Literature Review

A Sociological Perspective on Character Building of Students in Inclusive Schools: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyze the contribution of inclusive education to student character development using a systematic approach to various national and international studies with an emphasis on social interaction, teacher practices, school culture, and inclusive values.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This study used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method with the PRISMA model through four steps: (1). Identification, (2). Screening, (3). Eligibility, and (4). Inclusion. Articles with the keywords "inclusive schools," "inclusive education," and "character development and sociological perspectives" were retrieved from the Scopus database. Approximately 20 articles met the inclusion criteria and were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify the main themes and patterns of character development in the context of inclusive education.

Results/Findings: Inclusive education plays a strategic role in shaping students' social character. Students' character is shaped through collaborative social and cultural processes at school. The SLR results show that inclusive education plays a strategic role in developing students' social character through collaborative school activities and social processes. Three main topics were discussed: (1). The role of teachers as empathetic and fair social agents, (2). An inclusive school culture that fosters solidarity and respect for differences, and (3). Inclusive leadership that fosters cooperation among students.

Originality: There is still minimal research discussing the sociological perspective on how social interactions between regular students and students with special needs occur in inclusive schools. This study focuses on the sociological aspects of inclusive education, examining how school social structures, norms of togetherness, and norms of interaction shape the collective characteristics of students, requiring theoretical understanding and providing practical guidance for the development of an inclusive and equitable school culture.

Keywords: sociological perspective, inclusive education, character building, school culture, social interaction.

1. Introduction

The function of education is not only as a means of transferring knowledge, but also as a social space for shaping the character of students. From a sociological perspective, schools are institutions that play a role in shaping the values, norms, and social identities of the younger generation. The presence of inclusive education is expected to shape the implementation of social justice in education by providing equal learning opportunities for students, including children with special needs (ABK) (Maratia et al., 2025) .

Inclusive education can be defined as a form of educational reform that emphasizes anti-discrimination, openness, mutual respect, and efforts to change society's attitudes towards children and people with disabilities. Through inclusive education, students can learn together and benefit not only students with special needs but also regular students (Meliani & Sati, 2023) . Through these interactions, students can learn deep social values that can shape their character, such as accepting diversity and respecting all members of the class (Zollers et al., 1999) .

Based on research findings from Schwab et al.,(2020) , entitled "Agreement among student, parent and teacher ratings of school inclusion," academic inclusion has the highest consistency of assessment, while social-emotional inclusion is more difficult to measure uniformly. To achieve comprehensive inclusive education, schools need to consider the social and emotional dimensions of students, not just academic results, and encourage open communication between teachers, students, and parents to understand the social acceptance of students in an inclusive environment.

From a sociological perspective, inclusive education is not only seen as an academic mechanism, but also as a tool for building positive and sustainable social relationships among students from different backgrounds and abilities (Meliani & Sati, 2023) . Inclusive education is a form of human rights and good education to increase social tolerance because it has the potential to build understanding and respect by instilling moral values such as: (1). Polite, (2). Friendly, (3). Honest, (4). Loving (5). Mutual assistance, (6). Respect for differences, and (7). Tolerance.

Based on research findings from Juvonen et al.,(2019) entitled "Promoting social inclusion in educational settings: challenges and opportunities," social support, positive attitudes from teachers and peers, and school policies oriented toward collaboration are important factors in the success of social inclusion. It is necessary to implement comprehensive educational strategies, including teacher training, adaptive curricula, and social interaction programs to create a truly inclusive school climate so that social inclusion is not merely the physical integration of students but a dynamic process that demands changes in culture, attitudes, and school structures so that every student feels accepted, valued, and has equal opportunities to develop.

Inclusion can be seen as a process of addressing and responding to diversity among all individuals by increasing participation in learning, culture, and society, as well as reducing exclusion both within and from educational activities. The presence of students with special needs in schools can be a means of character development for regular students.

Ministry of Education Regulation No. 70 of 2009, Article 2, Paragraph 2 states that "Inclusive education aims to realize the implementation of education that respects diversity and is non-discriminatory for all students" (Eko Pradipta Kurnaedi, 2022) . According to the Ministry of National Education, there are 17 values in character education, such as (1) Religious, (2) Honest, (3) Tolerance, (4) Discipline, (5) Hard work, (6) Creative (7). Independent, (8). Democratic, (9). Curiosity, (10). Nationalism, (11). Love for the homeland (12). Appreciation of achievement, (13). Friendly or communicative, (14). Love of peace (15). Enjoys reading, (16). Cares about the environment and society, and (17). Responsible (Utomo & Thaibah, 2021) .

Research from Siperstein et al.,(2022) entitled "A place for everybody: students' perspective on inclusive behavior in school" states that inclusive students have empathy, openness, and positive leadership qualities. Inclusive schools provide physical space, extracurricular activities, and role models from teachers who support equal social interaction. Teachers play an important role in building an inclusive culture through collaborative learning, strengthening empathy, and arranging learning spaces that facilitate social interaction among students. True inclusion does not only mean physical presence, but also includes social participation, emotional connection, and appreciation of diversity in all school activities.

Based on research from Shogren et al.,(2015) entitled "The perspectives of students with and without disabilities on inclusive schools," students with and without disabilities have the same desire to become independent learners. An inclusive school culture, positive teacher attitudes, and respectful social relationships between students are very important. Each student receives support according to their needs without creating divisions between groups.

Inclusive education involves not only access to education but also complex social processes that influence how students develop their moral and social values. There is still little research discussing the sociological perspective on how social interactions between regular and special needs students take place. Inclusive education has so far been studied more from pedagogical and psychological aspects, while sociological dimensions such as how social interactions, school norms, and social structures shape character have not been studied in depth, even though these contribute to the character formation of students and are very important to study further (Väyrynen & Paksuniemi, 2020) .

In order to address this gap, this study explores in depth what character values can be developed through interaction between regular and special needs students in inclusive schools and how inclusive schools support the social and emotional character development of students using a literature review.

2. Method

This study uses a SLR method that can help researchers understand existing knowledge and assess the condition of a field of study. Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is introduced with a scientific, transparent, and replicable approach through a comprehensive literature search process and clear inclusion criteria. The stages in using the SLR method are (1) literature identification, (2) determination of inclusion and exclusion criteria, (3) data cleaning from duplication and inconsistencies, and (4) synthesis analysis of findings using qualitative and quantitative approaches. SLR not only encompasses previous research results but also provides theoretical contributions, identifies research gaps, and directs further studies (Linnenluecke, 2020) .

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Published between 2015 and 2025	Published before 2015
Article is a peer-reviewed journal	The article is not a peer-reviewed journal
Journal indexed at least in Sinta 3 or Scopus	Journal with an index lower than Sinta 3 or not officially indexed

Written in Indonesian or English	The text is not written in Indonesian or English
Discusses the character development of students in the context of inclusive education	Does not discuss character development or is not relevant to the inclusive context
Empirical research or systematic literature review	Opinion articles, general conceptual essays, or those without empirical data
Full text available	Full text not available

This research method follows the PRISMA guidelines for producing systematic reviews. PRISMA provides a standard methodology that contributes to ensuring the quality of the revision and replication process with a systematic, transparent, and structured flow. Systematic reviews are developed by explaining the article selection criteria, search strategies, data extraction, and data analysis procedures.

In general, the PRISMA method is divided into several steps, namely:
(1). Determining information sources, (2). Study selection, (3). Data collection process, (4). Determining eligibility criteria, (5). Data item selection (Tedja et al., 2024) .

In this study, information was searched for in an online database with a large repository of academic studies, namely Scopus. Articles that could not be accessed in full were excluded from this study. The selection of literature in this study was carried out in several steps, namely:

1. Enter keywords based on the objective, which is to determine the character building of students in inclusive schools from a sociological perspective. The keywords entered are "Inclusive Schools" OR "Inclusive Education" OR "Inclusive Classes", "Character Building" OR "Character Values", "Sociological Perspective" OR "Social-Emotional Behavior" OR "Social-Moral Development" OR "Social Aspects" OR "Social Awareness" and "Learning Environment."
2. Selecting titles, abstracts, and keywords based on eligibility criteria,
3. All articles that are not eliminated in the selection will be reviewed and selected by reading the entire article thoroughly based on eligibility criteria.
4. Only articles with open access and that meet the eligibility criteria are used.

The data management and article organization process is carried out with the help of Rayyan AI software. This tool is used to manage search results, detect duplication, and mark articles that meet or do not meet the eligibility criteria. However, the final decision is still made by the researcher manually ( ).

All data used in this study are scientific articles that are publicly available through the Scopus database. No personal or sensitive data were used, and the list of selected articles and the results of data extraction are available and can be provided to parties who need them for academic purposes.

3. Results

Articles that passed the selection process were then analyzed using the SLR PRISMA approach with the following analysis steps: (1). Data extraction, compiling important information from each article such as title, year of publication, research objectives, methods, main findings, and contributions to inclusive education; (2). Compiling selected

article findings into main themes related to student character development in inclusive schools, social relationships, the role of teachers, and instilled character values; and (3). Interpreting the data from a sociological perspective, taking into account social factors that influence inclusive education, such as classroom dynamics and interactions between students from different backgrounds. The following image shows the PRISMA flow model used by the researcher:
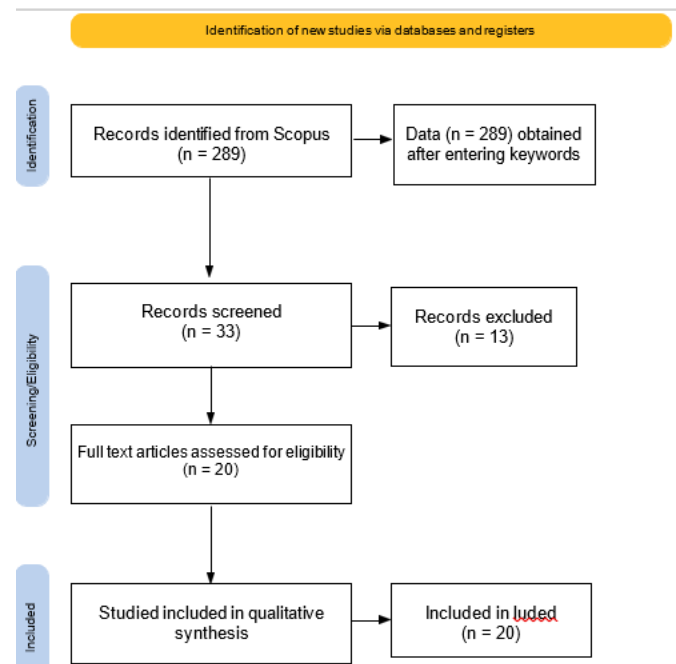

Figure 1. Prism Diagram

Based on the analysis of 20 reviewed articles, it can be understood that inclusive education is not only an administrative policy but also a process of social character building that involves changes in values within the education system and interpersonal relationships at school. The leadership of the principal, the social and learning environment, professional teachers, and collaboration (between teachers, principals, government, and community) play an important role in strengthening moral and empathetic values among students.

Table 2. Publications based on author and year, title, research method, research focus, and summary of findings.

No	Author and Year	Title	Method	Focus	Summary of Findings
1	(Koller, 2020)	Inclusive school leaders—their role in raising the achievement of all learners	Qualitative	Developing an inclusive leadership model and explaining how school leadership supports an inclusive social culture.	Inclusive school leaders play an important role in creating a school culture that supports the participation of all learners without discrimination. The development of an inclusive school leadership model is based on European education policy with three main theories:

No	Author	Title	Method	Focus	Findings
					(1) Transformational, (2) Distributed, and (3) Instructional leadership.
2	(Barth & Grütter, 2024)	Inclusive classroom norms and children's expectations of peers with learning difficulties in their social world	Quantitative	Examining the influence of inclusive classroom norms on children's social expectations of peers with special needs.	Inclusive classroom norms significantly increase children's expectations and inclusive behavior towards peers with learning difficulties. Children in classrooms with high inclusive norms tend to be more open, fair, and empathetic towards differences.
3	(Szumski et al., 2020)	Attitudes of students toward people with disabilities, moral identity, and inclusive education—A two-level analysis	Quantitative	Investigates the relationship between students' moral identity, inclusive classroom environment, and attitudes toward friends with disabilities.	The school social environment is important in strengthening moral and empathetic values among students. The higher the level of individual moral identity and class morality, the more positive students' attitudes toward friends with disabilities. Students in inclusive classes have more positive affective attitudes than those in traditional classes.
4	(Llorent et al., 2024)	Inclusive education by teachers to the development of the social and emotional competencies of their students in secondary education	Qualitative	Exploring teacher agency in implementing the inclusive pedagogical approach in action (IPAA) in inclusive classrooms.	Teachers who have the ability to make professional decisions that favor all students play an important role in fostering social values such as empathy, equality, and mutual respect in the classroom. The IPAA approach views inclusion not only as a policy but as a social and moral process that is alive in everyday educational practices.
5	(Mohammad Efendi, Rizqi Fahar Pradipta, Dimas Arif Dewantoro, Umi Saiful Ummah, Ediyanto Ediyanto, 2022)	Inclusive Education for Students with Special Needs at Indonesian Public Schools	Mixed Methods	Analyzing the implementation of inclusive education policies in Indonesian public schools and their impact on socio-pedagogical practices.	The success of inclusive education requires collaboration between teachers, school principals, the government, and the community. Teachers need to improve their pedagogical and moral competencies to address the diverse needs of students.
6	(Molina Roldán et al., 2021)	How inclusive interactive learning environments benefit students without special needs	Qualitative	Investigating how interactions in interactive learning environments improve the social skills and empathy of students without disabilities.	Dialogic interactions between students with and without disabilities increase positive attitudes toward diversity, social skills, and cognitive development. Students without special needs learn to appreciate differences, develop empathy, be patient, and help friends in need. They gain cognitive benefits through dialogue

					and cross-ability collaboration.
7	(Margas, 2023)	Inclusive classroom climate development as the cornerstone of inclusive school building: review and perspective	Quantitative	Identifying the advantages and obstacles of implementing inclusive education from the perspective of teachers.	The success of inclusion implementation is greatly influenced by teacher attitudes, school team collaboration, and systemic support. Teachers who have a prosocial and empathetic orientation are better able to create a learning environment that is friendly to differences and character-oriented.
8	(Schwab et al., 2022)	Social participation in the context of inclusive education: primary school students' friendship networks from students' and teachers' perspectives	Mixed Methods	Examining social participation and friendship relationships among students in inclusive primary schools from two perspectives: teachers and students.	The role of teachers and inclusive classroom norms can improve the low social participation of children with special needs. Teachers who actively foster collaboration and group work successfully improve social connectedness, empathy, and support among students. Social relationships are an important part of students' emotional and moral well-being in an inclusive environment.
9	(Lakkala et al., 2021)	Teachers supporting students in collaborative- -ways: An analysis of collaborative work creating supportive learning environments for every student in a school: Cases from Austria, Finland, Lithuania, and Poland.	Qualitative	Analyzing how teachers in four countries work collaboratively in a manner to create learning environments that support all students in inclusive schools.	Collaboration between teachers and professionals is an essential element in inclusive education. Teacher collaboration can enhance a sense of community, collective responsibility, and social efficacy in supporting all students.
10	(DeMatthews et al., 2021)	Leading inclusive schools: principal perceptions, practices, and challenges to meaningful change	Qualitative	Exploring how principals view, practice, and face challenges in leading inclusive schools.	School principals are committed to inclusivity to support the character development of students. Values of social justice, empathy, and acceptance of differences form the basis of their leadership, but they face structural obstacles such as limited resources and lack of training.
11	(Väyrynen & Paksuniemi, 2020)	Translating inclusive values into pedagogical actions	Qualitative	Analyzing how teachers understand and apply inclusive values in pedagogical	Teachers who are aware of the value of inclusion (diversity, support for all students, collaboration, and professional

				practice, particularly through collaborative teaching.	development) can implement participatory and appreciative learning. Through cooperation between teachers, the strategic application of flexibility, and mutual respect, a democratic classroom culture is created that supports all students, thereby strengthening social relationships, empathy, and mutual trust.
12	(Zweers et al., 2021)	Social-emotional development of students with social-emotional and behavioral difficulties in inclusive regular and exclusive special education	Quantitative	The development of social-emotional relationships (teacher relationships, peer acceptance, and self-esteem) in students with social-emotional and behavioral difficulties in the context of inclusive schools and special schools.	The social context of school (relationships with teachers and friends) greatly influences students' emotional development.
13	(Jorge Abellán, Nieves Sáez-Gallego, 2018)	Exploring the effect of contact and inclusive sport on physical education in the attitudes toward intellectual disability of high school students	Quantitative	Assessing the influence of inclusive sports-based physical education programs and direct contact with individuals with intellectual disabilities on changes in high school students' attitudes toward disability.	Direct and intensive contact and various experiences through inclusive sports activities can improve perceptions and foster empathy, appreciate diversity, and develop mutual support for people with disabilities. It is important to implement and hold direct social experiences as a strategy for shaping social character that values togetherness.
14	(Loeper et al., 2022)	The role of students' experiences in ' attitude formation towards peers with non-compliant classroom behavior in inclusive primary schools	Quantitative	Investigating the extent to which students' attitudes toward peers with non-compatible or non-compliant behavior toward class norms in inclusive classrooms are influenced by their contact experiences with these students, personal experiences related to behavioral difficulties or special educational needs, as well as gender factors and the emotional climate of the classroom.	Attitudes toward peers with non- -compatible behaviors are largely influenced by their direct contact experiences. Female students show more positive attitudes than male students. It is important to foster positive attitudes between groups through social contact. This study recommends collaborative learning strategies to increase social participation and build empathetic character among inclusive elementary school students.

15	(Vlachou & Tsirantonaki, 2023)	The Importance of School Principals' Values towards the Inclusive Education of Disabled Students: Associations between Their Values and Knowledge, Beliefs, Attitudes and Practices	Quantitative	Analyzing the role and influence of principals' personal values on the implementation of inclusive education for students with disabilities, as well as how these values relate to principals' knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and practices in managing inclusive schools.	The social structure of the school, interpersonal relationships, and social values that develop in inclusive classrooms help shape the character of students. Inclusion is not just a matter of policy or placing students with disabilities in regular classrooms, but rather a process rooted in the values of humanity, social justice, and equality, which are reflected through values-based leadership and collaboration among the entire school community. The personal values of the principal are the most fundamental and influential factors in realizing inclusive education for students with disabilities. Values form the foundation that shapes the principal's beliefs, attitudes, and practices in leading an inclusive school.
16	(Xu et al., 2024)	Primary school students' perceptions of class environment and their attitudes towards inclusive education in China	Quantitative	Analyzing how students' perceptions of the social and emotional environment in the classroom relate to their attitudes towards inclusive education. This study also examines the role of social relationships, teacher support, and classroom climate in students' acceptance of peers with disabilities.	A positive classroom environment serves as a social space that supports the formation of students' social character. Students who feel emotional support from teachers, have good relationships with peers, and experience an inclusive classroom climate have a more positive attitude toward inclusive education. Social conditions encourage the development of values such as empathy, respect, and solidarity among students. The social climate of the classroom plays an important role in the process of shaping students' character because through daily interactions in an inclusive environment, students learn to understand differences and develop more humanistic social attitudes.
17	(Armiyati et al., 2025)	Promoting inclusive education by in s incorporating living heritage into history	Qualitative	Analyzing the perceptions and practices of history teachers in implementing inclusive education through the	Teachers view living cultural heritage as an effective learning medium for instilling social and humanitarian values in the context of inclusive education. Students learn

		learning: teachers' perspectives and practices.		integration of living cultural heritage into history learning and how this approach supports the formation of character and social values in students.	to understand diversity and build mutual respect. This approach fosters empathy, tolerance, and collaboration in students, so that culture-based inclusive education functions as a process of social character building in line with the principles of humanity and togetherness.
18	(Al-Karimah et al., 2024)	Character-based inclusive education management at senior high school: a qualitative case study	Qualitative	How character-based inclusive education management is implemented, including the stages of planning, implementation, organization, and evaluation, as well as how character values are integrated into the inclusive education system.	Through collaboration between teachers, parents, and students, the school has succeeded in creating a learning environment that fosters values of empathy, responsibility, and cooperation. The implementation of an Islamic character-based curriculum integrated with inclusive programs such as active learning and collaborative approaches encourages students to respect differences and behave fairly towards peers with special needs. The school has not only successfully implemented inclusive education but also made it a vehicle for shaping social and moral character in line with humanitarian and spiritual values.
19	(Shogren et al., 2015)	The perspectives of students with and without disabilities on inclusive schools	Qualitative	Exploring students' views on inclusive school culture, sense of belonging, teaching practices, positive behavior support, and social relationships between students with and without disabilities to understand the dynamics of forming an inclusive school community.	Inclusive schools play an important role in shaping the social and moral character of students through a school culture that emphasizes a sense of belonging, cooperation, and mutual respect for differences. Students describe school as a safe and supportive place where every individual feels accepted and valued regardless of ability. Principals and teachers play an important role as social figures who facilitate the community through a fair and inclusive approach. Interactions between students with and without disabilities help foster social awareness, tolerance, and moral responsibility, which directly contribute to the formation of an inclusive character.

| 20 | (Carrington et al., 2022) | Societal, systemic, school, and family drivers for and barriers to inclusive education | Qualitative | Identifying and analyzing factors that support and hinder the implementation of inclusive education and the closure of segregated schools (an educational model in which students with disabilities are separated from other students and placed in special schools or separate classes) in Queensland, Australia at the societal, systemic, school, and family levels. | The formation of inclusive character in students does not only depend on school practices, but also on the broader social system that includes community values, educational policies, and family culture. Social attitudes towards disability, beliefs about human rights and social justice, and ethical and collaborative school leadership are the most important factors in strengthening inclusive culture. This study confirms that inclusive education is not merely a policy issue but also a social movement that requires a paradigm shift from a medical model to a social model so that schools truly function as moral communities where students learn to respect differences and cultivate human values. |

The inclusive school environment becomes a socialization arena that instills social and moral awareness, shaping students' characters to behave fairly and respect diversity in society. The classroom becomes an agent for shaping students' moral and social characters. Values such as fairness, empathy, and acceptance of differences grow through social interaction.

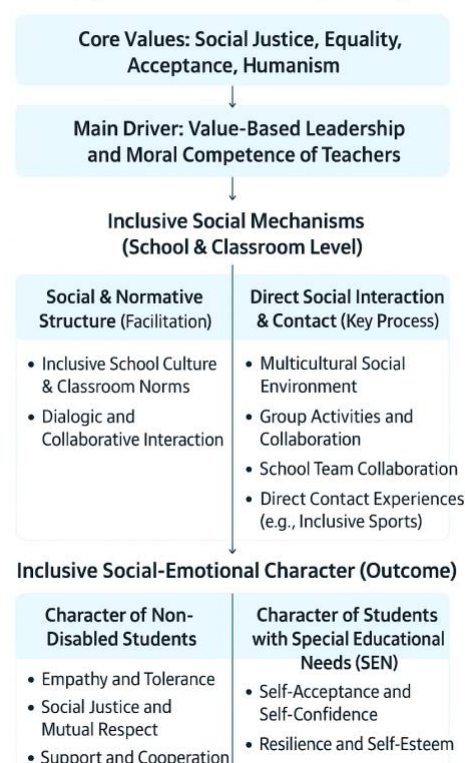**Sociological Foundation & Inclusive Values (Systemic & Leadership Level)**

Core Values: Social Justice, Equality, Acceptance, Humanism

↓

Main Driver: Value-Based Leadership and Moral Competence of Teachers

↓

Inclusive Social Mechanisms (School & Classroom Level)

Social & Normative Structure (Facilitation)	Direct Social Interaction & Contact (Key Process)
• Inclusive School Culture & Classroom Norms • Dialogic and Collaborative Interaction	• Multicultural Social Environment • Group Activities and Collaboration • School Team Collaboration • Direct Contact Experiences (e.g., Inclusive Sports)

Inclusive Social-Emotional Character (Outcome)

Character of Non-Disabled Students	Character of Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
• Empathy and Tolerance • Social Justice and Mutual Respect • Support and Cooperation	• Self-Acceptance and Self-Confidence • Resilience and Self-Esteem

Figure 2. Model of findings

Teachers act as social agents who instill character through fair and empathetic relationships in the classroom. Inclusive schools can be arenas where values such as respect, tolerance, and equality grow naturally in the teaching and learning process, so that students' character can be shaped through inclusive and collaborative social dynamics.

Social relationships and friendship networks in inclusive schools are the main targets for shaping children's social character. Through daily interactions, students learn about solidarity, equality, justice, acceptance, and empathy, which are the foundations of moral character. Inclusive schools serve as social spaces where children learn to manage differences and build positive social identities through fair and collaborative social experiences.

These findings address the previously identified research gap regarding what character values can be developed through interactions between regular and special needs students in schools and how inclusive schools support the social and emotional character development of students.

4. Discussion

Overall, the SLR results emphasize the importance of understanding inclusive education as a complex social phenomenon. Previous research findings and this analysis reinforce that student character is formed through a continuous social process in an inclusive school environment. The SLR results show that the formation of student character in inclusive schools is not only determined by internal factors but is also influenced by the social and cultural structure of inclusive schools. Social interaction, professional cooperation, and an inclusive school culture shape student character through the values of togetherness, tolerance, empathy, and social responsibility. These findings are in line with previous research by Juvonen et al., (2019) , which states that social support, positive attitudes from teachers and peers, and school policies oriented towards collaboration are important factors in the success of social inclusion.

The character development of students is linked to policy, community, and the classroom. With inclusive leadership, justice, equality, empathy, and participation can be instilled in interactions among school members (Vlachou & Tsirantonaki, 2023) . Teachers who have the ability to make professional decisions that favor all students can address the diverse needs of students (Llorent et al., 2024) . A learning environment that is friendly to diversity and character-oriented is influenced by teacher attitudes, school team collaboration, and systemic support. Teacher collaboration can enhance a sense of community, collective responsibility, and social efficacy in supporting all students (Lakkala et al., 2021) .

It is necessary to implement a comprehensive education strategy, including teacher training, adaptive curricula, and social interaction programs to create a truly inclusive school climate so that social inclusion is not merely the physical integration of students but a dynamic process that demands changes in culture, attitudes, and school structures so that every student feels accepted, valued, and has equal opportunities to develop.

Through collaboration between teachers, the implementation of flexible strategies,

and mutual respect, a democratic classroom culture can be created that supports all students, thereby strengthening social relationships, empathy, and mutual trust (Väyrynen & Paksuniemi, 2020) . The social context of school, namely the relationship between teachers and peers, greatly influences students' emotional development. This finding is reinforced by Loeper et al.,(2022) , which confirms that positive social experiences with peers who exhibit non-compatible behavior encourage the formation of open-mindedness, patience, and empathy, indicating that character learning in an inclusive context occurs through real social interactions in the classroom.

In several previous studies, for example by(2020) , it was found that academic inclusion had the highest consistency of assessment, while social-emotional inclusion was more difficult to measure uniformly. To achieve comprehensive inclusive education, schools need to consider the social and emotional dimensions of students, not just academic results, and encourage open communication between teachers, students, and parents to understand the social acceptance of students in an inclusive environment.

Based on the results of the SLR, inclusive education is not only about teaching strategies but also the process of internalizing social values such as tolerance, empathy, and cooperation so that a learning community can be created that respects differences and fosters social responsibility. Findings from Jorge Abellán, Nieves Sáez-Gallego,(2018) show that inclusive sports activities and direct contact with individuals with intellectual disabilities can increase social acceptance and positive attitudes among students towards diversity.

Social interaction in inclusive classrooms is an effective means of character building, where through shared learning experiences, students can internalize values such as empathy, solidarity, mutual respect, self-confidence, and social justice. The success of inclusive schools depends on the social values embraced by teachers and the school community. Teachers, as social agents, play a central role in instilling morals through daily practices in the classroom. The culture of inclusive schools provides a forum for the socialization of human values and social justice that shape students' character.   These findings are reinforced by Xu et al., 2013,(2024) , which reveals that positive perceptions of a supportive classroom environment and harmonious social relationships correlate with an increase in students' inclusive attitudes towards peers with disabilities. A conducive social environment has been proven to be a space for students to practice the values of mutual respect and understanding of differences.

The sociological approach provides an understanding that character formation does not occur individually but rather through social interaction, power structures, and school cultural norms. Thus, inclusive education functions as a social system that instills collective values and equality. Inclusive schools are social contexts where moral values are internalized through interactions between students. Moral identity is formed and reinforced by inclusive class norms, creating an environment that fosters empathy, justice, and respect for differences (Carrington et al., 2022) .

Inclusive schools serve as social laboratories that educate students to become moral and characterful individuals through diverse and mutually respectful social relationships. This is in line with research from Siperstein et al.,(2022) which states that true inclusion does not only mean physical presence but also includes social participation, emotional

connection, and appreciation of diversity in all inclusion activities. However, Carrington et al.,(2022) highlight in their research that the success of shaping the social character of students in inclusive schools also depends on community support, government policies, and school leadership that fosters social justice values and rejects segregative systems.

The learning process and collaborative policies create a social environment that supports the character development of students. Inclusive education is not only an academic program but also a means of moral socialization and strengthening children's social identity in a diverse society. The sociological perspective provides a complementary viewpoint that emphasizes the dimensions of social relationships and group dynamics as the basis for character building, not merely an individual pedagogical approach.

Inclusive education serves not only as an academic tool but also as a social system that shapes students' character through the values of empathy, tolerance, and diversity. This study highlights that students' character is shaped through collaborative social and cultural interactions at school, not just the result of individual learning processes. The sociological perspective views inclusive schools as arenas for social interaction that instill collective values and strengthen social cohesion among individuals with different abilities.

The limitations of this SLR lie in the scope of the data, which is still secondary literature and predominantly derived from conceptual research. The results of the analysis are based on theoretical interpretations without direct verification in the field, so they are not yet able to empirically describe how social dynamics and character formation actually occur in inclusive schools in Indonesia. In addition, some of the articles reviewed originate from developed countries, so cultural, policy, and educational structure differences may affect their relevance to the local context.

Further research is recommended to conduct empirical evidence in the field to test the extent to which social factors such as school culture, interaction patterns, and teacher roles actually influence the character formation of students in the context of inclusive schools. It is also necessary for further research to better adapt the context to the socio-cultural conditions in Indonesia so that the results are more relevant and applicable by using

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), it can be concluded that teachers, school culture, and social interactions are inseparable in shaping the character of students in inclusive schools. Thus, inclusive education functions as a social system that instills collective values and equality. Inclusive education functions as a social process of character building among students through interpersonal relationships that foster empathy, justice, and equality. Inclusive education focuses not only on physical integration, but also on social participation, emotional connection, and appreciation of diversity.

The main factors that play a role in this process include inclusive school leadership, teacher professionalism, a collaborative culture, and systemic support from the community and government. Social interactions in the classroom become a forum for internalizing moral values such as tolerance, solidarity, responsibility, and mutual respect.

Thus, inclusive schools can become social spaces that shape the moral and social character of students based on values of humanity and social justice.

Inclusive education plays a central role in shaping students' character from a sociological perspective. Inclusive schools have proven to be effective social environments for fostering values of empathy, tolerance, solidarity, and social responsibility through direct interaction between students with and without disabilities. The social relationships formed in inclusive classrooms enable students to learn to appreciate differences, work together, and understand the importance of accepting diversity.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable. This study did not involve humans or animals as research subjects. The data were obtained entirely from publicly available journal articles.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study, the collection, analysis, or interpretation of data, the writing of the manuscript, or the decision to publish the results.

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