

Collaborative Character-Building Strategies of Parents and Teachers for Children with Intellectual Disabilities

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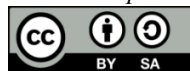
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ABSTRACT

Character building is a fundamental goal of education; however, fostering character development among children with intellectual disabilities remains challenging because it requires consistent support from both families and schools amid developmental limitations and persistent social stigma. The objective of this qualitative research using by case study design at Cileunyi State Special Education School, Bandung, Indonesia, is to understand the strategies implemented by teachers and parents to develop the character of children who have intellectual disabilities, as well as the forms of collaboration that exist between them. With the data collection using in-depth interviews with teachers, parents, and students, supported by observations and documentation, all of data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The findings show that collaboration between teachers and parents plays an essential role in the character development of children who have intellectual disabilities. Teachers and parents consistently prioritize the development of their independence character and religious character through four main strategies: habituation, modeling, repetition, and continuous monitoring. According to this study, the success of these strategies depends on how consistently they are applied in both home and school settings. The important thing to ensuring consistency in character education and bolstering character development for children who have intellectual disabilities is tight collaboration and sustained communication between parents and educators.

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Collaborative Character-Building Strategies of Parents and Teachers for Children with Intellectual Disabilities

1. Introduction

Character development in children is one of the fundamental goals of education. Through the educational process, every child is expected to develop various positive character traits that will serve as a foundation for their personal and social lives (Devi Yaniar Wi Hargina, 2023). Character, in this context, is defined as the way a person thinks, acts, behaves, and socializes traits that distinguish them in their daily lives within their surroundings, such as school, the community, family, and the nation (Siswanto et al., 2021). In Indonesia, character development for students with disabilities is supported through the national special education and curriculum framework, which emphasizes educational adaptation to students' needs and character development (Kemendikdasmen, 2025b; Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2021). This emphasis is further reflected in the "7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children" guide for Special Education Schools (SLB) (2025a), which promotes religious character, noble moral values, discipline, independence, and social responsibility through daily habituation involving schools and families. Therefore, character development is not only oriented toward fostering good behavior but is also an educational process aimed at instilling positive values, attitudes, and habits so that children can fulfill their roles responsibly in society.

The orientation of character development involves more than just behavioral features; it also includes knowledge, attitudes, and actions. Thomas Lickona emphasizes the importance of synergy among the three components of morality as a means of building good character: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. Moral knowing emphasizes a child's knowledge and understanding of moral values; moral feeling emphasizes the ability to internalize and feel those values, while moral action emphasizes the implementation of moral values in the form of concrete behavior (Lickona, 1991). These three components complement one another in shaping a well-rounded character in children.

Character development becomes a more complex endeavor when applied to children who have intellectual disabilities. These Children are those who experience impairments in cognitive development, resulting in intellectual abilities below the average for their age group. This condition causes them to have difficulty processing information quickly, limitations in problem-solving, delays in the activities of learning process, and learning patterns that tend to be irregular (Lubis et al., 2023). In alongside cognitive obstacles, Public Law also defines children who have intellectual disabilities as individuals who experience limitations across various aspects of development, such as cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social (Nugroho & Trihastuti, 2024).

Children with intellectual disabilities experience challenges due to both their developmental limitations and their social surroundings. Previous research reveals that public comprehension of children with impairments remains inadequate, resulting in numerous unfavorable perceptions about their presence (Andriani et al., 2023). These negative judgments are largely due to society ideas that regard disability as a cause of shame, resulting in children with impairments receiving less than ideal social acceptance. This scenario hinders children's ability to properly develop their social interaction skills. One element contributing to their lack of acceptability is their weak social skills. Furthermore, poor social skills may be influenced by parents' lack of awareness in implementing parenting practices that are appropriate for the child's developmental needs, preventing the social learning process from progressing effectively.

Despite these limitations, children with intellectual disabilities are still expected to develop character traits that enable them to participate in and fulfill their respective roles in everyday life. Character development in this context does not imply that children must demonstrate the same level of independence or behavioral performance as children without

disabilities, but rather that they are supported to develop positive values, habits, and behaviors according to their individual abilities and developmental capacities. In practice, however, many children with intellectual disabilities continue to require sustained guidance and support from parents and teachers to develop and consistently demonstrate these character traits across different situations and environments. This condition highlights the importance of continuous character-building efforts that accommodate children's individual limitations while gradually fostering their independence and participation.

The initial context of SLB Negeri Cileunyi presents a relatively positive setting for examining this issue. The school's educational vision and mission emphasize character, independence, achievement, noble behavior, empathy, and social responsibility, while cooperation with parents is identified as one of the strategies for achieving these educational goals. The school's documented activities also demonstrate that students are actively involved in various educational and developmental activities alongside teachers and parents. In addition, the school has documented a number of student and institutional achievements, indicating that students are provided with opportunities to participate and demonstrate their abilities despite their developmental limitations. These initial observations, based on school documentation and publicly available information from the school's official website, suggest that character development and student participation are being continuously supported within the school context.

Nevertheless, these achievements and documented activities do not in themselves explain how character development is cultivated or how consistency is maintained between the school and home environments. The positive context of SLB Negeri Cileunyi therefore raises an important question: how do parents and teachers develop and reinforce children's character, and how they collaborate to maintain the continuity of character development across educational settings. Understanding these practices is important because the development of children with intellectual disabilities depends not only on the programs provided by schools but also on the consistency of support and reinforcement provided by families.

Previous studies have revealed the important role of collaboration between educational institutions particularly between schools and families in educating children living with disabilities. International studies have similarly emphasized the importance of parent–teacher collaboration in supporting children with intellectual disabilities. For example, Fontaine et al. (2008) examined communication between parents and teachers of children with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities in special educational centres in the Netherlands and found that effective information exchange between families and professionals is essential for providing consistent support. Talapatra et al. (2019) further emphasized that strong family–school partnerships are essential in supporting students with intellectual disabilities, particularly in planning educational and transition services. More recently, Klefbeck (2026), through a scoping review of empirical studies, found that teacher–parent collaboration can support the development and participation of students with intellectual disabilities, although its effectiveness depends on trust, clear roles, institutional support, and reciprocal communication. These studies indicate that collaboration between families and schools has been widely recognized internationally as an important component of supporting children with intellectual disabilities.

However, present research continues to focus primarily on boosting academic achievement, developing functional abilities, or changing children's conduct; therefore, the topic of character development has not received significant attention (Azwar, 2023). In the context of children with intellectual disabilities, behavioral and functional development can be understood through the concept of adaptive behavior. Tassé et al. (2016) explain that intellectual disability involves limitations in adaptive behavior across conceptual, social, and practical domains. These domains provide observable areas through which children's developmental

progress can be monitored, including their ability to follow routines, interact with others, regulate behavior, and perform daily activities with increasing independence. Similarly, previous research indicates that collaboration between parents and schools frequently confronts many barriers, particularly in maintaining consistency in the application of values and behaviors between the home and school environments (Umam, 2023). These findings indicate that collaborative solutions for character development in children living with intellectual disabilities warrant further investigation.

It is important to examine these limitations, given that character development in children with intellectual disabilities requires a continuous and consistent process across various educational settings. Alongside the family which serves as the first and primary educational environment schools fulfill a vital role in supporting children's character development within a structured educational process (Wahyuningsih & Umaeroh, 2021). Synergy between parents and teachers is necessary so that the character values instilled at school can be reinforced through parenting at home, thereby ensuring that character development proceeds continuously. Based on this overview, the goal of this study is to understand the strategies implemented by parents and teachers to support the character development of children living with intellectual disabilities, as well as to analyze the forms of collaborative efforts established between them.

This study contributes to the scientific literature on character development in children with intellectual disabilities by emphasizing the importance of coordinated efforts between parents and teachers in fostering character development of children with these disabilities. In practical terms, these findings can provide practical guidelines for parents, teachers, and relevant educational institutions in developing a more consistent and collaborative approach to character development, linking educational practices at school with parenting practices at home.

2. Method

Type of Research/Design

This study, which utilized a qualitative approach based on case study research design, aimed to understand the strategies adopted by parents and teachers to build the character of children living with intellectual disabilities at the Cileunyi State Special Education School (SLB). The paradigms of qualitative approach is using postpositivist and interpretive paradigms, aimed at understanding phenomena based on the meanings constructed by research participants within their natural context, rather than producing statistical generalizations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Subjects/Population and Sample

The study was conducted at the Cileunyi Special Education School (SLB Negeri Cileunyi) in Bandung Regency, which was selected through purposive sampling because it is a special education school (SLB) that provides education for students who living with intellectual disabilities and implements a learning approach that involves the teachers and parents' active participation in the character-building process. Research informants were chosen with purposive sampling technique, based on their active involvement in the character education process of the children. The informants consisted of two junior high school homeroom teachers, four parents of eighth-grade students, and several junior high school students at SLBN Cileunyi in Bandung.

Procedure/Data Collection

Data collection to achieve the objectives of this study was conducted through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. The research instruments consisted of a researcher-developed semi-structured interview guide, an observation guide, and a documentation guide. The interview guide comprised nine main questions addressing informants' perceptions of children with intellectual disabilities, priority character traits, character development strategies, challenges, parent-teacher collaboration, and the roles of

family, teachers, and the surrounding environment. The interviews were conducted semi-structurally, in which the main questions served as a guide while follow-up questions were developed based on participants' responses to explore relevant information in greater depth. Interviews were carried out with teachers, parents, and students to gather concrete information regarding the character traits considered a priority, as well as the character development strategies implemented, the forms of collaboration between families and schools, and the various challenges encountered during implementation. Observations were conducted directly on learning activities, interactions between teachers and students, and various habit-forming activities related to character development within the school environment. Documentation was used as supporting information, including various school documents, pictures of activities, and other records pertinent to the execution of character education. The overall data collection process is summarized in Figure 1.

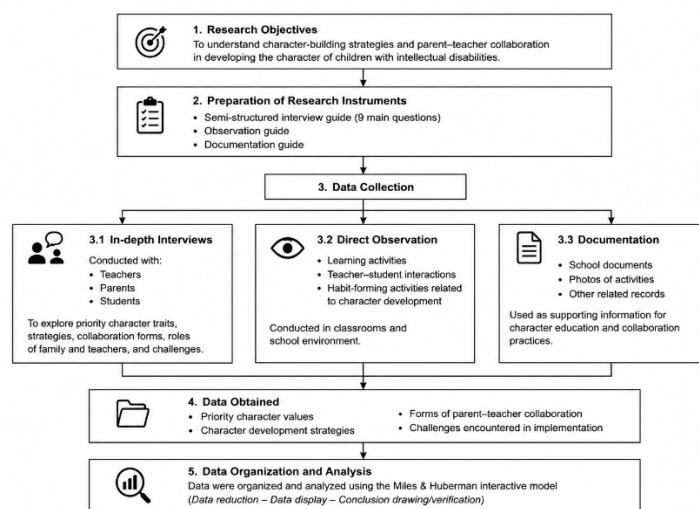


Figure 1. Flowchart of the Data Collection Process

Data Analysis

To evaluate the validity of the data, this study using triangulation, specifically technique triangulation, by comparing the results all data collection technique by interviews with direct observations, and also literature and documentation analysis, as well as using source triangulation, based on information collected from all informant by teachers, parents and students. After all the data were collected, the data were analyzed using the interactive qualitative analysis model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and then the formulation and verification of conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis was conducted simultaneously from the data collection process until patterns, themes, and relationships among the findings were identified that could address the research focus on parental strategies, teacher strategies, and the collaboration synergy between the two in building the character of children who living with intellectual disabilities.

3. Results

Character-Building Strategies of Parents and Teachers in Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Based on interviews with parents of students at the Cileunyi State Special Education School in Bandung Regency, This study was found that parents play a main role in the character development for their children living with intellectual disabilities. This role is evident not only in the higher frequency of interaction within the family environment compared to at school but also in parents' awareness of their children's specific characteristics and needs. The interview

results show that parents closely tailor their character-building practices to their children's abilities and daily needs. Therefore, parents strive to instill various character values so that their children can lead more independent lives and adapt to their social environment.

The interviews data showed a common orientation among parents in determining which character traits to prioritize. The two main character traits that are consistently developed are religious character and independence. For parents, the success of a child's education is not measured solely by academic ability, but rather by the child's ability to perform religious duties in accordance with Islamic law and to carry out daily activities independently. These expectations form the basis for determining the character education strategies implemented within the family environment. In practice, religious character was reflected in activities such as prayer, recitation of daily supplications, and memorization of short surahs, while independence was reflected in children's participation in daily self-care activities.

In shaping religious character, the most dominant strategy is modeling by parents and other family members. Parents do not merely give instructions but also directly demonstrate religious practices so that children can observe and imitate these behaviors. For example, when performing prayers, children are invited to stand beside their parents to follow each movement and recitation. In addition, parents also employ the strategy of repetition through the teaching of daily prayers and short surahs by having parents and children take turns reciting the verses. This process is carried out routinely as part of daily habituation at home.

A relatively similar strategy is also applied in fostering independence. Parents first demonstrate the activity to be performed, then ask the child to imitate and practice it independently. Based on observation data, this strategy is applied in various daily activities, such as putting on and taking off school clothes, eating, bathing, and other self-care activities. Thus, the learning process occurs not only through instruction but also through modeling, hands-on practice, and continuous repetition tailored to the child's abilities. The findings also show that parents consistently reinforce these practices through repeated guidance and ongoing support until the children are able to perform these activities with a higher degree of independence.

The interview data further findings indicate that parents play a crucial role in shaping the character of children with intellectual disabilities. Religious character and independence are the primary focuses, as they are considered the most essential tools children need to navigate daily life. Although these children still require guidance and supervision in performing religious rituals and independent activities, parents view every small step of progress as a form of advancement that must be continuously reinforced through consistent support.

"As parents, we do not force our children to be able to do everything. Instead, we gradually introduce and model activities according to their abilities. We also encourage them to develop habits that they can perform independently, such as eating on their own, performing prayers, and praying. We continuously guide, practice, and reinforce these habits so that they can gradually develop into independence in their daily lives."

The interview findings indicate that parents' character-building practices were implemented gradually and continuously. Although children still required guidance and supervision in religious activities and daily self-care, parents viewed each small improvement as progress that needed to be reinforced through continued practice and support.

Overall, the findings from the interviews indicate that parents employ strategies such as leading by example, habituation, repetition, and continuous guidance to develop their children's religious character and independence. These strategies are tailored to each child's individual capabilities and implemented through routine activities at home.

In addition to parental strategies, teachers also play a role in children's character development at school. The interview with teachers and observation indicate that teachers play

a crucial role in the character development for children or student who living with intellectual disabilities while they are in the school environment. All teachers have responsibility not only as educators but also as surrogate parents responsible for guiding, directing, and helping children develop the habit of applying various character values in their daily lives at school. This role becomes even more important because children spend most of their time outside the family environment with teachers and peers.

The interview and observation data also showed that school provides a supportive environment for the character development of children who living with intellectual disabilities. Some teachers noted that children tend to be more confident and find it easier to express themselves at school because they interact with peers who have relatively similar developmental characteristics. These conditions foster a more comfortable learning environment, allowing the character-building process to take place more effectively.

The strategies implemented by teachers are essentially similar to those used by parents, namely through habituation, modeling, repetition, guidance, and continuous monitoring. The difference lies in the intensity of implementation, which is adapted to learning activities and school routines. Some of the key character traits that teachers instill in children with disabilities at school also focus on religious character and independence.

In fostering religious character, teachers encourage students to engage in various religious activities as part of their daily school routine. These practices include performing wudu before learning activities, praying before and after studying, and reciting prayers during daily activities, such as prayers before and after meals, as well as other daily prayers. Throughout these activities, teachers provide direct guidance by supervising each step performed by the students. If an error is detected, teachers not only provide verbal corrections but also demonstrate the correct movements or recitations so that students can imitate and practice them.

In addition to religious character, teachers also prioritize fostering independence through various simple, repetitive activities. Observations show that most eighth-grade students are already able to perform various activities independently, such as putting on and taking off their shoes, organizing their school supplies, putting items away in their proper places, and writing letters and numbers although they still require guidance during the initial stages. These skills are developed through practice that is gradual, consistent, and repetitive, tailored to each child's individual abilities. These findings indicate that character development in children with intellectual disabilities requires a gradual and repetitive process. This process adapts to each child's individual abilities so that learning success is not measured by the speed of achievement but rather by the consistency of progress demonstrated over time.

In practice, teachers consistently repeat instructions, provide examples, and remind students of the various rules that apply at school. Supervision is carried out continuously to ensure that every student is able to carry out activities in accordance with the character education learning objectives. In addition, teachers also provide guidance in managing emotions by offering explanations and direction when students exhibit uncontrolled behavior so that they learn to better recognize and control their emotions.



Figure 2. *Teacher helping a child learn and understand the material*

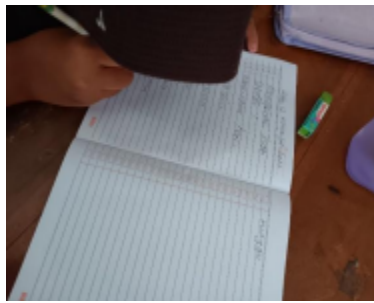


Figure 3. *Teacher demonstrating during a lesson so that the child can write independently*



Figure 4. *Scene of the daily practice of saying a prayer together at the end of the day*

The observation and documentation findings further support these practices, showing that direct guidance, modeling, repeated practice, and religious habituation are integrated into everyday learning and school routines (Figures 2–4). The activities illustrate how these practices are integrated into everyday learning and school routines, particularly in supporting students' understanding, independence, and religious habits.

Nevertheless, the interview and observation findings revealed differences in the level of independence among students. One student still demonstrated a relatively low level of independence as the student continued to require repeated guidance and assistance when writing, performing religious practices, and and required more assistance in performing daily activities alongside peers at school. According to the information obtained from the teacher, this condition was related to the limited consistency of guidance and opportunities to practice independent activities in the home environment. As a result, teachers provided additional guidance and repeated practice at school to help the student gradually develop greater independence.

Overall, findings from interviews with teachers, observations, and documentation indicate that teachers foster children's character through several key strategies, namely habit formation, setting a good example, repetition, guidance, and continuous monitoring. Religious character and independence are the main character dimensions observed in the school environment, just as they are by parents at home. The implementation of these strategies is integrated into daily learning activities and school routines, and is adapted to each child's individual abilities.

Parent–Teacher Collaboration in Character Building

The interview results indicate that character development in children with intellectual disabilities is not only carried out separately by parents or teachers, but also through collaboration between the two. Without coordination, the character values introduced at school may not be consistently reinforced at home, and vice versa.

The most prevalent form of collaboration identified in this study is ongoing communication between teachers and parents. This communication not only serves to convey the child's progress but also acts as a means of coordination in determining character education strategies to be consistently applied both at home and at school. Through two-way communication, teachers can provide information about the character habits or goals currently being cultivated at school, while parents share updates on their child's progress and any challenges the child faces within the family environment. If there are differing perspectives regarding the character education process, both parties engage in discussions to reach a mutual understanding of the steps to be taken.

The interview results also indicate that regular communication serves as a means of

evaluating a child's character development. Parents and teachers jointly monitor changes in the child's behavior and then adjust strategies if obstacles or a decline in development are identified. Conversely, if the child demonstrates positive development, the strategies already in place are maintained and reinforced through consistent practice in both environments. Therefore, communication serves not only as a medium for exchanging information but also as a mechanism for joint decision-making in the character-building process.

Research findings show that the character traits that are the focus of collaboration between parents and teachers are religious character and independence. Both of these traits are developed through relatively similar strategies, namely habituation, modeling, repetition, and monitoring, which are carried out on an ongoing basis. Parents and teachers reinforce the implementation of these strategies to ensure that children receive a consistent learning experience, both at school and at home. This consistency is one of the key factors identified in the character-building process.

One important finding in this study indicates that children's character development is also supported by the level of consistency in support provided across the two educational environments. In one case identified, a child still exhibited a low level of independence due to a lack of consistent practice within the family environment. This situation resulted in the efforts made by teachers at school being less consistently reinforced at home. This finding indicates that the continuity of character-building practices between home and school is an important aspect of the collaborative process.

The findings further indicate that collaboration is also facilitated through communication platforms, including WhatsApp groups, which allow teachers and parents to exchange information and coordinate regarding the children's development. Thus, collaboration in this study encompasses routine communication, monitoring of children's development, alignment of character-building strategies, and reinforcement of similar practices in both home and school environments, as the strategies implemented share commonalities.

Overall, the findings from the interviews and observations indicate that parent-teacher collaboration primarily takes the form of ongoing two-way communication and coordination. This collaboration focuses specifically on religious character and independence and is reflected in monitoring children's development, discussing challenges, adjusting strategies, and reinforcing character-building practices in both home and school environments.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that character development in children with intellectual disabilities is supported by a combination of four main strategies: habituation, modeling, repetition, and continuous monitoring, with religious character and independence character emerging as the primary character values developed by parents and teachers. Instead of merely emphasizing academic achievement, focusing on these practices is actually more important in helping children develop positive behaviors while building the functional skills that support their participation in daily life according to their individual abilities.

In developing religious character, modeling was identified as an important strategy used by both parents and teachers. Parents demonstrate religious practices directly, while teachers provide examples and guidance during religious activities at school. This finding aligns with social learning theory by Albert Bandura (1977), which explains that individuals learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and modeling of significant others. In the context of this study, parents and teachers function as important models whose repeated behaviors provide children with opportunities to observe and practice desired behaviors. The direct modeling strategy for children with intellectual disabilities is considered highly relevant because the character values modeled through concrete actions can be demonstrated, observed, and imitated directly by the children.

The findings also show that habituation and repetition are consistently used in both home and school environments. Parents repeatedly practice religious activities and daily self-care with their children, while teachers incorporate similar practices into school routines. These findings indicate that teaching the behaviors specified in character development for children with intellectual disabilities requires repeated opportunities, rather than relying solely on verbal instructions. This is consistent with the conception of character education by Lickona (1991), which emphasizes the integration of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. In this context, the repeated practice of specific behaviors can provide children with the opportunity to move beyond simply being introduced to and informed about a value toward applying that value in their daily actions.

The development of independence further demonstrates the importance of gradual guidance. Parents and teachers first demonstrate activities, provide assistance when necessary, and then encourage children to practice the activities independently. This finding can be understood through the zone of proximal development by Vygotsky's concept (1978), in which learners can accomplish tasks with assistance from more competent others that they cannot yet perform independently. Therefore, these findings indicate that guidance in character development serves as a form of gradual support. This form of guidance is not necessarily provided in a uniform manner, but can be tailored to each child's abilities. This is particularly relevant for children with intellectual disabilities because their progress may occur at different rates and may require repeated opportunities to practice the same activity.

The findings are also consistent with previous research concerning parental involvement in the development of children with special needs. Andriani et al. (2023) highlight the role of parents in supporting children's independence, while Hudiyah Bil Haq et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of parental involvement in supporting the development of children with special needs. Other studies also emphasize the importance of parent-teacher collaboration in providing support to children with intellectual disabilities. Fontaine et al. (2008) explain that a key component of mutual support for children with severe intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities is communication between parents and teachers, particularly in the exchange of information and experiences. Talapatra et al. (2019) further emphasize the importance of a collaborative partnership between families and schools, particularly through family involvement and coordinated educational services in supporting students with intellectual disabilities. Klefbeck (2026) found that teacher-parent collaboration for students with intellectual disabilities can take various forms but is strengthened by two-way communication, trust, and a clear collaborative structure. These studies expand upon the findings of this research by demonstrating that character-building practices carried out by parents involve not only independence-oriented activities but also religious practices, and that such practices are reinforced by teachers in the school setting and vice versa. Furthermore, these findings indicate that parent-teacher collaboration serves as a means to ensure the continuity of these character-building practices in both home and school settings.

However, the findings indicate that the character-building process cannot be understood solely from the strategies implemented by individual parents or teachers. The continuity of these practices across family and school is also important. The most common form of collaboration identified in this study was ongoing two-way communication through which parents and teachers exchanged information about children's development, discussed challenges, monitored progress, and coordinated character-building practices. This finding is consistent with school-family partnerships concept by Epstein's (2011), in which communication enables families and schools to share information and work toward common educational goals.

The importance of this collaboration also aligns with the concept of collaboration in modern education, which positions cooperation among stakeholders as an important factor in achieving educational goals. Collaboration can be understood as systematic cooperation among

various parties within and outside educational institutions to support students' development (Kholil, 2021). In this study, collaboration was realized through regular communication, monitoring of children's development, alignment of character-building strategies, and the use of communication platforms such as WhatsApp groups to facilitate coordination between teachers and parents. Thus, the collaboration functioned not merely as a means of exchanging information but also as a means of continuously synchronizing character-building practices across home and school.

The collaboration identified in this study can also be understood through ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979) that children's development is influenced not only by their immediate environments but also by the relationships between those environments. The family and school can be illustrated as important microsystems, while communication and collaboration between parents and teachers are illustrated as a bridge connecting these two environments. In the context of this study, communication therefore functions as a means of coordinating expectations and reinforcing character-building practices across home and school.

This study indicates that children's character development is also supported by the consistency of support provided across these two educational environments. In one case identified, a child still exhibited a low level of independence and required repeated guidance and assistance in writing, performing religious practices, and carrying out daily activities alongside peers at school. According to the teacher, opportunities for consistent practice and guidance in the family environment were limited. This finding indicates that the continuity of character-building practices between home and school is an important aspect of the collaborative process. This interpretation is consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspective, which emphasizes the influence of interactions among children's immediate environments, and with Epstein's (2011) concept of school-family partnership, which highlights communication and coordinated involvement between families and schools in supporting children's development.

The importance of consistency becomes particularly apparent in the case of a child whose independence remained relatively low because character-building practices were not consistently reinforced within the family environment. These findings should not be interpreted as placing full responsibility for children's development solely on parents or teachers. Instead, they highlight the importance of continuity between these two environments: practices introduced at school should be reinforced at home, while practices developed at home should also be reinforced through school routines. This finding is in line with Feranina and Komala (2022), who emphasize the importance of cooperation between parents and teachers in supporting children's character and independence.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that character-building strategies and parent-teacher collaboration are closely interrelated. Habituation, modeling, repetition, and continuous monitoring serve as practical tools for developing character values in children with these disabilities, while communication and coordination between parents and teachers help ensure the continuity of these practices at home and at school. Thus, this study emphasizes the importance of continuity in character-building collaboration as a crucial dimension for children with intellectual disabilities. These findings suggest that collaboration is not merely an exchange of information between parents and teachers, but also a means of connecting and reinforcing character-building practices in both settings.

Nevertheless, this study also has several limitations; for instance, it was conducted at only one special education setting, which limits the ability to generalize the findings to other educational environments with more inclusive institutional, family, and student characteristics. Furthermore, this study focuses solely on the perspectives and observations of parents and teachers regarding character-building practices, and thus does not fully represent the perspectives of all stakeholders involved in children's development. Furthermore, the

qualitative research approach only explores character-building strategies and parent–teacher collaboration, rather than measuring their effectiveness through quantitative statistical analysis; thus, future research could compare or test their effectiveness across multiple special education schools and/or incorporate a broader range of stakeholder perspectives in various contexts.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that parents and teachers play complementary roles in developing the character of children with intellectual disabilities. The character values emphasized include independence in daily activities and religious character, demonstrated through regular prayer and supplication. Parents primarily foster these values through habituation and positive modeling at home, while teachers reinforce them through structured guidance, repetition, habituation, and supervision at school.

The study further finds that parent–teacher collaboration is reflected primarily in regular and continuous two-way communication to monitor children's development, evaluate character-building practices, and maintain consistency between home and school. Therefore, the findings indicate that character development in children with intellectual disabilities is supported not only by the strategies employed by parents and teachers but also by the continuity and consistency of their collaborative efforts across educational settings.

Based on these findings, this study advises that schools implement a more structured communication system with parents, including regular meetings and digital communication channels, to ensure that the character-building process continues. Furthermore, parents must preserve the habits and exemplary behavior they have developed at home in order to be consistent with the school's character education curriculum. Future study should include more special education schools with various features, or employ a mixed-methods approach to acquire a more thorough knowledge of the usefulness of collaborative practices in developing the character of children with intellectual disabilities.

6. Conflict of Interest

The author of this research declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

7. Author Contributions

S.A.S. contributed to the conceptualization of the research idea, the development of the research methodology, the validation of research instruments, research supervision, the interpretation of results, the critical review of the article's content, the strengthening of the theory-based discussion, as well as the final revision of the manuscript and final approval of the manuscript for publication. Meanwhile, author K.N. contributed to the preparation of the research outline, the development of research instruments, data collection, data analysis, and the preparation of the initial draft of the article. All authors confirm that they have read and approved the final version of the manuscript. The percentage of contribution for each author is as follows: S.A.S. 60%, K.N. 40%.

8. Data Availability Statement

The authors declare that data sharing is not applicable, as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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