

## Developing a character assessment instrument based on the school culture

Murti Ambarwati Hidayah\*; Farida Agus Setiawati

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author. E-mail: [murtiambarwati19@gmail.com](mailto:murtiambarwati19@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

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This study aims to develop an instrument that is valid and reliable to measure the character of junior high school students. The developed instrument is a character assessment based on the school culture, used to facilitate teachers and schools in assessing student characters. This study is development research. The trial subjects involved in this study were 128 grade VIII students of state junior high schools in Bantul. The developed instrument was validated for the content by experts. The construct validity was analyzed using the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and the reliability was estimated using the omega reliability formula by McDonald. The result of the study is a character assessment instrument comprising six aspects with 12 indicators and 22 statements. The developed instrument has fulfilled the validity and reliability requirements. The content validity acquired an Aiken index of 0.87, while the CFA test acquired a loading factor score of each item being valid with  $\lambda > 0.5$  and  $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ . The student character measurement fits the theorized model ( $\chi^2 = 230.719$ ;  $p = 0.08$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.040$ ; and  $CFI = 0.964$ ) and McDonald's composite reliability estimation result 0.907. The score of students' characters in the developing category were 63.3%, 18.8% for the early development category, 11.7% for the requiring assistance category, and 6.3% for the cultured category.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort to develop and improve human quality from intellectual and character aspects. [Law No. 20 of 2003](#) on the National Education System formulates,

*“National education aims to improve the ability and shape characters and dignified national civilization to enrich the life of a nation, aiming to develop student potentials to become people who believe and fear God, have a noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.”*

Therefore, it concludes that national education aims to create better students' characters and values in their lives.

Education that lacks emphasis on the character cultivation aspect triggers various problems in students. The character of the youths, primarily students, begins to erode over time. Thus, becoming a teacher in the current education world is a massive challenge. According to [Kawuryan \(2010\)](#), the challenges include student behaviors, such as cheating during a test, lack of discipline, laziness, selfishness, being involved in fights, promiscuity, misuse of drugs, being materialistic, lack of caring towards others, lack of courtesy, and lack of respect towards parents. These challenges will be problems related to the declining character values of students.

One of the means from the government to handle these problems is by cultivating character education in all education levels. Character education is fundamental to realizing the national

development vision, i.e., realizing a society with noble character, morals, ethics, and culture, and being civilized based on Pancasila philosophy (Alawiyah, 2012). It is also an effort to support the realization of the ideals of the nation as mandated in Pancasila and the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution.

Character education is considered a means to improve various deviations, shaping the national character and culture. It is performed at schools through learning process sequences and through habituation in student lives, which teaches knowledge on right or wrong and interprets it as good or bad. Declining student characters is prone to occur in middle school students categorized as early teenagers, transitioning from childhood to adulthood. Often, it is the period to search for identity; hence, they tend to have unstable reactions and emotions. Thus, school as an educational facility has an essential role to be a role model in developing character education.

The school is considered a preventive alternative because it can create a better national generation. As a preventive alternative, a school is expected to improve national youth quality in various aspects to minimize and reduce the national culture and character problems. An effort from a school in cultivating character values is creating a school environment that reflects character cultures through the school vision, mission, and programs, e.g., slogans that exist around the school environment. Good school cultures will lead to good changes, particularly in changing behaviors. Thus, school cultural implementation to develop student characters is necessary to acquire student character values created from student cultures or habits in the school environment.

Character is identical with morals, and thus, a character is universal human behavioral values covering all human activities, both concerning God, humans, environment, and oneself. This relationship is embodied in the mind, attitude, feeling, words, and actions based on religious norms, laws, manners, cultures, and customs (Marzuki, 2012). Character is often related to character education categorized in the affective component that includes interest, attitude, self-concept, and moral value aspects (Herpratiwi et al., 2017). Character education does not merely teach right or wrong. Character education cultivates habituation on good things so that students understand (cognitive) right or wrong, feel (affective) good values, and are used to doing them (psychomotor). In other words, good character education must involve “good knowledge” (moral knowing), “loving good” (moral feeling), and “good behavior” (moral action) (Supinah et al., 2011).

Character education has been extensively socialized in schools. Nevertheless, its implementation on students requires supporting and sufficient learning settings comprising the syllabus, lesson plan, innovative learning implementation, learning media, and assessment instrument. To date, teachers generally develop only learning elements, while assessment instrument development is limited to the cognitive area (Sutijan et al., 2015).

In 2010, the National Education Ministry released National Cultural and Character Education values. There are 18 character values to be cultivated in middle school. The character values are religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard-working, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, the spirit of nationality, nationalism, appreciating achievements, friendliness/communicativeness, loving peace, liking to read, care towards the environment, social care, and responsibility. This study selected cultural-based character values at junior high school in Bantul. This school's ten character values are religiosity, honesty, discipline and caring, responsibility, tolerance and concern, hard-working, cooperativeness, and nationalism. From the ten character values developed at the school, the character values in this study were limited to six, i.e., religiosity, tolerance, honesty, politeness, concern, and nationalism.

Religiosity is a character value related to God. It shows that one's thoughts, expressions, and actions are always based on divine values and/or religious teachings (Mustari, 2014). The religiosity character is vital for students as a robust foundation in living a life to be a good person at school and after graduating following the vision and mission of junior high school in Bantul.

Tolerance is the attitude to accepting things that are contrary to what has become self-confidence (Samani, 2017). One of the essential characters to be cultivated in Indonesia is tolerance. Inculcating school tolerance supports harmony, builds good equality, and ensures equality of students from different backgrounds (Mayasari et al., 2019). Honesty is an attitude and behavior reflecting the unity between knowledge, words, and actions (knowing, saying, and doing the right thing); thus, the person concerned becomes a trusted person (Hasan et al., 2010). Politeness is an attitude in speaking and behaving. Politeness is relative, meaning that what is considered good/polite at a certain place and time can be different at a different place and time (Kurniasih & Sani, 2014). Politeness must be inculcated in students since they often do not respect older people, such as teachers, in the current globalization era. Caring means paying attention, heeding, and interfering. The Ministry of National Education divides the caring character into social care and environmental care. Social care is generally explained as the relationship between humans in various community lives (Busyaeri & Muharom, 2016). Meanwhile, environmental care is an attitude and action that always prevents damage to the surrounding environment, develops measures to repair the damages, and helps others in need (Mustari, 2014). Nationalism is a way of thinking and acting that shows loyalty, care, and high appreciation for the national language and physical, social, cultural, economic, and political environment (Mustari, 2014). Based on the observation and interview results with teachers, character assessment is commonly performed by the homeroom teacher using information from the religion teacher, civic education teacher, counselor notes, or as necessary. The attitude assessment conducted by the homeroom teacher was limited to violations conducted by students at school, and the instrument was student records on when the violation was conducted and the violation type, e.g., absence, late, and others recorded on the counselor journal. Most subject teachers rarely applied the affective character assessment and only taught the subject during the learning process.

Teachers' nescience might cause the character assessment that is rarely applied by teachers on the character concept, character assessment scope, and instrument development and implementation, especially related to the class evaluation implementation. This character assessment requires an instrument. A good assessment instrument can illustrate the subject condition well.

One of the common problems in character assessment is the absence of a valid instrument to assess student characters at school. Teachers struggle to categorize the assessment since they do not have the criteria to determine the categories and indicators as the assessment benchmark concerning the aspects to be evaluated (Khairunnisa et al., 2013).

Characters are a part of the affective aspect. Assessment in the affective aspect is acquired through measurement or observation. In discovering character values, character assessment is performed. An assessment is a set of systematic and sustainable activities to obtain data information concerning students' learning processes and outcomes (Muhammad, 2015). Character assessment can be performed by attitude assessment. One of the instruments for assessing child characters is a questionnaire. Based on the above explanation, the study aims to arrange and develop a valid and reliable cultural-based character assessment instrument for middle school students. The following are research questions that are answered in this study. (1) What are the aspects and indicators of the developed character assessment instruments? (2) What does the content validity of the construct of the developed character assessment instrument look like? (3) What is the construct validity of the developed character assessment instrument like? (4) What is the reliability of the developed character assessment instrument like? (5) What does the student character score profile based on the developed instrument look like?

## METHOD

This study is development research aimed at developing a valid and reliable instrument to measure grade VIII students' cultural-based characters. The developed instrument is an assessment instrument to measure characters using student behavior indicators in classroom and school

activities. The instrument is a student self-assessment questionnaire with questions and answer choices. The developed student character assessment instrument contains instructions for users, procedures for use, and an explanation of the instrument in the form of a multiple-choice questionnaire with statements and answer choices graded and in tiered scores ranging from 1 to 4, where a score of 4 is the highest score representing the character value, while a score of 1 represents a low or unrepresentative character value. Each answer choice contains the truth. The trial subjects in the study are 128 grade VIII students of state junior high schools in Bantul. The subjects were established by using a non-probability sampling technique with the purposive sampling technique. The subjects were selected since the school was appointed as the *Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter* or PPK (Character Education Enhancement) piloting school by implementing a national culture and character perspective curriculum.

The instrument development processes referred to ten affective instrument development steps by [Mardapi \(2012\)](#). The content of the developed instrument was validated by experts. The content validity analysis was calculated using Aiken's formula. Testing the validity and construct reliability of the data from the instrument testing was analyzed using CFA with the help of the LISREL program. The calculation of the reliability of the composite score was estimated with the McDonald's composite reliability coefficient or the omega coefficient ( $\omega$ ). The developed instrument consists of 22 items, with 12 assessment indicators or grids, presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Student Character Assessment Indicators

Aspect	Indicator	No. of Item
Religiosity	Do worship obediently	1, 2
	Apply religious teachings in daily life	3, 4
Tolerance	Maintain good relations among people	5, 6
	Appreciate the differences of others	7, 8
Honesty	Do all activities without cheating	9
	Act trustworthy/not lie/pretend	10, 11
Politeness	Respect others by speaking softly	12, 13, 14
Caring	Participate in social activities	15, 16
	Keep the classroom and school environments clean	17, 18
Nationalism	Instill a sense of nationalism in oneself	19, 20
	Have the will to use domestic products	21
	Preserve national arts and cultures	22

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this study is an instrument of a student self-assessment questionnaire expected to have good and sufficient validity and reliability values. It is expected that the developed assessment instrument truly measures actual student characters and becomes a reference for teachers in creating other character assessment instruments. The trial design arrangement in this study was conducted to obtain the validity and reliability values.

Construct validation was performed by measurement, psychology, and language experts. After the construct validation, the readability test was carried out by handing out the instrument to students. Readability relates to a written or printed state that is clear, easy, interesting, and fun to read. Therefore, the readability level of an instrument is measured by the reader. In this step, the instrument was distributed to 14 students. The next step after the first trial was the instrument revision. Then, after the second revision, the second trial was performed, i.e., an extensive trial. The extensive trial was conducted on 128 grade VIII students of junior high school in Bantul. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed to obtain the construct validity value based on the CFA and reliability.

## Content Validity

Validity is a requirement to be met. It is vital, as Azwar (2015) states that validity refers to aspects of the accuracy and accuracy of the measurement results. The content validation in the current study was performed by two lecturers (measurement experts), two counsellors (psychology experts), and a teacher (language expert). Expert validation aims to acquire the content validity value. Content validity analysis was calculated using Aiken's formula.

Aiken's validity value was used as the validity threshold referred to the Aiken's table. The validity value for five raters and four choices of answer scales with an error level of 5% was 0.87. Based on the results obtained from Aiken's validity value for each item developed, the instrument met the criteria of  $\geq 0.87$ , so it can be stated that the instrument is valid, assessed by five raters.

## Readability Test

Readability relates to the state of writing or print that is clear, easy, interesting, and fun to read. Therefore, the readability level of an instrument is measured by the reader. In this step, the instrument was handed out to students. The students were asked to read the questionnaire items and identify difficult words, too-long words, and unclear statements. Also, they were asked to assess whether or not the instrument was good. The aspects were determined from the understanding and ease of students in working on the questionnaire. The instrument readability test result conducted by 14 students is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Instrument Readability Test Result

No.	Criteria	Aspect			
		Comprehension		Easiness	
		Total	%	Total	%
1.	Good	12	85.7	12	85.7
2.	Sufficient	1	7.1	2	14.3
3.	Poor	1	7.1	0	0.0

Based on the readability test result in Table 2, 12 students or 85.7% (most respondents) could understand the instrument items and found it easy to read. This shows that the instrument is feasible to be used, although there are improvements on choices of words, sentences, or terms following student suggestions. Therefore, a revision was necessary. Then, a revision was performed, and the instrument was reassembled for the extensive trial.

## Item Analysis

The following step was the limited trial on 46 students. The trial data were analyzed using the "item-total correlated" approach with the product-moment correlation formulation. The instrument item analysis was conducted to acquire good items. Acceptable items were those having a power difference (correlation coefficient)  $> 0.3$ . Based on the self-assessment instrument data analysis result on the limited trial, there were items with a good coefficient ( $> 0.3$ ), i.e., the lowest correlation being 0.312 and the highest correlation being 0.709. Thus, the instrument had good items, and these items were used in the extensive trial.

## Construct Validity

In the study validity construct, data were collected from the extensive trial and analyzed using the CFA aimed to confirm or test the model. The construct test result of middle school student characters analyzed from the standardized solution diagram path shows each indicator's loading factor value. The loading factor values obtained had three items with  $\lambda < 0.5$ , indicating that the three items were invalid. The dropped items were honesty in item J4, politeness in item



S1, and caring in item K3. Thus, the three items were excluded from the test. The construct testing result after excluding three invalid items is presented in Figure 1. The test result shows that loading factor values on each item are valid with  $\lambda > 0.5$ . Then, the t-value can also be observed in Figure 2.

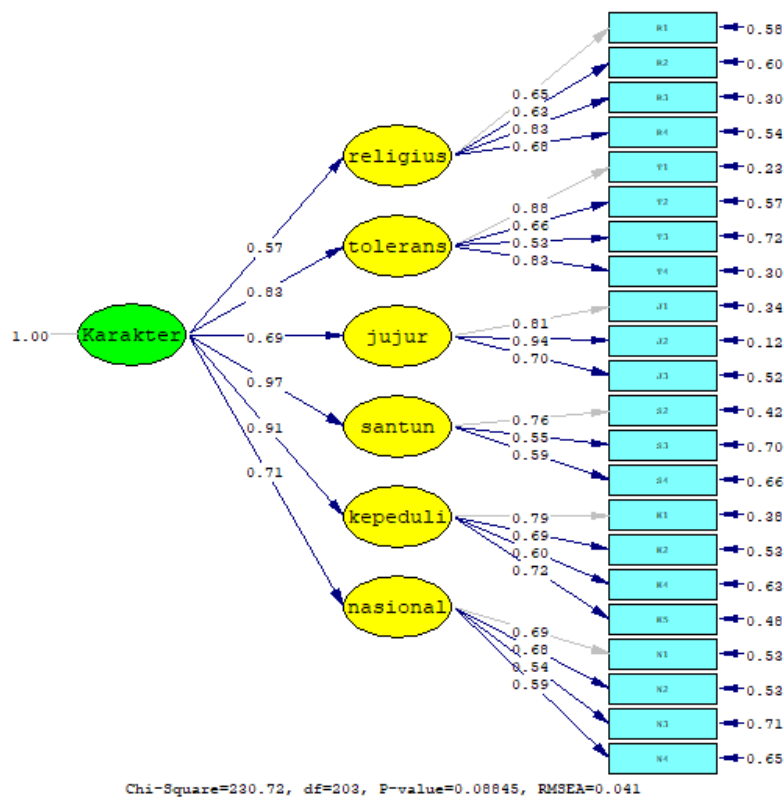


Figure 1. Basic Model Standardization Solution

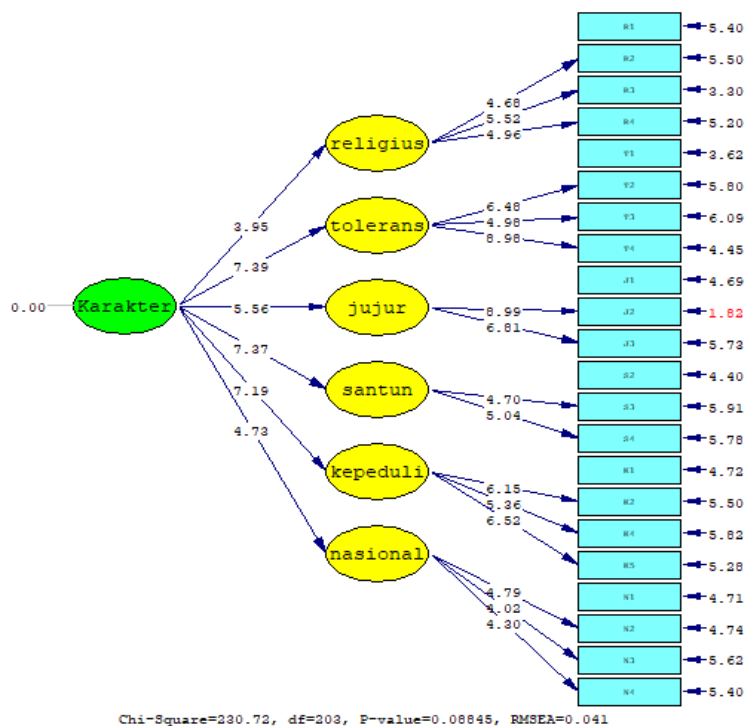


Figure 2. Basic Model T-Value

The indicator t-value analysis can be observed on the t-value diagram path. If the t-value is above 1.96, the item is declared valid. The analysis result shows that the t-value is above 1.96.

Then, in assessing the model fit on CFA, Wijanto in Suparto (2019) asserts the model fit test criteria observed from the RMSEA value is under 0.80 and GFI value is above 0.90. Meanwhile, according to Garson (2013), the model construct test can use three fitness measures representing three different model fit test categories.

Based on several aforementioned opinions, referring to Suparto (2019), the model construct is declared fit if it has a minimum of three different model fit indices. The three fitness indices are chi-square; p-value  $>0.05$ . CFI $>0.90$ , and RMSEA $<0.08$ . The overall model fit analysis result in this study is summarized and presented in Table 3. The testing result demonstrates that the construct model from the student character assessment instrument has a fit model.

Table 3. Model Fit Criteria Analysis Result

No.	Fit Index	Value	Standard Value	Description
1	p-value	0.0884	$>0.05$	Fit
2	RMSEA	0.0408	$<0.08$	Fit
3	CFI	0.964	$>0.9$	Fit

### Instrument Reliability

Reliable means trusted. Reliability is an index showing the extent of a measurement instrument that can be reliable or trusted. If an instrument is used repeatedly to measure the same symptoms and the result is relatively consistent, the measurement instrument is declared reliable. In assessing a reliability level of a measuring instrument, one can use the Construct Reliability (CR) and Variance Extracted (VE) values. According to Wijanto (2015), a reliable measurement instrument has a calculated CR value of  $> 0.70$  and a VE value of  $> 0.5$ .

The reliability test decision following Hair (2010) is as follows. (1) A construct is reliable if the CR value is  $\geq 0.70$ . If the CR value is between 0.60 and 0.70, the reliability is relatively good. (2) A construct is reliable if the VE value is  $\geq 0.50$ . However, VE is usually optional in a study.

Hair (2010) suggests that interpretation on reliability construct measures can be declared good if the value exceeds 0.40. Huang et al. (2017) also mention that a 0.63 CR value is considered good, and acceptable VE values fall between 0.30 to 0.66. The CR and VE test results in the study are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Construct Reliability Result

No	Aspect	CR	VE
1.	Religiosity	0.79	0.49
2.	Tolerance	0.82	0.54
3.	Honesty	0.86	0.67
4.	Politeness	0.67	0.41
5.	Caring	0.73	0.49
6.	Nationalism	0.72	0.40

The CR and VE reliability test results discovered that the character assessment aspect had a good reliability value referring to the reliability test criteria value range (Hair, 2010). Meanwhile, the composite reliability estimation with the McDonald coefficient formula called the omega coefficient ( $\omega$ ) obtained a 0.907 value. Following Raykov (1997), the cut-off to determine good composite reliability is 0.6. Therefore, the composite reliability result is good.

### Profile of Student's Character

The self-assessment instrument test on the study produced data of student responses with ranges of 1-4 and 22 items. The highest expectation score obtained on this character assessment

instrument was 88 (4 x 22), while the lowest expectation score was 22 (1 x 22), with an average score of 77.37 and a standard deviation of 9.18. Hence, the determination of the very high categorization results is at a score of 86, the high category is at scores of 77-85, the low category is at scores of 68-76, and the very low category is at scores of < 68. The score distribution based on the overall aspect is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Overall Character Aspect Score Category

No.	Category	Interval	Freq.	Percentage (%)
1.	Very high/cultured	$\geq 86$	8	6.3
2.	High/developing	$77 \geq \text{score} < 86$	81	63.3
3.	Low/early development	$68 \geq \text{score} < 77$	24	18.8
4.	Very low/requiring assistance	$\leq 68$	15	11.7
<b>Total</b>			<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>

The score distribution analysis result of self-assessment data shows 81 students (63.3%) are in a high or developing category, 24 students (18.8%) are in a low or early development category, 15 students (11.7%) are in a very low or requiring assistance category, and eight students (6.3%) are in a very high or cultured category. The highest frequency is in a high or developing category with scores of 77-85, with 81 students (63.3%). This shows that the characters of the students at junior high schools in Bantul are in a high or developing category.

Various habituation activities carried out at junior high schools in Bantul became the basis for character building in students. One of these character building activities is done through habituation or culture in schools. This is because school culture can be one of the supports in improving student morale and achievement (Retnasari et al., 2021). Regular and ongoing communication is needed between schools and parents to find out and monitor student progress at school and also at home (Sukadari et al., 2020; Supraptiningrum & Agustini, 2015). It should be noted that the character is an important aspect for human success in the future (Mustakim & Salman, 2019). Therefore, character assessment needs to be carried out by the the school.

Character assessment is related to the assessment of the behavior of students in every activity, both in the school environment and outside the school. However, conducting character assessments on students is not an easy thing. A teacher must be able to choose assessment sources and media according to the educational level of the students to be assessed. Teachers need to assess the extent to which the character is embedded in students as an effort to build student character for the better (Sukadari et al., 2020).

Based on the aforementioned description, the developed instrument for assessing character based on school culture for students has been prepared with the rules and conditions for the preparation of the instrument. This is evidenced by the estimation of the validity and reliability of the instrument that has met the criteria, so that the developed instrument is suitable to be used to assist teachers and schools in assessing the character of students of junior high schools.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been described, it can be concluded that the developed instrument consists of aspects of religiosity, tolerance, honesty, courtesy, caring, and nationalism and it is divided into 12 indicators with 22 questions. The instrument is suitable for use by the teacher because it has met the criteria for compiling a valid and reliable instrument with evidence of validation and reliability estimation. The character profile of junior high school students in Bantul is as follows: 81 students (63.3%) are in a high or developing category, 24 students (18.8%) are in a low or early development category, 15 students (11.7%) are in a very low or requiring assistance category, and eight students (6.3%) are in a very high or cultured category.



Suggestions in using the product are that teachers as the assessment executor can use this instrument as a reference to develop an integrated character instrument assessment on other subjects and class levels; teachers who want to develop a student character assessment instrument on other levels are expected to follow the steps in this study; an intense initial meeting with the respondents and evaluators is required to acquire accurate data.

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