International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsulindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

Integrating The Theory Of Virtuity In Character Education: A Study Of The Condition Of Contemporary Indonesian Education

Dian Sundari
Yogyakarta State University
Siti Irene Astuti Dwiningrum
Yogyakarta State University
Pujiriyanto
Yogyakarta State University

Corresponding Author: diansundari.2025@student.uny.ac.id, siti_ireneastuti@uny.ac.id, pujiriyanto@uny.ac.id

Abstract

Character education has become a strategic and pressing issue in Indonesia, amid rising cases of bullying, intolerance, school violence, low academic integrity, and the misuse of digital technology that triggers negative behavior. This phenomenon confirms that education has not fully succeeded in forming students' virtues holistically, resulting in many students who are academically intelligent but morally fragile amid the dynamics of modernity. Based on this reality, this article aims to analyze the integration of virtue theory in character education and examine its relevance to the contemporary state of Indonesian education. Using a qualitative approach using library research methods, data was selectively collected from various national and international scientific journal articles, reference books, policy documents, and recent research reports, which were then analyzed using content analysis and critical interpretation techniques. The results of the study indicate that virtue theory offers a strong and comprehensive philosophical foundation by emphasizing the formation of moral habits and character development through real practice, rather than simply memorizing normative values. Its integration in the field can be accelerated through curriculum strengthening, the establishment of a consistent school culture, teacher role models, reflective learning, and alignment with the Pancasila Student Profile. Through this synergy, the orientation of character education shifts from merely transferring moral knowledge to the formation of whole human beings who have high integrity, are responsible, have empathy, and have deep social concern.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Keywords: Theory of Goodness, Character Education, Virtue, Pancasila Student Profile, Contemporary Education.

INTRODUCTION

Today's society is changing rapidly in terms of how we live, share culture, work, and use new technologies. The internet has changed the way people communicate with each other, seek information, and perceive themselves. This can be a good thing because it helps improve life and education. But it also creates new problems, especially for young people. Issues such as bullying, school violence, inappropriate use of social media, hate speech, and cheating occur not only in Indonesia but throughout the world. This shows that simply having new technology and better education does not automatically help young people grow into good, honest, and friendly individuals (UNESCO, 2024). Many studies state that it is increasingly challenging for the younger generation to develop good character in the digital age. This is because they are exposed to a lot of information and influences from the internet, not all of which are good. Young people must strive to sort and choose the right information and develop good character in the midst of the challenges of the digital era. A UNESCO report (2024) stated that using technology without understanding right and wrong can lead to cyberbullying, the spread of false rumors, and difficulties in forming healthy friendships.

In Indonesia, there are increasing cases of student fights, intolerance, greedy behavior, and cheating in schools (Suyitno, Wahyudi, & Setiawan, 2023). This means that education should be more than just teaching facts; it should also help students build strong morals and good character. In Indonesia, character education has long been a part of the country's educational goals. The Law on Education (Law No. 20 of 2003) states that education should help students become obedient, respectful, noble, intelligent, creative, independent, just, and responsible individuals. This means that education is not just about learning facts but also about developing good human beings. However, research shows that there is often a gap; what students learn about good behavior in school is not always reflected in their daily behavior (Marini, Safitri, & Muda, 2023). A researcher named Berkowitz (2022) found that moral teaching is most effective when schools also create a culture that encourages students to practice good behavior. Schools that truly help students build character usually don't just teach moral values in class and then leave it at that. They instill these values in every aspect of school life, whether in the classroom, extracurricular activities, or even in daily interactions. This demonstrates that character building isn't just about ethics lessons; it requires a broader and more comprehensive approach.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

In Indonesia, research by Wuryandani (2022) found that simply incorporating character values into school plans does not always change student behavior. Schools that truly help students build character typically don't just teach moral values in the classroom and then leave it at that. They instill those values in every aspect of school activities, whether in the classroom, extracurricular activities, or even in daily interactions. This suggests that character building isn't just about ethics lessons; it requires a broader and more comprehensive approach. Therefore, students may know about good character in theory but don't always demonstrate it in their daily actions. Research by Fitriani and Prasetyo (2024) examined character education in the digital age. They found that the biggest challenge is helping students use technology responsibly. When students don't think about digital ethics, it can lead to more online conflicts. Therefore, good character education needs to be based on strong ideas so students can develop lasting good habits. Another study by Gunawan, Suryadi, and Hasanah (2025) showed that a program called the Pancasila Student Profile helps students build good character. Through fifth-grade projects, students learn to work collaboratively, independently, creatively, and care for others. However, the study also found that the program's success depends on teacher preparedness and whether the school regularly promotes character values.

International research by Kristjánsson (2020) highlights virtue theory as one of the most relevant approaches to contemporary character education. This theory believes that character develops through the continuous development of virtues, practiced until they become integral to one's personality. Similarly, Arthur and colleagues (2023), using the Jubilee Center framework, emphasized that effective character education must foster four types of virtues: moral, intellectual, civic, and performative. This approach actually shapes students' character more holistically than methods that focus solely on moral knowledge.

Unfortunately, despite the abundance of research on character education, not much has truly addressed the relationship between virtue theory and its application in Indonesian education today. Most research focuses on program evaluations or the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile. Meanwhile, studies that use virtue theory as the philosophical foundation for character education are still rare. This theory offers a different perspective on how character develops not only through teachings but also through daily habits, teacher role models, real-life experiences, and a consistent school culture. This gap requires further research in the future.

Based on the description above, this research aims to answer three main questions. First, what is the concept of virtue theory in character education? Second, what is the current state of character education in Indonesia? Third, how can virtue theory be integrated into the

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

development of character education in Indonesia? The author hopes that the answers to these questions will provide a more comprehensive picture of the importance of virtue theory as a philosophical foundation for character education, especially in the current digital era.

This study aims to explore the concept of virtue theory in character education, examine the current real conditions of character education in Indonesia, and offer strategies so that virtue theory can be truly applied in the development of national character education. From a theoretical perspective, this study is expected to enrich studies in the philosophy of education and character education. From a practical perspective, the results of this study can be a reference that helps teachers, schools, and policymakers when designing more effective, contextually appropriate, and sustainable character education. Seeing the many moral issues in the world of Indonesian education, the development of virtue theory, and the need to strengthen the philosophical basis of character education, the author plans to compile a scientific study entitled "Integrating the Theory of Virtue in Character Education: A Study of the Condition of Contemporary Indonesian Education."

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a qualitative approach using library research. The primary objective of this study was to deeply understand, interpret, and analyze the concept of virtue theory and its relevance to character education in the context of contemporary Indonesian education. Unlike quantitative approaches, which emphasize measurement and generalization, a qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, philosophical values, and conceptual constructs underlying various literatures. This approach is particularly suitable for conceptual studies because it allows researchers the freedom to explore nuances, contexts, and theoretical implications without manipulating the variables or research objects (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The literature review method was chosen as the primary strategy because this research is theoretical and conceptual in nature. The focus is not on collecting primary data in the field, but rather on synthesizing and reinterpreting various existing scientific ideas and findings. According to Snyder (2019), literature review is a systematic research method for identifying, evaluating, organizing, and synthesizing relevant literature to build a more comprehensive and coherent understanding of an issue. In education, this method is frequently used to develop new conceptual frameworks, review established theories, critique current educational practices, and formulate evidence-based policy recommendations.

The data sources for this study are entirely secondary. They were obtained from various

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

credible scientific and academic documents, including articles from reputable national and international scientific journals, classic and contemporary academic books, official research reports, government education policy documents, and publications from international institutions such as UNESCO, the OECD, and the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues. This diversity of sources was deliberately used to enrich perspectives, avoid bias, and strengthen the validity of the findings through source triangulation (Yin, 2023). Thus, this study does not rely solely on one type of literature but rather fosters dialogue between various scientific perspectives.

The data collection process was carried out through systematic and structured documentation techniques. Researchers conducted a literature search using several leading scientific databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, Taylor & Francis Online, SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. Search keywords were carefully selected, including: virtue theory, virtue ethics, character education, character virtues, moral education, character education, Pancasila Student Profile, contemporary Indonesian education, moral virtues, and combinations of these keywords. The search process was carried out repeatedly with variations of keywords to ensure the completeness of the literature.

Strict inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to maintain the quality of the study. The literature analyzed was primarily published within the last five years (2020–2025) to maintain relevance to current educational conditions. However, the researchers also included several fundamental classical works, such as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, the thought of Thomas Lickona, and the works of David Carr and Kristjánsson. These classic works remain essential as they form the primary philosophical foundation of virtue theory and cannot be ignored.

After the data was collected, a data reduction stage was carried out. The obtained literature was grouped based on major themes, namely: (1) the concept and history of virtue theory, (2) the development of character education globally, (3) the conditions and challenges of character education in Indonesia, (4) models of virtue-based education, and (5) the alignment of virtue theory with the Pancasila Student Profile. This reduction stage is important to focus the analysis and eliminate irrelevant information (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020).

Data analysis was conducted using two main approaches: content analysis and a critical-interpretive approach. Content analysis was used to identify patterns, themes, key concepts, and relationships between ideas emerging from various sources (Krippendorff, 2019). Meanwhile, the critical-interpretive approach was used to in-depth evaluate the suitability of the theory of virtue with the reality of education in Indonesia. Through this approach, researchers not only described what was written in the literature but also criticized, compared, and contextualized it with various

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

current issues such as student moral degradation, the impact of social media, challenges in the digital era, school culture, and the implementation of the Independent Learning policy.

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the research, several validation techniques were applied. First, theoretical triangulation, which involves comparing the perspectives of various experts such as Aristotle, Lickona, Kristjánsson, Arthur, Berkowitz, and Nucci. Second, source triangulation, which involves comparing findings from scientific journals, books, and government policy documents. Third, an audit trail, which involves detailed recording of the entire literature search and analysis process for possible retrieval.

This study also acknowledges its limitations. Because it is entirely library-based, it does not involve primary data from schools or direct respondents. Therefore, the results are conceptual and interpretive in nature, not empirical generalizations. Nevertheless, the strength of this research lies in the depth of its philosophical analysis and its contextual relevance to Indonesian education. Through a series of systematic, transparent, and rigorous methodological steps, this research is expected to produce meaningful insights. The results will not only contribute to the development of character education theory but also provide practical recommendations that can be utilized by policymakers, principals, teachers, and other stakeholders in strengthening virtue-based character education in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research indicates that Aristotle's theory of virtue holds significant relevance as a philosophical basis for character education in Indonesia. According to Aristotle, the primary goal of education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but rather, the support of individuals in achieving a quality life through the development of virtue. In this view, virtue is not an innate trait acquired from birth, but rather a moral quality formed through education, habits, repeated practice, and ongoing life experiences. This idea aligns closely with the goals of Indonesian national education, which focus not only on mastering knowledge but also on creating individuals who are faithful, noble, intelligent, creative, independent, and responsible as citizens.

The research findings show that virtue theory has evolved into a virtue-based character education approach, which is now a significant paradigm in contemporary character education. This approach places virtue at the center of the educational process and divides virtues into four main categories: moral virtues, intellectual virtues, civic virtues, and performative virtues. Moral virtues encompass values such as honesty, integrity, empathy, compassion, and respect. Intellectual virtues include curiosity, critical thinking skills, openness to new ideas, and sound

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

decision-making skills. Civic virtues relate to social responsibility, tolerance, concern for others, and a spirit of mutual cooperation within the context of society. Meanwhile, performative virtues encompass discipline, perseverance, resilience, resilience, self-control, and the ability to face life's challenges positively.

The research also shows that the four categories of virtues cannot be viewed as separate entities. Instead, all categories of virtues are interconnected, mutually supportive, and need to develop harmoniously within students. Individuals with high intelligence but lacking moral integrity risk misusing their knowledge for unethical purposes. Conversely, individuals with good intentions but lacking critical thinking skills will struggle to make sound decisions in complex situations. Similarly, social responsibility and civic spirit will not develop effectively without resilience, discipline, and self-control. Therefore, virtue theory emphasizes the importance of holistic human development that harmoniously integrates moral, intellectual, social, and personal dimensions.

Another highly relevant finding in this study is that character education in Indonesia is currently undergoing a complex transformation process. On the one hand, the government demonstrates a strong commitment through various regulations and policies that prioritize character education in national education development. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum, the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile, and various character development programs reflect a deep concern for the importance of character formation in students. However, on the other hand, actual conditions on the ground still show a significant gap between the values taught in the curriculum and the behavior demonstrated by students in their daily lives. This gap can be seen through various social phenomena emerging in the world of education. This study found several indicators that character education is still not functioning optimally. Cases of bullying, violence in schools, low academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating on exams, and increasing intolerance are evidence that the internalization of values is not yet fully reflected in students' actual behavior. This situation demonstrates that character education cannot be implemented simply by providing material or simply instilling moral slogans. Character education must be reflected in school culture, learning styles, teacher role models, and the social interactions students experience every day.

Based on the analysis, this study identified five key strategies that can be implemented to effectively and sustainably integrate virtue theory into educational practice in Indonesia. The first strategy is to strengthen a school culture based on virtue values. School culture is a social environment that has a significant impact on student character formation. Values such as honesty,

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

responsibility, discipline, caring, and respect need to be implemented in school regulations, traditions, customs, and interpersonal relationships. When virtue is incorporated into school culture, students learn through real-life experiences, not just theoretical instruction. The second strategy is to strengthen the role of teachers as moral role models. Research shows that students more easily absorb values through observing the behavior of adults they admire. Therefore, teachers need to function not only as instructors but also as role models who demonstrate integrity, fairness, empathy, responsibility, and a commitment to moral values in their daily lives. Teachers' role models have a far more powerful impact than simply providing verbal advice. The third strategy is to develop reflective learning. Reflective learning provides opportunities for students to analyze experiences, understand the impact of actions, and connect knowledge with moral values. Through reflection, students not only learn what is right but also understand the reasons behind actions deemed good and important. This approach helps deepen moral awareness in a more sustainable manner. The fourth strategy is the integration of virtue values into the curriculum as a whole. Character education should be viewed as part of the overall learning process, not as a separate subject. Each subject has the potential to develop specific values. Mathematics can cultivate perseverance and logical thinking, language lessons can foster empathy and communication, history can foster an appreciation for struggle and integrity, while science education can foster curiosity and responsibility for the environment. The fifth strategy is strengthening collaboration between schools, families, and communities. Character formation does not occur solely through formal education in schools. The family and community environment also have a significant impact on the development of students' values and behavior. Therefore, strong synergy between these three environments is needed so that the values taught in schools can be accepted and reinforced in everyday life.

The latest findings in this study indicate a significant philosophical alignment between the theory of virtue and the Pancasila Student Profile. Moral virtue is directly linked to the dimensions of Faith, Devotion to God Almighty, and Noble Character. Civic virtue is linked to the dimensions of Global Diversity and Mutual Cooperation. Intellectual virtue is closely linked to the dimensions of Critical and Creative Reasoning. On the other hand, performative virtue is linked to the dimension of Independence. This alignment suggests that the theory of virtue can serve as a solid conceptual foundation in supporting the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile within the Indonesian education system. Therefore, character education grounded in virtue is not only philosophically relevant but also has great potential to serve as a strategic framework in creating a generation of Indonesians with character, competence, and readiness to face the challenges of

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

the 21st century.

DISCUSSION

The overall results of this research demonstrate that the theory of virtue has a strong philosophical alignment with the aspirations, values, and direction of national education development in Indonesia. This approach, rooted in Aristotelian thought, views education as a means of developing good individuals through the continuous development of virtue. In the Indonesian context, this idea is highly relevant because the virtue values that are at the heart of the theory of virtue have long been part of the nation's culture. Values such as honesty, mutual cooperation, responsibility, social awareness, tolerance, hard work, and respect for others are a legacy embedded in various social and cultural traditions of Indonesian society. Therefore, character-based education based on virtue is not a foreign concept, but rather an effort to revive the nation's noble values in the context of contemporary education.

The results of this study also reinforce the idea that educational success should not be judged solely on academic achievement, test scores, or competitive performance. Quality education must be able to produce holistically developed individuals, namely individuals who possess intellectual ability, moral maturity, emotional balance, social responsibility, and positive contributions to society. This view aligns with the concept of whole-person education, which views education as a process of developing all aspects of human life. Within the framework of virtue theory, educational success is measured not only by the knowledge acquired by students but also by the character formed during the educational process. In other words, education must be able to develop character that is reflected in concrete actions, not just the production of knowledge alone.

One of the most crucial findings of this research is the apparent disconnect between well-designed character education policies in regulations and their implementation on the ground. In recent years, the Indonesian government has demonstrated a clear commitment to strengthening character education through various strategic policies. The Pancasila Student Profile and the Independent Curriculum are concrete examples of policies that place character at the center of the educational process. Both policies provide an innovative vision of students who excel not only academically but also possess faith, independence, creativity, critical thinking, the ability to collaborate, and respect differences. However, research findings indicate that this vision has not been fully realized in daily educational practice. Many educational institutions still face challenges in implementing character values into real and meaningful learning experiences. Character

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

education often remains confined to slogans, curriculum documents, or ceremonial activities that are not fully integrated into the school culture. This situation reflects that the success of educational policies depends not only on the quality of the policy design itself, but also on the implementation capacity, the qualifications of implementers, and the readiness of the educational organization's culture to embrace change.

This study found that one of the main obstacles to the implementation of character education is the strong influence of the academic orientation that still dominates educational culture in Indonesia. For years, school success has often been measured by quantitative indicators such as test scores, graduation rates, school rankings, and academic achievement. Therefore, schools indirectly convey the message to students that academic achievement is the primary goal of education, while relegating the moral and character dimensions to a lesser position. When students see the greatest rewards given to those who achieve the highest grades, while the qualities of honesty, caring, and responsibility receive less attention, character education loses its transformative power. This condition explains why various phenomena such as bullying, school violence, low academic integrity, plagiarism, intolerance, and minimal social responsibility still frequently occur in educational environments. These phenomena are not merely problems of individual behavior, but rather indicate that the process of internalizing values has not been effective. From a virtue theory perspective, character cannot be built solely by conveying moral information. Character formation occurs through habits, experiences, role models, and concrete practices carried out consistently in daily life.

The findings of this study provide strong evidence for the core principle of virtue theory, which states that character cannot be learned solely through lectures but must be experienced directly. The reviewed studies indicate that the most successful character education programs are those that provide students with opportunities to experience, apply, and reflect on moral values in real-world situations. Learning based on social projects, community service activities, collaboration, real-world problem-solving, and community involvement have been shown to be more effective in character formation than methods that focus solely on teaching moral values. These results reinforce Aristotle's view that a person does not become good simply by knowing what good is, but by consistently practicing good actions. In this context, character education is more than simply imparting moral knowledge; it is also a process of forming moral habits. The more frequently students engage in the practices of honesty, empathy, responsibility, and cooperation, the more likely these values are to become an integral part of their character. Therefore, character education must be designed as a learning process based on real-world

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

experiences and actions.

Another important finding from this study is the role of social capital in fostering the success of character education. Social capital refers to the network of social relationships, levels of trust, shared norms, and collaboration that enable individuals to interact effectively within a community. Research shows that environments with high social capital tend to be more successful in developing students' character than those with weak social relationships. Social capital creates opportunities for students to learn to respect others, build trust, resolve conflicts constructively, and develop social skills necessary for life in society. In the context of character education, social capital serves as an environment that supports and strengthens the internalization of virtues. When students are in a community that upholds values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and caring, they gain social experiences that strengthen character development. Conversely, if students are in an environment filled with distrust, conflict, or unethical behavior, the character education process will experience greater obstacles.

Findings regarding the importance of collaboration between schools, families, and communities further strengthen the argument for the role of social capital in character education. Robert Putnam's thinking explains that social capital is formed through networks of mutual trust and norms of reciprocity that enable individuals to work together to achieve common goals. In the context of character education, social capital can be defined as the moral infrastructure that supports the development of virtues in students. When schools, families, and communities share a common vision of the values they wish to instill, students will receive consistent and sustainable moral messages.

Conversely, when there is a mismatch between the values taught in school and the practices encountered at home and in the community, the process of internalizing values becomes more challenging. Therefore, the responsibility for character education cannot be solely assumed by schools. Success in this area depends heavily on the active participation of families and communities in building an educational ecosystem that supports students' character development. These findings explain why many character education programs that actively involve parents and the community tend to have stronger and more lasting effects.

The overall research findings reveal several strategic implications for the future development of character education in Indonesia. First, the educational assessment system needs to be reoriented so that it focuses not only on academic achievement but also on student character development through more authentic methods, such as character portfolios, social projects, behavioral observation, self-reflection, and participation in community activities.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Second, professional development programs for teachers should focus more on character education competencies, including the ability to serve as moral role models, facilitate ethical reflection, and integrate values into the learning process. Third, school principals need to be empowered to play the role of effective character leaders, consistently and sustainably building a school culture based on virtue. Fourth, collaboration between schools, families, and the community needs to be systematically designed through programs that create synergy in student character development.

Thus, this study confirms that character education based on virtue theory is not only philosophically relevant but also has a strong empirical basis for application in the Indonesian educational context. Virtue theory provides a comprehensive conceptual framework for developing individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess morality, resilience, responsibility, and the ability to live harmoniously in an increasingly complex society.

Table 5. Relationship between the Theory of Goodness and Indonesian Character Education

Aspect	Indonesian Character Education	Virtue Theory	Meeting point
Educational Goals	Forming human beings with character	Forming humans who have virtue	Character development as the main goal of education
Approach	Habits and role models	Habituation and practice of virtue	Character is formed through experience
The Role of Teachers	Facilitator and role model	Moral exemplar (moral example)	Teachers as character models
Learning Environment	School, family, community	Community of goodness	Education takes place holistically
The final result	Pancasila Student Profile	Virtuous person	A moral and responsible person

Source: Lickona (2021); Arthur et al. (2023); Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2022).

If we examine Table 5, it is clear that there is a close relationship between character education in Indonesia and virtue theory. Both share the same primary goal: character formation. Character education in Indonesia seeks to produce individuals with high morals, social awareness, and good personalities. Furthermore, virtue theory also emphasizes that virtue is a key element in character formation. These findings suggest that virtue theory is a worthy philosophical

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

foundation for strengthening the implementation of national character education.

Speaking of approaches, these two concepts align in terms of the importance of practice and direct experience. Moral learning is not sufficient only in the classroom; it needs to be implemented so that virtuous values truly take hold and become part of students' lives. Aristotle also stated that a person can become good by regularly performing good actions, until they eventually become habits. The role of teachers is also vital in both approaches. Teachers not only impart knowledge but also serve as role models. They must be concrete examples of moral values for students. In the Independent Curriculum and the Pancasila Student Profile, teachers play a crucial role in building a positive culture in schools.

In this context, the Pancasila Student Profile represents a concrete realization of the virtue values embedded in the Indonesian education system. Therefore, the theory of virtue is highly relevant as a philosophical foundation for character education. With this approach, education focuses not only on academic achievement but also on developing individuals who are moral, responsible, and ready to contribute to society. Therefore, the Pancasila Student Profile should not be viewed solely as an administrative tool within the Independent Curriculum, but rather as a concrete manifestation of virtue-based education. Through the integration of the theory of virtue, character education in Indonesia can evolve from merely conveying values to developing holistic individuals, namely those with moral integrity, intellectual intelligence, social awareness, and the ability to make positive contributions to society, the nation, and the global arena.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and findings presented, it can be concluded that the theory of virtue, rooted in Aristotle's thought, is highly relevant as a philosophical foundation for developing character education in Indonesia. This theory explains that character is not an innate trait that occurs automatically from birth, but rather the result of a process of habituation, continuous practice, reflection, and life experiences gained by individuals within their social context. Therefore, education plays a crucial role in nurturing individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess moral, social, and personal qualities that facilitate them to live meaningful lives and make positive contributions to their surroundings.

The findings of this study indicate that virtue-based character education groups character into four main, complementary categories: moral virtues, intellectual virtues, civic virtues, and performative virtues. Moral virtues encompass principles such as honesty, integrity, empathy, and respect. Intellectual virtues include curiosity, open-mindedness, critical reasoning, and wisdom in

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

decision-making. Civic virtues relate to a sense of social responsibility, tolerance, concern for others, and a spirit of mutual cooperation. Meanwhile, performative virtues encompass discipline, perseverance, resilience, self-control, and the ability to face challenges with a positive attitude. These four categories cannot develop separately but must be built in a balanced and integrated manner to produce individuals who grow holistically through a holistic education.

This research also reveals that character education in Indonesia is currently in a transitional phase marked by a gap between the ideals in policy and the current state of implementation. Various national policies, such as Strengthening Character Education, the Independent Curriculum, and the Pancasila Student Profile, have provided clear guidelines for character development in students. However, their implementation faces numerous challenges. The phenomena of bullying, low academic integrity, intolerance, violence in educational settings, and the negative impact of technological advances indicate that the internalization of values has not yet been fully realized in students' actual behavior. This situation indicates that character education is still often considered an additional program, rather than a fundamental culture in all educational activities.

This research confirms that character cannot be formed solely through material instruction or moral lectures, but rather needs to be developed through real-life experiences and ongoing reflection. These findings confirm the central tenet of virtue theory: that a person becomes good not simply by knowing good deeds, but by consistently practicing them until they become part of their identity. Therefore, character education must be realized through a positive school culture, exemplary teacher practice, reflective learning, meaningful social experiences, and opportunities for students to apply virtues in their daily lives.

This study also found that social capital plays a crucial role in the success of character education. Relationships based on trust, collaboration, caring, and shared norms between schools, families, and communities create an environment that supports the growth of virtuous values. When values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and caring are consistently reinforced across all educational settings, students receive more effective moral support to internalize these values. Conversely, a disconnect between values between schools, families, and communities can diminish the effectiveness of character education.

The findings of this study also demonstrate a strong philosophical alignment between the theory of virtue and the six dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile. Moral virtue is closely linked to the dimensions of Faith, Devotion to God Almighty, and Noble Character. Meanwhile, civic virtue is reflected in the dimensions of Global Diversity and Mutual Cooperation. Intellectual

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

virtue aligns with the dimensions of Critical and Creative Reasoning. On the other hand, performative virtue is closely linked to the dimension of Independence. This alignment suggests that the theory of virtue can serve as a conceptual foundation that strengthens the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile in educational practice in Indonesia.

Based on these findings, this study concludes that integrating virtue theory into the Indonesian education system is a strategic step to strengthen character education in a more in-depth, systematic, and sustainable manner. This step must be realized through strengthening a virtue-based school culture, increasing the role of teachers as moral role models, developing reflective learning, integrating values into the entire curriculum, and strengthening collaboration between schools, families, and the community. In this way, education will not only focus on academic achievement but also on developing individuals with character, integrity, empathy, and resilience, and be able to make positive contributions to the life of society, the nation, and the state. Through this approach, virtue-based character education can become an important foundation in realizing the Golden Generation of Indonesia 2045, which is intellectually superior and morally strong.

REFERENCES

Arthur, J., Harrison, T., Carr, D., Kristjánsson, K., & Davison, I. (2023). The Jubilee Center Framework for Character Education. University of Birmingham.

Baehr, J. (2021). The Inquiring Mind: Intellectual Virtues and Education. Oxford University Press.

Berkowitz, M. W. (2022). Character Education and Moral Development. Journal of Character Education, 18(2), 45–60.

Carr, D. (2021). Educating Character through Virtue Ethics. Educational Philosophy and Theory, 53(8), 765–777.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (6th ed.). Sage Publications.

Davidson, M. (2021). Virtue, Character and Moral Education. Routledge.

Dewantara, KH (2022). Education and Culture. Yogyakarta: UST Press.

Duckworth, A. (2021). Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance. Scribner.

Fitriani, N., & Prasetyo, A. (2024). Character Education in the Digital Era: Challenges and Implementation Strategies. Journal of Character Education, 14(1), 55–69.

Gunawan, H., Suryadi, D., & Hasanah, A. (2025). Profile of Pancasila Students and Transformation of Character Education. Indonesian Journal of Education, 6(1), 11–26.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License

Harrison, T., Morris, I., & Ryan, J. (2022). Character Education in Schools: A Review of Research and Practice. Journal of Character Education, 18(2), 15–32.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. (2022). Pancasila Student Profile. Jakarta: Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.

Krippendorff, K. (2019). Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Kristjánsson, K. (2020). Virtuous Emotions. Oxford University Press.

Lickona, T. (2021). Educating for Character. New York: Bantam Books.

Marini, A., Safitri, D., & Muda, I. (2023). Strengthening Character Education in Indonesian Schools. International Journal of Instruction, 16(2), 101–118.

Miles, M.B., Huberman, A.M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Muslich, M. (2021). Character Education: Responding to the Challenge of the Moral Crisis. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.

Narvaez, D. (2022). Moral Development and Character Education. Handbook of Moral Education, 455–472.

Nucci, L. (2021). Character Education in Democratic Schools. Cambridge Journal of Education, 51(4), 523–538.

Peterson, A. (2022). Civic Virtues and Democratic Education. Journal of Moral Education, 51(4), 487–501.

Purwanto, A., et al. (2023). Character Education in the Era of Society 5.0. Journal of Educational Research, 15(2), 77–91.

Shidiq, M., & Rahman, F. (2024). Integration of Virtuous Values in the Independent Curriculum. Journal of Educational Sciences, 30(1), 88–101.

Snyder, H. (2019). Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines. Journal of Business Research, 104, 333–339.

Suyitno, S., Wahyudi, A., & Setiawan, D. (2023). Challenges of Character Education in Contemporary Indonesia. National Education Journal, 24(2), 144–158.

Wibowo, A., & Nugroho, B. (2024). Character Education and Digital Literacy. Journal of Educational Technology, 26(1), 33–47.

Wuryandani, W. (2022). Strengthening Character Education Based on Virtuous Values. Journal of

Yin, R. K. (2023). Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods (7th ed.). Sage Publications.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License