



Analysis of factors influencing the development of honesty in elementary school students

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ABSTRACT

Honesty is a fundamental value that must be nurtured as the basis for forming individuals with integrity. However, dishonest behavior remains prevalent among elementary school students, signaling the importance of understanding the factors that shape honest character. This study aims to explore the internal and external factors that influence the development of honesty in fourth-grade students at SDN 12 Sungai Rawa. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, the research involved one homeroom teacher, two students, and two parents as participants. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that honesty is shaped by internal factors such as habits, willpower, and heredity, and external factors, including education and the environment. Early habit formation, intrinsic motivation, and inherited traits all contribute to the development of honesty. Moreover, the educational roles of teachers and parents, as well as influences from the family and peer environment, can strengthen or weaken character formation. In conclusion, fostering honesty in children requires a collaborative interaction between internal dispositions and external influences.

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ABSTRAK

Nilai kejujuran sangat penting untuk ditanamkan sebagai fondasi dalam pembentukan pribadi yang berintegritas. Namun, masih terdapat perilaku tidak jujur di kalangan peserta didik sekolah dasar. Hal ini menunjukkan perlunya pemahaman yang lebih mendalam mengenai faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi pembentukan karakter kejujuran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan faktor internal dan eksternal yang memengaruhi pembentukan karakter kejujuran peserta didik kelas IV di SDN 12 Sungai Rawa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari guru wali kelas, dua peserta didik, dan dua orang tua peserta didik. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara, observasi, dan telaah dokumentasi, dengan analisis data menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman melalui tiga tahapan: reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa karakter kejujuran dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal seperti kebiasaan, kehendak, dan keturunan, serta faktor eksternal seperti pendidikan dan lingkungan. Kebiasaan berkata jujur yang ditanamkan sejak dini, motivasi dari dalam diri, serta kecenderungan bawaan menjadi dasar dalam membentuk karakter jujur. Selain itu, pendidikan dari guru dan orang tua, serta pengaruh lingkungan sosial seperti keluarga dan teman sebaya, dapat memperkuat atau bahkan menghambat perkembangan kejujuran. Kesimpulannya, pembentukan karakter kejujuran memerlukan sinergi antara faktor internal dan eksternal.

Kata Kunci: kejujuran; pembentukan karakter; sekolah dasar

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INTRODUCTION

Character education plays an important role in shaping students at the elementary school level. It is part of the effort to create education that is not only academically intelligent but also morally sound. Education is a conscious process aimed at cultivating good character, so that students grow into individuals who are beneficial to religion, nation, and state (Arifin *et al.*, 2024). Especially in early childhood, instilling character values becomes an important foundation in shaping individuals with noble character who can act humanely in daily life (Rohmah *et al.*, 2023). Early childhood is a very important stage in a child's development because it is during this period that the foundations of personality begin to form. Children at this age are in the golden age phase, during which they are highly sensitive and readily absorb values from their surroundings, whether through observation, imitation, or direct experience.

Instilling character values from an early age provides a foundational basis for shaping individuals with noble morals, a sense of responsibility, and the capacity to act humanely in daily life. In elementary school, various character values can be instilled in students, including religiousness, honesty, caring, love of cleanliness and the environment, nationalism, tolerance, discipline, independence, creativity, and friendliness and communication. Character development can be carried out through various approaches, for example, by training students to think consistently, habituating them to practice mutual agreements, teaching the importance of time discipline, and instilling values of tolerance and respect for others. In addition, students are encouraged to develop politeness, adherence to rules, and concern for the environment and others (Latifah *et al.*, 2023).

Character education is the process of developing and strengthening an individual's morals and personality. At the elementary school level, this education becomes an important foundation in shaping a high-quality future generation. Through daily interactions with teachers and peers, students learn to recognize and apply values such as honesty, discipline, and empathy. However, the role of the school alone is not enough. Parents and the community also have a significant responsibility in instilling and strengthening these character values outside of the school environment (Aini *et al.*, 2024). One method for implementing character education in elementary schools is a qualitative approach. This approach aims to understand the actual conditions in students' environments and to interpret their behavior in depth, with a focus on gathering relevant facts. Schools, as the primary place for instilling character values, have a significant responsibility to create a supportive environment. This includes facilitating the development of dignified attitudes and behaviors among students, educational staff, and teachers in daily life (Astuti *et al.*, 2024).

Ideally, elementary school students should demonstrate honest behavior in both their actions and their words, whether or not they are supervised. However, character development for children in today's educational system requires special attention (Nurhasanah *et al.*, 2024). The statement above aligns with findings from the initial interview with the fourth-grade homeroom teacher at SDN 12 Sungai Rawa, which revealed that dishonest behaviors persist among students. The teacher reported that some students engaged in dishonest behavior, such as taking classmates' belongings during break time. When asked to explain by the class teacher, the students in question were reluctant to admit their actions. Such incidents have occurred repeatedly. This situation indicates a serious problem in fostering honesty among students. The issue is not only about taking someone else's belongings but also reflects students' low awareness of acknowledging mistakes and taking responsibility for their actions. Many problems that have recently arisen in our country actually stem from a character crisis. Therefore, the cultivation of moral values and noble character should be a primary focus of the goals of National Education.

This condition indicates a gap between expectations (the ideal situation) and the reality occurring in elementary school environments. If left unaddressed, this habit can adversely affect students' moral and behavioral development and create an unhealthy social environment in the school. This suggests that the

cultivation of values of honesty has not been functioning optimally. It is possible that these values have not been strongly instilled, whether through school education, parenting at home, or the influence of the surrounding environment. Therefore, it is very important for schools and parents to jointly explore in depth the factors that influence the formation of honest character in students. Cases of honesty have become a very complex issue (Kartini & Mimbar, 2020). That is why solutions to educate honest individuals require strategies from all directions. In essence, schools are one avenue for changing behavior through an academic framework.

This is reinforced by prior research, which indicates that the factors most influential in shaping students' character include family, teachers, the surrounding environment, and the learning media used (Utami *et al.*, 2020). However, what matters most is the love and support provided by the family. Unfortunately, honest behavior is becoming increasingly rare. Many people engage in disgraceful acts, ranging from theft and business fraud to corruption. Therefore, moral and honest education is essential for shaping a child's personality from an early age. The main goal of character education is for students to understand and apply positive values in their daily lives. Within the broad framework of character education, various values have been established as goals, including honesty. This honesty encompasses speaking the truth, being open, being consistent between words and actions, being courageous for the right reasons, being trustworthy, and refraining from deceitful behavior (Hadriany *et al.*, 2021).

Character education that instills the value of honesty should be introduced from an early age (Marlina *et al.*, 2024). Children need to learn that being honest is not just about speaking the truth, but also about shaping a personality that can be trusted. The earlier they understand the importance of honesty, the stronger the foundation of integrity they will have as adults. Education is one of the pathways to shape a character with integrity, grounded in values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and independence (Zulaiha *et al.*, 2025). The main goal of character education is to cultivate individuals who are steadfast, principled, and trustworthy. In this way, young people grow up to become individuals who are not only intelligent but also ethical. In instilling the value of honesty in students, the teacher's role is crucial (Munif *et al.*, 2021). Teachers do not merely deliver the material; they also need to identify effective ways so that the values taught can be truly understood and practiced by children. Success in shaping honest attitudes at school greatly depends on how teachers carry out their duties. Ultimately, teachers are on the front line of achieving the goals of education.

Based on prior research, it is evident that the value of honesty must be instilled from an early age as a foundation for developing integrity and a trustworthy character. The earlier a child understands the importance of honesty, the stronger the moral foundation that is built. The role of teachers is crucial, not only as educators but also as role models and guides. The success of character education in schools depends on teachers' ability to integrate these values into instruction and daily life. Exemplary behavior and the right approach are key to shaping a generation that is not only intelligent but also strong in character. Teachers are not only educators but also role models for students (Judrah *et al.*, 2024). The success of character education heavily relies on the teacher's role in the learning process. Therefore, a teacher can serve as a mirror that significantly influences the formation of students' character.

Although numerous studies have examined character education and honesty, there remains a gap in understanding the factors that influence the development of honest behavior, particularly at the elementary school level. Most prior research has focused on the programs or methods employed, but few have examined in depth the influence of internal and external factors on the development of honest character in students. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by analyzing the factors that contribute to honesty among elementary school children. Based on this background, the study seeks to describe the internal and external factors that influence the development of the character trait of honesty among fourth-grade students at *SDN 12 Sungai Rawa*. This research is expected to provide a more comprehensive

understanding of the dynamics of the development of a character of honesty in elementary school-aged children.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Character Education

Character education has become an important focus in the education system because it not only imparts knowledge but also shapes students' overall personalities. Character education can be understood as the teaching of values, manners, morality, and traits. The goal of character education is to guide students in making good choices, maintaining positive behaviors, and acting with integrity in daily life (Harahap *et al.*, 2025). The role of teachers is significant in this process; they not only teach but must also find ways to instill values such as honesty in students.

Unfortunately, although various character education programs have been designed, there is still a gap in understanding the factors that influence the development of honesty, particularly at the elementary school level. Therefore, more comprehensive efforts are needed to analyze these factors so that character education, especially the value of honesty, can be applied effectively and have a real impact on children's moral development (Ningsih, 2022). In elementary schools, character education is implemented through various activities to make it more comprehensive and integrated into students' daily lives. This effort is not limited to classroom lessons but also extends to out-of-class activities, such as extracurricular programs, group collaboration, and social interactions within the school environment. Its success depends on how these values are habituated in both settings, both during learning and during free activities (Putri *et al.*, 2024).

Character education has three main complementary roles. First, it serves to shape and develop children's potential so that they can think clearly, have a good heart, and exhibit behavior consistent with the values of Pancasila. Second, it plays a role in strengthening support from families, schools, communities, and the government to nurture the potential of every citizen, thereby building an independent, advanced, and prosperous nation. Third, character education also serves as a filter to determine which cultural values align with the nation's character and to reject foreign cultural influences that are inconsistent with the identity of the Indonesian nation (Norlita *et al.*, 2023).

The values in character education are shaped by four main sources. The first is religion. Because Indonesian society is religious, many of the character values taught are rooted in religious traditions. Second is Pancasila. As the foundation of the state, Pancasila serves as a guideline in various aspects of political, legal, economic, social, cultural, and artistic life. The goal of character education is also consistent with the spirit of Pancasila, which aims to cultivate citizens capable and willing to practice it in practice. Third is culture. Local cultural values are an important foundation in shaping identity and a sense of togetherness. Therefore, culture must be considered a primary source in building the nation's character and courage. Lastly, character education also aligns with the objectives of national education, which aim to shape individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, virtuous, and contribute positively to society (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022).

In character education, 18 core values are instilled in students to prepare them for their future lives. These values include: religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, and independent. In addition, democratic attitudes, a strong curiosity, national spirit, and patriotism are also taught. Children are also encouraged to appreciate their achievements, build positive relationships with others through friendliness and communication, and value peace. Equally important, they are habituated to enjoy reading, care for the environment, be sensitive to social conditions around them, and have a sense of responsibility in every action (Restuningtyas & Utomo, 2024).

The Value of Honesty

Someone who conveys something that is not in accordance with reality is usually considered dishonest. They can be called hypocritical, lying, deceitful, or unfaithful. An honest character is about openly expressing what actually exists, without a discrepancy between what is said and what is done; it is courageous because it is right, trustworthy, and does not cheat (Kasmantoro *et al.*, 2022). In essence, the inconsistency between words and reality causes trust in that person to collapse, which reflects the loss of honesty that should be maintained (Saputri *et al.*, 2023). Honesty is about being true to oneself, without pretense or intent to deceive, even when no one is looking. It means continuing to do what is right, not because of supervision, but because of the awareness that truthfulness is something that should indeed be upheld (Cahyani & Hidayat, 2023).

The value of honesty is considered so precious because not everyone can practice it consistently. Honesty helps learners to act with integrity, build trust, and appreciate the value of truth in daily interactions. Many individuals choose to lie for personal gain, power, or other pragmatic reasons. In fact, lying contradicts one's conscience and damages personal integrity. Meanwhile, honesty is essentially an expression of a pure conscience, an inner voice that cannot lie and always leads to the truth (Madani, 2021).

Through education in honesty, children are taught that being honest is not just about telling the truth, but also about building a reputation as a trustworthy individual. Honesty has long-term positive effects on their lives, including in social relationships, academic achievement, and personal integrity (Sahroh & Rizkiyah, 2021). Conversely, dishonest behavior can lead to negative consequences, both moral and professional. Children who are accustomed to speaking and acting honestly tend to demonstrate better performance qualities because they are not burdened by guilt or uncertainty. Meanwhile, children who frequently hide the truth or manipulate situations are at risk of declining quality in their actions. Thus, honesty is not merely a moral value but also a component of a strategy for building a healthier and more meaningful future (Fauziyah, 2023).

METHODS

This study is a qualitative study. It employs a case study as its primary method. This approach can be applied to individuals, groups, institutions, or organizations to gain a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the situation or phenomenon under study. Through case studies, researchers can examine various aspects in detail, including the background, dynamics, and impact of events within a specific, real-world context (Ilhami *et al.*, 2024). The research subjects included homeroom teachers, 2 students, and 2 parents of fourth-grade students at SDN 12 Sungai Rawa. The data collection techniques and instruments used in this study consisted of interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and document review sheets. The following are the grids for interview instruments (see **Table 1**), observation (see **Table 2**), and documentation (see **Table 3**).

Table 1. Interview Outline

Aspect	Indicator	Subindicator
Internal Factors	Custom or habit	Rules from teachers and parents Daily habits
	Will/desire	Student's desire Students' aspirations
	Descendant	Heredity factor Economic factor
External Factors	Education	General education Religious education
	Environment	Inside the school Outside the school

Source: Researcher Modification (2025)

Table 2. Observation Grid

Aspect	Indicator	Subindicator
External Factors	Education	General education Religious education
	Environment	Inside the school Outside the school

Source: Researcher Modification (2025)

Table 3. Documentation Grid

Aspect	Indicator	Document Name
External Factors	Education	<i>Buku catatan guru</i>

Source: Researcher Modification (2025)

To test the validity of the data, the researcher employed source, time, and technique triangulation. Data validity should be assessed to ensure that the existing data are reliable. To test the validity of the data, the researcher employed triangulation techniques, including source, time, and technique triangulation. Source triangulation is conducted by comparing data from multiple informants, such as teachers, students, and parents. Time triangulation is done by collecting data at different times to observe the consistency of the information. Meanwhile, technique triangulation involves using various data collection methods, namely interviews, observations, and documentation, to ensure the validity of the findings. The data analysis technique used in this study is the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three main stages:

1. Data reduction, which is the process of filtering, summarizing, and selecting relevant data according to the focus of the research. The collected data is then simplified to improve focus and facilitate subsequent analysis.
2. Data presentation, where the reduced data is organized and presented in the form of narratives, tables, matrices, or other visual displays so that the information obtained is easier to understand and analyze.

3. Drawing conclusions, which is the process of formulating the meaning or findings from data that has been thoroughly analyzed. At this stage, verification or rechecking of the data is also conducted to ensure the consistency, validity, and accuracy of the findings. These three stages are conducted continuously and are interrelated to achieve accurate and in-depth research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to describe the internal and external factors that influence the development of honesty among fourth-grade students at *SDN 12 Sungai Rawa*. The presentation of data is based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation conducted with 2 students, teachers, and 2 parents. The results of this study are categorized into two main parts, namely: 1) internal factors originating from habits, willpower, and heredity; and 2) external factors, which include the influence of education and the environment.

Internal Factors

1. Habit

Habits are among the most prominent internal factors shaping students' honesty. Students who have been accustomed to being honest and open since childhood tend to show the same attitude in the school environment. This habit does not form suddenly but rather through a continuous, consistent process in daily life, both at home and at school. The synthesis and data processing results indicate that parenting patterns within the family environment play a significant role in shaping students' honest behavior. Fourth-grade teachers observe that students who are accustomed to being honest at home tend to exhibit the same behavior at school, such as courageously admitting mistakes. This is reinforced by students' statements that parental advice and support make them feel safer, even though they previously felt afraid. The value of honesty, taught through role modeling, family rules, and open communication, provides an important foundation for children's moral awareness. Thus, a home environment that emphasizes the importance of admitting mistakes and valuing honesty has been proven to shape students' honest behavior in daily life, including in the school environment.

Nevertheless, on the other hand, there are still students who exhibit dishonest behavior, for example, not admitting their mistakes after taking a friend's belongings during break time, even when the teacher has noticed it. This condition reflects an imbalance in the development of honest habits among some students. Some of them have not yet developed this positive habit due to a lack of consistent guidance from their immediate environment. For instance, at home, there may be no rules or reinforcement of the value of honesty, or even parents may unconsciously set an example of contradictory behavior, such as covering up mistakes or lying in certain situations.

Apart from the home, the school environment also plays an important role in shaping this habit. Teachers not only provide verbal guidance but also establish class rules and policies that instill the value of honesty, such as prohibiting cheating on exams, requiring honesty when borrowing friends' belongings, and recognizing students who admit their mistakes. When these rules are enforced consistently, students learn that honesty is not merely a value taught to them but also an attitude that is valued and becomes part of their identity. In this way, the habit of honesty formed at home and reinforced by daily rules and practices at school gradually develops into a character trait inherent in students.

The family environment plays a very important role in shaping a child's character (Rahayu *et al.*, 2020). Habits at home are instilled in the student's soul, thereby shaping ethical behavior and good values in social life (Abdulkareem *et al.*, 2025). The family is the first place where a child begins to learn

fundamental life values. Therefore, a student's character is strongly influenced by parenting patterns, habits, and interactions at home. If the family environment provides positive support for character development, then the character education process at school will be even stronger. School will only reinforce what has already been instilled at home from an early age. In other words, the synergy between family and school is key to shaping a well-rounded child's character.

2. Will

In addition to habits, students' will or inner desire is an important factor in shaping their character of honesty. This will reflect the presence of personal moral awareness and an internal drive to be honest, even without supervision. Research findings indicate that some students intend to be honest but remain hesitant or afraid of potential consequences, such as being scolded or feeling embarrassed. This indicates that the value of honesty has been instilled in them, but the courage to express it remains to be developed. Emotional support from teachers and an empathetic approach are essential to ensure that students feel safe and confident in expressing themselves honestly. Therefore, the formation of an honest character is influenced not only by external factors such as the environment and role modeling but also by the overall development of the child's moral awareness and internal motivation.

Field data indicate that the willingness to be honest has not yet been demonstrated by all students. Cases are still found in which students choose to conceal mistakes, for example, by not admitting to taking a friend's belongings or by hiding their actions from the teacher. This can occur because students fear being scolded, feel embarrassed about being known by their friends, or have not yet developed the confidence to take responsibility for their actions. In such conditions, the student's honest intention may not yet be strong enough to overcome social pressure or personal fear.

Encouragement to be honest can be fostered through supportive approaches from teachers and parents. When students feel that admitting mistakes does not always lead to punishment, but is understood as a form of courage, their confidence to be honest also increases. Therefore, the role of educators is crucial in creating a safe and accepting environment in which students are not afraid to speak the truth. Honesty is not just about knowing what is right, but also about having the courage to act on it. In this context, the will to be honest needs to be continuously nurtured and strengthened through patient guidance, empathy from the surrounding environment, and opportunities for students to learn to take responsibility for their actions without feeling pressured.

3. Descendant

Research indicates that some parents believe that a child's basic traits, such as openness, honesty, and a sense of responsibility, are heritable. These traits are often visible from an early age, even before the child enters formal education. Parents report that this innate character trait contributes to the child's tendency to act honestly in daily life. This belief is based on observations that some children display honest behavior without much guidance, as if it is already part of their personality.

However, although innate traits can confer an initial advantage, most teachers and parents agree that heredity is not the sole determinant of honesty. Honesty as a moral value cannot rely solely on natural disposition, but must be cultivated, nurtured, and continuously guided through education, habituation, and exemplary behavior in daily life. Even a child with a tendency toward honesty still needs a supportive environment that provides space to develop that attitude.

On the other hand, some students who are reserved or not accustomed to expressing themselves from a young age do not necessarily mean they cannot be honest. However, they require a different approach to character development. If the home and school environments cannot appropriately respond to a child's basic character, the potential for honesty may not develop optimally. This may explain why some students continue to hide mistakes or be dishonest in difficult situations. Therefore, it is important to recognize that although hereditary factors may provide certain tendencies, an honest

character must still be cultivated through ongoing education and an approach that suits each child's personality.

In a family, the primary responsibility for a child's education lies with the parents. Nowadays, parents are expected to be more attentive to their children's education and to prepare them to become resilient individuals who can actively contribute to society. The family plays a central role in the educational process, both within Islamic and non-Islamic communities. This is because the family is the first environment in which a child grows and develops and exerts significant influence, particularly during the critical early years of life (preschool age). During this phase, the values and habits instilled in a child become deeply rooted and are difficult to change later (Puspytasari, 2022). Parents play a significant role in supporting their children's future success. Although in essence the responsibility for education is shared, the family, especially parents, plays a primary role in shaping the next generation, who will play an important role in the future (Jannah & Umam, 2021).

External Factors

1. Education

Research shows that education, both at school and at home, plays a central role in shaping students' character of honesty. The value of honesty does not emerge automatically; it results from a continuous learning process through teaching, role modeling, and habituation. At school, teachers are important figures who not only deliver instructional content but also instill moral values through classroom interactions and real-world situations. Efforts to incorporate messages of honesty into various learning activities demonstrate teachers' commitment to building an honest culture within the school environment.

Meanwhile, home education serves as the initial foundation for developing a child's honesty. Parents who actively encourage their children to admit mistakes, tell the truth, and understand the consequences of lying help shape their moral awareness from an early age. These values are instilled not merely through punishment but through dialogue, advice, and approaches that foster a sense of responsibility. Thus, consistent character education from the two main environments school and family will reinforce each other in nurturing and maintaining honesty in students.

However, the reality on the ground shows that not all students have a strong character education background, either at home or at school. There are still students who are not accustomed to being honest, especially when facing the consequences of their actions. For example, when students commit violations or take their friend's belongings, some of them choose to remain silent or refuse to admit it. This can happen due to a lack of habituation of honesty values in the education system they receive. Inconsistency in applying values, both from parents and teachers, can also cause confusion for children in determining what is right and how they should behave.

Character education focusing on honesty must be a shared responsibility between schools and families. When both environments work synergistically and consistently, students will find it easier to understand and internalize the value of honesty as part of their daily behavior, rather than merely a rule to follow when being watched. Education that emphasizes moral values and provides children with the space to learn from mistakes will be far more effective in shaping strong and sustainable honesty character. In the context of developing the character of young generations through formal education, the role of teachers is very important. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering knowledge but also have the responsibility to guide students to grow into individuals with noble character (Wally, 2022). The values of honesty and discipline need to be emphasized to students as part of preparing them to face challenges in the digital era (Sari & Istanto, 2025).

2. Environment

The surrounding environment, whether at home, school, or in interactions with peers, plays a very important role in shaping and influencing students' honesty behavior. A family environment that is open, communicative, and provides examples of honest behavior in daily life has been proven to instill the value of honesty from an early age. When a child grows up in a family that upholds honesty, such as parents who consistently keep promises and admit mistakes, the child tends to imitate and internalize that behavior. Students who are used to seeing positive role models at home will find it easier to carry those values into their social life, including at school.

Research results show that the school environment, particularly interactions with peers, has a significant influence on the formation and consistency of students' honesty. Although students have been instilled with values of honesty from home or school, negative peer influences can undermine these values. In practice, students often face social pressure to conform to group norms, even if those norms contradict the principles of honesty that have been taught. This creates a dilemma between the desire to be accepted by friends and the courage to act honestly.

The situation emphasizes the importance of the school's role in building a collective culture of honesty. Schools need to create a social environment that supports and values honesty, both through teacher role models and by strengthening healthy and positive relationships among students. When honesty becomes a value that is collectively accepted and appreciated within the school environment, students will feel safer and more confident to act honestly, without fear of being ostracized or losing peer support.

However, the fact is that not all environments provide that support. In some cases, there are still students who feel safer hiding the truth because they fear being mocked, scolded, or not believed. This becomes a serious challenge in building honesty, because even though the value has been taught, without a positive environmental support, students may lose the courage to apply it. Therefore, creating a healthy social environment at home, at school, and among peers is an important step to ensure that the value of honesty truly grows as part of the students' character, not just as a rule to be memorized.

Discussion

Character education has become a significant challenge in Indonesia, amid the increasing involvement of young people in various deviant behaviors such as promiscuity, drug abuse, fighting, illegal racing, and gambling. This phenomenon indicates that character formation has not been optimal, even though character is an important element in societal, national, and state life (Zhang, 2023). This is inseparable from the fact that humans are social beings who constantly interact with one another. In building these relationships, noble attitudes based on shared life values, such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and care, are required. The importance of character education in guiding students is to help them develop into individuals with noble character through closeness and exemplary behavior, while also preparing their future as people with a strong personality (Hantika, 2022).

Character education becomes crucial in shaping individuals who are not only intellectually smart but also morally and socially mature (Hendri *et al.*, 2022). In instilling honesty in children, it is not enough to merely provide cognitive knowledge about the meaning of honesty. This process must also touch the affective aspects and be reflected in real actions. Education based on the values of honesty can create an environment full of peace, blessings, and mutual trust (Ramadani & Sofa, 2024). Some steps that can be taken include (Pertiwani, 2021):

1. Instilling a sense of discipline. By being disciplined, children will get used to being honest in their daily lives.

2. Provide guidance, understanding, and advice regarding the value of honesty. Such guidance helps children understand and apply honesty in their daily lives;
3. Providing an example of honesty from adults. The example set by parents or older individuals will serve as a concrete model for children to imitate such positive behavior.

Schools also play an important role in educating students' morals, especially when some of them receive limited moral education from their family environment. In this context, the role of teachers becomes very fundamental and crucial as the main driver in implementing moral and character education in schools. One form of contribution from teachers is through the relationships they build with students, where such interactions serve as a means to effectively convey moral values (Faiz & Purwati, 2022). Many things can be done by teachers outside of the learning process to shape honest behavior in children. Activities that are particularly effective include modeling behavior demonstrated by teachers in social interactions and other supporting activities, such as honesty canteens, identity formation, observation activities, and the use of natural media (Bureau *et al.*, 2022; Syofyan *et al.*, 2022).

One of the weaknesses in the implementation of character education in schools is that it has not been carried out comprehensively. Character education is often only considered as part of teaching obligations, without a deep understanding of the proper way to implement it. In order for the implementation of character education to run optimally, there are several important aspects that need to be considered (Salirawati, 2021):

1. Some schools have not been optimal in evaluating the implementation of character education.
2. Not all teachers are able to be role models in realizing character values.
3. There are still teachers who have not fully integrated character education into the learning process.
4. The implementation of character values in school culture is not yet effective.
5. A systematic evaluation model is not yet available

Therefore, the government, especially the Ministry of Education and Culture, needs to reevaluate and set priorities for the character values that are most important to instill in students. In the book "Manfaat berkata jujur" Lazuardi states that there are several benefits of honesty, including: a peaceful mind and heart, receiving rewards for good deeds, being respected by others, obtaining blessings in every effort undertaken, being safe from any danger, and having many friends (Agustina & Suryadi, 2023).

In the context of elementary school, the habit of telling the truth instilled through daily classroom activities, such as honestly recording attendance, completing assignments without cheating, and openly admitting mistakes, reflects character formation through the internalization of values. The habits and role modeling of teachers in elementary schools greatly influence the development of honest personalities in students (Utami, 2021). On the other hand, external influences such as the family environment also play an important role. Children raised in family environments that are open and consistent in instilling the value of honesty tend to have more stable character. Effective communication between parents and children can strengthen the value of honesty within students (Gustiani *et al.*, 2025). Thus, the synergy between internal and external factors is crucial for the success of character education, particularly in shaping honest behavior from elementary school age.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the development of honesty character in fourth-grade students of *SDN 12 Sungai Rawa* is influenced by two main factors: internal and external factors. Internal factors include habits, willpower, and inherent tendencies (heredity), while external factors include education and social environment. The habit of telling the truth cultivated from an early age, motivation

from within the students, and inherent character form the foundation for honest behavior. On the other hand, education provided by teachers and parents, as well as influences from the environment such as family and peers, also strengthen or can even hinder the development of honesty character. Although some students have shown honest behavior, dishonest behavior is still found in certain situations, indicating the need for consistent and ongoing character development. The implication of this finding is the importance of close collaboration between the school and parents in instilling and habituating the value of honesty, as well as the need to create a safe and supportive environment so that students feel comfortable and confident in being honest in their daily lives.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author states that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this article. The author emphasizes that the article's data and content are free of plagiarism.

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