



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF  
MODERN EDUCATION  
(IJMOE)  
[www.ijmoe.com](http://www.ijmoe.com)



## CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS ON 2000-2024 SCOPUS DATABASE

Nurul Nadia Ibrahim<sup>1\*</sup>, Noor Banu Mahadir Naidu<sup>2</sup>, Punggothai Chandra Shegaram<sup>3</sup>, Nur Suhaila Ahmad<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Human Sciences, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia  
Email: nurulnadia.ib@fsk.upsi.edu.my

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Human Sciences, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia  
Email: noor.banu@fsk.upsi.edu.my

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Art, Sustainability and Creative Industry, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia  
Email: hamsavarsha@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup> School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia  
Email: nurahmad2178@gmail.com

\* Corresponding Author

### Article Info:

#### Article history:

Received date: 21.07.2024

Revised date: 18.08.2022

Accepted date: 23.09.2024

Published date: 30.09.2024

#### To cite this document:

Ibrahim, N. N., Naidu, N. B. M., Shegaram, P. C., & Ahmad, N. S. (2024). Character Education In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Bibliometric Analysis On 2000-2024 Scopus Database. *International Journal of Modern Education*, 6 (22), 741-757.

DOI: 10.35631/IJMOE.622049

This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)



### Abstract:

Character education has gained prominence in the 21st century as an essential aspect of developing well-rounded individuals equipped to navigate the moral and ethical complexities of modern society. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis of character education research published between 2000 and 2024, using the Scopus database to identify key trends, influential authors, leading institutions, and dominant themes in the field. The analysis reveals a growing body of literature that reflects the increasing significance of character education, particularly in regions such as Indonesia and the United States. The findings highlight the interdisciplinary nature of character education research, with significant contributions from social sciences, psychology, and the arts and humanities. This study provides a comprehensive overview of the evolution of character education, offering valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers interested in the future direction of this critical area of study.

### Keywords:

Character Education, 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Bibliometric Analysis

## Introduction

Character education has emerged as a crucial element in contemporary educational systems, particularly in the 21st century, where there is an increasing emphasis on the holistic development of students. The objective of character education is to instill moral and ethical values in students, shaping them into responsible and well-rounded individuals. Character education is recognized as essential for the moral and civic development of students. It aims to cultivate virtues such as honesty, responsibility, respect, and empathy, which are critical for personal and social well-being.

Character education is integral in preparing students to become the ethical leaders of tomorrow, emphasizing the need for education policies that support moral education (Singh, 2019). The promotion of character education goes beyond merely teaching ethical principles; it involves creating a school culture that consistently reinforces these values. This process is essential for the long-term development of students' character, as emphasized by research on the implementation of character education in elementary schools.

Character education in Malaysian school is implemented through various subjects and activities designed to promote moral and ethical values. Islamic Education and Moral Education are the primary vehicles for character education, reflecting the country's religious and cultural diversity. Islamic Education is compulsory for Muslim students, while non-Muslim students receive Moral Education, which focuses on universal values such as honesty, respect, and responsibility.

Nevertheless, the upcoming 2027 new Malaysia's school curriculum will place a strong emphasis on character education. The curriculum will be designed to nurture well-rounded students who prioritize lifelong learning, racial unity, and social harmony. A key aspect of this curriculum is the inclusion of character education with a focus on socio-emotional learning across all levels, from preschool to secondary education. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to equip students for future challenges (The Star, 2023).

## Literature Review

The implementation of character education varies across educational institutions, but it generally involves integrating character-building activities into the curriculum and extracurricular activities. For instance, Wahyuningsih et al. (2020) describe how character education can be integrated into university lectures by embedding character values into lesson plans and encouraging students to apply these values in their daily lives [(Wahyuningsih et al., 2020)]. This broader approach to character education suggests that it plays a pivotal role in preparing students for the complexities of modern life. The impact of character education extends beyond the classroom, influencing students' behavior and their overall development. Research by Baehr (2017) emphasizes that character education not only fosters moral and civic virtues but also promotes intellectual character, encouraging traits like curiosity and open-mindedness (Baehr, 2017). Moreover, character education has been shown to positively influence teachers as well. A study by Kim et al. (2018) found that teachers who believe in the effectiveness of character education report higher job satisfaction, which in turn benefits the overall educational environment (Kim et al., 2018).

However, implementing character education is not without challenges. One significant challenge is the varying levels of understanding and commitment among educators and parents. Asri and Deviv (2023) note that gaps in teachers' understanding of character education, along with a lack of resources, can hinder its effectiveness (Asri & Deviv, 2023). Additionally, there is often a tension between the individualistic focus of character education and its political and social dimensions, as discussed by Peterson (2020), who argues for a more integrated approach that considers both moral and political aspects of character formation (Peterson, 2020).

As we progress through the 21st century, the concept and implementation of character education face new challenges and opportunities. The rapidly changing technological landscape, shifting social dynamics, and evolving educational needs have necessitated a reevaluation of how character education is approached in schools and institutions. One of the significant challenges is the changing nature of social and cultural norms. The 21st century has seen increased awareness of global issues such as climate change, social justice, and economic inequality which all of them have implications for character education. These issues require a more nuanced approach to teaching moral and ethical values, as students must learn to navigate complex societal issues that were less prominent in previous generations (Bochniarz, 2019). The rise of new pedagogical approaches and the emphasis on 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity pose additional challenges. These skills, while essential, can sometimes be at odds with traditional character education, which often focuses on the development of specific virtues such as honesty, respect, and responsibility. The challenge lies in integrating these new competencies with character education in a way that is cohesive and reinforces rather than detracts from moral development (Lavy, 2020).

To address these challenges, character education must evolve in several key ways. First, there is a need for a more integrated approach that combines character education with the teaching of 21st-century skills. This can be achieved by embedding character education within broader educational frameworks that prioritize critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving. For instance, using inquiry-based learning methods can help students apply ethical reasoning in real-world scenarios, thereby strengthening their moral development while also enhancing their cognitive skills (Ratnaningsih, 2017). Character education should embrace the opportunities presented by digital technologies. This could involve using digital platforms to create interactive and engaging character education programs that resonate with today's digitally native students. For example, gamified learning experiences that reward ethical decision-making can help reinforce character values in a format that is both familiar and appealing to students (Mayes, Natividad & Spector, 2015). Furthermore, there is a growing need for character education to be more culturally responsive and inclusive. As classrooms become more diverse, character education programs must reflect the values and traditions of all students, ensuring that moral and ethical teachings are relevant and respectful of different cultural backgrounds (Ng, 2020).

Thus, the aim of this study is to conduct a literature review of the character education research using bibliometric methods.

### Research Question

1. What is the research trends in character education according to the year of publication from 2000-2024?
2. Who has been published in the area concerning the authors, their affiliated organizations, sources, country and subject area?
3. What are the most prevalent themes and topics within the field of character education research?
4. What are the most cited papers in character education research?

### Methodology

Bibliometrics, as described by Verbeek et al. (2002), involves the combination, organization, and analysis of bibliographic data from scientific publications. In addition to basic descriptive details like publication journals, years, and key author classifications, bibliometric analysis includes advanced techniques such as document co-citation analysis (Wu & Wu, 2017). To conduct a comprehensive literature review, compile a bibliography, and achieve accurate results, it is essential to select relevant keywords, perform literature searches, and carry out detailed analyses. This process allows readers to deeply understand the research topic. In this study, Scopus database was utilized to identify the relevant studies.

### Data Search Strategy

Study employed a screening sequence to determine the search terms for article retrieval. Study was initiated by querying Scopus database with online TITLE-ABS-KEY (character AND education) AND PUBYEAR > 1999 AND PUBYEAR < 2025, thereby assembling 17,328 articles. Afterwards, the query string was revised to the keyword limited to 'Character Education'. Finally, 506 English-language research publications were found using the final search string refinement, and they were included for bibliometric analysis. The Scopus index was chosen as the database for document search and extraction because of its ability to deliver precise citation search results and its wide-ranging coverage across multiple disciplines, including physical sciences and medicine (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2019). The search focused on publications from 2000 to 2024 because the selected timeframe covers the onset and progression of character education practices and policies in the 21st century. This period is crucial for capturing the evolution of character education, reflecting how it has adapted to emerging global challenges and educational trends. By analysing this comprehensive timeframe, the study ensures a thorough understanding of the development and impact of character education over the past two decades.

### Data Analysis

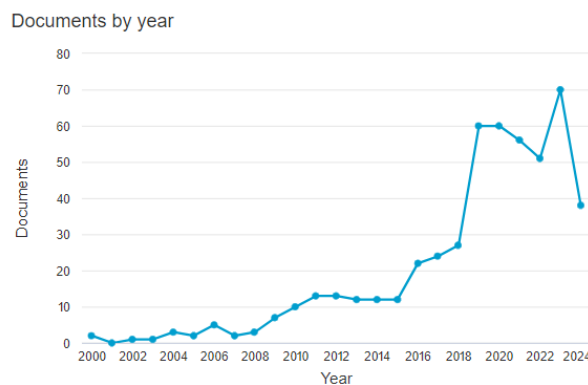
The Vosviewer software version 1.6.15 was used to analyse and visualize the bibliometric analysis for this study. Author names, journals, citations, keywords, and the year of research publication were all included in the data sets. This application was used to create maps and conduct analysis using the VOS clustering and mapping techniques. In this context, node size indicated the number of publications within the dataset. The proximity of items on the map and the thickness of connecting lines represented the strength of collaboration between two items. A higher co-author network led to closer items on the map with thicker connecting lines. Items with stronger connections were clustered together, depicting a collaborative network within the dataset.

## Research Findings and Discussions

### *RQ 1: What Are The Research Trends In Character Education According To The Year Of Publication?*

**Table 1: Number Of Publications According To The Year**

Year	Total Publication	Year	Total Publication
2024	38	2013	12
2023	70	2012	13
2022	51	2011	13
2021	56	2010	10
2020	60	2009	7
2019	60	2008	3
2018	27	2007	2
2017	24	2006	5
2016	22	2005	2
2015	12	2004	3
2014	12	2003	1

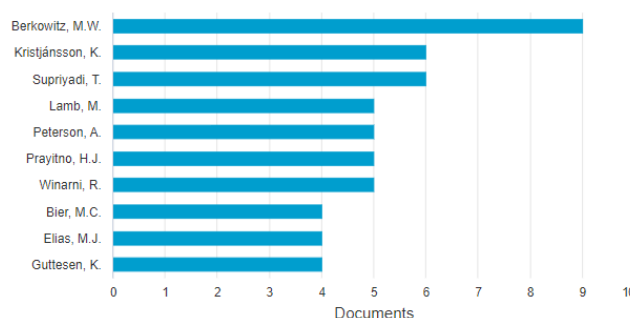


**Figure 1: Research Trends In Character Education Studies By Year Of Publication**

The data presented in Table 1 and Figure 1 highlights a clear trend in the volume of research publications on character education over the years. From 2000 to 2010, the research output in character education was relatively low, with annual publications ranging from 1 to 13. This period marks a foundational phase in character education research, where the topic was gradually gaining traction. The steady but minimal growth suggests that while there was some interest, it had not yet become a major focus within educational research. Starting from 2011, a noticeable increase in publications is observed, particularly peaking around 2019 and 2020 with 60 publications each year. This sharp increase suggests a growing recognition of the importance of character education, possibly driven by global educational policies and a heightened focus on holistic student development. The peak during these years indicates a period where character education became a significant area of study, attracting more researchers and resulting in a higher volume of publications. The period from 2021 to 2024 shows fluctuations in the number of publications. In 2021, there were 56 publications, followed by a significant rise to 70 publications in 2023 and still going 2024 are 38 publications.

***RQ 2: Who Has Been Published In The Area Concerning The Authors, Their Affiliated Organizations, Sources, Country And Subject Area?******i) Authors*****Table 2: Author With Number Of Publication**

Author	Number of Documents
Berkowitz, M.W.	9
Kristjánsson, K.	6
Supriyadi, T.	6
Lamb, M.	5
Peterson, A.	5
Prayitno, H.J.	5
Winarni, R.	5
Bier, M.C.	4
Elias, M.J.	4
Guttesen, K.	4

**Figure 2: Author With Number Of Publications**

The data provided in Table 2 and Figure 2 offers valuable insights into the 10 authors who have significantly contributed to the field of character education in published most papers in scopus data base. M.W. Berkowitz emerges as the most prolific author with 9 publications. His extensive work indicates a deep and sustained engagement with character education. K. Kristjánsson and T. Supriyadi each with 6 publications. Their frequent publications indicate that they have also made substantial contributions to the development of theories, practices, or policies related to character education. The works of Kristjánsson and Supriyadi likely complement and expand upon existing research, helping to diversify the perspectives within this academic discipline. M. Lamb, A. Peterson, H.J. Prayitno and R. Winarni each have 5 publications. M.C. Bier, M.J. Elias and K. Guttesen each have 4 publications.

The prominence of certain authors, such as Berkowitz, Kristjánsson Supriyadi and other authors indicates that their work likely serves as a cornerstone for other researchers. Their contributions may guide future studies and influence educational practices aimed at character development. Additionally, the consistent output from a range of authors demonstrates the field's vitality and the ongoing interest in character education as a crucial component of educational research. The presence of several authors with a substantial number of publications suggests that the field benefits from a diversity of perspectives and approaches. This diversity

is crucial for the development of a comprehensive understanding of character education as it allows for the exploration of various dimensions be it theoretical, practical or policy-oriented.

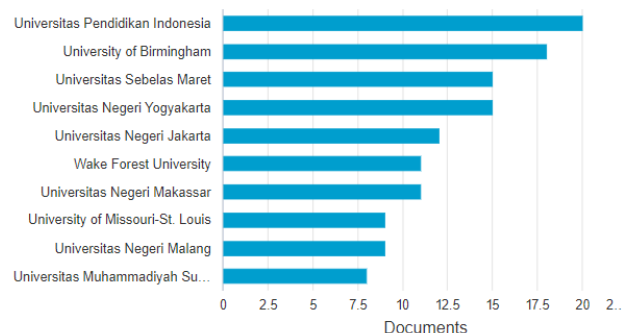
## ii) *Affiliated Organizations*

**Table 3: Affiliated Organization With Published Most Articles**

Affiliation	Documents
Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia	20
University of Birmingham	18
Universitas Sebelas Maret	15
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta	15
Universitas Negeri Jakarta	12
Wake Forest University	11
Universitas Negeri Makassar	11
University of Missouri-St. Louis	9
Universitas Negeri Malang	9
Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta	8

Documents by affiliation

Compare the document counts for up to 15 affiliations.



**Figure 3: Affiliated Organization With Published Most Articles**

The data provided in Table 3 and Figure 3 outlines the leading institutions in terms of the number of publications related to character education. This analysis offers insights into the academic organizations that have significantly contributed to this research area. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia stands out as the most prolific institution with 20 publications. Followed by University of Birmingham with 18 publications. Universitas Sebelas Maret and Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta have both produced 15 publications each. Universitas Negeri Jakarta has published 12 articles. Wake Forest University from United State and Universitas Negeri Makassar from Indonesia both have 11 publications each. University of Missouri-St. Louis, Universitas Negeri Malang, and Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta each contributed 9 to 8 publications.

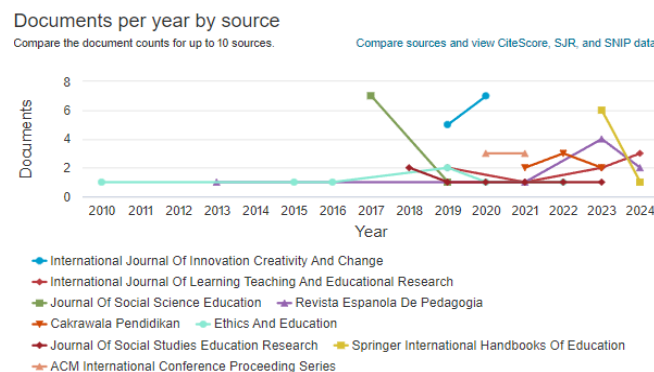
Findings show that the leading institutions in character education research with a strong showing from various other Indonesian universities. The significant contributions from these institutions suggest that character education is a major area of academic focus, particularly in Indonesia. This regional concentration of research might indicate specific cultural or educational priorities that drive the study and implementation of character education. The

diversity of institutions involved also reflects a global interest in character education, with important contributions from both Western and non-Western contexts.

### iii) Sources

**Table 4: Top Contributing Sources**

Source	Documents
Journal Of Moral Education	34
International Journal Of Innovation Creativity And Change	12
International Journal Of Learning Teaching And Educational Research	8
Journal Of Social Science Education	8
Revista Espanola De Pedagogia	8
Cakrawala Pendidikan	7
Ethics And Education	7
Journal Of Social Studies Education Research	7
Springer International Handbooks Of Education	7
ACM International Conference Proceeding Series	6



**Figure 4: Top Contributing Sources**

The data presented in Table 4 and the accompanying figure 4 highlights the top contributing sources for publications in character education. Analyzing these sources provides insights into where significant research in this field is being published and which platforms are most influential in shaping the discourse around character education based on Scopus database. Journal of Moral Education stands out as the most prominent source with 34 publications. This journal is highly influential in the field that focusing on the moral and ethical dimensions of education which are closely related to character education. International Journal of Innovation Creativity and Change with 12 publications, International Journal of Learning Teaching and Educational Research and Journal of Social Science Education each with 8 publications. Revista Espanola De Pedagogia, Cakrawala Pendidikan, Ethics and Education and Journal of Social Studies Education Research each have 7 publications followed by Cakrawala Pendidikan. Springer International Handbooks of Education and ACM International Conference Proceeding Series each with 6-7 publications.

For researchers in the field of character education, targeting these key sources for publication is crucial for reaching a relevant audience and contributing to the ongoing academic conversation. The diversity of sources also suggests that character education is a multidisciplinary field, with research being published in journals that focus on ethics, social

science education, innovation and more. Researchers aiming to make a significant impact in this field can consider these top sources when disseminating their work.

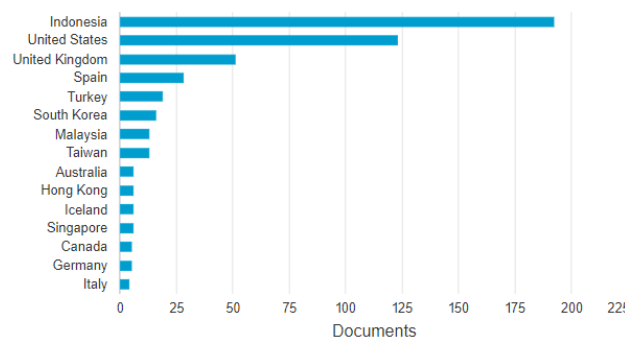
iv) *Country*

**Table 5: Countries With Most Published Articles**

COUNTRY/TERRITORY	Documents
Indonesia	192
United States	123
United Kingdom	51
Spain	28
Turkey	19
South Korea	16
Malaysia	13
Taiwan	13
Australia	6
Hong Kong	6
Iceland	6
Singapore	6
Canada	5
Germany	5
Italy	4

Documents by country or territory

Compare the document counts for up to 15 countries/territories.



**Figure 5: Countries With Most Published Articles**

The data presented in Figure 5 and Table 5 provides an overview of the countries with the most published articles in the field of character education. This analysis offers insights into which nations are leading in research output and contributing significantly to the global understanding of character education. Indonesia emerges as the most prolific country with 192 publications. This significant number suggests that character education is a major focus within Indonesian educational research. The high volume of publications indicates that Indonesian scholars are deeply engaged in exploring and promoting character education possibly driven by national educational policies or cultural emphasis on character development in schools. United States follows with 123 publications. United Kingdom is the third most significant contributor with 51 publications. Spain with 28 publications and Turkey with 19 publications are notable European and Middle Eastern region contributors respectively. South Korea with publications and Taiwan 13 publications represent significant contributions from East Asia. Malaysia 13 publications and Australia 6 publications further diversify the global research landscape

bringing insights from Southeast Asia and the Pacific region. Germany 5 publications, Canada 5 publications and Italy 4 publications add to the representation from Europe and North America.

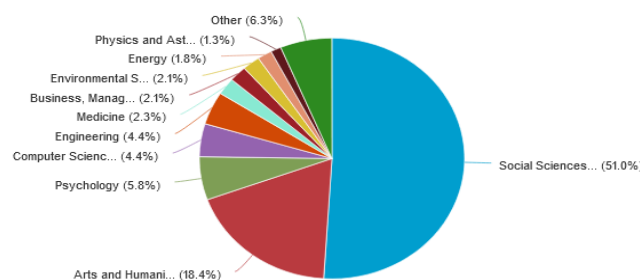
The global distribution of research highlights the diverse cultural and educational contexts in which character education is studied and implemented. This international spread of research contributions underscores the universal importance of character education and the value of cross-cultural insights in advancing this field.

v) **Subject Area**

**Table 6: Subject Area**

SUBJECT AREA	Documents
Social Sciences	404
Arts and Humanities	146
Psychology	46
Computer Science	35
Engineering	35
Medicine	18
Business, Management and Accounting	17
Environmental Science	17
Energy	14
Physics and Astronomy	10
Chemical Engineering	7
Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology	6
Mathematics	6
Chemistry	5
Multidisciplinary	5
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	4
Neuroscience	4
Decision Sciences	3
Earth and Planetary Sciences	3
Health Professions	3
Nursing	3
Materials Science	1

Documents by subject area

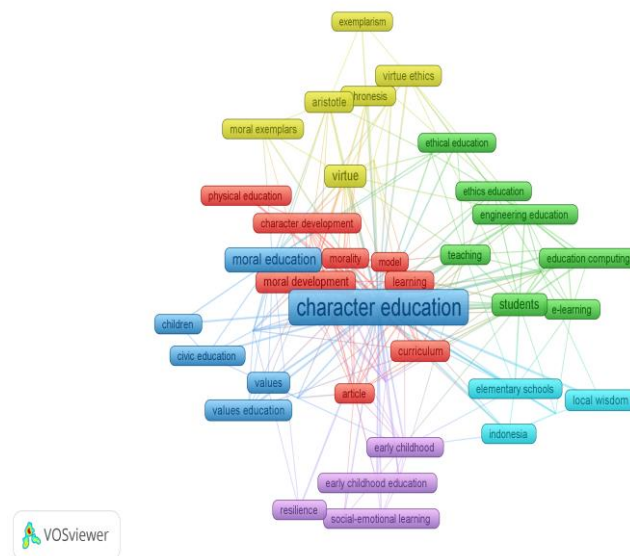


**Figure 6: Subject Area**

The data provided in the Figure 6 and table 6 categorizes the subject areas in which character education research has been published. This analysis sheds light on the interdisciplinary nature of character education and the various academic fields that contribute to its study. Social Sciences (51.0%) with 404 documents. The majority of research in character education falls within the social sciences. This is expected as character education is fundamentally concerned with social and ethical development which are core topics in social science disciplines such as sociology, education and anthropology. Arts and Humanities (18.4%) with 146 documents. The significant presence of character education research in the arts and humanities reflects the field's deep connections with moral philosophy, ethics, history and literature. Research within these disciplines may focus on the moral and ethical dimensions of character education, exploring how cultural narratives, historical contexts and philosophical frameworks influence character development. Psychology (5.8%) with 46 documents. Psychology is another key area contributing to character education research. Studies in this field likely investigate the cognitive and emotional processes involved in character development, the psychological outcomes of character education programs and the role of individual differences in moral and character education. Subject area also come from Interdisciplinary area such as Computer Science and Engineering (4.4%) each with 35 documents. This study suggests a growing interest in the application of technology in educational settings. This may include studies on digital platforms and the use of artificial intelligence for character education. Medicine (2.3%) with 18 documents. This research might focus on the integration of character education into medical education in emphasizing the development of empathy, ethical decision-making and professional integrity among healthcare providers. Next are, Business, Management, and Accounting (2.2%) with 17 documents, Environmental Science (2.1%) with 17 documents, Energy (1.8%) with 14 documents and Physics and Astronomy (1.3%) with 10 documents.

The analysis of subject areas in character education research reveals its inherently interdisciplinary nature with significant contributions from social sciences, arts and humanities and psychology. The involvement of fields such as computer science, engineering, and business indicates a broadening of the research scope reflecting the diverse contexts in which character education is relevant. This interdisciplinary approach enriches the understanding and application of character education which making it a crucial component of both personal development and professional ethics across various fields.

***RQ3: What Are The Most Prevalent Themes And Topics Within The Field Of Character Education Research From 2000 To The Present?***



**Figure 7: Network Visualization Of Co-Occurrence**

Figure 7 represents different thematic clusters in the field of character education as identified through network visualization of co-occurrence which analyze from VOSviewer software. The clusters highlight how certain themes and topics are interconnected. Cluster 1 (highlighted in red colour) contains 9 themes which Character, Character Development, Curriculum, Education, Ethics, Moral Development, Morality, Learning and Physical Education. Cluster 2 (highlighted in green) contains themes E-learning, Education Computing, Engineering Education, Ethical Education, Ethics Education, Learning Systems, Students, Teaching and Virtue Education. Next, is Cluster 3 (highlighted in blue) contains Character Education, Children, Citizenship Education, Civic Education, Moral Education, Responsibility, Values and Values Education. Cluster 4 (highlighted in yellow) contains themes Aristotle, Exemplarism, Leadership, Moral Exemplars, Phronesis, Practical Wisdom, Virtue and Virtue Ethics. Cluster 5 (highlighted in purple) contains themes Early Childhood, Early Childhood Education and Resilience and Social-Emotional Learning. Cluster 6 contains themes of Elementary Schools, Indonesia and Local Wisdom. These interconnected themes demonstrate the multidisciplinary nature of character education, which draws from education, psychology, ethics, technology, and cultural studies to create a holistic approach to character development.

**RQ4: What Are The Most Cited Papers In Character Education Research?****Table 7: Most Cited Journal**

Title	Author	Cite
Strengths gym: The impact of a character strengths-based intervention on the life satisfaction and well-being of adolescents	Proctor, C., Tsukayama, E., Wood, A., Maltby, J., Eades, J., & Linley, P. (2011)	197
Educational Policy on Emotional Intelligence: Does It Make Sense?	Mayer, J., & Cobb, C. (2000)	183
Research-Based Character Education	Marvin W. Berkowitz, & Melinda C. Bier. (2004)	121
Socioscientific Issues as a Vehicle for Promoting Character and Values for Global Citizens	Lee, H., Yoo, J., Choi, K., Kim, S., Krajcik, J., Herman, B. C., & Zeidler, D. (2013)	110
Teacher education, preservice teacher beliefs, and the moral work of teaching	Sanger, M. N., & Osguthorpe, R. (2011)	109
What works in values education	Berkowitz, M. W. (2011)	100
Politics of Character Education	Howard, R., Berkowitz, M., & Schaeffer, E. F. (2004).	65
A systematic review of state-level social-emotional learning standards: Implications for practice and research	Eklund, K., Kilpatrick, K., Kilgus, S. P., & Haider, A. F. (2018)	63
The matter of motivation: Striatal resting-state connectivity is dissociable between grit and growth mindset	Myers, C. A., Wang, C., Black, J., Bugescu, N., & Hoeft, F. (2016)	61
Exploring the implementation of local wisdom-based character education among Indonesian higher education students	Hidayati, N., Waluyo, H., Winarni, R., & Suyitno, S. (2020)	60

The table 7 provided lists some of the most cited papers in character education research based on their citation counts. This analysis highlights the impact these works have had on the field and identifies key themes and authors that have shaped contemporary discourse in character education. Highest citation is paper published on title ‘Strengths Gym: The impact of a character strengths-based intervention on the life satisfaction and well-being of adolescents’ (Proctor et al., 2011) has 197 Citations. This paper has the highest citation count, reflecting its significant influence in the area of positive psychology and character education. The study focuses on how character strengths can positively affect adolescents' well-being, a topic that resonates widely with educators and psychologists aiming to foster holistic student development. Next is ‘Educational Policy on Emotional Intelligence: Does It Make Sense?’ (Mayer & Cobb, 2000) with 183 Citations. It has been foundational in discussions about how emotional intelligence can be cultivated in educational settings and its role in overall character development. Article title’s ‘Research-Based Character Education’ (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004) with 121 Citations. This paper has significantly contributed to the evidence base for character education, providing a research-backed framework that educators and policymakers can use to develop effective character education programs. Its continued relevance is indicated by its substantial citation count. Next is ‘Socioscientific Issues as a Vehicle for Promoting Character and Values for Global Citizens’ (Lee et al., 2013) with 110 Citations. This study's focus on

global citizenship and socioscientific issues highlights the intersection between science education and character development. Its influence reflects the growing importance of preparing students to be responsible global citizens through character education. 'Teacher education, preservice teacher beliefs, and the moral work of teaching' (Sanger & Osguthorpe, 2011) with 109 Citations. This paper is critical in understanding the role of teacher education in character development. It emphasizes the moral responsibilities of teachers and how their beliefs shape their teaching practices.

Next is 'What works in values education' (Berkowitz, 2011) with 100 Citations. Berkowitz's work has been pivotal in identifying effective strategies for values education. This paper serves as a guide for educators looking to implement successful values education programs. 'Politics of Character Education' (Howard, Berkowitz, & Schaeffer, 2004) with 65 Citations. This paper explores the political dimensions of character education, offering insights into how policy and governance influence the implementation of character education. Its relevance to both policymakers and educators is demonstrated by its significant citation count. 'A systematic review of state-level social-emotional learning standards: Implications for practice and research' (Eklund et al., 2018) with 63 Citations. This paper reviews social-emotional learning (SEL) standards across different states, providing a comprehensive analysis that is crucial for both research and practical implementation of SEL in schools. 'The matter of motivation: Striatal resting-state connectivity is dissociable between grit and growth mindset' (Myers et al., 2016) with 61 Citations. The integration of neuroscience with character education, particularly through the study of grit and growth mindset, marks this paper as a significant contribution. 'Exploring the implementation of local wisdom-based character education among Indonesian higher education students' (Hidayati et al., 2020) with 60 Citations. This paper emphasizes the role of local wisdom in character education particularly in the Indonesian context.

The most cited papers in character education research in the 21st century reflect a broad range of topics, from the integration of positive psychology and emotional intelligence into education to the exploration of cultural and global contexts in character development. The significant citation counts of these papers indicate their impact and continued relevance in shaping both academic discourse and practical applications in character education. Authors like Proctor, Mayer, Berkowitz, and Hidayati have made substantial contributions to the field, influencing how character education is understood and implemented across different educational contexts globally.

## Conclusion

The bibliometric analysis of character education research from 2000 to 2024 underscores the growing importance of this field in contemporary educational discourse. The data reveals significant trends, including a marked increase in publications over the past decade, reflecting a heightened global interest in the moral and ethical development of students. The analysis identifies key contributors to the field, both in terms of prolific authors and leading institutions, with a notable concentration of research output from Indonesia and the United States. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary nature of character education is evident in its integration across various academic fields, including social sciences, psychology, and education. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of character education's evolution, offering a foundation for future research that addresses emerging challenges and opportunities in this critical area of educational development.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express our deepest gratitude to Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris and Universiti Sains Malaysia for their support throughout this research. Special thanks to the Scopus database for providing comprehensive access to the publications analyzed in this study. We also extend our appreciation to all the researchers and educators whose work has contributed to the field of character education, providing valuable insights that have enriched our analysis. Finally, we acknowledge the reviewers and editors of this journal for their constructive feedback and guidance in refining this manuscript.

## References

- Asri, D., & Deviv, S. (2023). Character education: A review of implementation and challenges in schools. *Journal of Indonesian Scholars for Social Research*.
- Baehr, J. (2017). The varieties of character and some implications for character education. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 46 (6), 1153-1161.
- Bochniarz, Z. (2019). How should higher education respond to 21st-century challenges? Some practical comments. *2019 IEEE 18th International Conference on Cognitive Informatics & Cognitive Computing (ICCCIC)*, 335-341.
- Cho, M. (2022). Analysis of character-related research trends according to school level. *The Korean Association of General Education*.
- Dakir, J., Othman, M., Tamuri, A. H., Stapa, Z., & Yahya, S. A. (2015). Islamic education and level of character internalization of secondary school students in Malaysia. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6 (4), 602-613.
- Diharja, U., & Hadiwinarto, H. (2021). Implementation of character education at the elementary school level. *Jurnal Basicedu*.
- Donesia, E. A., Widodo, P., Saragih, H. J. R., & Suwarno, P. (2023). National character development and character education in schools Malaysia. *International Journal of Progressive Sciences and Technologies*.
- Eklund, K., Kilpatrick, K., Kilgus, S. P., & Haider, A. F. (2018). A systematic review of state-level social-emotional learning standards: Implications for practice and research. *Journal of School Psychology*, 70, 1-11.
- Hallinger, P., & Kovačević, J. (2019). A Bibliometric Review of Research on Educational Administration: Science Mapping the Literature, 1960 to 2018. *Review of Educational Research*, 89, 335-369.
- Hidayati, N., Waluyo, H., Winarni, R., & Suyitno, S. (2020). Exploring the implementation of local wisdom-based character education among Indonesian higher education students. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 10 (2), 182-195.
- Kim, K., Harris, C., & Pham, L. (2018). How character education impacts teachers. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Perspectives in Higher Education*.
- Lavy, S. (2020). A review of character strengths interventions in twenty-first-century schools: Their importance and how they can be fostered. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 15 (2), 573-596.
- Lee, H., Yoo, J., Choi, K., Kim, S., Krajcik, J., Herman, B. C., & Zeidler, D. (2013). Socioscientific issues as a vehicle for promoting character and values for global citizens. *Science & Education*, 22 (5), 1153-1161.
- Mahanani, P., Akbar, S., Kamaruddin, A. Y., & Hussin, Z. (2022). Educational analysis to develop character in Malaysia and Indonesia. *International Journal of Instruction*.

- Mayasari, N., Saputra, D. G., Widiatsih, A., & Purnama, Y. (2023). Bibliometric analysis in the realm of character education management in the school environment. *West Science Business and Management*.
- Mayes, R., Natividad, G., & Spector, J. (2015). Challenges for educational technologists in the 21st century. *Education Sciences*, 5(3), 221-237.
- Mayer, J. D., & Cobb, C. D. (2000). Educational policy on emotional intelligence: Does it make sense? *Educational Psychology Review*, 12(2), 163-183.
- Minsih, M., Fuadi, D., & Rohmah, N. D. (2023). Character education through an independent curriculum. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*.
- Muhtar, T., Supriyadi, T., Lengkana, A. S., & Cukarso, S. H. I. (2021). Character education in physical education learning model: A bibliometric study on 2011-2020 Scopus database. *International Journal of Human Movement and Sports Sciences*, 9 (5), 956-964.
- Myers, C. A., Wang, C., Black, J. M., Bugescu, N., & Hoeft, F. (2016). The matter of motivation: Striatal resting-state connectivity is dissociable between grit and growth mindset. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 11 (10), 1521-1527.
- Ng, S. B. (2020). Developing curriculum design for the 21st century – Balancing the need of character building and meeting other emerging needs of the future. *Asia Pacific Journal on Curriculum Studies*.
- Peterson, A. (2020). Character education, the individual, and the political. *Journal of Moral Education*, 49 (2), 143-157.
- Proctor, C., Tsukayama, E., Wood, A. M., Maltby, J., Eades, J. F., & Linley, P. A. (2011). Strengths gym: The impact of a character strengths-based intervention on the life satisfaction and well-being of adolescents. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 6 (5), 377-388.
- Ratnaningsih, S. (2017). Character education in primary school students prepare to face challenges of the 21st century. In *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Education and Humanities* (pp. 113-117).
- Singh, B. (2019). Character education in the 21st century. *Journal of Social Studies (JSS)*, 15 (1), 1-10.
- Stuchlíková, L. (2016). Challenges of education in the 21st century. *2016 International Conference on Emerging eLearning Technologies and Applications (ICETA)*, 335-340.
- The Star. (2023, December 6). New 2027 school curriculum would include character education says Education Minister. *The Star*. Retrieved from <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2023/12/06/new-2027-school-curriculum-would-include-character-education-says-education-minister>
- Verbeek, A., Debackere, K., Luwel, M. & Zimmermann, E. (2002). "Measuring Progress And Evolution In Science And Technology –I: The Multiple Uses Of Bibliometric Indicators". *International Journal Of Management Reviews*. Vol. 4 No. 2, Pp. 179-211.
- Wahyuningsih, S., Tsuroya, T. F., Patmawati, H., Sunendar, A., & Anggarasari, N. (2020). Integration of character education in student development lecture. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Research of Educational Administration and Management (ICREAM 2018)* (pp. 116-118).
- Wu, Y.C.J. & Wu, T. (2017). "A Decade Of Entrepreneurship Education In The Asia Pacific For Future Directions In Theory And Practice". *Management Decision*. Vol. 55 No. 7, Pp. 1333-1350.

Yolandini, B., Suabuana, C., Muhammad, I., & Triansyah, F. A. (2023). Analysis bibliometric: Character education research in elementary schools on one decades. *JIIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 15 (3), 202-209.