



## The Relationship Between Teacher Exemplary Behavior and the Character of Fifth Grade Students at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This study was conducted to examine the relationship between teachers' exemplary attitudes and the character development of fifth-grade students at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School.

**Methodology:** This study employed a quantitative method with a correlational approach. The sample consisted of 56 students selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected using a Likert scale and analyzed through the Pearson Product Moment correlation test with the assistance of SPSS software version 21.

**Main Findings:** The research findings revealed a relationship between teacher role modeling and the character of fifth-grade students. The stronger the role modeling demonstrated by the teacher, the more positive the character development in the students.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** This study presents a novel element by specifically examining the relationship between teacher role modeling and character development in fifth-grade elementary school students, who are at a developmental stage where the teacher figure has significant influence. Furthermore, this research highlights the concrete forms of teacher role modeling that align with the conditions of the elementary school environment and analyzes them through an approach that directly examines the relationship between variables. Thus, this study provides an important contribution to the development of character education in elementary schools, especially in the implementation of teacher role modeling values in daily practice.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in developing skills, shaping character, and building a dignified national civilization. The primary goal of education is to enlighten the life of the nation and to shape students who are faithful, knowledgeable, moral, and ethical. Education also emphasizes the instillation of positive character values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, tolerance, cooperation, justice, and compassion [1]. Primary education holds a key role in shaping children's personalities and character from an early age. At this stage, students' moral development is greatly influenced by their environment, especially by figures they regard as role models at school namely, teachers. In character education, the teacher's role is not limited to delivering academic content but also includes serving as a role model through their attitudes, behaviors, and the values they demonstrate in daily life. The concrete examples set by teachers are among the most effective ways to instill values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and courtesy in students [2]. Teacher role modeling has proven to be one of the most

effective strategies in internalizing character values in students, particularly at the elementary school level, which is a crucial period in the formation of children's personalities [3].

Thomas Lickona states that noble character involves knowing what is good, committing to do what is good, and taking real action to realize it. According to Damariswara et al., [4] character is a value manifested in action, formed through a process in which a value develops into a virtue. Character is shaped through the internalization of interrelated and mutually reinforcing values. For example, the character of honesty is developed through an understanding of what honesty is and why it is important, the willingness to be honest, and the habit of acting honestly. These values must support each other in order to create a whole and positive character [5]. Albert Bandura stated that our behavior is influenced by the people around us and the environment we live in. His theory also explains that individuals observe the behavior of others and then attempt to imitate it [6].

The urgency of this research arises from the increasingly complex challenges of character education in the era of digitalization and globalization, where children are frequently exposed to external values that are difficult to control. Several studies have indicated a tendency toward declining discipline, empathy, and social responsibility among elementary school students. The current situation reflects a decline in students' morals and character in Indonesia. Data from the Indonesian Teachers Federation and the Indonesian Child Protection Commission in 2023 show that 23% of bullying cases occurred in elementary schools, with elementary students accounting for 26% of all reports. Bullying cases surged sharply from 226 cases in 2022 to 3,800 cases in 2023, with the most common forms being physical, verbal, and psychological violence [7]. These findings are supported by a survey conducted by the Research and Development and Training Agency of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in August 2021, which revealed that the student character index declined from 71.41 in 2020 to 69.52 in 2021 across five dimensions: religiosity, nationalism, independence, solidarity, and integrity [8]. This condition highlights the importance of re-examining key factors that influence character formation, one of which is teacher role modeling in schools. When teachers consistently demonstrate positive attitudes such as honesty, punctuality, polite speech, and neat appearance, students are more likely to imitate these behaviors through observation and value internalization [9].

In this context, the role of teachers as role models becomes critically important. Elementary school-aged children tend to imitate the behavior of adults they perceive as authoritative figures, whether that behavior is positive or negative. Therefore, strengthening teacher role modeling is a strategic step to ensure that character education does not remain merely a theoretical concept, but is truly implemented in everyday life [10]. Moreover, the importance of this research aligns with government policy as outlined in the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 20 of 2018 on Strengthening Character Education. This policy emphasizes that the instillation of character values must be carried out comprehensively through role modeling, habituation, and integration into the learning process. Given the central role of teachers in the education system, they must become the primary focus of empirical studies that evaluate the effectiveness of Strengthening Character Education implementation in schools [11].

At Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School, there are two fifth-grade teachers who serve as role models, each with a different yet equally influential approach. One teacher is known for being patient and meticulous, with over 20 years of teaching experience. Meanwhile, the other teacher is known for being firm and upholding the value of honesty, despite having only a few years of experience. These contrasting role-modeling styles present an interesting foundation for further investigation, particularly in examining how each approach influences students' character development. The character values observed in this study include honesty, discipline, responsibility, and politeness. Teachers with strong personal character demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that students can emulate. A teacher's role modeling encompasses attitudes, speech, and actions that reflect moral and ethical values, which are expected to be instilled in students. Therefore, teacher role modeling plays a significant role in shaping student character. Several previous studies support this. For instance, research by Puja Sundari showed a strong relationship between teachers' personality competence and the character development of fifth-grade students at MI Curup Utara, Rejang Lebong Regency [12]. Another study by Supandri also revealed a significant positive correlation between teachers' personality competence and the character of fifth-grade students at MIN Paju Ponorogo [13]. Teacher role modeling is considered the most influential component in shaping student character [14]. It influences students' personal and character development and aims to prepare and enhance individual quality to support national progress as a whole [15]. Being an educator requires the ability to be a role model for students and to be someone worthy of emulation. Moral values cannot be effectively instilled without real-life examples thus, teacher role modeling is crucial in the educational process [16]. For example, if a teacher aims to teach the value of compassion but instead displays harsh and temperamental behavior, students are more likely to remember the harshness rather than the value of compassion being taught [17]. Therefore, teachers must be able to set good examples through their words, attitudes, and actions [18].

Research on student character development has been widely conducted at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels. However, most of these studies tend to use qualitative approaches or focus on private and religious-based schools. For example, a study by Tampubolon examined how character values are instilled and influenced by the personality of religious education teachers in private schools [2]. Meanwhile, other studies have

mostly discussed teacher involvement in the character education process without specifically testing the correlation between teacher role modeling and student character based on measurable data, this creates a research gap [19]. On the other hand, studies that directly examine the relationship between teacher role modeling and student character in public elementary schools using a quantitative approach are still rare. This research gap is the main focus of the present study.

This study was conducted to fill the existing research gap by examining how various forms of teacher role modeling in a public elementary school relate to the character development of fifth-grade students. It offers a new contribution by specifically exploring the relationship between teacher role modeling and the character development of elementary school students during a developmental stage in which teachers serve as highly influential figures. In addition, this study highlights concrete forms of teacher role modeling that are relevant to the context of elementary school environments and analyzes them using an approach that directly tests the relationship between variables.

This study provides valuable insights into the influence of various forms of teacher role modeling on the character development of elementary school students, making it a significant contribution to the advancement of character education at this level. The results are expected to serve as a reference for educators and policymakers in designing more effective strategies to instill positive behaviors and character values through the role modeling demonstrated by teachers.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study employs a quantitative approach using a correlational method. The main objective of this approach is to determine whether there is a relationship between two variables, namely teacher role modeling as the independent variable and student character as the dependent variable [20]. The correlational method allows researchers to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between variables based on numerical data collected from respondents [21]. Pearson correlation was chosen as the analytical technique because the data obtained from the Likert-scale instrument is at the interval level and meets the normality assumption, as indicated by the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test with a significance value greater than 0.06 [20].

### **2.2. Population and Sample**

The population in this study refers to the group or area targeted for generalization by the researcher, which may consist of objects or subjects with specific numbers and characteristics [20]. In the context of this research, all students at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School were designated as the population. Meanwhile, the sample is a portion of the population that is considered representative of the whole. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which is based on certain considerations determined by the researcher. The sample was deliberately selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the objectives of the study [20]. The criteria used for sample selection included:

1. Students are in upper grades (grades IV, V, and VI), as this stage marks the beginning of character development prior to early adolescence;
2. Possess adequate basic literacy skills, such as the ability to read and comprehend texts; and
3. Are not under academic pressure, such as preparing for final school examinations.

Based on these criteria, the researcher selected fifth-grade students as the sample because they best met all the requirements. Fourth-grade students were excluded due to insufficient literacy skills among some students, and sixth-grade students were not included because they were preparing for school exams and thus considered academically unstable. With these considerations, a total of 56 fifth-grade students were selected as the sample for this study.

### **2.3. Research Instrument**

The primary instrument used was a closed-ended questionnaire with a 5 point Likert scale to measure teacher role modeling and student character. The questionnaire items were developed based on indicators of teacher role modeling, including openness to differences, discipline, honesty, good behavior, speech, and attire, while student character values were based on Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 20 of 2018, encompassing discipline, honesty, responsibility, and politeness [11]. Data collection was conducted using two Likert scales one to measure teacher role modeling and another to measure student character. Both scales were developed based on theoretical indicators and were tested for validity and reliability prior to distribution. The teacher role modeling scale assessed the extent to which teachers were perceived as role models by students through their daily attitudes and behaviors, while the student character scale measured the degree to which students demonstrated positive attitudes and behaviors in their daily lives.

The teacher role modeling scale in this study was developed based on various indicators proposed by education experts. These indicators included openness to differences [22], the ability to model disciplined

behavior, appropriate attire, and polite speech [23], as well as values of honesty and good behavior [24]. The scale consisted of 30 statement items, divided into two categories 18 favorable (positive) items representing desirable role model behaviors and 12 unfavorable (negative) items representing behaviors that do not reflect good role modeling. The scale was carefully developed to ensure comprehensive measurement of all aspects of teacher role modeling.

The student character scale was developed based on indicators proposed by experts. For the discipline aspect, indicators included compliance with classroom learning activities and school rules [25], completion of teacher-assigned tasks [26], and student attendance in learning activities [27]. The honesty aspect was measured through indicators such as admitting mistakes and returning lost items [28], independently completing tests or assignments [29], and speaking and behaving truthfully in accordance with facts [30]. For the responsibility aspect, indicators included accepting consequences for one's actions and keeping promises [31], returning borrowed items, and completing student tasks without reminders [32]. The politeness aspect was measured through indicators such as being friendly and polite to everyone [33], showing respect and helping others [34], and using polite expressions like "thank you," "please," and "sorry" [35]. Overall, this scale consisted of 35 statement items, comprising 18 favorable (positive) items and 17 unfavorable (negative) items, designed to comprehensively measure various dimensions of student character.

## 2.4. Data Analysis Technique

This study employed two data analysis approaches descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive analysis aimed to identify patterns and trends emerging in each examined variable. Meanwhile, the inferential analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation tests to measure the strength of relationships and determine the nature of associations (positive or negative) between the observed variables. Data analysis was carried out using the Pearson Product Moment correlation test with the assistance of SPSS version 21 for Windows. This technique was used to determine whether there is a relationship between teacher role modeling and student character. This technique can be used if the data are assumed to be normally distributed, so before conducting the Pearson correlation test, a normality test was carried out to determine whether the data were normally distributed [20]. The analysis procedures included:

1. Descriptive statistical analysis to describe the characteristics of the research data without drawing conclusions.
2. Normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to determine whether the data are normally distributed.
3. Pearson Product Moment correlation test to test the hypothesis that was formulated at the beginning of the study.
4. Hypothesis testing to determine whether there is a significant relationship between teacher role modeling and the character of fifth-grade students, using a 5% level of significance.

## 2.5. Research Procedure

### 2.5.1. Preliminary Study and Permission Process

The initial stage began with a visit to one of the public elementary schools to conduct a preliminary study.. The aim was to gain an initial understanding of the learning environment, school culture, as well as the characteristics of students and their teachers. This information served as the basis for determining the appropriateness of the location and research subjects. Subsequently, the researcher proceeded with the formal permission process by submitting an official letter to the school principal and relevant authorities to obtain approval for conducting the research.

### 2.5.2. Instrument Development

In this study, the instrument was developed in a structured manner to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data collected. The instrument used was a questionnaire formulated based on theoretical reviews from Thomas Lickona and Albert Bandura, as well as references related to teacher role modeling and student character. The teacher role modeling variable was measured using indicators such as discipline, honesty, kindness, speech, openness to differences, and appearance, while student character was measured through indicators of honesty, discipline, responsibility, and politeness. The questionnaire items were developed using a 5-point Likert scale and divided into two sections: students' perceptions of teacher role modeling and students' self-assessments of their character. The instrument was then validated through expert judgment and tested on students outside the research sample to ensure validity and reliability using the Pearson Product Moment correlation and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Items that did not meet the criteria were revised or eliminated, resulting in a final and reliable instrument used for data collection [20].

### 2.5.3. Validity and Reliability Testing

Before the questionnaire was used in the main study, instrument testing was conducted to ensure its quality. Content validity was assessed through expert judgment involving two academics in the field of elementary education. Empirical validity was evaluated using Pearson's correlation between each item and the total score, with a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of  $\geq 0.361$  considered acceptable. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, where a value greater than 0.6 indicated good internal consistency. All tests were conducted on a limited group of respondents outside the main research sample [20].

### 2.5.4. Data Collection

Data collection was carried out after the instruments were deemed valid and reliable. All fifth-grade students a total of 56 served as respondents, with the questionnaires distributed across two different classes. The researcher was accompanied by the homeroom teachers during the questionnaire administration.

### 2.5.5. Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS version 26 through several steps:

1. Normality testing was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method to ensure that the assumption of normally distributed data was met.
2. The correlation between teacher role modeling and student character was tested using the Pearson Product Moment technique if the data were normally distributed.
3. The interpretation of the strength of the correlation is based on the criteria below:
- 4.

Coefficient Interval	Level of Relationship
0,00 - 0,199	Very Low
0,20 - 0,399	Low
0,40 - 0,599	Moderate
0,60 - 0,799	Strong
0,80 - 0,1000	Very Strong

Source: Sugiyono [20]

### 2.5.6. Conclusion Drawing

The final stage involved drawing conclusions based on the results of statistical analysis. The researcher interpreted the findings theoretically and compared them with previous research. The final report was prepared to present the findings, suggest practical implications for teachers and schools, and provide directions for future research.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Result

#### 3.1.1. Instrument Validity Test

Based on the results of the validity test, it was concluded that all 30 statement items regarding teacher role modeling were declared valid, as all calculated  $r$  values ( $r_{\text{count}}$ ) were greater than the critical  $r$  value ( $r_{\text{table}}$ ) of 0.361. This means that all items can be used for data collection. Similarly, for the student character questionnaire, it was concluded that all 35 statement items were declared valid, as all  $r_{\text{count}}$  values were greater than the  $r_{\text{table}}$  value of 0.361. This indicates that all items are suitable for use in data collection.

#### 3.1.2. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Teacher Role Modeling	0,913	30
Student Character	0,930	35

The reliability criterion for an instrument is that if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.6, the instrument is considered reliable. However, if the value is less than 0.6, the instrument is considered unreliable. Based on the results of the test, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the student character questionnaire was 0.930, which is greater than 0.6. This means the instrument is reliable or consistent in measuring student character.

Meanwhile, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the teacher role modeling questionnaire was 0.913, which is also greater than 0.6, indicating that the instrument is reliable or consistent in measuring teacher role modeling.

### 3.1.3. Descriptive Statistical Test on Teacher Role Modeling

Table 3. Descriptive Statistical Test on Teacher Role Modeling

Evaluated Aspect	Actual Score	Ideal Score	Percentage (%)	Category
Exemplary attitude towards diversity	1.177	1.400	84%	Very Good
Exemplary behavior in being disciplined	1.207	1.400	86%	Very Good
Exemplary behavior in honesty	1.210	1.400	86%	Very Good
Exemplary behavior in good conduct	1.200	1.400	85%	Very Good
Exemplary attitude in speaking	1.248	1.400	89%	Very Good
Exemplary attitude in dressing	1.190	1.400	85%	Very Good
Average	7.232	8.400	86%	Very Good

Based on the results of data analysis obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to 56 fifth-grade students regarding teacher role modeling at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School, a total score of 7,232 was obtained out of an ideal score of 8,400. The percentage calculation showed a score of 86%, which, according to the category by Sugiyono [20], falls into the Very Good category as it lies within the range of 81%–100%. This indicates that the teacher role modeling at the school is perceived as very good by the respondents. The aspects of role modeling measured ranging from openness to differences, discipline, honesty, good behavior, speech, and appearance consistently received ratings with percentages above 80%. Therefore, in general, teacher role modeling at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School is considered to be very good.

### 3.1.4. Descriptive Statistical Test on Student Character

Table 4. Descriptive Statistical Test on Student Character

Evaluated Aspect	Actual Score	Ideal Score	Percentage (%)	Category
Discipline	2.373	2.800	84%	Very Good
Honesty	1.923	2.240	85%	Very Good
Responsibility	1.875	2.240	83%	Very Good
Politeness	2.158	2.520	85%	Very Good
Average	8.327	9.800	84%	Very Good

Based on the results of data analysis obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to 56 fifth-grade students regarding their character at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School, a total score of 8,327 was obtained out of an ideal score of 9,800. The percentage calculation showed a score of 84%, which, according to the category by Sugiyono [20], falls into the Very Good category as it lies within the range of 81%–100%. This indicates that the students' character at the school is perceived as very good. The aspects of student character measured namely discipline, honesty, responsibility, and politeness consistently received ratings with percentages above 80%. Therefore, in general, the character of fifth-grade students at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School is considered to be very good.

### 3.1.5. Normality Test

Table 5. Normality Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		56
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	,0000000
	Std. Deviation	8,61885819
	Absolute	,070
Most Extreme Differences	Positive	,054
	Negative	-,070

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	,526
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,945

Data is considered normally distributed if the significance value is greater than 0.05. Based on the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, a significance value of 0.945 was obtained, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold. This indicates that the data is normally distributed. Therefore, the data meets the normality assumption and can be further analyzed statistically.

### 3.1.6. Correlation Test

Table 6. Correlation Test

Variable	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Teacher Role Modeling	0.759	0.000
Student Character	0.759	0.000

Based on the results of the Pearson correlation test between teacher role modeling and student character, a correlation coefficient value of 0.759 was obtained with a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, indicating that there is a relationship between teacher role modeling and student character. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.759 indicates a positive relationship with strong correlation strength, falling within the range of 0.60 to 0.799.

### 3.1.7. Hypothesis Test

Based on the results of the Pearson correlation test between teacher role modeling and student character, the significance value was found to be less than the significance level of 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), so the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted, meaning there is a relationship between teacher role modeling and student character. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between teacher role modeling and the character of fifth-grade students at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School. The positive and strong correlation coefficient indicates that the better the role modeling demonstrated by the teacher, the more positive or better the character possessed by the students. This underscores the important role of teachers as role models in shaping student character within the school environment.

## 3.2. Discussion

The research results show a correlation between teacher role modeling and student character. This is based on the Pearson correlation test results, which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.759 and a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, indicating that there is a relationship between teacher role modeling and student character. The correlation coefficient of 0.759 indicates a strong and positive relationship, meaning that the higher the level of role modeling demonstrated by the teacher, the better the development of student character. In other words, the formation of student character at this school is closely related to the attitudes and behaviors of teachers as role models. These findings show that teacher role modeling plays a crucial role in shaping student character in elementary schools. This aligns with Bandura's view that individuals learn through the examples they observe. In this context, teachers serve as figures who provide direct examples that students can follow in various attitudes and values such as discipline, honesty, responsibility, and politeness. Students imitate teachers' behavior through observation and internalize these values into their daily lives [36]. Furthermore, according to Lickona, character formation requires a combination of value knowledge, moral feeling, and corresponding actions. Teacher role modeling is not just about verbally teaching values but also about demonstrating empathy and consistency in acting according to those values. In this way, teachers create an environment that supports students in absorbing and practicing good character [10].

These findings are also supported by several previous studies. One of them, a study using an Aristotelian approach, emphasizes the importance of habituating values from an early age through role modeling. Aristotle believed that children gradually learn virtues by imitating role models they admire. Role modeling interventions that highlight virtues in elementary schools have been proven effective in promoting students' moral development [37]. This aligns with other research findings which conclude that the success of character education in elementary schools greatly depends on the involvement of teachers, both in the learning process and as role models for students. Teachers who are able to create a supportive classroom environment and apply appropriate methods will be more successful in instilling positive values in their students. The role of role modeling becomes very important because students tend to learn through what they see and experience every day. When teachers demonstrate attitudes such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and politeness, it directly influences the formation of students'

character. In other words, the daily behavior of teachers becomes one of the main factors in the success of character education in the school environment [38].

Another study conducted at the higher education level shows that positive perceptions of teachers' character also impact students' prosocial behavior. This indicates that the influence of teacher role modeling continues into higher education [39]. Furthermore, a longitudinal study on students revealed that students' altruistic values can develop through teacher support that provides freedom and positive role models. Teachers who are able to offer encouragement and good examples influence students to be more caring and exhibit positive social behaviors [40].

Other studies also highlight the importance of a close relationship between teachers and students in promoting prosocial behavior. Meeting students' emotional needs, such as feeling accepted and supported, is a key factor in this process. Teacher role modeling reflected in these positive relationships strengthens students' motivation to act positively [41]. Other research similarly shows that the implementation of social-emotional learning approaches and the quality of educator-student relationships significantly contribute to sustained progress in character development. These findings reinforce the view that an educational system integrating academic excellence with the development of social-emotional competencies creates an optimal foundation for nurturing noble character in young generations [42].

Finally, a qualitative study examining teachers' views on their role as role models found that most teachers understand role modeling as an example of everyday behavior. However, awareness of the deeper meaning and strategic purpose of this role still needs to be improved. Therefore, developing this understanding should be incorporated into teacher training and coaching so that role modeling can be carried out more effectively [43]. The above findings are supported by other research which states that reflective learning plays an important role in helping teachers develop strong character. Through this process, they gain a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities as role models, thus being encouraged to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors in daily life. This awareness strengthens their commitment to becoming educators of integrity. This is closely related to teacher role modeling, where character values are not only taught through words but also shown through concrete actions. Teachers who habitually engage in self-reflection tend to be more consistent in their attitudes, and this positively impacts the instilling of character values in students [44].

In general, the teachers at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School consistently demonstrate positive behavior toward students, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers not only convey moral values verbally but also apply them in concrete actions. This reinforces the view that teachers are not only instructors but also role models, especially for elementary school students who are at a developmental stage where they tend to imitate the attitudes and behaviors of adults around them. Teacher role modeling is an important aspect of personality competence that directly influences the formation of student character. These findings align with other research stating that professional teachers are those who maintain consistency between their words and actions, and these two aspects are closely related to student development. In other words, teachers have the optimal capacity to be character role models through mastery of personality competence [45]. Therefore, teachers need to pay more attention to aspects of personality competence, especially in terms of role modeling. Other studies also emphasize that teachers must instill integrity and ethics, as these two aspects are crucial in shaping students' character and morality comprehensively [46].

The teachers at this school have demonstrated the ability to be role models for students. By providing concrete examples, teachers make it easier for students to imitate what they do. The impact of this role modeling will be more optimal if it is consistently displayed during the learning process in the classroom. This is in line with other research findings that emphasize the importance of teachers being direct role models in educating and shaping children's character and morality through the learning process [47]. Teachers who consistently show good behavior in their daily school activities will be directly imitated by students; whatever the teacher does tends to be followed by the students. This is clearly seen in this school, where most students admit that their actions are greatly influenced by what their teachers exemplify, such as always arriving on time, wearing uniforms neatly, showing respect, appreciating others, and being willing to help. Teachers who fully act as role models will shape students into individuals with strong personality and character because in character education, teaching knowledge or material alone is not enough concrete examples are highly needed. This is also reinforced by other research findings which state that students who receive role modeling from teachers show improvements in entrepreneurial competence and behavioral control, whereas students who do not receive such role modeling experience the opposite [48]. Additional findings also strengthen this idea, showing that teachers play an important role in creating quality character education. This is realized through the learning process, where teachers serve as examples and role models, as reflected in classroom activities when they teach and instill values such as character, humility, openness, love of learning, responsibility, and justice [49]. Other studies also mention that teacher role modeling can influence changes in student behavior, where students may imitate teacher behavior without the teachers themselves realizing it, indicating an indirect impact of educator behavior. Therefore, there is a need for a deeper understanding of what is required for teachers to become effective moral role models [50].



Teachers with good personalities can serve as positive role models and help shape students with strong character. However, in the process of instilling, forming, and habituating student character, close cooperation and positive synergy among the school, family, and community are necessary. Character development in students will only succeed if these three environments work consistently together, because character education is more effective when taught through role modeling and habituation. Although teachers hold the primary role at school, parents and the surrounding environment must also contribute by demonstrating attitudes and behaviors worthy of imitation, so that the main goal of character education shaping students with good character can be fully achieved. Findings from other research support this view, stating that the combined role of family, school, and community influences the moral development of students [51]. This is also in line with other research results showing that, besides teachers, family environment, peers, and social environment also affect the formation of student character [52], [53].

From a social perspective, teacher role modeling has a significant influence in shaping a responsible and well-behaved younger generation. Therefore, strengthening the role of teachers as role models needs to be a focus in education policies, supported by regular training and evaluation. Cooperation between schools, families, and communities is also important to reinforce the character values being taught. This aligns with other research showing the importance of improving teacher competencies, especially in character education that focuses on psychological well-being and positive approaches to strengthen self-confidence, resilience, commitment, and teaching enthusiasm. Through integrated training programs, educators can more optimally foster character values in students, which ultimately strengthens the sustainability of character-based education [54].

Furthermore, the government must also play an active role in developing and enhancing teachers' personality competence through seminars or training programs specifically aimed at improving teachers' ability to be role models for students. This competence is very important and equal to other competencies that teachers are required to have. This aligns with research findings stating that character education supported by government policies can shape professional teacher character, enabling them to become optimal educators and mentors [55]. Moreover, other studies also show that continuous training has a positive impact on improving teacher competence, including personal and social aspects, with the goal of strengthening teacher morality [56].

Thus, it is important to emphasize that improving teachers' personality competence, particularly in terms of role modeling, must be a primary focus. Teachers who consistently demonstrate positive values will be effective role models in shaping students' character. Therefore, teacher professional development should not only focus on pedagogical and academic aspects but also on strengthening positive personality values that can be emulated by students. This aligns with other research findings showing that teachers' personality competence influences student character, meaning that teachers play an important role in shaping positive character and preventing negative student behavior through their personality and role modeling [57], [58]. Similarly, other research also confirms that teachers' personality competence is crucial in shaping student character by enhancing self-confidence and the ability to instill character values [59].

However, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted at only one school with a limited sample size, which reduces the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the use of self-report questionnaires may introduce social desirability bias, potentially affecting the honesty of respondents' answers. Lastly, since this study used a correlational design, the results cannot be used to establish definitive cause-and-effect relationships. Therefore, further research using an experimental approach is needed to explore causal relationships in greater depth.

Therefore, for future research, it is recommended to conduct a quasi-experimental study using a pre-test and post-test design with a control group in order to directly observe the impact of teacher role modeling interventions on student character. In addition, expanding the sample size is advised to allow for broader generalization of the findings. A mixed-method approach that combines questionnaires, observations, and interviews is also suggested to gain a deeper understanding of how the internalization of character values occurs within students.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

There is a relationship between teacher role modeling and the character of fifth-grade students at Sepanjang Jaya IV Public Elementary School. The results of the Pearson correlation test showed a coefficient value of 0.759 with a significance level of 0.000, indicating that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that positive teacher role modeling plays a role in shaping positive student character. This relationship falls into the positive category with a strong level of correlation, meaning that the better the teacher's role modeling, the better the character development of the students. This occurs because students tend to view teachers as role models and imitate the behaviors they demonstrate. Therefore, it is important for teachers to continually develop their personal qualities, especially in providing good examples for their students.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the role of teacher role modeling is not only conceptual but also has a tangible impact on shaping the character of primary school students. Teachers who consistently demonstrate discipline, honesty, responsibility, and politeness tend to become figures that students easily emulate in their daily lives. The character values formed through this process serve as a crucial foundation for the moral and social development of children in the future. Therefore, strengthening student character should ideally begin with improving the personal quality of teachers through self-development training, reflective practices, and the consistent application of positive values in the school environment.

However, this study still has limitations, therefore for future research, it is recommended to conduct a quasi-experimental study using a pre-test and post-test design with a control group in order to directly observe the impact of teacher role modeling interventions on student character. In addition, expanding the sample size is advised to allow for broader generalization of the findings. A mixed-method approach that combines questionnaires, observations, and interviews is also suggested to gain a deeper understanding of how the internalization of character values occurs within students.

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