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# Management Of Character Education Strengthening Through Deep Learning To Improve The Graduate Profile In Elementary Schools

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**Abstract**

*Character education in elementary schools is often treated as a separate program rather than integrated into meaningful learning. This study analyzes the management of character education strengthening through deep learning to improve the graduate profile at SDN Cibogo, Cianjur Regency, and SDN Balandongan, Sukabumi City. A qualitative approach with a multi-site case study design was used. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving principals, teachers, students, educational staff, and parents, analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, and checked through source and technique triangulation. Both schools managed character education through four interrelated functions. Planning started from students' needs and translated character goals into observable behavioral indicators. Organizing relied on role distribution, coordination, use of teacher competencies, and collaboration with parents. Actuating integrated character values into mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning, supported by habituation and the principal's exemplary leadership. Controlling combined monitoring, supervision, character and graduate-profile evaluation, and follow-up that fed the next planning cycle. Rubric scores on all eight graduate-profile dimensions rose in both schools by 0.4-0.8 points, presented descriptively without statistical testing. SDN Cibogo emphasized basic habits such as discipline and responsibility, whereas SDN Balandongan emphasized applying knowledge to solve problems. Barriers included student diversity, uneven teacher readiness, limited time and facilities, and differing family support, addressed through mentoring, sharing good practices, and optimizing available*



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*resources. The study concludes that character strengthening through deep learning is better supported when managed as a systematic, collaborative, contextual, and continuous cycle.*

**Keywords: character education; deep learning; educational management; elementary school; graduate profile**

## INTRODUCTION

Education at the elementary school level holds a strategic position in shaping the foundations of students' character, competencies, and learning habits. Education should not be directed solely at the mastery of knowledge; it also needs to produce students who are faithful and devout, have noble morals, and are independent, creative, critical thinkers, able to collaborate and communicate, and responsible as citizens (Republik Indonesia, 2003; Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah Republik Indonesia, 2025a). Within this framework, character education needs to be managed as an integral part of the school's overall education system, while learning needs to provide experiences that allow character values to be understood, experienced, and practiced in real contexts.

Character education is essentially a deliberate process of helping students understand, care about, and act upon moral values. Lickona (1996) positions moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action as a single whole, so that character does not stop at knowledge of what is good but is realized in behavior. In the context of educational management, the success of this process depends on the school's ability to plan goals, organize resources, mobilize the school community, and carry out control and follow-up. Terry's (2019) framework of management functions, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, provides a basis for viewing character education as a systematic process rather than merely a series of incidental activities.

At the same time, the changing demands of 21st-century education call for learning that is more active, reflective, contextual, and oriented toward understanding. In this study, deep learning is understood as a pedagogical approach that provides room for mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2024; Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah Republik Indonesia, 2025b). This approach positions students as subjects who connect knowledge with experience, solve problems, discuss, collaborate, produce work, communicate ideas, and reflect. Through such learning experiences, deep learning is directed at fostering a graduate profile that,



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in this study, comprises eight dimensions (Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah Republik Indonesia, 2025a), namely faith and piety, citizenship, creativity, critical reasoning, collaboration, independence, health, and communication.

The problem that then arises is not only how character education and deep learning are implemented in the classroom, but how both are managed by the school as a whole. Character programs may lose their impact if they are not supported by needs-based planning, clear role distribution, teacher competence, school culture, exemplary conduct, family involvement, and evaluation that leads to follow-up. This problem was also evident in the two schools that served as research sites. Preliminary observations at SDN Cibogo showed that a number of students were not yet consistent in completing tasks independently, the distribution of responsibilities in group activities was still uneven, and some students still needed teacher guidance to express their opinions and complete tasks. At SDN Balandongan, student participation in learning still varied, while teachers faced challenges in adjusting learning activities to the diversity of students' abilities and learning needs. Therefore, a management study is important for explaining the relationship between policy, school management, learning experiences, and the attainment of the graduate profile.

Research on character education has developed extensively. Durlak et al. (2011), through a meta-analysis of 213 school-based social and emotional learning programs, showed that these programs improved students' social-emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance. In the context of Indonesian elementary schools, Adrian and Kayyis (2025) systematically reviewed local culture-based education as a strategy for strengthening student character and identified challenges in the form of limited teacher competence, contextual learning resources, and policy support. From a management perspective, Putri et al. (2024) examined the management of character education based on local cultural wisdom in elementary schools through the stages of planning, implementation, and controlling, together with its supporting and inhibiting factors. In studies of deep learning, Andayanie et al. (2025), Feri (2025), and Kurnianingsih et al. (2026) showed that integrating mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning can strengthen the quality of learning experiences, although its implementation still faces challenges in the form of teacher readiness, facilities, time, and shifts in instructional mindset. Nafi'ah and Faruq (2025) also noted teacher readiness and limited infrastructure and learning technology as barriers to implementing deep learning in basic education. At the elementary school level, Fauziah et al. (2025) and Hidayati et al. (2026) described the application of mindful,


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meaningful, and joyful learning in the learning process, Prasetiya et al. (2025) examined digital *Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam dan Sosial (IPAS*, Natural and Social Sciences) learning strategies based on these three principles, while Fauziah et al. (2025), together with Feri (2025), argued that integrating these three principles can create more holistic and adaptive learning experiences.

Nevertheless, these deep learning studies mainly highlight the implementation of deep learning at the level of the learning process. The school's managerial process, namely how planning, organizing, and actuating, as well as controlling and evaluation, are carried out so that deep learning functions as a mechanism for strengthening character, has not been the main focus of these studies, while the managerial study by Putri et al. (2024) was framed in the context of local cultural wisdom rather than deep learning. The link between such management and the eight dimensions of the graduate profile, particularly in elementary schools with different contexts, has also received limited attention.

The novelty of this study lies in using the four management functions as a lens for reading deep learning as a mechanism for strengthening character education directed toward the graduate profile. A further novelty is the comparative analysis of SDN Cibogo, Cianjur Regency, and SDN Balandongan, Sukabumi City, to examine how the same management principles are applied differently according to the characteristics of students, teacher competence, facilities, families, and the social environment.

Based on this gap, this study aims to describe and analyze the management of character education strengthening through deep learning to improve the graduate profile at SDN Cibogo and SDN Balandongan. More specifically, this study seeks to answer how the planning, organizing, and actuating, as well as the controlling and evaluation, of character education strengthening through deep learning are carried out in both schools; what factors support and hinder its implementation and what strategies are adopted to overcome these barriers; and how this management contributes to the development of the eight dimensions of the graduate profile.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method and a multi-site case study design. This approach was chosen because the study focused on understanding the processes, experiences, strategies, barriers, and efforts of the schools in managing character education strengthening through deep learning in a natural context (Moleong, 2021). The multi-site design enabled the researchers to compare management patterns at SDN Cibogo, Cianjur


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Regency, and SDN Balandongan, Sukabumi City, without losing the distinctive characteristics of each site (Yin, 2018).

The informants totaled 20 people, 10 at each school, consisting of one principal, three teachers, three students, one member of the educational staff, and two parents. Informant codes were assigned based on the school (C for SDN Cibogo and B for SDN Balandongan) and role (KS for the principal or *kepala sekolah*, G for teachers or *guru*, S for students or *peserta didik*, and OT for parents or *orang tua*), followed by a sequence number, for example C-KS1 and B-G2. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and observations, while secondary data were obtained through a documentation study of school programs, learning tools, and documents related to character strengthening and the graduate profile, such as records of student needs, supervision records, behavioral development journals, and development rubrics. The study focused on the four management functions, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, and examined supporting factors, inhibiting factors, and follow-up strategies.

Data were collected triangulatively through interviews, observations, and documentation. The researchers also conducted preliminary observations of learning in both schools to map the conditions of students that formed the background of the research problem. In addition, the development of the eight graduate-profile dimensions was assessed using a 1-4 scale rubric at the initial and final assessments. Data analysis followed the processes of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data trustworthiness was strengthened through source and technique triangulation so that information from the principals, teachers, students, and parents, as well as observation results and documents, could be compared (Patton, 1999; Sugiyono, 2022). Because the study is qualitative, improvement in the graduate profile was not tested statistically but was described based on initial and final rubric scores as well as changes in learning experiences, behaviors, habits, skills, and character attainment observed within the school context.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Planning Character Education Strengthening through Deep Learning

Both schools began strengthening character education with an analysis of students' needs. At SDN Cibogo, needs were identified through observation of discipline, responsibility, independence, care, cooperation, communication, and the ability to follow lessons. SDN Balandongan also considered differences in ability, interests, character, and mentoring needs.



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This shared pattern indicates that in both schools the program was not designed uniformly but started from the actual conditions of students.

The principal of SDN Cibogo described the starting point of planning as follows.

> "At first we saw there were still students who weren't disciplined in doing their tasks, weren't used to working together, and still depended on the teacher's directions. From there we got the teachers to plan activities that don't just chase the material, but also train responsibility, independence, and cooperation." (C-KS1)

Observations showed that in planning meetings, the principal and teachers discussed students' difficulties and determined habituation activities and group learning. At SDN Balandongan, a teacher explained that differences in students' abilities were taken into account in designing learning.

> "When we plan lessons, we keep in mind that kids have different abilities. Some get the material quickly, some need concrete examples. So we make activities that connect to everyday life, so the kids can understand the material and at the same time practice being independent and responsible." (B-G1)

Observations showed that teachers prepared activities with different levels of mentoring and used problems close to students' experiences.

Goal setting was directed at the holistic development of students. SDN Cibogo emphasized the integration of academic ability and character, while SDN Balandongan emphasized the ability to use knowledge in real situations while demonstrating positive behavior. The goals were then translated into observable behavioral indicators, such as completing tasks as a form of responsibility, group work as a practice of collaboration, expressing opinions as communication, and solving problems as an exercise in critical reasoning.

Programs were developed by integrating character education into learning, habituation, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and school culture. Through this pattern, character was not positioned as an additional program. Teachers incorporated character elements through their choice of activities, materials, methods, tasks, discussions, projects, and reflection. Planning also took into account students' age, abilities, and learning needs.

The planned learning strategies were oriented toward active engagement. Students were given room to ask questions, observe, discuss, try things out, solve problems, create work, express opinions, and reflect on their experiences. Resource planning covered teacher readiness,


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media, facilities, the school environment, and time. Both schools sought to optimize available resources so that limited facilities did not automatically hinder meaningful learning.

Stakeholder involvement was part of planning. The principal, teachers, educational staff, students, and parents each had their own roles. Communication with parents was needed so that habituation at school was reinforced at home. This finding shows that planning is not merely the preparation of documents but a process of setting direction, priorities, resources, and responsibilities based on students' needs. Planning that starts from students' needs and real experiences is in line with Fauziah et al. (2025), who found that meaningful learning in elementary schools is realized by linking material to students' real experiences; this study shows that such linking was already designed at the planning stage.

**2. Organizing Resources and Collaboration**

Organizing in both schools was carried out through the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the principal, teachers, educational staff, students, and parents. The principal acted as director, coordinator, and motivator; teachers became the main implementers of learning as well as mentors of character development. Organizing ensured that character education was not placed on a single teacher or a single subject.

Structure and coordination were used to facilitate communication about learning progress and students' conditions. Coordination among members of the school community helped the school obtain more complete information and enabled students' problems to be discussed together promptly. Utilizing teacher competencies was also important because deep learning requires the ability to design activities, pose trigger questions, manage discussions, facilitate problem solving, and conduct reflection.

At SDN Cibogo, a teacher explained this coordination flow.

> "The principal gives directions for the program, then each teacher adjusts it to the activities in class. We often discuss it when we find a kid who needs mentoring. If there's a problem with discipline or study habits, we also talk with the parents." (C-G2)

Observations showed that coordination between the principal and teachers took place through internal meetings and communication about students' conditions. At SDN Balandongan, the principal emphasized the utilization of teacher competencies.

> "We try to make use of teachers' abilities according to their strengths. Teachers who are used to using learning media help their colleagues, while other teachers share their


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experience in character habituation. That way the program becomes a shared responsibility." (B-KS1)

Observations showed that teachers coordinated on lesson designs and helped one another in using media and managing activities.

Collaboration did not stop at the relationship between the principal and teachers but extended to parents. Findings in both schools showed that the sustainability of character requires alignment between habituation at school and in the family.

This involvement was confirmed by parents at both schools.

"The teacher usually tells us how our child is doing, especially if there's unfinished work or habits that need fixing. We're asked to help get the child used to being responsible at home." (C-OT1)

"The school told us that character building has to continue at home. We usually get information through talking with the homeroom teacher about our child's independence, study habits, and responsibility." (B-OT1)

This finding is in line with Epstein (1995), who views families and communities as partners of the school in children's education and development, and with Berkowitz and Bier (2004), who emphasize that the primary influence on character formation comes from the family, although schools can also be a force for development. Conversely, Hikmah et al. (2026) found that limited parental involvement contributed to the declining ethics and discipline of elementary school students, so that character education efforts tended to have only a temporary impact. From a management perspective, organizing thus serves to turn program goals into an operational work structure.

**3. Actuating: Mindful, Meaningful, and Joyful Learning**

The implementation of character education strengthening at SDN Cibogo and SDN Balandongan took place through the integration of character values into the learning process and daily life. Teachers gave students opportunities to actively observe, ask questions, discuss, try things out, solve problems, produce work, express opinions, and reflect. Learning was directed to be mindful, meaningful, and joyful.

Mindful learning was evident when students understood the learning objectives, paid attention to their own thinking processes, raised questions, and reflected. Meaningful learning was evident when material was connected to real-life experiences and problems. Joyful learning was evident in a learning atmosphere that was safe, comfortable, interactive, and encouraging


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of engagement. Integrating these three principles meant that learning did not only pursue academic outcomes but also provided room for the formation of attitudes and competencies.

This practice was evident in group learning at SDN Cibogo.

> "During group learning, I don't give the answer right away. The kids are asked to discuss the problem first, split up the tasks, and present their results. When they're done, I get them to talk about what went well and what needs to be improved." (C-G1)

Observations showed that the teacher conveyed the learning objectives, gave group problem-solving activities, and closed the activity with reflection. Some students were able to express their opinions, while several others still needed guiding questions. At SDN Balandongan, a teacher linked the material to students' experiences.

> "The kids are more enthusiastic when the material is linked to their experiences. For example, when we talk about the environment, they observe their surroundings, identify problems, then propose solutions. We ask them to explain the reasons for their choices, not just memorize answers." (B-G2)

Observations showed that students conducted simple observations, held discussions, and presented their results, while the teacher used trigger questions and provided opportunities to reflect on the learning experience.

Character strengthening took place alongside learning experiences. When completing tasks, students practiced responsibility and independence; when working in groups, they practiced collaboration and communication; when solving problems, they practiced critical reasoning; and when producing work, they practiced creativity. Habituation and the exemplary conduct of the principal and teachers reinforced this process so that the values learned could become practiced behavior.

The principal's leadership was an important factor at the implementation stage. The principal provided direction, support, motivation, guidance, and oversight so that the program remained consistent. The leader's example also shaped the school climate; disciplined behavior, responsibility, good communication, and care served as direct examples for students. This role of the principal in directing and fostering learning is in line with the meta-analysis by Robinson et al. (2008), which showed that the average effect of instructional leadership on student outcomes was three to four times greater than that of transformational leadership; the more leaders focus on learning, the greater their influence.



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This finding reinforces recent research that positions deep learning as an approach integrating conceptual understanding, active engagement, reflection, and enjoyable learning experiences. In the elementary school context, integrating mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning is considered capable of creating more holistic and adaptive learning experiences (Fauziah et al., 2025; Feri, 2025). This study adds a managerial dimension by showing that the implementation of deep learning depends not only on teachers' strategies but also on planning, organizing, leadership, school culture, and evaluation.

**4. Controlling, Evaluation, and Follow-Up**

Controlling in both schools was carried out through program monitoring, learning supervision, evaluation of character development, evaluation of the graduate profile, and follow-up. Monitoring was used to check the alignment between plans and implementation. Supervision was used to obtain a picture of learning practices while providing feedback to teachers.

Character evaluation was conducted through observation of students' behavior in various activities. Graduate-profile evaluation considered not only academic results but also the development of character, skills, habits, communication skills, collaboration, independence, and the application of knowledge. Evaluation results were used to determine student mentoring, adjustments to learning strategies, teacher development, reinforcement of habituation, and communication with parents.

The principal of SDN Cibogo emphasized that controlling was directed at changes in students' behavior.

> "We don't just check whether the activities were carried out. We also ask teachers to pay attention to changes in the kids' behavior. If many still aren't responsible for their tasks, the learning strategies and habituation need to be improved." (C-KS1)

Observations showed that the principal observed the learning process and gave feedback on student engagement, classroom management, and reflection activities. At SDN Balandongan, a teacher used development records as a basis for follow-up.

> "We record the kids' progress from daily activities. Some are starting to be brave enough to share their opinions, but some are still passive. Those observations become material for changing the group arrangements, the way we ask questions, or the kind of mentoring." (B-G3)

Observations showed that the teacher recorded group participation and provided additional mentoring to students who were experiencing difficulties.


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Controlling ultimately served as both control and guidance. The findings showed an improvement cycle: monitoring and evaluation results were used to improve learning and became input for subsequent planning. This pattern is in line with the controlling function in Terry's (2019) management, but in school practice it developed into a mechanism for continuous quality improvement. This stage-based management pattern was also evident in the study by Putri et al. (2024) on character education management in elementary schools, which covered planning, implementation, and controlling.

**5. The Graduate Profile Developed**

The development of the eight graduate-profile dimensions was assessed using a 1-4 scale rubric at the initial and final assessments. Table 1 shows that scores on all dimensions increased in both schools, with gains of 0.4-0.7 points at SDN Cibogo and 0.4-0.8 points at SDN Balandongan. The highest gain at SDN Cibogo occurred in the independence dimension, while at SDN Balandongan it occurred in the creativity and communication dimensions. These scores are presented descriptively and were not tested statistically.

**Table 1. Graduate-Profile Dimension Rubric Scores at the Initial and Final Assessments (1-4 Scale)**

| Graduate-profile dimension | SDN Cibogo (initial → final) | SDN Balandongan (initial → final) |
|---|---|---|
| Faith and piety | 2.7 → 3.1 | 2.8 → 3.2 |
| Citizenship | 2.3 → 2.9 | 2.4 → 3.0 |
| Creativity | 2.2 → 2.8 | 2.3 → 3.1 |
| Critical reasoning | 2.1 → 2.7 | 2.4 → 3.0 |
| Collaboration | 2.4 → 3.0 | 2.5 → 3.2 |
| Independence | 2.2 → 2.9 | 2.4 → 3.0 |
| Health | 2.7 → 3.1 | 2.6 → 3.1 |
| Communication | 2.2 → 2.8 | 2.3 → 3.1 |

Faith and piety were developed through religious habituation in accordance with students' beliefs, good conduct, honesty, responsibility, politeness, care, and the exemplary conduct of the school community.

Citizenship was developed through compliance with rules, respect for differences, environmental care, unity, responsibility, and opportunities to discuss issues close to students' lives.



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Creativity was developed through open-ended tasks, creating work, formulating ideas, presentations, and opportunities to try various alternative solutions. Students were encouraged to see mistakes as part of the learning process.

Critical reasoning was developed through questioning, discussion, information analysis, giving reasons, comparison, and problem solving. Teachers did not always provide direct answers but gave students room to find and justify their own answers.

Collaboration was developed through group work, task distribution, listening to opinions, resolving differences, and achieving shared goals. Teachers provided guidance so that participation among group members remained balanced.

Independence was developed through assigning responsibility, opportunities to try, completing tasks, making decisions, and not always depending on teachers' help.

Health was developed through hygiene habituation, physical activity, awareness of caring for the environment, and the formation of lifestyle habits that support health.

Communication was developed through asking questions, discussing, presenting, storytelling, expressing opinions, and communicating work results.

These changes were also felt by students at both schools.

> "Before, when there was group work I mostly just waited for my friends. Now we usually split up the tasks. I'm also asked to explain the part I did, so I have to understand my own task." (C-S2)

> "Now when the teacher gives us a problem, we're told to find the answer first and explain why. I'm braver now about asking questions and trying to share my opinion, even though sometimes I'm still wrong." (B-S3)

Observations showed that students participated in discussions, gave reasons for their answers, and presented the results of activities. The direction of these score gains is consistent with the meta-analysis by Durlak et al. (2011), which showed that school-based social-emotional programs improved students' skills, attitudes, and behavior. However, because the scores in this study were not tested statistically, these gains are read as an indication of development, not as evidence of a causal effect.


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**6. Comparison of Findings at the Two Sites**

**Table 2. Comparison of Findings at the Two Sites**

| Aspect | SDN Cibogo | SDN Balandongan |
|---|---|---|
| Planning | Starting from students' needs and character-strengthening goals. | Adjusting the program to students' characteristics and school resources. |
| Organizing | Emphasizing role distribution and coordination among the school community. | Emphasizing the utilization of human resource competencies and cooperation. |
| Actuating | Integrating character into learning and habituation. | Developing contextual and active learning experiences. |
| Leadership | The principal as director and mentor of teachers. | The principal as motivator, supporter, and coordinator. |
| Controlling | Monitoring, supervision, evaluation, and follow-up. | Gradual monitoring and continuous improvement. |
| Supporting factors | Leadership, teachers, culture, facilities, parents, environment. | Leadership, teacher competence, culture, resources, family, environment. |
| Inhibiting factors | Student diversity, time, facilities, family support. | Student diversity, human resource readiness, time, facilities, family, social environment. |
| Solutions | Strengthening teacher competence, school culture, and collaboration. | Competence development, resource optimization, collaboration, and evaluation. |

The comparison in Table 2 shows that both schools shared the same direction, but their implementation was adaptive to context. The differences do not indicate the superiority of either school; rather, they show that character education management needs to take into account



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students' conditions, teacher competence, leadership, facilities, families, and the social environment.

These differences in emphasis were evident in the teachers' explanations at both schools.

"We focus more on strengthening basic habits like discipline, responsibility, and being able to work in groups, because those still need to be guided regularly." (C-G3)

"We try to develop activities that get the kids to use what they know to solve problems, and at the same time get them used to discussing and justifying their answers." (B-G2)

The findings for each aspect were also supported by documentary evidence, as summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3. Documentary Evidence at the Two Sites**

| **Aspect** | **Evidence at SDN Cibogo** | **Evidence at SDN Balandongan** |
|---|---|---|
| Planning | Records of needs for discipline, responsibility, and cooperation | Records of differences in ability and mentoring needs |
| Organizing | Teacher role distribution and coordination of character strengthening | Utilization of teacher competencies and collaboration |
| Actuating | Group learning, habituation, reflection | Contextual learning, problem solving, presentations |
| Evaluation | Supervision and behavioral development journals | Development rubrics and learning reflections |
| Follow-up | Teacher development and reinforcement of habituation | Activity adjustments and student mentoring |

**7. Supporting Factors, Inhibiting Factors, and Resolution Strategies**

The main supporting factors were the principal's leadership, teacher competence, school culture, facilities and infrastructure, parental support, and the social environment. The principal provided direction and support; teachers determined the quality of learning experiences; school culture provided positive habituation; facilities supported a variety of activities; families reinforced character at home; and the environment became a space for applying values.

Inhibiting factors included the diversity of students' characteristics, the readiness and competence of human resources, limited time, limited facilities and infrastructure, differences in


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family support, and the influence of the social environment. Student diversity demands differentiation and flexibility. Deep learning also requires time for exploration, discussion, practice, and reflection. Limited facilities can reduce the variety of activities, while differences in family and environmental conditions can affect the continuity of character habituation.

At SDN Cibogo, a teacher described the barriers faced in learning.

> "The barrier we feel is the difference in the kids' habits and abilities. Some can already manage their own tasks, but some have to keep being reminded. Class time is also limited if every kid has to get a chance to discuss and reflect. So we adjust the activities to their abilities." (C-G1)

Observations showed that some students needed mentoring when working in groups, so the teacher rearranged the task distribution and gave additional instructions.

Resolution strategies were carried out through improved coordination and mentoring by the principal, teacher competence development, sharing good practices, discussion and reflection, strengthening school culture, collaboration with parents, optimizing local resources, and continuous evaluation. The schools did not merely address short-term problems but sought to build internal capacity so that the program would become increasingly sustainable.

The principal of SDN Balandongan explained the barrier of teacher readiness and how it was addressed.

> "Not all teachers are equally ready to carry out deep learning. Some are already used to designing active activities, while others still need mentoring. We deal with it through discussion, sharing teaching practices, and making use of the resources we have." (B-KS1)

Observations showed that teachers used simple available media and adjusted activities to the allocated learning time. These barriers of teacher readiness and limited facilities are in line with Andayanie et al. (2025), Feri (2025), and Nafi'ah and Faruq (2025), who identified teacher readiness and limited facilities as obstacles to implementing deep learning. This study shows that the schools addressed these obstacles through mentoring, sharing teaching practices, and utilizing available resources.

**8. Analysis of Terry's Management Functions and the Conceptual Model**

When analyzed using Terry's (2019) management functions, character education strengthening through deep learning in both schools formed a cycle. Planning covered the identification of needs, goals, programs, strategies, resources, and stakeholders. Organizing arranged task distribution, coordination, human resource competencies, collaboration, and


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resources. Actuating translated plans into learning experiences through leadership, deep learning, exemplary conduct, and school culture. Controlling covered monitoring, supervision, character evaluation, graduate-profile evaluation, and follow-up.

The conceptual relationship of the findings can be formulated as: needs analysis → program planning → resource organizing → implementation of deep learning → character strengthening → controlling and evaluation → follow-up → improvement of the graduate profile. This sequence is cyclical rather than linear, because evaluation results can feed back into the basis for subsequent needs analysis and planning. This cyclical nature is in line with Sholihah and Rahmadani (2026), who formulated a cyclical implementation model of deep learning based on mindful, meaningful, and joyful principles across the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages in early childhood education; this study shows a similar pattern at the level of elementary school management.

The model shows that the graduate profile is not produced by a single activity. The profile is formed through the accumulation of learning experiences, habituation, exemplary conduct, mentoring, social interaction, and school management. Thus, program outcomes are more accurately understood as the result of an integrated system than as the impact of a single learning strategy.

## CONCLUSION

The study at SDN Cibogo, Cianjur Regency, and SDN Balandongan, Sukabumi City, showed that the management of character education strengthening through deep learning is a systematic, integrated, contextual, and continuous process. Planning was carried out based on students' needs and translated into goals, programs, strategies, resources, and stakeholder involvement. Organizing ensured that role distribution and coordination functioned, while actuating integrated character education with mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning experiences.

Controlling functioned not only to check program implementation but also to develop teachers, monitor character development, evaluate the graduate profile, and generate follow-up. Rubric scores on the eight graduate-profile dimensions, namely faith and piety, citizenship, creativity, critical reasoning, collaboration, independence, health, and communication, increased in both schools and indicated development of the graduate profile. Both schools shared the same management direction with different emphases: SDN Cibogo strengthened basic habits such as


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discipline, responsibility, and group work, whereas SDN Balandongan developed the use of knowledge to solve problems. Implementation was supported by leadership, teacher competence, school culture, facilities, families, and the environment, while barriers stemmed mainly from student diversity, human resource readiness, limited time and facilities, family support, and the social environment. These barriers were addressed through coordination and mentoring by the principal, teacher competence development, sharing good practices, collaboration with parents, and optimizing available resources.

In practical terms, schools need to maintain a quality improvement cycle that connects needs analysis, planning, organizing, deep learning, habituation, exemplary conduct, monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up. Principals need to strengthen developmental leadership and supervision; teachers need to improve their ability to design active and reflective learning experiences; schools need to optimize local resources; parents need to become partners; and school supervisors and policymakers need to provide continuous mentoring. This study is limited to two elementary schools, and rubric scores are presented descriptively without statistical testing. Therefore, future research could expand the number of sites and examine the development of the eight graduate-profile dimensions longitudinally.

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