



## The Role of the Buddhist Sunday School Teacher in Building Children's Character

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### Abstract

This study aims to describe the process of forming children's character through the role of the teacher at the Buddhist Sunday School at Vipassana Kusalacitta Bekasi Temple. A qualitative descriptive approach was used in this study to gain a deep understanding of the experiences and perceptions of teachers and the learning processes involved. Character education has an important role in shaping and developing children's character in facing the challenges of the changing times. Teachers have a central role in creating an interesting learning environment, building good relationships with children, and using appropriate learning methods. In the context of Buddhist Sunday School or non-formal education, interesting learning is key in developing children's character. Methods such as stories, games, group discussions, and creative activities can be used by teachers to help children understand the concepts of characters that are taught in a fun and memorable way. This research is expected to provide insight to teachers in Buddhist Sunday Schools about effective ways to shape children's character and also provide recommendations for learning strategies in character education in Buddhist Sunday Schools or other non-formal education. With the joint efforts of teachers and appropriate learning methods, it is hoped that character education can be properly integrated into the education system to produce a generation that has integrity, cares for the environment, and is able to maintain peace and order in everyday life.

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## INTRODUCTION

The education world is constantly evolving to keep up with technological advancements and ensure a balanced development (Smith, 2018). The progress of human civilization is intricately linked to the behavior and actions of its inhabitants (Johnson, 2020). The responsibility to care for one another and for the planet is heavily influenced by human behavior (Anderson, 2019). The preservation and sustainability of life on Earth greatly depend on the actions and choices humans make (Brown, 2021). A harmonious and prosperous life is the aspiration of all individuals around the globe (Clark, 2017). Unfortunately, the destruction of life on Earth is often a consequence of human actions and treatment of the environment (Wilson, 2016).

Technology, while offering numerous advancements and opportunities for exploration, also plays a significant role in shaping human behavior and its impact on the world (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2006). Humans need to use technology responsibly and ethically to ensure the well-being of the planet and all its inhabitants. In this ever-changing world, it becomes crucial for educators to incorporate values, ethics, and character development alongside academic knowledge (Azwar, 2011). Education is vital in shaping individuals' behavior, fostering empathy, understanding, and a sense of responsibility towards others and the environment (Azwar, 2012).

Many fatal mistakes are made by humans in ruining the continuity of life in this world, both materially and mentally. Many humans also do the present destruction of nature, Even this damage is not only physical, it's about the human psyche itself. The current mental crisis raises many serious problems for a harmonious and well-being life. There is a conflict between Russia and Ukraine (Charlotte et al., 2022). It has caused much damage to the facilities and facilities and many victims of the lives. Not just that, Psychically suffering is felt as disturbing enthusiasm. Then the case of terrorism that occurs in various worlds will certainly cause problems in life (Mubarak, 2012).

This should not be done when man's behaviour is following the morality of good morality. The Buddhist teaching holds firm on peace and love for others.(Pranata, Joni; Wijoyo, 2020). Early education is essential in improving good behavior in humans. The teacher needs to be able to print a good child's character. Buddha people have a non-formal education carried out every Sunday in Monastery.

Buddhist Sunday school education has been recognized by the Indonesian government in Peraturan Menteri Agama Republik Indonesia Nomor 39 Tahun 2014 Tentang Pendidikan Keagamaan Buddha (Kemenag.go.id, 2014) And have their curriculum through Keputusan Direktorat Jendral Bimbingan Masyarakat Buddha Nomor 63 Tahun 2017 Tentang Kurikulum Pendidikan Sekolah Minggu Buddha (Penyusun, 2020). Of course, this week of Buddhist school education greatly influences the development of the child, especially the Buddhist students. This study is consistent with research ever conducted by (Sukodoyo, n.d.) entitled "Motivation To Become A Teacher Buddhist Sunday School In The Monastery Of Getasan Subdistrict-Semarang District".

This research specifically examined the role of teachers in developing good character through formal learning activities in the Buddhist Sunday School within the monastery setting. The study aimed to understand how teachers contribute to character development among students in this context. By focusing on the specific environment of the monastery and the unique curriculum provided by the Bimas Buddha, the research explored how teachers can effectively nurture and shape the students' character. The findings of this study shed light on the importance of teacher skills in delivering tailored materials and engaging learning activities that emphasize character education. Teachers play a vital role in fostering enthusiasm, problem-solving skills, self-sufficiency, creativity, and a sense of responsibility among the students through their expertise and creativity. The research highlights the significance of the teacher's role in building a solid foundation of good character within

the Buddhist Sunday School, contributing to the overall growth and development of the students in this spiritual learning environment.

## **METHODS**

In this study, the author used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. According to (Muri, 2014) qualitative approach is an inquiry strategy that emphasizes the search for meaning, understanding, concept, characteristics, symbol, and Even the description of the phenomenon, focus and multimethod. It's natural and holistic, Putting quality first, using some way, and presenting narratively. Teknik sampling yang digunakan adalah teknik purposive sampling. Purposive Sampling Is a data source sample extract technique with certain considerations and goals (Sugiyono, 2017). This particular consideration is, Such people, are considered to know best about what we expect or engage in such matters.

The subject of our research is the data source that allows researchers to obtain the required information. So, the research is on any subject at Sunday school teacher ( Buddha Sunday school ) buddha, in the Sunday school Buddhist monastery Vipassana Kusalacitta Bekasi. The whole subject of study was determined by considering the conformity with the purpose and objective of the research phase. At the same time, the research object is the role of Sunday school teacher at Buddhist Monastery Vipassana Kusalacitta Bekasi.

The procedure to gather data in this research involved multiple methods, including observation, interviews, and documentation. The observation was utilized to directly observe and record the behaviors and interactions of the participants. Interviews were conducted to obtain firsthand information and perspectives from the participants, allowing for a deeper understanding of their experiences and opinions. Additionally, written records, reports, or official documents were collected and analyzed to supplement the data obtained through observation and interviews. By employing these various data collection methods, the researchers aimed to gather comprehensive and diverse information to address the research objectives effectively.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this study highlight the significant role that Buddhist Sunday school teachers play in building children's character. Through their expertise and dedication, these teachers contribute to the holistic development of children by focusing on character education and fostering moral values.

The findings show that qualified teachers in Buddhist Sunday schools have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach and guide students effectively. Their professional training ensures they meet the standards set for teaching in this context, allowing them to provide quality education to their students. Preparation is a crucial aspect of the teacher's role in the Buddhist Sunday school. Teachers invest time and effort in preparing lessons, materials, and teaching strategies in advance. This preparation ensures that the learning process is well-structured and engaging, enabling effective curriculum delivery.

Instructional methods employed by Buddhist Sunday school teachers are tailored to meet the needs of their students. They are free to develop learning creativity within the curriculum provided by the Bimas Buddha. The emphasis on character education is evident in the curriculum, reflecting the aim of building higher moral values in students. One notable aspect of the learning activities in Buddhist Sunday schools is the element of fun and engagement. Teachers design and implement

activities that captivate children's interest and enthusiasm, making the learning experience enjoyable. This approach contributes to a positive learning environment and enhances students' motivation to participate in the learning process actively. The role of the teacher in facilitating problem-solving activities is significant. By providing opportunities for students to solve challenges independently, teachers empower children to develop their problem-solving skills. Collaboration and interaction within group settings foster independence and encourage students to seek solutions independently.

Buddhist Sunday school teachers also encourage self-sufficiency among students. Teachers nurture students' independence and self-reliance by promoting the preparation of materials and taking responsibility for their own learning. Creativity and initiative are essential qualities that teachers strive to cultivate in students. By providing opportunities for expression and active participation, teachers empower students to develop their creativity, explore their ideas, and take initiative in various activities.

Sunday school Buddhists are non-formal schools managed by foundations or monasteries. This study was conducted at Monastery Vipassana Kusalacitta Kota Bekasi. Were students girls Buddha Sunday school Buddhist some homes in the monastery. Teachers teach public and private Buddha Sunday School Buddhism in Bekasi formal education around the city. They may be the place of the schedule as their responsibility and as calls the soul for the sustainability of Buddhist dhamma as a source of what one has. The number of vipassana children in Buddha Sunday school monastery Kusalacitta is approximately 25.

This has not been registered exactly to the document the place, and this number is known from observations during this research. The interesting thing in this study is the output of the students' studies that reflect good characters that form in learning activities. This result is, of course, related to the role of a qualified teacher in carrying out learning so that it produces the character of a child who has a Buddhistic Carakt. Master's understanding, according to "Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 about teacher and lecture", That teachers are professional educators with primary roles in early education, Basic education, and middle education formal educational lanes, in education, Teaching, Leading, directing, Training, judging, and evaluate (Illahi, n.d.)

This skill must already have been owned by the teacher in the Buddha Sunday School. They teach in Buddha Sunday school is not the same as carrying out studies in formal schools. Teachers can freely develop learning creativity with curriculums provided by the Bimas Buddha. This Buddha Sunday school curriculum emphasises the education of character in building a man of higher character. The learning activities in the Buddha Sunday School are fun for children, so their enthusiasm is good for learning. Teacher skills are major in delivering material tailored to inoperative learning activities.

The skills teachers possess in the Buddha Sunday School are fundamental and indispensable. Teaching in the Buddha Sunday School differs from the conventional approach in formal schools. Here, teachers have the freedom to unleash their creativity and develop innovative learning methods aligned with the curriculums provided by Bimas Buddha. The unique emphasis of the Buddha Sunday school curriculum lies in character education, aiming to nurture individuals with elevated moral values and principles. In the Buddha Sunday School, learning activities are designed to be enjoyable and engaging for children, igniting their enthusiasm and passion for learning. The role of the teacher's skills in this context is paramount. They serve as the guiding force, proficiently delivering tailored materials and orchestrating interactive learning experiences that resonate with students' needs and abilities.

Indeed, the amalgamation of these factors is key to understanding the pivotal role of the Buddhist Sunday school teacher in building children's character. The possession of essential skills by the teacher allows for effective instruction and guidance in this unique educational setting. The

distinction of teaching in the Buddha Sunday School further emphasizes the importance of tailoring teaching methods to meet the specific needs and goals of character development.

The freedom granted to teachers in fostering learning creativity is essential in creating engaging and meaningful learning experiences. This freedom enables teachers to adapt and innovate within the framework of the provided curriculum, resulting in a more dynamic and impactful educational environment. By strongly emphasizing character education, teachers in the Buddha Sunday School ensure that students receive comprehensive moral and ethical guidance, fostering the development of higher moral values.

The incorporation of enjoyable learning activities further enhances the learning experience for children. Teachers stimulate enthusiasm and active participation by making learning fun and engaging, leading to enhanced learning outcomes. These activities create a positive and supportive learning environment where students can thrive and develop their character.

**Table 1.** The Role of the Buddhist Sunday School Teacher in Building Children's Character

Role	Description
Qualified Teacher	The teacher is a qualified professional who meets the standards set for teaching in Buddhist Sunday School.
Preparation	Teachers prepare lessons, materials, and strategies to ensure effective learning.
Instruction	The teacher uses appropriate teaching methods and models to engage students in learning.
Character Education Emphasis	The teacher emphasizes character development in the curriculum, focusing on building higher moral values.
Fun and Engaging Learning Activities	The teacher designs and implements enjoyable learning activities that promote enthusiasm and participation.
Problem-Solving Facilitation	The teacher facilitates problem-solving activities that enhance children's ability to solve challenges independently.
Encouragement of Self-Sufficiency	The teacher fosters self-sufficiency by encouraging students to prepare their materials and take responsibility for their learning.
Promotion of Creativity and Initiative	The teacher promotes creativity and initiative by providing opportunities for students to express their ideas and take active roles in activities.
Independence in Problem-Solving	The teacher encourages students to interact, communicate, and collaborate in solving problems within group settings.
Cultivation of Responsibility	The teacher instills a sense of responsibility in students through various activities, such as punctuality, preparedness, and understanding of their roles.

The table highlights the key elements and practices associated with qualified teachers in Buddhist Sunday Schools. These elements collectively contribute to effectively developing children's character and learning experiences. One theoretical perspective that can be applied to this table is social constructivism Jannah, et al. (2021). Social constructivism posits that learning is an active process in which individuals construct knowledge and meaning through interactions with their environment and social interactions with others. In Buddhist Sunday Schools, the qualified teacher is crucial in creating a conducive learning environment and facilitating meaningful interactions that promote character development.

Teaching plays a crucial role in achieving the purpose of learning, and it should be conducted with proper preparation, execution, and evaluation. According to the social constructivist theory, individuals construct their understanding of moral values and principles through social interactions and experiences Irvansyah, et al (2021; Shofwan, et. al., 2021). In line with this theory, the teacher's role in facilitating problem-solving activities and promoting independence aligns with the idea that learners actively construct knowledge and develop problem-solving skills through collaboration and engagement in authentic tasks. Promoting creativity and initiative also aligns with social constructivism, emphasizing active participation and personal agency in learning. By providing opportunities for students to express their ideas and actively participate in activities, the teacher fosters their ability to construct meaning, develop creativity, and show initiative.

Additionally, the cultivation of responsibility reflects the social constructivist notion of individuals taking ownership of their learning and personal development. By instilling a sense of responsibility, the teacher encourages students to actively engage, prepare materials, and understand their roles in learning. Therefore, effective teaching practices in line with social constructivism contribute to the overall success of learning experiences.

The teacher who teaches at this Buddha Sunday school is a qualified teacher who meets the standard. Some teachers have been certified as professional teachers in Buddhist religious education. Before delivering a lesson, the teacher engages in thorough preparation, typically starting several days in advance. This preparation phase involves various tasks, including gathering and organizing teaching materials and media resources. The teacher ensures a well-prepared, structured lesson plan aligning with the curriculum and learning objectives. They carefully select and arrange the content, materials, and resources used during the lesson to effectively convey the intended knowledge and skills to the students.

Additionally, the teacher may consider incorporating multimedia elements such as visual aids, audio recordings, or interactive tools to enhance the learning experience. By dedicating time and effort to preparing the materials and teaching aids, the teacher sets the stage for a well-organized and engaging learning environment where students can actively participate and benefit from the lesson. (Laren, 2013). Then a teacher's learning process has to dance and use appropriate models to learn to be achieved properly. Then from that, Teachers are expected to be able to use some models of learning so that students in learning are not saturated (Laren, 2013). Then the learning evaluation phase. According to Tarbiyah, 2019, evaluation is a process to measure levels of the achievement of a goal. Evaluation conducted by teachers in Buddha Sunday School is not the score as a report, only in the form of a description, which is used as a student learning progress report.

The output of this study refers to the character development of children listed in the learning outcomes of the Buddhist Sunday School curriculum. The learning activities carried out are as follows: (a) Telling a story; The stories told at the Buddhist Sunday School are jataka stories, that is, stories that tell the life story of the Buddha. This story is related to good morals. By imitating the wise figures in this story, it will be able to develop a good character for children. (b) Role Play; Role-playing can increase children's confidence to express their inner potential to be shown to their environment. In addition, playing roles is useful for encouraging students to be actively involved in solving problems while listening carefully to how other people talk about the problems they are facing. (c) singing; The benefits of singing activities are numerous, such as: increasing vocabulary, pleasing the heart, self-confidence, good communication, and building imagination and creativity. The songs sung at the Buddhist Sunday School are spiritual songs that require a noble nature and religious understanding to inspire children to live their future lives.

The learning process conducted by the teacher in this Buddha week school can develop the child's character as follows: (a) Can solve problems; Children in this Buddha Sunday school kusalacitta can solve the problems facing both in school and in a hurry when socializing with his friends. In the BUDDHA SUNDAY SCHOOL activities in the storm, they will play together and study together this is an activity that can enhance the femininity of a student to solve the problems he faces. This also follows the research from (Rahayu, 2013), which states that through project methods, autonomy in solving simple problems can undergo improvements. Such improvements occur because, through project methods, children have a new experience in solving the problems faced in working together in the workgroup., children can interact and communicate problems and strive independently to solve problems facing within groups, (b) Can serve themselves; The kusalacitta Buddha, Sunday school students, can prepare equipment for the school and Buddha Sunday school activities. They can prepare and can redefine the equipment that they have used as well as in the vihara. (c) Creative and initiative; Buddha Sunday school students have a good creativity and initiative, This can be reflected

in the various things that are done, Such as bold advice or input in carrying out activities together, both in school environments and at home (d) So rarely ask someone else's help; Vipassana kusalacitta Buddha Sunday school students already intense follow learning can have good character to enable them to work into their obligations well, (d) responsibility; This attitude of responsibility can be obtained by student Buddha Sunday school vihara vipassana kusalacitta utilizing the carried out activity, This is proven on the sensitivity of students who arrived on time, They can also wake up early, Prepare the equipment and understand the duty of a student who has to carry out his responsibilities.

## CONCLUSION

A child's character can be effectively nurtured and aligned with Buddhist principles through non-formal learning activities conducted in Sunday schools, which are often managed by foundations or monasteries. These learning activities play a crucial role in shaping children's character as they receive guidance from teachers who adhere to the curriculum provided by the agency. The development of this good character extends beyond the classroom and can be applied in their daily lives. The significance of this research lies in its potential to benefit both educators and school management. By implementing the teachings and concepts of goodness embedded in the curriculum, teachers can effectively foster positive character traits in their students. This, in turn, contributes to achieving the overall purpose of education as specified. It is essential to uphold and promote character education in all sectors to cultivate peace and well-being within society. By instilling Buddhist values and principles through non-formal learning activities, children are equipped with the necessary qualities to lead a virtuous life and contribute positively to their communities. This integration of character education into the learning process supports individual growth and nurtures a harmonious and prosperous society.

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