

# Impact Analysis Achievement Guidance in Instilling Critical Thinking and Creative Character in Elementary School Students

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## Article info:

*Submitted: December 17, 2025. Revised: January 10, 2026. Accepted: March 10, 2026*

## Abstract

**Background** – Character education, particularly in the form of critical and creative thinking, plays a crucial role in developing students' intellectual abilities from an early age, especially considering the low level of critical thinking skills among Indonesian students as indicated by the Programme for International Student Assessment results.

**Purpose** – This study aims to describe the impact of achievement guidance in instilling critical thinking skills and creative character in students at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem.

**Method/Approach** – This research employs a simple descriptive qualitative method, involving 25 students and 1 achievement guidance teacher as research subjects. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, while data validity was ensured using source and technique triangulation. Data analysis techniques included data reduction, data display, and continuous conclusion drawing or verification conducted during the research process.

**Findings** – The results indicate that Bimpres activities at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem successfully instill critical thinking skills and creative character in students. However, several challenges were identified, including differences in students' learning speeds and limited instructional time.

**Conclusions** – The study concludes that the Bimpres program is effective as a medium for strengthening students' intellectual character, although optimization is still needed to address existing constraints.

**Novelty/Originality/Value** – This research highlights the role of structured achievement guidance programs as an effective strategy for integrating character education, particularly in fostering critical and creative thinking skills at the elementary school level.

**Keywords:** Achievement Guidance, Critical Thinking Character, Creative Character

## Recommended citation:

Fauzandy, F., W., & Utomo, A., C. (2026). Impact Analysis Achievement Guidance in Instilling Critical Thinking and Creative Character in Elementary School Students. (2026). *Lembaran Ilmu Kependidikan*, 55(1), 113-120. <https://doi.org/10.15294/lik.v55i1.40657>

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed by themselves and society (Rahman, Munandar, Fitriani, Karlina, & Yumriani, 2022). Not only that, education is also one of the efforts or means to shape the character of students. Character building is very important and must be implemented. Character education is education that must be taught to students, especially at the elementary level. Character education provided from the elementary level can produce people with character. People with character in the family environment, in the school environment, and in the community environment. Schools have an important role in educating and instilling moral values and social values that can produce people with character (Anugraheni, 2018).

Strengthening character education in the current era is important, given the many events that indicate a moral crisis among children, adolescents, and parents. Therefore, strengthening character education needs to be implemented as early as possible, starting from the family environment, school, and extending to the community environment (Wuryandani, Maftuh, & Budimansyah, 2019). One of the character traits that needs to be developed is critical thinking and creativity.

The low level of critical thinking skills among students is a serious problem that must be addressed immediately, as it will be detrimental to many parties if left unchecked. There is a concern that students will be unable to analyze and solve real problems they encounter in their daily lives, and that they will have difficulty making quick and accurate decisions (Anisa, Ipungkartti, & Saffanah, 2021). Critical thinking is essential to student learning success and can also help improve student achievement. In addition to critical thinking skills, creative character also plays a very important role in improving student achievement. Creative character enables students to generate new ideas, find various alternative solutions, and develop more effective learning methods in line with their potential. Creative character is an important component in shaping adaptive, innovative learners who are capable of facing future challenges. In general, creative character can be defined as an individual's ability to generate new, original, and useful ideas in solving problems or creating something of value (Twiningsih, 2023). Learning achievement is the result of learning achieved by students within a certain period of time, which reflects their level of mastery of the learning material. Thus, creative character plays an important role in supporting the achievement of student learning.

Academic achievement is the result of learning obtained by students within a certain period of time. There is an opinion that achievement is the success of students achieved during a certain period of time. In a number of subjects referred to in this paper, it is evidence of the success and change of students in mastering knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes through stages of learning evaluation expressed in grades (Husodo, 2014). Every educational unit, including elementary schools, is encouraged to improve learning achievements in both academic and non-academic fields, including in the Education Festival and O2SN competitions at the sub-district, district, and provincial levels (Husodo, 2014). School performance is improved by providing tutoring, which is expected to improve student performance in competitions.

Tutoring is guidance provided by experts, either individuals or groups, who experience problems in learning so that after going through a process of change in learning, they can achieve optimal learning outcomes (Putu, Nonik, Sulastri, & Sedanayasa, 2014). Achievement guidance is a key factor in instilling critical thinking and creativity in students. This guidance is an activity that can improve students' critical thinking skills. Improving students' critical thinking skills can help them develop and make it easier for them to understand material, solve problems, and win competitions. In addition, this guidance activity can also increase students' creativity in learning.

## METHODS

The type of research used is qualitative research. Qualitative research is descriptive and analytical in nature. Descriptive in qualitative research means describing and explaining the events, phenomena, and social situations being studied. This study uses qualitative research to describe the impact of achievement guidance in instilling critical thinking skills and creative character at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem. The design used in this study is simple descriptive, which means describing things as they are, realistically without manipulation, based on information in the field, with the aim of obtaining an overview of the critical thinking skills of elementary school students. This research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem, with research subjects including 25 students and 1 achievement guidance teacher, while the research object was the impact of achievement guidance in instilling critical thinking and creative character. The data sources used were primary and secondary data. Primary data is research data obtained directly from the original data source. Primary data was obtained directly from teachers and students, while secondary data was obtained from school documents and achievement guidance questions.

The data collection techniques used were interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews, where researchers conducted in-depth interviews with teachers and students regarding achievement guidance in instilling critical thinking skills, achievement guidance in instilling creativity, and obstacles in achievement guidance. Observation, in which the researcher collected data through direct observation in the field by visiting the research location, and documentation, in which the researcher sought to understand the initial conditions of the students in the study.

Efforts to test the validity of the data used were carried out using source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation is checking data from various informants from whom the data will be collected, while technique triangulation involves collecting data from various different sources to produce more comprehensive information. After the data was collected, the author used data analysis. This study used data reduction to summarize or simplify the information, data display to group categories, and verification to draw conclusions based on the data obtained.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation conducted with teachers and several students during the implementation of achievement guidance at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem. Achievement Guidance at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem is a special program designed to explore, develop, and improve students' abilities and potential in various academic fields. Improving the quality and access to education is an important step in facing the advancement of science and increasingly fierce global competition. Therefore, children, especially at the elementary school level, need appropriate and quality education. Education at the elementary school level is the first formal level that will determine the direction of students' potential development (Windyatmoko & Hartini, 2025). One effort that can be made is through tutoring. Tutoring is guidance provided by experts, either individuals or groups who experience problems in learning so that after going through a process of change in learning, they can achieve optimal learning outcomes (Putu et al., 2014). This guidance is an activity that can improve students' critical thinking skills. Improving students' critical thinking skills can help them develop further. Critical thinking is a way of thinking that involves deep reflection in problem solving and decision making to analyze situations, evaluate arguments, and draw accurate conclusions (Stobaugh, 2013).

Critical thinking refers to the way students actively respond to information provided by presenting arguments and formulating conclusions based on sound reasoning. This statement is in line with the views expressed by (Azizah, Sulianto, & Cintang, 2018) Critical thinking skills involve a structured and detailed cognitive process to systematically analyze problems, carefully identify differences, and evaluate information to devise strategies for solving them. Teachers can

use several methods during achievement guidance to encourage students to hone their critical thinking skills by giving them HOTS questions and material that is above their grade level. Giving students HOTS questions encourages them to find the right solutions and also encourages them to think critically. This is in line with the opinion that (Cindy Marsya Putri, Adrias Adrias, & Salmainsi Syafitri Syam, 2025) Therefore, the application of HOTS questions is a must in elementary school learning in order to foster critical and creative thinking patterns from an early age.

Not only that, this achievement guidance can also enhance students' creative character. Creativity is very important to develop because creativity can improve academic achievement. Therefore, the higher a person's creativity, the higher their academic achievement will be (Hasanah & Priyantoro, 2019). In this achievement guidance, students engage in question-and-answer sessions, group discussions, and individual problem solving. HOTS questions or problems given in achievement guidance activities also help develop children's creativity because they are required to provide a variety of answers and express many solutions to problems. In my opinion (Cindy Marsya Putri et al., 2025) HOTS questions also help develop children's creativity because they are required to find unusual and innovative solutions. The development of discussion methods is also carried out in tutoring activities conducted by tutors. By giving questions in groups, it is hoped that students can produce many answers and present concepts in other ways. This is done to enhance students' creative thinking. This is in line with the opinion that (Ngadha, Nanga, Ledu, Dhiu, & Lawe, 2023) which states that by using the discussion method, the majority of students are able to solve problems by working together and arguing with each other between groups. This can produce many answers.

However, there are obstacles in achievement guidance activities. One obstacle that often arises is the difference in the ability levels of students in one class. Each student has a different learning speed, so teachers must develop the right strategy so that all participants can follow the lesson well. In addition, time constraints are also an obstacle in the implementation of Bimpres. These activities are usually carried out outside of regular school hours, so that busy schedules sometimes make students feel tired or less focused. The solutions provided by teachers are to provide effective learning, motivate students, and provide adequate facilities and support.

### **The Impact of Achievement Guidance in Instilling Critical Thinking Skills**

The results of the above study show that achievement guidance at SD Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem can instill critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are very important for students because with these skills, students are able to think rationally and choose the best alternatives for themselves. Critical thinking involves focusing and not simply believing everything that the teacher says. The findings of the study show that the aspects that emerge in critical thinking are clarification, assessment/evaluation, analysis, and problem-solving strategies. This was confirmed by Mrs. F, who emphasized that the implementation of achievement guidance can be observed through various learning activities, particularly question and answer sessions conducted during the guidance process. According to her opinion (Syaharani, Cahyaningrum, & Putri, 2024) The use of question-and-answer methods in the classroom allows students to actively engage in the teaching and learning process, in line with the spirit of the independent curriculum that emphasizes the development of students' individual potential.

In addition, according to opinion (Djamarah & Zain, 2006) The question and answer method is an approach to delivering material in which interaction occurs through statements made by the teacher that are responded to by students, or vice versa, from students to the teacher. The question-and-answer method is a learning strategy in which the teacher delivers material through questions that must be answered by students, either verbally or in writing. This method not only serves to evaluate students' understanding, but also to guide students to be able to think critically, logically, and systematically. With a variety of questions, students are trained to express their opinions, construct arguments, and dare to express their ideas in front of the class (Tambak, 2014). Thus, the question-and-answer method is not only a strategy for delivering material, but also a means of increasing active participation, critical thinking, and in-depth understanding among students, while also helping teachers gauge students' level of understanding of the learning

material.

Another activity that can foster critical thinking in students is individual problem solving. Mrs. F has stated that in addition to question and answer sessions, critical thinking can also be developed through individual problem solving, where teachers give students problems that are two levels above their ability, known as HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) problems. (Heong et al., 2011) shows that consistent application of HOTS questions can improve students' critical thinking abilities and problem-solving skills. In my opinion (Cindy Marsya Putri et al., 2025) The application of HOTS questions in elementary school learning has various benefits. One of the main benefits is to improve students' critical thinking skills, where they learn to question, analyze, and seek answers from various perspectives.

In my opinion (Baderan, 2019) In the problem-solving process, students may not yet know and understand all the prerequisite knowledge, so they try to find it themselves through sources, whether from books or other information. Explain that HOTS questions encourage students to think reflectively and solve problems systematically. When students are faced with challenging contextual problems, they will be encouraged to explore various possible answers and consider the best solutions (Brookhart, 2010). Based on the above description, it can be concluded that individual work on problems, particularly through the application of HOTS problems, plays an important role in fostering critical thinking in students. HOTS problems encourage students to think more deeply, question problems, and independently seek and evaluate various possible solutions. When students are faced with problems of a higher level of difficulty, they are encouraged to seek information from various sources and develop reflective and problem-solving skills. Thus, the consistent application of HOTS questions in learning can train students to think critically, logically, and creatively in facing various learning problems.

### **The Impact of Achievement Guidance in Instilling Creative Character**

Another impact of this achievement guidance is that it can instill creative character in students. This can be seen from the aspects of creative character, including fluency thinking, flexible thinking, original thinking, and elaboration ability. This can be seen from the activities carried out in achievement guidance, particularly group discussions. Mrs. F has stated that through group discussions, students are encouraged to exchange opinions and express diverse ideas. These activities provide opportunities for students to think creatively, both in expressing their ideas, responding to their friends' opinions, and formulating solutions to the problems given. Thus, group discussions in achievement guidance play an important role in instilling creative character in students. These findings are in line with (Johnson & Johnson, 2009) which states that cooperative learning through group discussions can improve students' creative thinking abilities and higher-order thinking skills. Interactions between students in groups encourage the emergence of new ideas and enrich perspectives in solving problems. Thus, group discussion activities in achievement guidance play an important role in instilling and developing students' creative characters. In the field of education, it is very important for teachers and counselors to help students develop a strong academic self-concept. One effective approach to achieving this is through group guidance (Sagala & Daulay, 2025).

The discussion method, followed by group presentations, can accustom students to deliberating and contributing new ideas to solve problems. This is in line with the opinion that (Ngadha et al., 2023) which states that by using the discussion method, the majority of students are able to solve problems by working together and arguing with each other between groups. This can produce many answers. In addition (Sujiwo, 2017) believe that through discussion methods, students are given the opportunity to develop problem-solving skills, practice and become accustomed to deliberating, and make decisions together. Through group discussion activities, students are trained to develop various aspects of creativity, such as fluent thinking, flexible thinking, original thinking, and the skill of elaborating ideas. Giving questions in groups encourages students to produce a variety of answers, present concepts in different ways, and express new ideas in problem solving. In addition, the discussion method followed by group presentations accustoms students to deliberating, working together, and arguing constructively. Thus, the consistent application of achievement guidance through group discussions can shape

students' characters to be creative, collaborative, and capable of thinking innovatively in facing learning problems.

Another activity that can help instill creative character in students is working on HOTS questions independently. This was conveyed by Mrs. F, who stated that HOTS questions or problems given in achievement guidance activities can help develop students' creativity, because they are required to provide a variety of answers and propose various alternatives for solving problems. Through these activities, students are encouraged to think openly, explore new ideas, and not be fixated on one correct answer, so that their creative character can develop optimally. According to her opinion (Cindy Marsya Putri et al., 2025) HOTS questions also help develop children's creativity because they are required to find unusual and innovative solutions. These questions given by teachers can train students to produce many answers and present concepts in different ways. This is very important in shaping students' creative characters. (Setiawati, Oktavia, Yoki, Reisky, & AP, 2019) stated that HOTS-based learning can improve students' abilities to understand, analyze, manipulate, create something new, and find solutions to problems so that they are able to solve problems on their own. In addition (Brookhart, 2010) explains that HOTS questions do not only focus on the final result, but also on the students' thinking process in exploring various possible answers. Through this process, students become accustomed to thinking creatively, reflectively, and innovatively in facing learning problems. Thus, the independent application of HOTS questions in achievement guidance activities is one effective strategy for continuously shaping students' creative character.

Working on HOTS questions independently in achievement guidance activities plays an important role in instilling creative character in students. HOTS questions encourage students to produce a variety of answers, find innovative solutions, and present concepts in different ways through a reflective and in-depth thinking process. By emphasizing higher-order thinking processes such as analyzing, creating, and solving problems independently, the application of HOTS questions becomes an effective strategy in shaping students who are creative, innovative, and able to solve learning problems in a sustainable manner.

### Challenges Encountered in Achievement Guidance

Although achievement guidance activities show positive results, there are several obstacles in implementing them. One of the obstacles that often arises in the implementation of achievement guidance is the difference in the ability levels of students in one class. Mrs. F has stated that each student has a different learning speed, so teachers need to develop and apply appropriate learning strategies so that all students can participate in the activities properly. In addition, Ms. F also said that time constraints are another obstacle in implementing achievement guidance. These activities are usually carried out outside of regular school hours, so students' busy schedules sometimes cause them to feel tired or lack focus during the activities. According to her opinion (Pisa, 2017) shows that suboptimal learning duration and time management can affect students' concentration and quality of engagement in additional learning activities. In addition, according to opinion (Nelyahardi & Prizunil, 2016) In providing tutoring services to students, there are several obstacles such as time constraints and difficulties in determining the appropriate method. Therefore, proper time management and interesting learning strategies are needed to ensure that tutoring continues to run effectively.

Despite various obstacles in Bimpres activities, teachers and schools strive to find solutions so that the Bimpres program continues to run optimally. More effective learning planning, continuous motivation, character building, and adequate facility support are important steps to improve the quality of coaching and maximize students' potential in achieving their best performance. Providing support such as motivating students with enthusiasm and paying attention to their needs and difficulties is also important (Khotimah, Zulaiha, & Amrillah, 2023).

### CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the implementation of achievement guidance (Bimpres) at SD

Muhammadiyah 16 Karangasem has effectively fostered students' critical thinking and creative character through interactive question-answer methods, the use of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) questions above students' levels, and collaborative activities such as discussions and presentations that develop fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration; however, challenges remain in the form of differing student learning speeds and limited time allocation outside regular school hours, which are addressed through improved learning planning, continuous motivation, character strengthening, and adequate facility support, while the novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on the integration of structured Bimpres programs with HOTS-based strategies as a practical and contextual approach to simultaneously developing critical and creative thinking skills at the elementary education level.

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