ANALYSIS IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARACTER BUILDING BASED ON CHARACTER FIRST EDUCATION IN 4TH GRADE AT SD BUKIT AKSARA SEMARANG

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Abstract

Character education is now the main focus of experts and educational institutions. Character is formed from small actions that are repeated until they become habits. To be effective, character education must be applicable and easy to understand so that students and their environment can feel the benefits. This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of character building at SD Bukit Aksara Semarang City. The research method used a qualitative approach with naturalistic inquiry, and the subjects were grade 4 students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and literature review. Data validity was obtained through confirmation of results and triangulation. The results showed that the implementation of character building at SD Bukit Aksara Semarang City is as follows: 1) The implementation of character building has been carried out through curriculum programs integrated with character-first education at each grade level and structured in the semester program. 2) In grade 4, the character values emphasized are attentiveness and sensitivity with indicators listed. 3) The implementation of character building is often inserted during the learning process in class, especially project-based learning, which is the school's semester program. The character of attentiveness and sensitivity is an essential aspect of character education that focuses on developing students' personalities. The impact is that students can understand and feel what others are experiencing, improve social skills, encourage responsibility, and help create a positive learning environment. Overall, the implementation of character building at SD Bukit Aksara has shown significant success, but a more holistic approach involving the family and social environment is still needed. Given the influence of external factors not described in this study, further research is required to understand how the environment outside school affects the development of students' attentiveness and sensitivity character and how appropriate solutions can be implemented to overcome these obstacles.

Keywords: *Character; Sensitivity; Attentiveness.*

Abstrak

Pendidikan karakter kini menjadi fokus utama para pakar dan lembaga pendidikan. Karakter terbentuk dari tindakan kecil yang berulang hingga menjadi kebiasaan. Agar efektif, pendidikan karakter harus aplikatif dan mudah dipahami, sehingga manfaatnya dapat dirasakan oleh siswa dan lingkungannya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis implementasi *character building* di SD Bukit Aksara Kota Semarang. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan *naturalistic inquiry*, dan subjeknya adalah siswa kelas 4. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi, serta kajian literatur. Validitas data diperoleh melalui konfirmasi hasil dan triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi *character building* di SD Bukit Aksara Kota Semarang yaitu sebagai berikut: 1) Implementasi *character building* telah dilaksanakan melalui program kurikulum yang diintegrasikan dengan *character first education* di setiap tingkatan kelas dan terstruktur dalam program semester. 2) Pada kelas 4 SD nilai karakter yang ditekankan adalah karakter perhatian *(attentiveness)* dan kepekaan *(sensitivity)* dengan indikator yang tertera. 3) Implementasi *character building* ini sering disisipkan pada saat proses pembelajaran di kelas terutama pembelajaran berbasis projek yang menjadi program semester sekolah tersebut. Karakter perhatian dan kepekaan merupakan aspek penting dalam pendidikan karakter yang berfokus pada pengembangan kepribadian siswa. Dampaknya siswa dapat memahami dan merasakan apa yang dialami oleh orang lain, meningkatkan keterampilan sosial, mendorong tanggung jawab, dan membantu menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang positif. Secara keseluruhan, implementasi *character building* di SD Bukit Aksara telah menunjukkan keberhasilan yang signifikan, namun masih diperlukan pendekatan lebih holistik yang melibatkan keluarga dan lingkungan sosial. Mengingat adanya pengaruh dari faktor eksternal yang tidak dijelaskan dalam penelitian ini, diperlukan penelitian lebih lanjut untuk memahami

bagaimana lingkungan di luar sekolah mempengaruhi perkembangan karakter perhatian dan kepekaan siswa dan bagaimana solusi yang tepat dapat diterapkan untuk mengatasi kendala tersebut.
Kata Kunci: Karakter; Kepekaan; Perhatian.

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping the character of the Indonesian nation. Education not only transfers knowledge but also shapes the character of the country. Therefore, education must produce intelligent and characterized individuals to create a nation that excels in achievement and interacts politely with the nation's noble values (Maryono, et al., 2018).

Bung Karno, one of the founding fathers, asserted, "This nation must be built by prioritising character building because this character will make Indonesia a great, advanced, victorious and dignified nation" (Asbari, et al., 2019). In line with Bung Karno's statement, Forester (Wibowo, 2012: 26) argues that the purpose of education is the formation of character manifested in the essential unity between the subject and his behavior and attitude to life. This emphasizes the importance of character education.

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20/2003 on the National Education System, education aims to develop the potential of learners to become individuals who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty and have noble character. In this context, education does not only focus on academic aspects but also on developing the character and morals of students. Supriyadi and Iskandar (2020) said that a good education must be able to form individuals who are physically and mentally healthy, knowledgeable, capable, and creative. This is important to prepare young people who can face global challenges and contribute positively to society. In addition, education must also instill the values of independence and responsibility so that students can become democratic citizens and active in the nation-building process (Supriyadi & Iskandar, 2020).

The implementation of these educational goals should start early, including at the primary school level. At this stage, children are not only introduced to basic knowledge but also to moral and social values that will shape their character in the future. Therefore, the role of teachers and the educational environment are vital in guiding students to achieve these goals (Rahmawati, 2021).

The National Education System in Indonesia continues to develop and change over times. The change in question is towards a better education system. Current conditions and anticipation of the future demand adjustments and changes to the curriculum. The current independent curriculum changes prove that the Indonesian government continues to develop a quality education system. The Minister of Education, Nadiem Makarim, revealed that education and character-building are prioritized in independent learning (Putri, et al., 2024).

Although the education system has made an important contribution to nation-building, in reality, students' character development has not been considered effective. (Mahendra, et al., 2019). The rise of cases such as bullying, sexual harassment, intolerance, disrespectful attitudes, drugs, and brawls by high school, junior high school, and even elementary school students. This is a crucial problem currently faced by students in Indonesia that requires an immediate solution because the existence of a nation is determined by the character of that nation (Faiz A., et al., 2021).

Therefore, it is necessary to reinforce Character Education Development (Character Building) in Schools, especially in Elementary Schools, which is the foundation level of character building. This aims to prepare students to face the progress of an increasingly sophisticated and modern nation, so that they not only master science and technology, but also have a strong character that reflects high Indonesian cultural values (Mahendra, et al., 2019).

However, there are other obstacles in the character education implementation system at various levels, namely: (1) character values in schools have not been translated into representative indicators; (2) schools have not chosen character values following the vision due to a lack of understanding; (3) teachers' understanding of character strengthening is still lacking, making it challenging to implement; (4) many teachers are not competent enough to integrate character values in lessons; (5) some teachers have not become good role models of character values; (6) character education strengthening policies also often change with the change of heads of state, ministers, or principals (Sakban & Sundawa, 2023). Therefore, the character education implementation system must be immediately addressed, and a solution must be found.

Currently, character education is the main focus of education experts, educational institutions, practitioners, and academics. Currently, many parents and teachers only know that children should have good character. However, how does the character develop? It happens through small actions that are repeated in daily life, which eventually become habits and form a person's character. The character must be applicable to be easily understood by students so that changes and benefits can be felt by students and their environment (Silalahi, 2017).

As an educational institution, SD Bukit Aksara Semarang City recognizes its responsibility to educate character to improve the quality of human resources. The school implements character education through its Character First Education program, to develop students into highly motivated individuals who are creative, able to express their potential, sensitive to the environment, disciplined, and have a foundation of faith and piety in God. In accordance with SD Bukit Aksara's vision of educating a creative and characterful generation, the school has implemented character education. The school has implemented character education (character building) to prepare students academically and socially, based on universal knowledge and religious moral values as guidelines for life (based on interview data).

As for the history of Character First Education, Character First began in 1992 as a leadership development program at manufacturing company Kimray Inc. in Oklahoma City. Each month, Kimray employees learn various character traits and how they relate to company values such as honesty, quality, safety, and service. The program was so successful in improving work culture that in 1996, local schools and police requested that Character First be adapted for public education, which became Character First Education. In 2012, Character First was acquired by Strata Leadership LLC which offers character-based leadership training programmes for businesses. Professional educators updated Character First Education materials according to Common Core standards and evolved into the highest quality world curriculum available today (CharacterFirstEducation.com, 2024).

The Character First Education book is the reference book used in this character curriculum. The main publisher of Character First Education materials and books is Strata Leadership LLC, with the latest edition published in 2021. The Character First Education book is a useful resource to help children develop their character. The character material is explained clearly and can be applied in everyday life. The book provides definitions and examples of character and teaches small actions that help build habits, which ultimately form character, known as "I WILL". In addition, the book highlights that every character is manifested in nature

(Character in Nature), and we can learn from nature. There is also a discussion on character in history, where we can learn from historical figures who exhibit this character (characterlibraries.com, 2024).

This research will discuss implementing Attentiveness and Sensitivity characters, part of the character types in Character First Education. Attentiveness refers to the ability to focus and give full attention to the person, situation, or task. Meanwhile, sensitivity is the ability to feel and understand others' feelings, needs, and conditions. In the context of Character First Education, these two characters are significant as they form the basis of healthy and productive social interactions. Implementing mindfulness and sensitivity in Character First Education is crucial for students' personal and social development. Through mindfulness and sensitivity, students learn to become better individuals and contribute to a more positive social environment. Thus, this character education shapes individuals and a better society (characterlibraries.com, 2024).

The implementation of character building has become a semester program integrated into the school curriculum. The program for the implementation of mindfulness and sensitivity at SD Bukit Aksara is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1
Character Implementation Program in the Curriculum

Month	First Semester	Month	Second Semester
	Indicators Attentiveness		**Indicators Sensitivity**
AGT	Staring at the person who is speaking	**JAN**	Listens attentively to others
SEPT	Ask questions if you don't understand	**FEB**	Paying attention to people's facial expressions
OKT	Sit or stand up straight	**MAR**	Pay attention to tone of voice
NOV	Not trying to get attention for yourself	**APR**	Empathize with others' circumstances
DES	Not looking away from eyes, ears, hands, feet, and mouth when paying attention to someone	**MAY**	Showing that I really care

Source: Data from the fourth grade teacher at SD Bukit Aksara

This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of character building at SD Bukit Aksara in Semarang City. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on implementing Character First Education in a local context where there is still minimal research on character education in Indonesia and its comprehensive and analytical approach.

Research Method

This research uses qualitative methods with a naturalistic inquiry approach. Naturalistic inquiry emphasizes the importance of understanding phenomena in their original context, without intervention or manipulation, so that the research results reflect the reality the research object faces (Cutler, et al., 2021). Researchers adjust to the conditions and environment in this context, naturally revealing facts about implementing character-building in schools through a constructive and interpretative approach (Li Y., et al., 2021). The data sources for the study were teachers and students in grades 4 A and 4 B of SD Bukit Aksara, Semarang City, with 30 students. The research was conducted over two months to allow the researcher to observe the students' character.

Data collection techniques were conducted through participatory observation, open-ended interviews, documentation, and review of relevant literature. Participatory observation is

carried out by researchers who are directly and actively involved in the activities carried out by the object of research. Open-ended interviews were conducted following specific guidelines, interview questions related to aspects of student habits at home and school, student behavior records, student-student relationships, student-teacher relationships, school programs, and problem-solving steps when facing certain problems. Additional data was obtained from documentation and relevant theoretical studies.

The data validity technique uses validity and data credibility tests. A valid instrument has high validity. It is valid if the instrument can accurately describe the data from the variables studied and measure the desired results (Sugiyono, 2021: 172). The validity of the data in this study was verified through confirmation of the results of observations and interviews with informants, as well as checking related documents. Data credibility is strengthened by extending the duration of observation, triangulating data, member checking, and using additional references. The limitation of this research is that there is not much research on character-first education because only a few specific schools use the character-based curriculum from Character First, so there are still few sources of previous research.

Result and Discussion
Overview of SD Bukit Aksara

SD Bukit Aksara is an A-accredited private primary school located at Jl. Prof Sudarto, No.40, Banyumanik, Semarang City. This private primary school was established in 2003. SD Bukit Aksara currently implements the "kurikulum merdeka", but with modifications to suit the learning principles of the foundation's curriculum. SD Bukit Aksara Semarang is one of the primary schools known for its holistic approach to education, particularly in implementing its character-building programme. This program aims to shape individuals with integrity, responsibility, and strong moral values, which aligns with the school's vision to produce a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has a good personality.

The school implements character education through a "Character Building" program integrated into the daily curriculum. Each subject focuses on academic knowledge and involves learning values such as sensitivity, honesty, discipline, responsibility, caring, and cooperation. The aim is to mold students into motivated, creative, able to express their potential, sensitive to the environment, disciplined, and have a foundation of faith and piety in God. This aligns with SD Bukit Aksara's vision, which is "Educating a Creative and Characterful Generation". The school's mission includes developing students' potential through a balanced approach between academic and character education. The school implements character education to prepare students academically and socially based on universal knowledge and religious and moral values as a guide to life.

Character Building Program in the Curriculum at SD Bukit Aksara

Based on interviews with school officials, the implementation of character building is put into practice through various activities and programs at school, including the teaching of character values that are integrated into the curriculum, aiming to teach students how to apply these values in their daily lives. Then, there is the Leadership Program, where students can develop leadership skills through programs such as class organization, mentoring, and collaborative projects in the classroom. Meaningful learning experiences where activities and projects are designed to teach students about character values directly through real-life experiences. Students learn through modeling, and teachers and school staff act as good role models, demonstrating character values in their daily actions. In addition, cooperation with

parents is also essential to strengthen character learning at home and school, creating a consistent environment that supports students' character development. With this approach, students are expected to become responsible, empathetic individuals ready to face future challenges.

SD Bukit Aksara adopts character-building materials from "Character First", which are implemented on an ongoing basis for grades 1-6. The characters built in each grade are:

Table 2
Character Building in Every Class

Class	Character Building
Class 1	Order and Patience
Class 2	Honesty and Responsibility
Class 3	Forgiveness and Humility
Class 4	Attentiveness and Sensitivity
Grade 5	Caring and Tolerance
Grade 6	Self-Control and Wisdom

Based on Table 2, character development in each class, class 1 instills the character of "order and patience"; students are taught to respect simple rules and show patience during play and in-class activities. The main focus is the habit of queuing, listening to friends, and waiting for their turn. In Grade 2, the character of "honesty and responsibility" is instilled, and students are introduced to the importance of honesty in deeds and speech. They begin to be given small tasks to understand the importance of being responsible, such as returning items to their place or maintaining cleanliness. In Grade 3, the character of "forgiveness and humility" is instilled, and students are trained to understand the meaning of forgiving and admitting mistakes. This humble character building is applied by teaching them how to share selflessly and appreciate the strengths of others. In Grade 4, the character of "attentiveness and sensitivity" is instilled, students are encouraged to be more sensitive to classmates' feelings and pay more attention to the needs of others, both in the school and home environment. Empathy training is provided through group activities. Grade 5 instills the character of "caring and tolerance"; students learn to care about their surroundings and develop a tolerant attitude towards differences. They are invited to discuss societal diversity and respecting all individuals. In Grade 6, it instills the character of "self-control and wisdom", towards adolescence, students are expected to be able to control their emotions and choose wise actions. They are invited to understand the consequences of each action and practice making good decisions in certain situations. Each class has a character focus that matches the children's emotional and cognitive development, helping them grow into well-balanced and well-behaved individuals.

Of the many character traits implemented at SD Bukit Aksara, this study focuses only on the specific implementation of attentiveness and sensitivity in Grade 4. Attentiveness and sensitivity are essential in building a school culture that supports effective learning and positive social behavior.

Implementation of Attentiveness Character

Attentiveness is the ability to focus on a person or task at hand. It helps in the learning process and reflects how much you appreciate the person or project at hand.

However, mindfulness is not always easy to achieve, especially in today's media-fuelled world and fast-paced information flow. Sometimes, it takes effort to switch off your mobile phone television or avoid other distractions to give someone the respect and attention they deserve.

Based on observations and interviews with the grade 4 teacher at SD Bukit Aksara, the character of attentiveness is applied by following the character indicators contained in the Character First Education series book Attentiveness with "I WILL" (action taken):

Indicator 1   : Looking at the person who is speaking
Indicator 2   : Ask if you don't understand
Indicator 3   : Sitting or standing upright
Indicator 4   : Not seeking attention for oneself
Indicator 5   : Does not look away from eyes, ears, hands, feet, and mouth when being
                 paying attention to someone.

Teachers often emphasize this indicator during the project learning process at school, and the school also works with parents to foster children's character at home.

Character observations were carried out for two months by observing student interactions during the learning process, using an observation sheet in the form of a checklist of student behavior that was already visible (T) or not yet visible (BT) based on observations of the five indicators. The results of observations of grade 4 students totaling 30 students, namely:

Table 3
Diagram of *Attentiveness* Character Observation Results
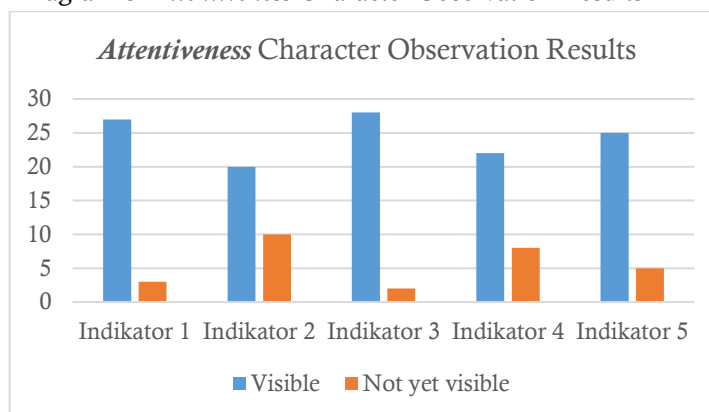
In Table 3, Indicator 1, it is recorded that 27 students have implemented the behavior of looking at the person talking, while 3 students have not. The difficulty of some students in maintaining focus while talking to friends can be attributed to the presence of distractions that divert their attention from the main topic. Based on the Cognitive Load theory by Sweller et al. (2019), students can experience cognitive overload when there are too many distractions or when they try to process too complex information simultaneously. This results in a decrease in their ability to give full attention to the speaker. Therefore, a structured learning environment with minimal distractions is essential to help students focus and process information effectively.

Indicator 2 evaluates students' skills in asking questions if they do not understand, either to the teacher when they do not understand the material or to fellow friends during discussions. A total of 10 out of 30 students have not been seen actively asking questions, while the other 20 students have been active in the learning process. According to the teacher, some students who are passive in class may feel shy or have closed personalities, while others may already understand the material being taught. Bandura's (2018) Self-Efficacy theory is relevant here, as it suggests that students' beliefs in their ability to understand the material and participate in class can affect how actively they ask questions. Students with low self-efficacy may be reluctant to ask questions because they doubt their own abilities, while students with high self-efficacy tend to be more courageous to ask questions and seek clarification. Self-efficacy supports the development of character traits such as perseverance, courage, and confidence.

Indicator 3 evaluates whether students show an upright posture when sitting or standing. Almost all 28 out of 30 students have demonstrated this behavior, while 2 students have not been seen to do so. The Embodied Cognition theory studied by Shapiro and Spaulding (2021) states that posture can influence cognitive and emotional processes. An upright posture is often associated with increased confidence and greater attentiveness, which can increase student engagement in the learning process. Therefore, encouraging students to maintain good posture can positively impact their focus and participation in class.

Indicator 4 shows that 8 students still often seek attention from the teacher and the surrounding environment by engaging in activities that distract them from learning, such as playing with friends. In contrast, 22 students have been seen focusing their attention on the teacher. The Attention Economy theory outlined by Knudsen et al. (2020) highlights how students' attention is often a limited resource, especially in an environment full of distractions. Students who seek attention may have difficulty organizing their focus, which can hinder their learning process. Implementing effective classroom management strategies can help reduce this behavior and improve student focus.

Indicator 5 evaluates whether students can maintain full attention, including not turning their eyes, ears, hands, feet, or mouth when paying attention to someone. A total of 25 students have shown this behavior, while 5 students have not been seen behaving as expected. According to the Behavioural Engagement Theory proposed by Skinner et al. (2019), behavioral engagement, such as visual and auditory focus, are essential indicators of broader student engagement in learning. Students who can maintain full attention are more likely to engage in the learning process deeply and show a better understanding of the material taught.

The data from Table 3 provides essential insights into student engagement and attention variations during the learning process. Factors such as cognitive load, self-efficacy, and environmental influences are important in affecting students' behavior in the classroom. An educational approach that considers these theories can help design more effective strategies to increase students' engagement and attention, thus supporting their overall academic success.

The overall application of the character of attention is depicted in the following pie chart:
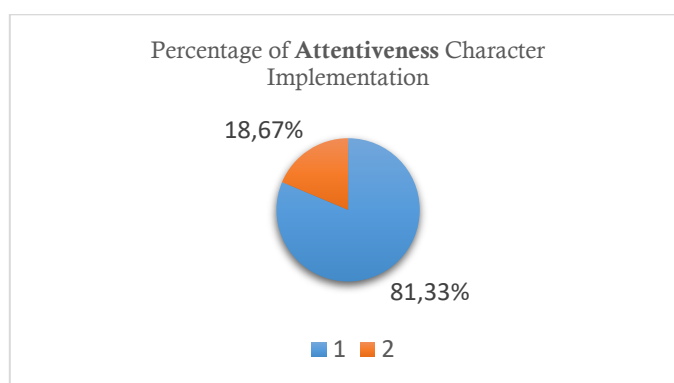

Figure 1
Percentage of Attentiveness Character Implementation at School

Based on the observation data in Figure 1, the overall percentage of the implementation of the character of attentiveness in 4th grade with 30 students, 81.33% of students have implemented the character of attentiveness at school. However, 18.67% of students still have not optimally implemented the character of attentiveness. This is likely to be influenced by external factors outside the school environment, which the author did not examine to that extent.

Implementation of Sensitivity Character

Sensitivity can be defined as an individual's ability to understand and respond empathetically to the feelings, needs, and perspectives of others. It encompasses heightened emotional awareness, the ability to sense what others might feel in various situations, and empathy-driven actions.

Sensitivity is an integral part of students' moral and social development. In the context of character education, sensitivity serves as the ability to feel and understand the feelings of others and as a foundation for building empathy and tolerance. Students can interact effectively and ethically with others with high sensitivity, which is crucial in creating an inclusive and harmonious learning environment. This sensitivity encourages students to realize the impact of their actions and words on others so that they can contribute to the establishment of healthy and positive relationships within their social environment.

Researchers found that sensitivity supports the development of essential social skills, such as good communication, the ability to cooperate in groups, and constructive conflict resolution. When students are taught to appreciate differences and understand others' perspectives, they become better individuals and more responsible members of society. Sensitivity development in character education is therefore crucial, as it equips students with the social skills necessary to interact positively in various aspects of their lives, both inside and outside the school environment.

Through observations and interviews with the grade 4 teacher at SD Bukit Aksara, it was found that mindfulness is applied to students by referring to the character indicators in the 'Sensitivity' edition of Character First Education. This application involves a series of concrete actions known as "I WILL," which describe specific behaviors expected of students, including the following:

Indicator 1   : Listen attentively to others
Indicator 2   : Paying attention to people's facial expressions
Indicator 3   : Pay attention to tone of voice
Indicator 4   : Empathize with others' circumstances
Indicator 5   : Showing that I really care

These character sensitivity indicators are designed to encourage students to be more aware and responsive to the social and emotional environment around them and develop students' ability to empathize and interact positively with peers and teachers.

Observations of student character were conducted over two months by paying attention to student interactions during the learning process. This observation used a checklist sheet to record whether the student's behavior was in accordance with the five indicators set, i.e., whether the behavior was already visible (T) or not yet visible (BT). The results of observations of 30 Grade 4 students provide an overview of the extent to which each student has applied the character of sensitivity, which is as follows:

Table 4
Diagram of Sensitivity Character Observation Results
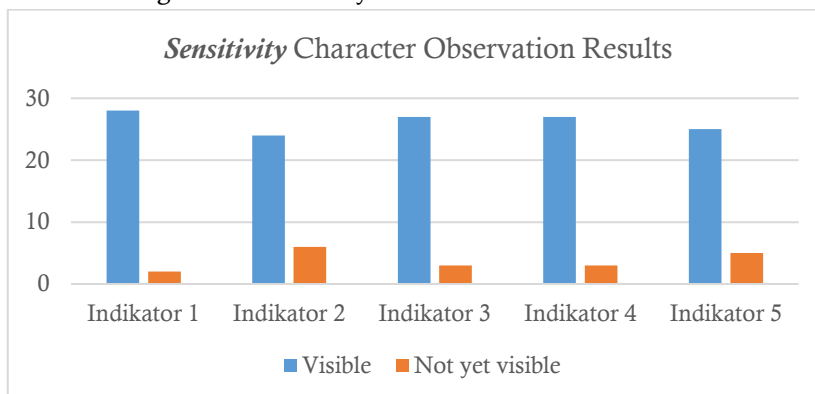
In Table 4, Indicator 1, it was recorded that 28 students have been seen implementing attentive listening behavior, as evidenced by good interaction relationships between friends and conducive learning because almost all students follow the instructions given by the teacher, for example when students are invited to visit the nature reserve and the teacher gives instructions in the form of do's and don'ts. In contrast, in the nature reserve, students listen attentively to the teacher and tour guide. According to character education theory, this ability is essential for creating a conducive learning environment and the basis for healthy interpersonal relationships. Recent studies have shown that attentive listening improves learning outcomes and builds trust between students and teachers (Jones et al., 2021). However, the other 2 students were still unfocused and preoccupied, suggesting that attentiveness is not fully developed, which may require a more interactive learning approach or specialized support.

Indicator 2 on paying attention to people's facial expressions, recorded as many as 24 out of 30 students who have been seen as sensitive in paying attention to the facial expressions of opponents who speak, able to represent the meaning of a person's facial expressions so that he knows what the interlocutor feels.

Figure 2
Circle Time for Listening to Each Other's Opinions in 4th grade at SD Bukit Aksara

In Figure 2, it can be seen during circle time between students discussing the learning that has taken place during the day, the teacher asks what material has been learned, and students argue in turn, and listen to each other. This sensitivity is important because it allows students to understand the emotions of others, which is a critical element in developing empathy. The social-emotional development theory by Eisenberg et al. (2020) asserts that the ability to understand facial expressions is closely related to the development of compassion and social competence. Students who have not achieved this may need to be engaged in activities that strengthen social and emotional skills.

Indicator 3 pays attention to the tone of voice, 27 out of 30 students apply this behavior. They are sensitive to the tone of voice that speaks to them, for example when the teacher is reprimanding a rowdy student with a high tone of voice, when his friend tells a sad story with a low and stammering tone accompanied by a sad facial expression which will foster a sense of empathy related to the observation of the next indicator. This shows their sensitivity to the emotional context of communication. Sensitivity to tone of voice is part of practical communication skills that can strengthen interpersonal relationships and help in conflict situations (Scherer, 2021). However, 3 students are still not sensitive to tone of voice, they need to be guided to pay more attention to non-verbal aspects of communication.

Indicator 4, namely empathizing with other people's circumstances, is still closely related to the previous indicator. As many as 27 students have been seen to have a high sense of empathy. Empathy is at the core of successful character education, because it encourages prosocial behavior and positive social relationships (Batson, 2022). However, there are still 3 students who have not been seen to show empathetic behavior because it could be due to a lack of experience or emotional development that has not been optimal.

Indicator 5 shows a genuinely caring attitude, based on observations, 25 out of 30 students have shown a caring attitude accompanied by concrete actions. This reflects their understanding of the importance of social responsibility. Caring for others and acting based on caring are manifestations of character values taught through character education programs (Lickona, 2018). For example, caring for a friend who needs help so he is immediately willing to help his friend, caring for his class teacher, for example, when his class teacher yesterday did not go to school because of illness, students asked about the teacher's condition and prayed for a speedy return to health, and students who have mastered the topic of the subject matter are willing to help students who are still having difficulty understanding the subject matter, showing the application of the value of collaboration and solidarity in the school environment.

From these observations, students who have applied the character of sensitivity as a whole are depicted in the following pie chart:
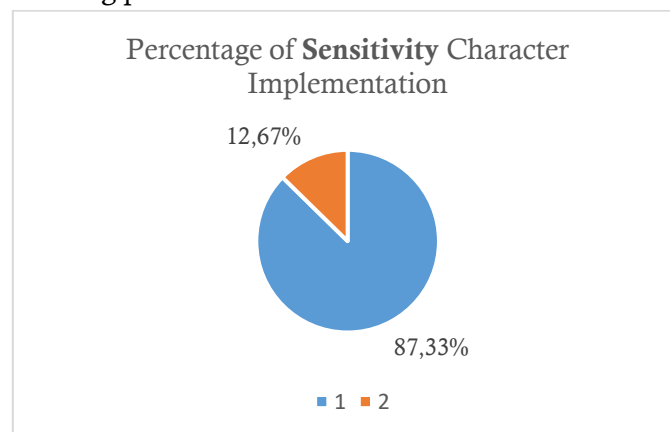

Figure 3
Percentage of Character Application of Sensitivity at School

Based on the observation data in Figure 3, the overall percentage of the implementation of the character of sensitivity in the 4th grade of SD Bukit Aksara Semarang City with 30 students, shows that 87.33% of students have successfully implemented the character of sensitivity significantly. However, 12.67% of students have not optimally implemented this character trait. This could be due to external factors involving family conditions, social environment, or media beyond the school's control.

Sensitivity is the ability to understand and respond empathetically to the feelings, emotions, and needs of others. In this context, emotional intelligence theory becomes relevant, where sensitivity is considered an essential component supporting healthy social interactions. According to Mayer et al. (2021), students with high sensitivity levels tend to be more successful in building positive interpersonal relationships, exhibiting prosocial behavior, and achieving better academic performance.

A recent study by Jones & Kahn (2021) suggests that factors such as school climate, support from teachers, and family influences strongly influence students' sensitivity development. A positive school climate and emotional support from teachers can create a supportive environment for sensitizing character development. In addition, research by Smith (2022) revealed that sensitivity is also affected by media influences and social interactions outside the school environment, which can strengthen or weaken the development of this character.

The results showed that students in a supportive environment at home and school have a higher tendency to develop good sensitivity. Therefore, it is important to pay special attention to students who are not optimal in developing this character of sensitivity. Interventions that focus on increasing emotional and social support inside and outside the school environment can help students develop better sensitivity. Thus, the development of sensitivity will not only improve students' social interactions but also contribute to their academic achievement and overall well-being.

Conclusion

Character building at SD Bukit Aksara Semarang City has been implemented through a curriculum program that refers to character-first education at each grade level and is structured in a semester program. In grade 4, the character values emphasized are attentiveness and sensitivity, with indicators listed. Attentiveness and sensitivity are essential aspects of character education that focus on developing students' personalities. The impact is that students can understand and feel what others are experiencing, improve social skills, encourage responsibility, and help create a positive learning environment. In addition, this character trait prepares students to be good members of society and contribute positively to the community. Effective implementation of these characteristics in the curriculum will have a long-term impact on students' personality development, making them better individuals who care about their surroundings. The implementation of this character-building is often inserted during the learning process in the classroom, especially project-based learning, which is the school's semester program. Overall, implementing attentiveness and sensitivity character building at SD Bukit Aksara has shown significant success, but it requires more attention from students who have not yet fully developed attentiveness and sensitivity. A more holistic and integrated approach involving the school family and social environment is needed to ensure more thorough and sustainable character development.

Thus, this study suggests the need to integrate Character Education into the curriculum, maximize local culture, and improve classroom management to strengthen character-building in the classroom. Building a strong school culture by familiarising character values in daily school life, providing role models, creating a supportive school environment, and establishing school rules and traditions are some methods of implementing Character Education. Given the influence of external factors not explained in this study, further research is needed to understand how the environment outside the school affects the development of students' caring and sensitive character and how appropriate solutions can be applied to overcome these obstacles.

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