Prayitno et al.	2022	Qualitative - Descriptive	Indonesian language textbooks	Document analysis	Prophetic values can serve as a pillar for developing positive politeness and strengthening student character.
Muassomah et al.	2025	Qualitative - Descriptive	Primary school students and teachers	Document analysis and observation	Participatory learning allowed students to co-design and engage in character education processes.

Theme 1: Curricular-Based Character Education

Curricular interventions represent the most frequently documented approach to character development, with Pancasila Education, Character Education Courses, and Indonesian Language Courses emerging as primary vehicles. Pancasila Education appeared in multiple studies (Karmelia, 2020; Hayqal & Najicha, 2023; Octavia & Rube'I, 2017) as a foundational framework for instilling national values and moral principles. The integration of Pancasila values in the educational process proved particularly effective in promoting tolerance among students from diverse backgrounds, fostering inclusivity and social cohesion (Karmelia, 2020).

Character Education Courses, as documented by Kurdi (2018), employed humanistic approaches that led to substantial self-reported improvements in self-awareness (80%), clarity of life purpose (87%), and value development (75%). However, the reliance on self-reported measures raises questions about measurement validity and the potential for social desirability bias in these findings.

Indonesian Language Courses also contributed significantly to character formation by emphasizing polite communication, respect, and cultural identity (Damayanti, 2021). The linguistic approach to character education demonstrates that language learning extends beyond communication skills to encompass moral and ethical dimensions of student behavior.

Theme 2: Co-Curricular and Experiential Learning Activities

Co-curricular activities, particularly Student Organizations and Scouting Activities, emerged as critical platforms for practical character development. Student Organizations were identified as the most influential strategy overall (see Figure 2), providing students with opportunities to practice leadership, teamwork, responsibility, and accountability in real-world contexts (Basri & Dwiningrum, 2020; Nastiti, 2023; Pertiwi et al., 2021). These organizations serve as laboratories for moral development, where students apply theoretical knowledge and develop soft skills essential for professional and civic life.

Scouting Activities, though less frequently studied, demonstrated effectiveness in building independence and responsibility through experiential learning (Arfiah & Sumardjoko, 2017). The hands-on, outdoor nature of scouting provides unique opportunities for character formation that complement classroom-based approaches.

Theme 3: Pedagogical Innovations and Teaching Methods

Innovative pedagogical approaches, including Blended Learning, Integrated Teaching Materials, and Participatory Learning, represent a third category of intervention strategies. Blended Learning combined digital literacy with character education, improving communication skills, time management, and integrity (Perdana & Adha, 2020). This approach is particularly relevant in the digital age, where students must navigate both online and offline moral landscapes.

Participatory Learning models (Muassomah et al., 2025) demonstrated that when students actively co-design their character education experiences, they achieve deeper cognitive and affective engagement. This student-centered approach challenges traditional transmission models of moral education and suggests that agency and ownership are critical to character development. Ethnopedagogical approaches (Sakti et al., 2024) and Local Wisdom Integration (Faiz & Soleh, 2020) highlight the importance of culturally contextualized character education, linking moral development to local traditions and community values.

Specific Character Traits Developed Through Intervention Strategies

Analysis of the reviewed literature revealed 40+ distinct character traits developed across the intervention strategies. These traits can be organized into three overarching categories: Moral Character, Performance Character, and Civic Character, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Character development outcomes by type and intervention

Character Type	Intervention Strategy	Specific Character Traits Developed	Supporting Studies	Effectiveness Evidence
Moral Character	Pancasila Education	• Tolerance • Religious practice • Unity and cohesion • Care for others • Non-discrimination	Octavia & Rube'I (2017); Karmelia (2020); Hayqal & Najicha (2023)	Qualitative evidence of behavioral change; no quantitative measures
	Character Education Courses	• Self-awareness (80%) • Life purpose clarity (87%) • Value development (75%) • Inner potential (89%)	Kurdi (2018)	Self-reported improvement 35-63% → 75-89%; measurement validity unclear
	Ethics and Professional Education	• Role model recognition (67%) • Character contribution (64%) • Faculty influence (62%)	Setiyaningsih (2020)	Quantitative survey data; causal mechanisms unclear
	Indonesian Language Course	• Honesty • Discipline • Responsibility • Politeness • Confidence	Damayanti (2021)	Qualitative observation: language-behavior link established
	Humanistic Character Education	• Behavioral change (85%+) • Conceptual	Sonika et al. (2020)	Mixed methods; quantitative + behavioral

		• understanding • Volunteerism		observation
	Anti-Corruption Education	• National concern • Moral values • Commitment to change	Setiawan (2023)	Qualitative; long-term impact unknown
Performance Character	Integrated Teaching Materials	• Critical thinking • Information articulation • Broader perspective • Valid conclusions	Suparni (2016); Rasyid et al. (2024)	Experimental design with pre-post tests
	Blended Learning	• Communication skills • Time management • Responsibility • Integrity	Perdana & Adha (2020)	Pre-post assessment; digital literacy integrated
	Scouting Activities	• Independence • Responsibility	Arfiah & Sumardjoko (2017)	Student self-reports; experiential learning focus
	Student Organizations	• Independence • Creativity • Responsibility • Honesty • Budget accountability • Time management	Basri & Dwiningrum (2020)	Qualitative; peer learning emphasized
	Local Wisdom Integration	• Entrepreneurial skills • Leadership skills	Soleh (2020)	Qualitative, culturally contextualized approach
		• Cultural appreciation		
Civic Character	Pancasila Education	• Pluralistic tolerance • Social cohesion • Collective action	Karmelia (2020); Hayqal & Najicha (2023)	Observational evidence in diverse settings
	Anti-Corruption Education	• State concern • Agent of change identity	Setiawan (2023)	Qualitative, political socialization focus
	Student Organizations	• Critical thinking in the digital age • National character preservation • Democratic attitudes • Decision-making skills	Pertiwi et al. (2021); Nastiti (2023)	Qualitative; emphasis on civic engagement
Moral and Civic Character	Participatory Learning	• Co-designed character education • Cognitive and affective growth	Muassomah et al. (2025)	Qualitative observation and documentation; active student engagement
	Ethnopedagogy	• Local wisdom integration	Sakti et al. (2024)	Qualitative; interviews and

	• Character development in early childhood		document analysis; community engagement emphasized
Civic Education Learning	• Responsibility • Ethical decision-making	Sartika et al. (2024)	Pre-action analysis; practical guidance for educators; measurable improvement in student responsibility
Prophetic Values in Textbooks	• Positive politeness • Strengthening ethical character	Prayitno et al. (2022)	Qualitative content analysis; descriptive evidence
Quantitative E-assessment (Rasch)	• Assessment of Pancasila student profile • Character development measurement	Sarifah et al. (2025)	Quantitative survey and Rasch model analysis; highlights gaps and strengths in character education.
Mixed Method for Various Schools	• Equitable character development across socioeconomic groups	Sholeh et al. (2025)	Pre- and post-tests; evidence of consistent impact across school types
Cooperative Learning (CAR, STAD & GI)	• Integration with community and parents • Student engagement	Wijaya et al. (2020)	Essay questions, questionnaires, observation; practical integration shown
Traditional Game "Congklak"	• Character development through play	Syahrial et al. (2022)	Questionnaires and interviews: significant positive correlation with character traits
Motivated Classroom Atmosphere	• Student engagement and productivity	Yunitasari et al. (2025)	Observation, interviews, and documentation; qualitative evidence
Teacher Preparation for Nationalism	• Developing nationalism character in students	Nuryadi et al. (2023)	Document analysis: qualitative insight on teacher support amid digital era challenges

Theme 1: Moral Character Development

Moral character traits, including honesty, tolerance, respect, responsibility, and integrity, were the most frequently targeted outcomes across studies. Responsibility emerged as the most commonly developed trait, appearing across six intervention strategies (see Figure 3). This finding suggests that responsibility serves as a foundational character trait that educators prioritize across multiple pedagogical contexts.

Tolerance and non-discrimination were primarily developed through Pancasila Education, which explicitly addresses Indonesia's pluralistic society and emphasizes unity in diversity (Karmelia, 2020). The development of these traits is significant in preventing social conflict and

promoting national cohesion in Indonesia's diverse cultural landscape.

Honesty and integrity were developed through multiple channels, including Indonesian Language Courses, Student Organizations, and Blended Learning. The multi-faceted approach to these traits suggests that moral character development requires reinforcement across different educational contexts.

Theme 2: Performance Character Development

Performance character traits, such as critical thinking, communication skills, time management, and creativity, were primarily developed through pedagogical innovations and co-curricular activities. Integrated Teaching Materials and Blended Learning proved particularly effective in enhancing critical thinking and analytical skills (Suparni, ; Rasyid et al., 2024).

Student Organizations contributed significantly to the development of performance character by fostering independence, creativity, and time management skills (Basri & Dwiningrum,

2020). These traits are essential for academic success and professional competitiveness, bridging the gap between moral development and practical capability.

Theme 3: Civic Character Development

Civic character traits, including democratic attitudes, decision-making skills, national concern, and social awareness, were cultivated primarily through Pancasila Education, Anti-Corruption Education, and Student Organizations. These interventions emphasize students' roles as active citizens who contribute to democratic governance and social progress.

Anti-Corruption Education (Setiawan, 2023) specifically targeted the development of moral values and commitment to social change, preparing students to serve as agents of reform in Indonesian society. However, the long-term impact of these attitudes remains unclear, as most studies lack longitudinal follow-up. Table 3 provides a comprehensive mapping of intervention strategies to specific character traits developed.

Table 3. Intervention strategies and developed characters

Intervention Strategy	Developed Characters
Pancasila Education	Tolerance, Religious practice, Unity, Care for others, Non-discrimination
Character Education Courses	Self-awareness, Life purpose clarity, Value development, Inner potential
Ethics & Professional Education	Respect, Responsibility, Trust
Indonesian Language Course	Honesty, Discipline, Responsibility, Politeness, Confidence
Humanistic Character Education	Behavioral change, Critical Thinking, Volunteerism
Anti-Corruption Education	National concern, Moral values, Commitment to change
Integrated Teaching Materials	Critical thinking, Communication, clarity, Open-mindedness, Analytical thinking
Blended Learning	Communication skills, Time management, Responsibility, Integrity
Scouting Activities	Independence, Responsibility
Student Organizations	Independence, Creativity, Responsibility, Honesty, Accountability, Time management
Local Wisdom Integration	Entrepreneurial skills, Leadership, Cultural appreciation

Civic Education Learning	Responsibility, Ethical decision-making
Prophetic Values in Textbooks	Politeness, Strengthening ethical character
Participatory Learning	Collaboration, Emotional Maturity
Ethnopedagogy	Cultural Appreciation, Social Awareness, and Early Childhood Character
Traditional Game "Congklak"	Social Skills, Cooperation, Self-Regulation
Motivated Classroom Atmosphere	Motivation, Responsibility, Discipline, Work ethic
Teacher Preparation for Nationalism	Nationalism character

Effectiveness of Intervention Strategies in Fostering Responsibility and Independence

To address this question, we conducted frequency analysis and visualized the relationships between intervention strategies and character outcomes using Sankey diagrams (Figures 2 and 3).

Theme 1: Responsibility as the Dominant Character Outcome

Responsibility emerged as the most frequently developed character trait, appearing in six different intervention strategies: Ethics & Professional Education, Indonesian Language Course, Blended Learning, Scouting Activities,
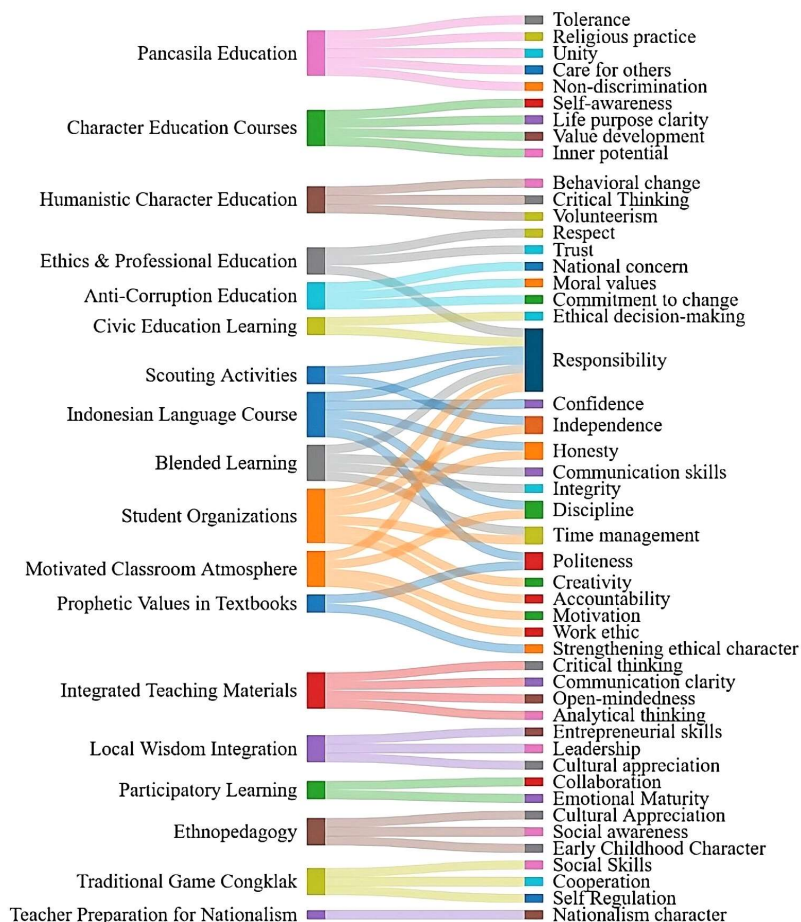

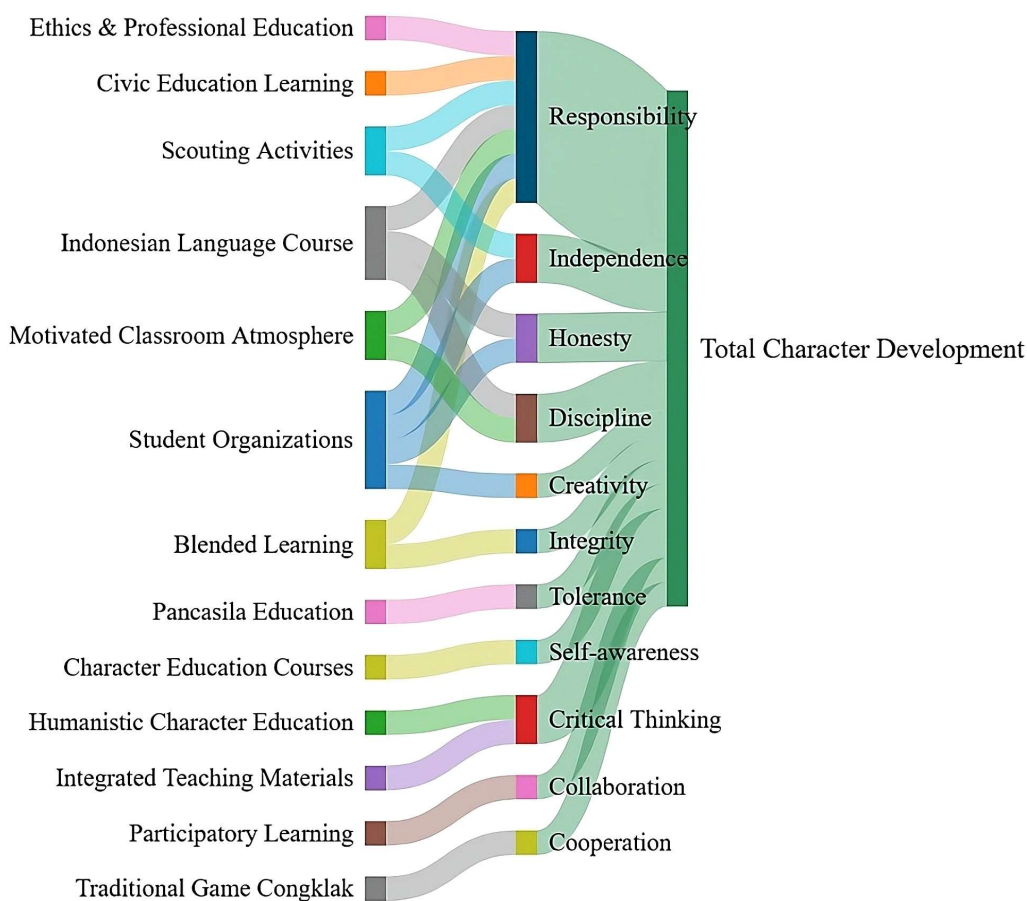**Figure 2.** Intervention strategies that influence the number of characters formed

Figure 3. Types of characters formed

Student Organizations, Civic Education Learning, and Motivated Classroom Atmosphere (see Figure 3). This finding indicates that responsibility is viewed as a foundational character trait that transcends specific pedagogical approaches.

The prominence of responsibility may reflect Indonesian educational priorities, in which accountability, ethical behavior, and social obligation are considered essential to both personal success and national development. The multi-strategy approach to developing responsibility suggests that educators recognize the need for repeated reinforcement of this trait across different learning contexts.

Theme 2: Student Organizations as the Most Influential Strategy

Student Organizations emerged as the single most influential intervention strategy, contributing to the development of six distinct character traits: Independence, Creativity, Responsibility, Honesty, Accountability, and Time Management (see Figure 2). This finding aligns with experiential learning theory, which posits that character development is most effective when students engage in authentic, meaningful activities that require the application of moral principles.

The effectiveness of Student Organizations can be attributed to several factors: (1) peer learning and modeling, (2) real-world application of ethical principles, (3) leadership opportunities, and (4) accountability structures. Unlike classroom-based interventions, student organizations provide sustained engagement over extended periods, allowing for deeper internalization of character values.

Theme 3: Independence as a Secondary Prior

Independence was developed through two primary strategies: Scouting Activities and Student

Organizations. While less frequently targeted than responsibility, independence represents an important developmental outcome, particularly in preparing students for autonomous decision-making and self-directed learning.

The relatively lower emphasis on independence compared to responsibility may reflect cultural values in Indonesian society, where collective responsibility and social harmony are often prioritized over individual autonomy. However, as Indonesia continues to modernize and integrate into global systems, the development of independent thinking and self-reliance may require greater emphasis in character education programs.

Theme 4: Synergies Between Strategies and Character Outcomes

The Sankey diagrams (Figures 2 and 3) reveal important synergies between intervention strategies and character outcomes. Strategies that combine experiential learning with structured reflection, such as Student Organizations, Scouting Activities, and Participatory Learning, appear most effective in developing multiple character traits simultaneously. This suggests that effective character education requires both action and reflection, enabling students to practice moral behavior and reflect on their experiences.

■ CONCLUSION

This review underscores the significant role of character education in higher education, highlighting the integration of values such as responsibility, creativity, and tolerance into both academic curricula and extracurricular activities. The studies reviewed suggest that initiatives like Pancasila education, Indonesian language courses, and student organizations have a meaningful impact on students' moral and intellectual development. However, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, reliance on self-reported data in many of the studies reviewed may introduce bias and

overestimate the impact of character education. Moreover, the search strategy was limited to national-level journals, potentially excluding relevant international research, and lacked a systematic quality assessment of the included studies. These factors suggest caution in generalizing the findings. While the results appear promising, the conclusions drawn from the data should be viewed with an awareness of these methodological constraints. Future research should address these gaps by exploring the long-term effects of character education and incorporating more rigorous, objective measures of character development. Furthermore, expanding the scope of studies to include international perspectives would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of character education globally. Finally, higher education institutions should continue to refine and integrate character education into both formal curricula and extracurricular activities, ensuring a holistic approach that promotes cognitive, emotional, and moral growth. Despite the positive outcomes reported, this review highlights the need for further research to assess the sustainability and long-term impact of character-building efforts, while addressing the identified limitations in the studies reviewed.

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