



---

## Implementation Of Aristotic Character Education In Elementary School Learning Constructivism

Fajar Cahyadi\*<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Fauzan Muttaqin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PGRI University Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Daarul Quran Institute Jakarta, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author's email: [fajarcahyadi@upgris.ac.id](mailto:fajarcahyadi@upgris.ac.id)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

**Received:** June 13, 2024

**Revised:** August 12, 2024

**Accepted:** November 14, 2024

This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



### Keywords:

*Character Education,  
Understanding Aristotle,  
Learning Constructivism,  
Primary school*

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to analyze the theoretical implementation between character education based on Aristotle's understanding and learning constructivism in the context of basic education. The research method uses qualitative descriptive analysis. The location of the research is SD Negeri 5 Cipondoh Makmur. Data collection uses observations, interviews, and documentation studies. Data collection was carried out for 2 sessions and validated using data triangulation and source triangulation. Data analysis uses interactive analysis through reduction, data display and inference. The results of the study show that character education based on Aristotle's understanding offers a rich and relevant approach in shaping children's character in elementary school. Through habituation of good behavior and hands-on experience, Aristotle's principles can be integrated into classroom learning to help children develop positive habits. In addition, this approach can be integrated with the principles of learning constructivism, which emphasizes the active role of learners in building their own knowledge through hands-on experience and reflection. The implication is to shape the character of children in elementary school through creating a learning environment that supports character formation, paying attention to the role of parents and the social environment.

---

## Introduction

Character education has become an increasingly important topic in the context of modern education. In various countries, there is a growing awareness that education should not only focus on the transfer of academic knowledge but also on the development of strong character in students. This is not only related to cognitive abilities but also to the development of morals, ethics, and good behavior. Character education aims to produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also moral, responsible, and capable of making positive contributions to society. One philosophical idea that offers a rich concept of character education is the understanding of Aristotle. Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher, emphasized the importance of character formation through habits and ethical principles (Jimenez, 2019).

---

In the modern education system, character education has become an area of increasing focus. Character education involves the development of values, attitudes, and good behavior in students (Nurindarwati et al, 2022). It involves efforts to help students become responsible, moral individuals with high integrity. Character education is not only aimed at shaping individuals who behave well within the school context but also at creating citizens who actively and positively contribute to society. According to Muttaqin & Hariyadi (2020), the implementation of character education also helps students develop critical thinking skills, overcome challenges, and make wise decisions. However, in the application of character education, many educational institutions face challenges, especially in choosing the right framework and effective methods.

One framework that can be applied in character education is the understanding of Aristotle. Aristotle is one of the ancient Greek philosophers who made significant contributions to ethics and character education. According to him, good character is not only the result of knowledge or courage but also the result of good habits formed from experience and practice. Aristotle believed that to become a moral individual, one must be accustomed to good behavior through practice and repetition. Strong character, according to Aristotle, is the result of good habits that are consistently practiced in daily life (Thomas-Smith, 2021). The ethical theory proposed by Aristotle emphasizes the importance of habits in forming character. This means that character education cannot be based solely on theory or knowledge but must be integrated into students' daily lives through continuous practice.

At the elementary education level, the constructivist learning approach has become popular. Constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their own knowledge through experience and reflection (Sarita, 2017). According to this theory, learning is not a passive process where students merely receive information, but an active process where students are involved in forming their own understanding. Constructivist learning encourages students to explore, ask questions, and develop knowledge through interaction with their environment (Saleem et al, 2021). In the context of character education, integrating Aristotle's understanding of character education with the principles of constructivist learning can be a potential approach to shaping the character of children in elementary schools.

The importance of character education is widely recognized, but its implementation often faces several challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of consistency in understanding and applying character values across various educational institutions. Some institutions may have different understandings of what character education is and the best ways to implement it. For example, there are schools that still use more traditional approaches, such as lectures or material delivery, while others may try more interactive and engaging approaches (Muttaqin, 2020). Traditional approaches often focus on transferring information about moral values without providing space for students to truly understand and apply those values in their lives.

At the elementary school level, there is an additional challenge in using constructivism as the main learning approach. Although constructivism places learners at the center of learning and emphasizes direct experience, this approach also requires a level of independence and reflective skills that may not be fully developed in children at this level.

---

Children at the elementary school age are still in a stage of cognitive development where they may not yet be fully capable of reflecting on and understanding abstract concepts such as justice, courage, and moderation. Therefore, the application of constructivist learning in character education at this level requires appropriate strategies that can help children gradually develop their reflective abilities and understanding (Juvova et al, 2015).

In the context of this research, there is a difference between Aristotle's theory of character education and the principles of constructivist learning in the context of elementary education. Although both frameworks offer different approaches, there is potential to integrate key elements from both to create a holistic and effective approach to shaping children's character in elementary schools. Aristotle emphasized the importance of habits in forming good character. For him, strong character is the result of good habits consistently practiced (Snow, 2016). On the other hand, constructivism emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their own knowledge through direct experience and reflection on that experience (Bada & Olusegun, 2015).

Integrating Aristotle's theory of character education with the principles of constructivist learning can provide a more comprehensive approach to character education in elementary schools. By combining Aristotle's concept of habits with the active learning approach of constructivism, character education can be more effective in shaping students into individuals who not only understand moral values but are also able to apply them in everyday life. For example, in the learning process, students can be involved in activities that not only teach moral values theoretically but also provide opportunities for them to practice those values through concrete activities. For instance, students can be invited to participate in group projects that require them to work together, share responsibilities, and solve problems fairly. In this way, they not only learn about justice abstractly but also apply the concept in a real context.

Although much research has been conducted on character education and constructivist learning separately, there is still a lack of research exploring the integration of these two frameworks in the context of elementary education. In-depth research on how the application of Aristotle's principles of character education can be enhanced through the constructivist learning approach can provide valuable insights into how to effectively shape children's character at this level. Therefore, this research is important because it provides a better understanding of how character education can be integrated into the curriculum and learning practices at the elementary school level.

This research is also important because it can help address the challenges that may be faced in the separate implementation of character education and constructivist learning. One of the main challenges in the implementation of character education is ensuring that the values taught in the classroom are also applied in students' daily lives. This requires an approach that not only emphasizes theoretical learning but also practical experiences that can help students internalize those values. By integrating Aristotle's approach to habits with the principles of constructivism, character education can become more holistic and effective.

Good character education does not only focus on desired behavior but also on the development of self-awareness and deep reflection on actions and their consequences (Jaakkola et al., 2022). In this regard, the constructivist approach, which

---

emphasizes reflection, can complement Aristotle's concept of habits. For example, after students are involved in activities that involve cooperation or ethical decision-making, they can be invited to reflect on the experience, discuss what they have learned, and how they can apply that learning in the future. This reflection can help students better understand the importance of character values and how those values apply in various contexts of their lives.

Furthermore, character education based on Aristotle's understanding and constructivist learning can also help students develop critical thinking skills. Aristotle emphasized the importance of wisdom in making moral decisions, which means that students should be taught to think critically about the situations they face and make wise decisions based on the values they have learned. The constructivist approach, with its focus on active and reflective learning, can support the development of these critical thinking skills. Therefore, this research aims to analyze how character education based on Aristotle's understanding can be integrated with the principles of constructivist learning in the context of elementary education.

## **Method**

This research uses descriptive methods and qualitative approaches. The informants in the research at SD Negeri 5 Cipondoh Makmur through interviews with five informants, namely the principal, class III teacher and three class III students. Data collection instruments are carried out by means of interviews, observations, and documentation. The interviews in this study for questions in general were unstructured and spontaneous to elicit views and opinions from the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Interviews were conducted with the principal, grade III teachers and three grade III students. Interviews with the Principal aimed to provide insight into the school's character education policies, how Aristotelian moral and ethical values are implemented holistically, and the challenges and successes encountered in this process. Interviews with Grade III Teachers were conducted to dig deeper into the concrete application of Aristotelian principles in everyday teaching. Teachers shared their experiences on the methods used to instill Aristotelian virtues such as courage, justice, and wisdom in constructivist learning. Interviews with Three Grade III Students aimed to understand how students respond to and experience Aristotelian character education in their classrooms. In the observation, the researcher carried out field observation activities for one month where every week two full observations were carried out to see firsthand the application of strengthening character education to care for the environment in schools. Documentation is used to find data on the problem being researched, namely through texts, book notes, photos, pictures of books, correspondence, curriculum studies, previous studies and archives related to the media (Hancock et al, 2021).

This study uses source and technique triangulation as a data validation method. Integrating data from observations, interviews, and documents as well as assessing the consistency of one data collected in these various ways, triangulation of sources and techniques in this study serves to assess the validity of the data. Data analysis uses the Miles & Huberman Model in the data management process which goes through steps using data reduction where the results of observations, interviews and documentation results (Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024) selected in accordance with the research objectives which are

---

then presented data from the research results in accordance with the indicators from the research discussion, and verification or conclusion of data to answer the research objectives.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

#### **Character Education in Aristotle's Understanding of Elementary School Learning**

Interviews with the school principal and class teachers revealed that the concept of character education inspired by Aristotle's philosophy has been systematically applied in the elementary school studied. The principal explained that the school has adopted Aristotelian values such as courage, justice, wisdom, and moderation as the main foundation for developing students' character.

Classroom observations showed that teachers consistently integrate these values into teaching and learning activities. For instance, in project-based learning, students are encouraged to collaborate, which allows them to practice justice in the distribution of tasks and responsibilities. Additionally, teachers encourage students to reflect personally after completing tasks, helping them develop wisdom in understanding their learning experiences.

From document studies, such as syllabi and lesson plans, it is evident that these Aristotelian character values are not only treated as end goals but also as processes that students must experience in every aspect of learning. Each learning material is designed by incorporating elements that encourage students to practice these virtues in real-life situations.

#### **Aristotle's Understanding in Constructivist Learning at Elementary School**

Aristotle's understanding in the context of constructivist learning at elementary school is clearly reflected in how teachers design and implement learning activities. Interviews with class teachers indicated that they understand the importance of direct experience and reflection in internalizing character values. Teachers explained that they use a constructivist approach to provide space for students to build their own understanding of these values through concrete learning experiences.

Classroom observations revealed that teachers often use techniques such as group discussions, simulations, and role-playing to help students grasp abstract concepts like courage and justice. In these activities, students not only learn about these concepts but are also given the opportunity to apply them in simulated situations that closely resemble real-life scenarios.

The analyzed documents, including student journals and progress reports, show that students are given opportunities to reflect on their experiences and how they practice Aristotelian values in learning activities. This reflection process is considered essential to ensure that character learning does not only happen on the surface but is also embedded in students' daily attitudes and behaviors.

---

### **Challenges in Implementing Aristotelian Character Education**

Despite the significant progress in implementing Aristotelian character education within constructivist learning at the elementary school level, this research also identified several challenges. Interviews with the principal and teachers revealed that one of the main challenges is initial resistance from some students and parents towards this approach. Some parents feel that a strong emphasis on character education might detract from students' academic achievements.

Teachers also expressed challenges in ensuring the consistency of character values application outside the classroom environment. Although students show understanding and application of these values in class, there is difficulty in ensuring that they carry these behaviors into their daily lives, especially when they are outside the school's supervision. Observations identified that some students struggle to consistently apply Aristotelian values, especially when faced with situations requiring complex moral understanding. This indicates that character education requires a more in-depth and sustained approach, rather than just classroom instruction.

Further document studies show that although the curriculum has been well-designed to include character education, implementation in the field still needs improvement. There is a need for further training for teachers on effective strategies to instill these values, as well as the development of better evaluation tools to measure the success of character education. This research reveals that the application of Aristotelian character education within constructivist learning in elementary schools holds great potential for shaping students' character in a profound and meaningful way. Although there are some challenges to overcome, the results indicate that with the right strategies, character education can be effectively integrated into the curriculum and positively impact students' moral development.

However, the success of this implementation heavily relies on the full support of all related parties, including teachers, students, parents, and the school administration. This research recommends further development in teacher training, parental support, and the enhancement of evaluation tools to ensure that character education is deeply rooted in students, not only during their time at school but also in their everyday lives.

### **Discussion**

#### **Character Education in Aristotle's Understanding of Learning in Elementary School**

Aristotle's understanding of character education has deep roots in ancient philosophical thought. Aristotle viewed that good character is not something that is given to humans from birth, but something that must be built through good habits and practices (Lickona, 2022). Based on the results of interviews and observations on learning at school, Aristotle's principles can be applied to shape children's character through direct experiences and good behavior habits.

One of the main concepts in Aristotle's understanding is the idea that good character is the result of good habits (Sanderse, 2020; Suwardani, 2020). Aristotle believed that human beings are naturally inclined towards goodness (Kristjánsson, 2022), but to achieve that goodness, they need to form good habits through consistent practice and practice. The

---

results of interviews and observations explain that teachers have an important role in guiding children in forming good habits through structured learning experiences.

The application of character education based on Aristotle's understanding in learning in elementary schools can involve several concrete steps (Mulyasa, 2022). First, teachers have created a learning environment that supports character building, such as by emphasizing the importance of mutual respect, cooperation, and honesty in daily interactions in the classroom. Second, teachers have integrated lessons about moral and ethical values into the curriculum as a whole, both through formal subject matter and through extracurricular activities.

In addition, it is also important to pay attention to the role of parents and the social environment in shaping children's character (Rohmalimna et al, 2022). Parents have a strong influence in shaping children's character through the example they give and the values they teach at home. Therefore, collaboration between schools and families is very important in supporting the formation of good character in children.

### **Aristotle's Understanding in Learning Constructivism in Elementary School**

Constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes the active role of learners in building their own knowledge through direct experience and reflection (Chuang, 2021). In the context of primary education, the constructivist approach allows children to learn through interaction with their environment and with their peers. The integration of Aristotle's understanding of character education with the principles of learning constructivism can provide a holistic approach in character formation in children in elementary school.

One of the key aspects of constructivism is the emphasis on learning through hands-on experience (Matriano, 2020). Aristotle also acknowledged the importance of experience in shaping character, although his approach may have differed slightly. For Aristotle, good experiences and consistent practices are the foundation for the formation of good habits (Afif, 2023). In the context of learning in primary schools, the results of observations and interviews show that teachers have created interesting and relevant learning experiences for children, so that they can develop positive habits through structured practices.

In addition, constructivism also emphasizes the active role of students in learning (O'Connor, 2022; Suparlan, 2019). This is in line with Aristotle's concept of character formation through good habits that are practiced consistently. In learning, teachers have provided opportunities for children to actively participate in the learning process, such as through group discussions, collaborative projects, and role simulations.

The integration of Aristotle's understanding of character education with the principles of learning constructivism can also help create an inclusive and supportive learning environment (Ramli et al., 2023). By paying attention to children's individual needs and interests, teachers can create engaging and meaningful learning experiences for all learners. This can help increase children's engagement and motivation in learning, as well as help them develop strong and positive characters.

---

### **Obstacles that Arise in Aristotle's Character Education**

Although the concept of character education based on Aristotle's understanding offers a rich and relevant approach in shaping children's character, there are several obstacles that may arise in its implementation. One of the main obstacles is the challenge of changing habits that have been embedded in individuals (Fadhilah, Safitri, & others, 2024). Forming new positive habits takes time and patience, and it is not always easy to do, especially if the individual has become accustomed to negative or detrimental behaviors.

In addition, character education based on Aristotle's understanding can also be faced with challenges in dealing with individual variations. Every child has different backgrounds, experiences, and needs, so an effective approach to shaping their character may also need to be adjusted (Hermino & Arifin, 2020). This requires flexibility and adjustment from teachers in designing and implementing effective character education programs in primary schools.

Another challenge is in balancing a teacher-centered approach to learning with a student-centered approach (Festiawan, 2020; Nuñez Enriquez & Oliver, 2021). While character education based on Aristotle's understanding emphasizes the important role of teachers in guiding and shaping children's character, the learning constructivism approach emphasizes the active role of students in building their own knowledge. Finding a balance between these two approaches can be challenging for teachers in planning and implementing effective learning in primary school.

The obstacles that arise also exist from administration and policy can also affect the implementation of character education based on Aristotle's understanding in elementary schools. Limited time, resources, and support can make it difficult for schools to implement character education programs thoroughly and sustainably (Kurdi, 2023; Lavy, 2020). Therefore, support from schools, parents, and the community is very important in ensuring the successful implementation of effective character education at the elementary school level.

### **conclusion**

Based on the results and discussions, it was concluded that character education based on Aristotle's understanding offers a rich and relevant approach in shaping children's character in elementary school. Through habituation of good behavior and hands-on experience, Aristotle's principles can be integrated into classroom learning to help children develop positive habits. In addition, this approach can be integrated with the principles of learning constructivism, which emphasizes the active role of learners in building their own knowledge through hands-on experience and reflection. However, the implementation of character education based on Aristotle's understanding in elementary schools is also faced with several obstacles and difficulties in changing habits that have been embedded in individuals, as well as dealing with individual variations and balancing a teacher-centered learning approach with a student-centered approach. Administrative and policy constraints can also affect the implementation of character education programs comprehensively and sustainably in elementary schools. The implication is that by shaping children's character in elementary school through creating a learning environment that supports character formation, paying attention to the role of parents and the social environment, and adapting

---



learning approaches to individual needs, teachers can help children develop strong and positive characters.

### **Bibliography**

- Afif, A. (2023). *Eudaimonisme: Kebajikan, Aktualisasi Potensi, dan Kebahagiaan*. IRCISOD.
- Bada, S. O., & Olusegun, S. (2015). Constructivism learning theory: A paradigm for teaching and learning. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 5(6), 66–70.
- Chuang, S. (2021). The applications of constructivist learning theory and social learning theory on adult continuous development. *Performance Improvement*, 60(3), 6–14.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Fadhilah, N. R., Safitri, D., & others. (2024). Implementasi Pembelajaran Ips Dalam Membangun Dan Membentuk Karakter Siswa. *Sindoro: Cendikia Pendidikan*, 3(10), 61–70.
- Festiawan, R. (2020). Belajar dan pendekatan pembelajaran. *Universitas Jenderal Soedirman*, 11.
- Hancock, D. R., Algozzine, B., & Lim, J. H. (2021). Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers.
- Hermino, A., & Arifin, I. (2020). Contextual character education for students in the senior high school. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 9(3), 1009–1023.
- Jaakkola, N., Karvinen, M., Hakio, K., Wolff, L.-A., Mattelmäki, T., & Friman, M. (2022). Becoming self-aware—how do self-awareness and transformative learning fit in the sustainability competency discourse? In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 7, p. 855583).
- Jimenez, M. (2019). Empeiria and Good Habits in Aristotle's Ethics. *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 57(3), 363–389.
- Juvova, A., Chudy, S., Neumeister, P., Plischke, J., & Kvintova, J. (2015). Reflection of constructivist theories in current educational practice. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 3(5), 345–349.
- Kristjánsson, K. (2022). Reason and intuition in Aristotle's moral psychology: why he was not a two-system dualist. *Philosophical Explorations*, 25(1), 42–57.
- Kurdi, M. S. (2023). TANTANGAN DALAM IMPLEMENTASI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER. *Pendidikan Karakter*, 102.
- 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.
- Lickona, T. (2022). *Character matters (Persoalan karakter): Bagaimana membantu anak mengembangkan penilaian yang baik, integritas, dan kebajikan penting lainnya*. Bumi Aksara.
- Matriano, E. A. (2020). Ensuring Student-Centered, Constructivist and Project-Based Experiential Learning Applying the Exploration, Research, Interaction and Creation (ERIC) Learning Model. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, 7(1), 214–227.
- Mulyasa, H. E. (2022). *Manajemen pendidikan karakter*. Bumi Aksara.
- Nuñez Enriquez, O., & Oliver, K. L. (2021). 'The collision of two worlds': when a teacher-centered facilitator meets a student-centered pedagogy. *Sport, Education and Society*, 26(5), 459–470.
- Nurindarwati, R., Hasyim, D., & others. (2022). EVALUATION MODEL OF CHARACTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND MORAL EDUCATION LEARNING AT SMP NEGERI I SURAKARTA. *Journal Research of Social*

*Science, Economics \& Management.*

- O'Connor, K. (2022). Constructivism, curriculum and the knowledge question: tensions and challenges for higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 47(2), 412–422.
- Ramli, A., Putri, R., Trimadona, E., Abadi, A., Ramadani, Y., Saputra, A. M. A., ... others. (2023). *LANDASAN PENDIDIKAN: Teori Dan Konsep Dasar Landasan Pendidikan Era Industri 4.0 Dan Society 5.0 Di Indonesia*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.
- Rohmalimna, A., Yeau, O., & Sie, P. (2022). The role of parental parenting in the formation of the child's self-concept. *World Psychology*, 1(2), 36–45.
- Saleem, A., Kausar, H., & Deeba, F. (2021). Social constructivism: A new paradigm in teaching and learning environment. *Perennial Journal of History*, 2(2), 403–421.
- Salmona, M., & Kaczynski, D. (2024). Qualitative data analysis strategies. In *How to Conduct Qualitative Research in Finance* (pp. 80–96). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Sanderse, W. (2020). Does Aristotle believe that habituation is only for children? *Journal of Moral Education*, 49(1), 98–110.
- Sarita, P. (2017). Constructivism: A new paradigm in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Academic Research and Development*, 2(4), 183–186.
- Snow, N. E. (2016). How habits make us virtuous. *Developing the Virtues: Integrating Perspectives*, 135–156.
- Suparlan, S. (2019). Teori konstruktivisme dalam pembelajaran. *Islamika*, 1(2), 79–88.
- Suwardani, N. P. (2020). "QUO VADIS" PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER: dalam Merajut Harapan Bangsa yang Bermartabat. Unhi Press.
- Thomas-Smith, L. (2021). *In Praise of Habit: The Necessity of Habit for Consistent Moral Practice*. University of Colorado at Boulder.
-