



Literature Review Study: Teacher Strategies in Shaping Students' Social Character in the Digital Age

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Abstract

This study discusses teachers' strategies in shaping students' social character in the digital age. With the continuous development of technology, the role of teachers in shaping students' social identity has become increasingly complex and dynamic. This condition certainly poses a serious challenge for education, especially in the context of shaping students' character. It is important to note that the unwise use of technology can have a negative impact on students, which poses a challenge for teachers, such as an increased risk of social isolation, cyberbullying, and digital distractions. This study uses a qualitative approach, specifically a systematic literature review (SLR), with a procedure of searching for 280 relevant articles. From the 280 articles, 148 were excluded at the identification stage, leaving 132 articles. Then, the screening stage eliminated 112 articles, leaving 20 articles. The results show that teachers' strategies in shaping students' social character in the digital era can be implemented through Value-Based Digital Storytelling, Social and Emotional Learning, Project-Based Learning, instilling core values, and overall collaboration.

Keywords: Teacher strategies; social character; digital era

1. Introduction

In an era of globalization and rapid development of information technology, the world of education is facing major changes, both in learning methods and in the challenges that arise with the progress of the times. One of the most significant changes is the entry of digitalization into classrooms. The internet, social media, digital learning applications, and smart devices are now part of students' daily lives (Permana, 2024).

In this era of ever-evolving technology, the role of teachers in shaping students' social identities has become increasingly complex and dynamic. Information and communication technology has not only changed the way we learn but also influenced social interactions inside and outside the classroom. On the one hand, technology offers unlimited opportunities, expands access to global educational resources, and strengthens connections between students and the outside world (Aroby, 2024). Additionally, digitalization also has the potential to reduce the intensity of their direct social interactions. Research (Supriyanto, 2022) found that children who use gadgets for more than three hours per day tend to have lower social skills compared to children with limited gadget use. This condition certainly poses a serious challenge for education, especially in

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the context of shaping students' character. We need to be aware that the unwise use of technology can have a negative impact on students, which poses a challenge for teachers, such as an increased risk of social isolation, cyberbullying, and digital distraction. In this case, teachers must have strategies in navigating change and ensuring that the technology used is in accordance with its ethical use to support the growth and development of students rather than hindering their social identity.

Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of technology use on students' social identity and how teacher, student, and technology interaction strategies can be optimized, including technology-based teaching methods and their influence on aspects of student development. Research conducted by Youru Xie et al. suggests that teacher and student interaction using online learning spaces can improve learning outcomes.(Xie, 2023) . Research conducted by Kaitlyn Burnell et al. argues that self-control is needed in the use of digital media because low self-control can lead to gadget addiction, which can cause higher risks. (Burnell, 2023) In this case, the above research provides an understanding of the importance of understanding how technology can affect student behavior and performance.

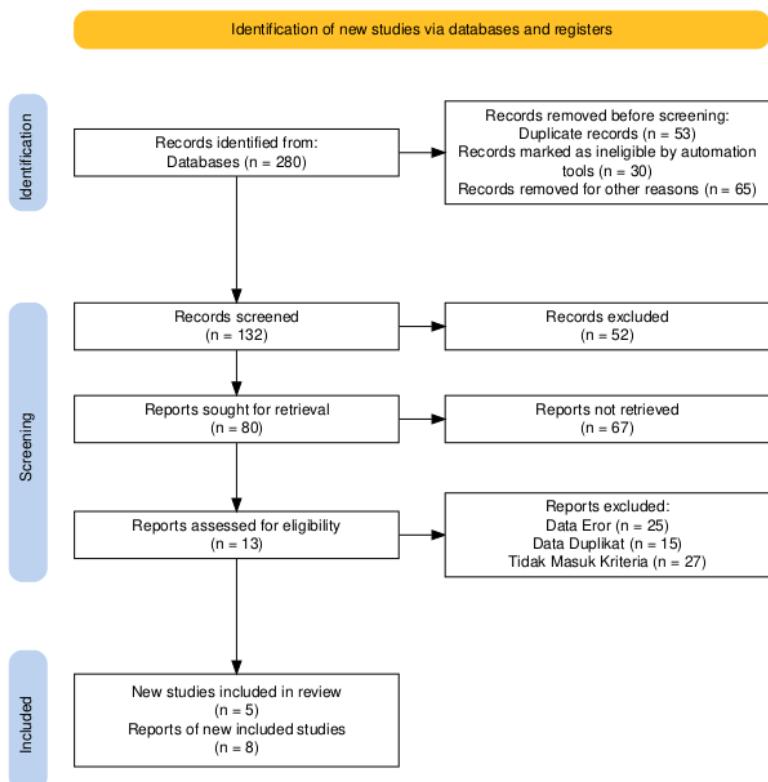
However, there are significant limitations in the existing literature. The main gap is the lack of empirical research related to teachers' strategies in shaping students' social character, as well as students' ability to manage their responsibility for ethical interaction on the platforms they use daily. To address this gap, this study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach. SLR was chosen because this method allows for the systematic collection, selection, and synthesis of previous research results by reviewing the latest literature from 2020 to 2025. SLR can map the main findings, identify research patterns, and formulate areas that are still open for further research. The urgency of using SLR in this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of teachers' strategies in shaping students' social character in the digital era. This study aims to analyze the contribution of various learning approaches used by teachers in shaping social interaction, empathy, and collaboration amid the dominance of digital media use by students, while also identifying existing research gaps. Through mapping and synthesizing the research literature, this study is expected to formulate relevant implications and provide recommendations for further research related to character education strategies so as to strengthen the formation of adaptive, humanistic, and sustainable social character in students in the digital era.

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach of a systematic literature review (SLR) using the PRISMA model. The author collected and analyzed information sources from journal articles. After selecting the sources, the author then analyzed the existing data qualitatively, looking for patterns, trends, and findings of keywords that emerged from the articles studied. *"Teacher Strategy" And "Character Education" And "Digital Era" And "Social Character" And "Digital Society" And "Character Formation" And "Digital Technology" And "Moral Education" And "Teacher Strategy"*

The researchers found 80 scientific papers through Scientdirect, 50 through Google Scholar, and 150 through Publish Or Perish, which ultimately resulted in 280 papers using a systematic search strategy and relevant keywords. After analyzing the 280 articles, the researchers excluded 53 articles that were not indexed by Scopus, 30 articles that were irrelevant, and 65 articles that did not fit the theme, leaving 132 articles. From the 132 articles, a further screening process resulted in the removal of 52 irrelevant articles, leaving 80 articles. After further review, the researchers did not include 67 articles, leaving 13 articles. In the final stage, 80 articles were eliminated due to 25 data errors, 15 duplicate data, and 27 articles that did not meet the criteria, resulting in a final research result consisting of 13 articles.

The following is an image of the PRISMA flow model used by the researchers:



3. Results

No.	Author & Year	Title	Findings
1	Apri Wardana Ritonga, 2022	Role of Teachers and Parents in Realizing Character Education in the Digital Era	Teachers and parents play a significant role through programs developed by schools
2	Triyanto & Rejekiningsih, 2020	Building Tolerance Character for Students in the Digital Era	Tolerance character can be built through digital media with PAOC and clear targets
3	Didin Saripudin, 2021	Value-Based Digital Storytelling Learning Media to Foster Student Character	The concept of digital-based storytelling can have a significant impact
8	Syahria Anggita Sakti, 2024	Revitalizing local wisdom within character education through an ethnopedagogy approach: A case study	Ethnopedagogy increases children's awareness of local culture and character development

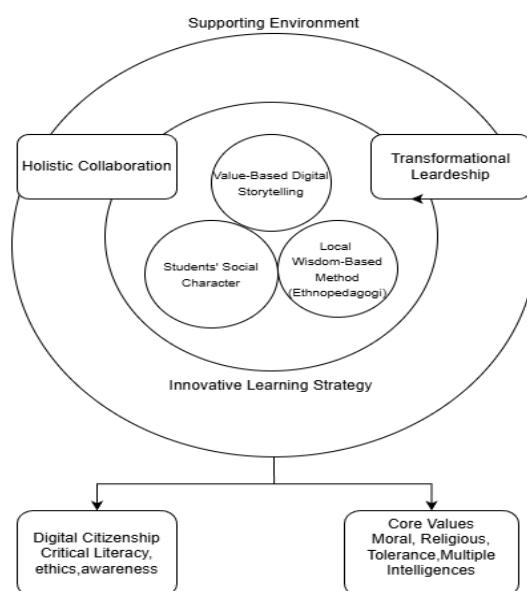
		on a preschool in Yogyakarta	
5.	Núria Vallès-Peris, 2024	Digital citizenship at school: Democracy, pragmatism, and RRI	Social character can be formed when critical digital literacy, ethical awareness, and responsibility are present in students.
6	Ananto & Ningsih, 2023	An examination of Indonesian teachers' and students' perception and level of digital citizenship	By practicing citizenship values, teachers and students can develop good digital awareness, but this needs to be balanced with social character in the virtual world.
7	Febriani & Yusnawati, 2021	Character Development Through Multiple Intelligences Classroom Management for Elementary Schools in the Digital Age	Internalization of character values can be achieved through multiple intelligences-based classroom management; exemplary behavior, courage, discipline, independence, responsibility, and respect for others.
8	Wibowo Heru Prasetyo, Bambang. 2023	Promoting Digital Citizenship among Student-Teachers: The Role of Project-Based Learning in Improving Appropriate Online Behaviors	Project-based learning helps prospective teachers in Indonesia develop social character and digital responsibility, making them better prepared to guide students to become ethical and characterful digital citizens in the technological era.
9	Muhammad Japar, Asep Casma a, 2023	Students' Perspectives on Civic Education through Digital Citizenship in the Virtual Era	Indonesian students understand the importance of digital ethics and responsibility as part of social character in the technological era.
10	Maria-Luisa Schmitz, 2024	Transformational leadership for technology integration in schools: Empowering teachers to use technology in a more demanding way	School principals with a transformational leadership style play an important role in empowering teachers to be more confident, skilled, and effective in using digital technology to create active and meaningful learning for students.
11	Gondo Subandi, 2025	A response to the character crisis: Can a digital Islamic character education based on local wisdom be the solution?	Incorporating local wisdom into the education curriculum helps instill pride in cultural heritage and promotes social values such as solidarity and cooperation.
12	Marcus Pietsch, Dana-Kristin Mah. 2024	Leading the AI transformation in schools: it starts with a 'digital mindset	A proactive, empathetic, and balanced school leadership approach can effectively enhance human and social values in education and digital mindset.
13	Stevani, 2020	The Implementation of Character Education in E-Learning Using	Character education can be effectively implemented and yield good results

		Google Classroom Media	through Google Classroom, even when learning is conducted remotely (PJJ).
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Based on the results of 13 Scopus journals and international journals analyzed in this study, it was found that teachers' strategies in shaping social character in the digital era require a transformation of the role of teachers from mere educators to transformative agents. The literature review also confirms that the character crisis in the digital era cannot be overcome with conventional approaches, because negative behavior in the digital space is rooted in low empathy and moral awareness due to minimal control over digital interactions. Therefore, there is a need for value-based strategies that foster tolerance, social responsibility, and moral integrity through local wisdom and religious values. In the Indonesian context, this approach is considered the most effective in protecting students from globalization and digital disinformation that have the potential to damage their social character.

Various studies show that the most effective strategies are holistic ones, such as the use of innovative learning media in the form of value-based digital storytelling with the application of project-based learning methods, which have been proven to require emotional aspects and responsible online behavior. In line with this, literature reviews also emphasize that strengthening the concept of *digital citizenship* is a key pillar in the curriculum. Its implementation is not merely about teaching digital ethics, but also facilitating critical discussions on digital issues. However, the success of this strategy is not only determined by individual teachers but is also greatly influenced by the transformational leadership of school principals who are able to create an innovative and collaborative school culture. This leadership support is a crucial factor in empowering teachers to effectively apply new methods. Nevertheless, this study also found several gaps that need to be further examined. First, most of the research is still qualitative and conceptual, so there are still limited large-scale quantitative studies that measure the long-term impact of various strategies. Second, there is still a gap between teachers' technical mastery and their pedagogical competence in facilitating complex and often controversial topics of digital citizenship.

Figure 3.1 Findings construct: Holistic Strategy Model for Social Character Building in the Digital Age



Based on the chart above, it shows that social character building in the digital age cannot be achieved with just one single strategy. It requires supporting strategies in the form of learning strategies and a strong foundation of values consisting of instilling values. All of these strategies can be achieved and succeed if there is a supportive environment, namely close collaboration between schools and parents as well as transformational school leadership.

4. Discussion

Integration of Values in Learning and Technology Utilization

Studies consistently emphasize the importance of integrating character education into all subjects. One innovative method that has been found to be effective is the use of *Value-Based Digital Storytelling*. (Saripudin 2021) Digital narratives are used to instill character values in a profound and engaging way. This success is highly dependent on mastery of professional digital competencies that not only include technical skills but also pedagogical abilities to integrate technology into learning and a deep understanding of the digital landscape faced by students (Saripudin, 2021) . Longitudinal research (Burnell, 2023) confirms that the quality, not just the intensity, of technology use determines the direction of social identity development. Digital activities that are collaborative, reflective, and have positive social value tend to strengthen empathy and social awareness, while passive and competitive use can weaken a sense of identity and social connectedness. Technology is not only a tool but also a medium for social and emotional learning (SEL). Strategies such as *Project Based Learning* (PBL) have been found to be successful in improving online behavior, showing that active and student-centered learning methods are very effective (Prasetyo, 2023) . Thus, students with emotional intelligence will be less likely to engage in cyberbullying because they can imagine the pain it causes. Teachers can help students understand through case studies or reflective discussions.

However, the limitation of this strategy is that it heavily relies on the teacher's pedagogical competence in integrating technology. This confirms the findings (Burnell, 2023) that quality is not only about the intensity of technology use; without competent teachers, PBL can fail, and digital storytelling can become merely a technical task without instilling values.

Instilling Core Values (Morality, Religion, and Tolerance)

Several literature, particularly in the Indonesian context, highlight the importance of character education based on religion and local wisdom values. (Sakti, 2024) Incorporating local wisdom into learning is one way to instill social values and digital thinking..) This strategy aims to build a strong moral compass when students are faced with situations such as hate speech or online intolerance. Students with a strong foundation of values will be able to control themselves in digital interactions. The literature emphasizes that social character can be formed even in the midst of rapid digitalization when students have ethical awareness towards society.(Peris, 2024) highlights the importance of equipping students with ethics as digital citizens, not only through teaching rules, but also by facilitating students in thinking critically about the digital issues they face . This process requires the instillation of social norms and religious values that serve as a moral compass in navigating the digital space.

This strategy provides a strong foundation, as students are not only taught global digital rules but also values and religious principles. However, this strategy carries the risk that the teaching of values could become dogmatic if not balanced with critical thinking.

Holistic collaboration

Synergy between teachers, schools, and parents is a key factor in ensuring consistency in social character building. The success of this strategy is certainly influenced by teacher competence. (Ritonga, 2022) The success of teachers does not come solely from the teachers themselves. Literature shows that teachers are motivated by school principals to achieve success in integrating technology (Schmitz et al., 2023) . Transformational leaders have proven to be capable of empowering teachers, encouraging them to use technology more innovatively and deeply. The success of school programs must be supported by monitoring and guidance from parents at home to ensure consistency in shaping social character in the digital age. (Pietsch & Kristin Mah, 2025) . In this case, collaboration between various parties influences the success of the implemented strategy, with parental supervision at home being one of the supporting factors for the strategy to have an impact on students. The limitations in this case are unifying the vision between parents who may have different levels of digital literacy and finding transformational leaders in the real world, which is a big challenge.

5. Conclusions

Teachers' strategies in shaping social character in the digital age require teachers to become transformative agents who not only teach but also guide social values and ethics in the digital space. The character crisis that has arisen due to weak empathy and moral awareness emphasizes the need for value-based strategies that foster tolerance, social responsibility, and integrity through local wisdom and religious values. Effective strategies are holistic, combining cognitive, affective, and social dimensions through approaches such as *value-based digital storytelling* and *project-based learning* that encourage ethical and reflective digital behavior. Strengthening digital citizenship is the main foundation for character building, while its success depends on holistic collaboration so that it can create a collaborative and character-building school culture. Thus, social character building in the digital age requires synergy between digital competence, teachers' moral exemplary behavior, and educational environment support to produce empathetic, critical, and responsible digital citizens. Based on the analysis results, there are several research recommendations that can be proposed for future research directions as follows: (1) Comparative studies, namely conducting research that compares the effectiveness of various character education models in shaping digital social character with different school backgrounds. (2) Longitudinal research, namely conducting long-term studies to track the development of social character. (3) Instrument validation, namely validating assessment instruments that specifically measure social character in the digital era, covering aspects of online empathy, digital ethics, and tolerance in virtual interactions.

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