

# Character Education for Generation Z: Psychoeducation for Parents on Character Education for Elementary School Students at Itqan Darussalam Foundation, East Aceh

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**Abstract:** *This community service effort with the objective of educating parents about character development for Generation Alpha children who attend elementary school at the Itqan Darussalam Foundation in East Aceh. Through the provision of psychoeducation, parents acquired knowledge and understanding of effective methods for fostering responsibility, empathy, and ethical principles in their children, especially in relation to the digital era. The program included interactive conversations and small group sessions to cultivate parental comprehension of the significance of character education. The results suggest a notable enhancement in parents' capacity to steer their children's moral and ethical growth while decreasing excessive dependence on technology. The program effectively established a collaboration between families and schools, thereby enhancing the comprehensive development of Generation Alpha.*

## Keywords:

*Generation Alpha, Psychoeducation, Character Education, Digital Era, Parental Guidance*

## Introduction

Generation Alpha refers to those born from 2010 onwards and is distinguished by its distinctive connection with technology and specific behavioral characteristics. This cohort is commonly known as "digital natives," as they have been exposed to digital technology since early childhood, which greatly influences their cognitive and social development (Hutajulu, 2024; Miranda et al., 2023; Fadlurrohim et al., 2020). Technology has greatly impacted Generation Alpha, developing critical thinking abilities, individualism, and adaptability. This has made them more versatile and equipped to handle change than earlier generations (Hutajulu, 2024; Miranda et al., 2023; Fadlurrohim et al., 2020).

Within the realm of education, Generation Alpha poses both obstacles and prospects for educators. Given their projected high levels of knowledge and the

likelihood of many of them pursuing higher education, educational institutions must urgently modify their instructional methods (Miller, 2023; Ziatdinov & Cilliers, 2021). Incorporating technology into curricula is crucial because it caters to the learning preferences of this group, who seek engaging and immersive educational experiences (Coolsaet, 2024; Miller, 2023; Ziatdinov & Cilliers, 2021). Studies suggest that upcoming educational institutions should adopt inventive pedagogical approaches and adaptable learning spaces to actively involve Generation Alpha (Coolsaet, 2024; Miller, 2023; Ziatdinov & Cilliers, 2021).

Furthermore, the behavioral traits of Generation Alpha go beyond academic environments. Research has observed a worrisome pattern in mental health, with evidence of heightened narcissistic characteristics and a propensity for violence in the current generation (Torres, 2023). This underscores the significance of attending to individuals' emotional and psychological well-being in educational and social settings, guaranteeing that the comprehensive demands of Generation Alpha are fulfilled (Torres, 2023; Batelić, 2022).

The need for character education for Generation Alpha is becoming more widely acknowledged as an essential aspect of their holistic growth, especially considering their distinct upbringing in the digital era. The defining feature of this generation is their premature exposure to technology, which profoundly impacts their social interactions and learning preferences. Therefore, character education needs to adjust to these transformations by prioritizing the cultivation of moral principles and social-emotional competencies essential for their comprehensive growth (Adisti & Rozikan, 2021; Jemmy, 2024).

The main objective of character education is to foster virtues such as respect, accountability, and equity among pupils. Generation Alpha faces the challenge of balancing digital interactions with face-to-face contact in today's environment (Adisti & Rozikan, 2021; Jemmy, 2024). Efficient character education programs should integrate components of social-emotional learning (SEL), which has been demonstrated to improve students' capacity to regulate emotions, foster positive connections, and exercise responsible judgment (Thaintheerasombat & Chookhampaeng, 2022; Singh, 2019). SEL frameworks can be incorporated into character education to cultivate empathy and self-awareness, which are crucial for nurturing individuals with a comprehensive development (Thaintheerasombat & Chookhampaeng, 2022; Duong & Bradshaw, 2017).

Additionally, the influence of educators and parents is crucial in molding the

character of Generation Alpha. Transformational leadership substantially impacts the effectiveness of character education activities in educational environments. By cultivating a setting that emphasizes ethical conduct and emotional intelligence, educators can assist in reducing the adverse effects of technology on social skills and character formation (Muhammad et al., 2022; Singh, 2019). Schools should collaborate with families and communities to strengthen character education, ensuring that the values imparted in school are consistently reflected in both the home and the community (Maunah, 2016; Rosa, 2019).

Providing parents with psychoeducation on character education for their children is essential to creating a supportive atmosphere that encourages ethical ideals and social-emotional abilities. This technique provides parents with the necessary resources to guide their children effectively and improves the family's general dynamics. This is crucial for fostering the development of character in children, especially those belonging to Generation Alpha. Character education seeks to cultivate virtues such as reverence, accountability, and compassion in young individuals.

Psychoeducational programs can greatly improve parents' comprehension of these principles and their ability to convey them to their children properly. Nunes et al. (2020) emphasize the significance of psychoeducation in addressing many subjects, such as child development and co-parenting. This can assist parents in effectively managing the challenges of raising children in the modern digital era. Parents can enhance their character education efforts by comprehending their children's developmental milestones and emotional demands.

This article outlines the psychoeducational initiatives for parents about character education for students at the Itqan Darussalam Foundation in Aceh Timur. These activities are expected to improve parents' knowledge and understanding of strategies for developing their children's character at home. This will help create a strong partnership between the school and families to prepare a well-rounded Generation Alpha in the age of technological advancement.

## **Method**

The participants in this endeavor are the guardians of primary school pupils at the Itqan Darussalam Foundation, located in East Aceh, who are recognized as Generation Alpha. These parents were selected based on their crucial role in guiding their children through the intricate digital age, particularly in character development.

The event occurred at the Itqan Darussalam Foundation, a hub for conducting psychoeducation training programs. The activity was conducted collaboratively, engaging the service's key stakeholders: parents and the school. The implementation team devised a plan to carry out the activity in collaboration with the school and parents. This plan involved providing psychoeducation training for parents, offering post-training support, and monitoring and evaluation.

The primary tactic employed to accomplish the objective of providing service is using the psychoeducation approach. The expert offered guidance to parents on the significance of character education and its practical implementation in nurturing the children of the Alpha generation within their own homes. This counseling session was conducted using an interactive technique, including engaging in discussions and exchanging questions and answers. Parents are actively engaged in the learning process, where they are encouraged to contribute their experiences, difficulties, and successful methods they have used in educating their children. Next, the parents were organized into multiple discussion groups to enhance their comprehension of strategies for addressing the difficulties associated with character education and fostering children's social-emotional abilities.

## **Result**

The mentoring process in this service activity progresses systematically through a series of activities designed to educate parents about the character development of their children. The introduction of psychoeducation to parents at the Itqan Darussalam Foundation in East Aceh has effectively met their requirements in educating the children of the Alpha generation who are maturing in the digital age.

Parents engaged in an interactive exercise to discuss character education, support children's social-emotional growth, and address the issues associated with children's use of technology. In addition, the program included small group discussions that fostered the sharing of experiences among the participants. Once parents have acquired comprehension, they replicate their knowledge and use it in their households. Parents receive guidance from the facilitators in the simulation to implement the tactics presented, such as strengthening values like responsibility, empathy, and justice in their children.

Furthermore, this curriculum is specifically developed to assist parents in addressing particular challenges they encounter with their children's moral development in the digital technology age. During psychoeducational activities,

service resource personnel offer parents psychological explanations to assist them in coping with stress and worry when dealing with their children's behavior, particularly those associated with the impact of technology. Aside from the training courses, parents can also participate in group discussion sessions and individual consultations, where they can address their specific issues and receive solutions from a team of professionals.

The findings of this service activity indicate a notable shift in the attitudes and actions of parents about the character education of their children. Parents who previously lacked comprehension regarding the significance of character education are now gaining a heightened awareness of the relevance of their role in molding ethical ideals in their children, particularly in the digital era. A significant development that has occurred is the increased recognition of the importance of enhancing communication between parents and children to enhance its quality. Parents are becoming aware of the need to take a more proactive approach in actively listening to and offering direction to their children, who may have been previously overlooked owing to a lack of understanding about good parenting.

In addition, parents could effectively employ psychoeducational activities to encourage their children to engage in alternative activities that promote social interaction and character development, reducing their reliance on technology. This program also promotes parental collaboration in fostering children's character education, fostering a community that mutually supports one another in cultivating children's moral ideals.

The results demonstrate that the psychoeducation program at the Itqan Darussalam Foundation effectively enhances character education in Alpha generation children, empowers parents to support their children's development, and fosters a social environment that promotes character formation in the digital era.

## **Discussion**

Providing parents with psychoeducation on character education for elementary school pupils is crucial for creating an atmosphere that promotes children's moral and ethical growth. This strategy empowers parents with the information and expertise required to cultivate values such as respect, accountability, and empathy in their children successfully. Providing parents with materials and practices that coincide with educational goals is essential due to families' important role in shaping character.

The primary goal of character education in elementary schools is to foster the development of pupils' ethical principles and interpersonal abilities. Educational institutions, especially elementary schools, must cultivate persons possessing both knowledge and values, fostering a conducive environment for character formation (Tuhuteru et al., 2023). This highlights the significance of cooperation between schools and families in strengthening character education within the household.

Psychoeducational programs can assist parents in comprehending the fundamental principles of character education and how to incorporate them into their everyday lives seamlessly. One example is emphasizing the significance of incorporating character values into the curriculum, which can be further supported by parents reinforcing these values at home (Fathinnaufal & Hidayati, 2020). Parents can actively engage in their children's moral education by comprehending the curriculum and its character-building elements.

Furthermore, social studies and other academic disciplines serve as a strategic foundation for imparting character qualities. The study of social sciences can instill in children the values of politeness, ethics, and morality, consequently influencing their character development (Lestari, 2022). Parents can enhance this learning process by discussing pertinent issues at home fostering children's introspection about their conduct and the principles they acquire at school.

Family education and academic integration are vital in building children's independence and character. Handayani et al. (2021) contend that promoting independence is a crucial component of character education since it facilitates the cultivation of self-sufficiency and accountability in children. Parents can cultivate these characteristics by granting children the autonomy to make decisions and acquire knowledge through firsthand encounters, reinforcing the lessons imparted in school.

Moreover, character education should involve a collective endeavor. Suherman (2018) asserts that character education should be seamlessly incorporated into all courses, fostering a unified strategy that garners parental support. Parents can enhance their children's ability to apply character education ideals in many settings by comprehending the interdependence between character education and numerous subjects.

Ultimately, providing parents with psychoeducation on character education is crucial for the comprehensive growth of elementary school pupils. By providing parents with information on character education principles and practical methods for reinforcing these ideas at home, we may establish a supportive atmosphere that

fosters moral values and social skills. The partnership between schools and families is crucial for nurturing persons with comprehensive skills and readiness to confront future obstacles.

## **Conclusion**

The psychoeducation activities provided to parents at the Itqan Darussalam East Aceh Foundation have effectively influenced children's character education. The program has facilitated parental comprehension of the significance of their role in educating the Alpha generation, who are maturing in the era of digital technology. The program emphasizes cultivating character virtues, including responsibility, empathy, and justice. By engaging in interactive training and participating in group discussion sessions, parents may effectively imitate their acquired knowledge and implement it in their homes. Furthermore, the program has effectively diminished children's reliance on technology by guiding them toward other beneficial pursuits. The findings of this study indicate a rise in parental awareness and competence in supporting their children's character education. This, in turn, leads to the development of a social atmosphere that fosters the cultivation of positive character traits. This program advocates for the ongoing participation of parents in fostering children's character development at home while also promoting strong collaboration between schools, families, and communities in cultivating a morally upright generation in the digital age.

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