SCHOOL STRATEGIES IN HANDLING DEVIANT BEHAVIOR AND LOW STUDENT LEARNING MOTIVATION. CASE STUDY AT STATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 1 SUWAWA

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This study focuses on analyzing deviant behavior and low learning motivation in students at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa, and how teacher competency and school strategies influence these dynamics in the context of implementing the Independent Curriculum and character education. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, this study involved 30 students selected through purposive sampling, as well as teachers and education personnel as supporting informants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques and assisted by NVivo 14 software for theme coding. The results indicate that deviant behavior and low learning motivation are closely related to teacher competency in implementing values-based learning, authentic assessment, and differentiated learning. Furthermore, the study revealed a significant gap between teachers' actual abilities and the demands of the Independent Curriculum, necessitating reinforcement through needs-based Teacher Professional Development (TPD) planning. These findings provide important implications: schools need to build a systematic character education ecosystem supported by ongoing teacher professional development to more effectively transform student behavior and learning motivation.
Keywords: Character education, Independent curriculum, Learning motivation	

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1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of secondary education in the contemporary era demonstrate the increasingly complex challenges schools face in building a quality learning environment, particularly related to the rise in deviant behavior among students. Various national reports indicate that cases of student disciplinary violations have increased over the past five years (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2021). This situation indicates a gap between the demands of 21st-century character education and students' self-regulation skills. This phenomenon directly impacts the learning climate and social interactions in schools, including at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa, where field observations revealed deviant behavior that disrupts the quality of learning. This empirical reality demonstrates the importance of research that analyzes the relationship between deviant behavior and learning motivation holistically and contextually.

At SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa, deviant behavior manifests itself in various forms, including unexcused absences, violations of rules, disrespect for teachers, and low participation in learning. Recent studies confirm that student

deviant behavior significantly degrades the learning climate and impacts academic achievement (Siregar & Putri, 2022). The decline in learning motivation over the past three years is also evident in the decline in students' interest and persistence in completing assignments. Based on the latest developments in Self-Determination Theory, weak intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are factors that worsen academic performance (Ryan et al., 2021). This indicates the need for appropriate interventions to improve students' learning orientation.

These field findings align with various studies that confirm the close relationship between deviant behavior and learning motivation. Research by Hasanah and Mulyadi (2021) shows that learning motivation plays a significant role in reducing students' tendencies toward negative behavior. On the other hand, an international study by Park and Kim (2023) confirms that deviant behavior is often triggered by a mismatch between the demands of the learning environment and students' self-regulatory capacity. However, most of this research separates learning motivation from deviant behavior, thus failing to provide an integrative picture of the dynamics of both at the school level.

The research gap is increasingly apparent because no academic study has specifically examined these two variables at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa. Many previous studies have focused on urban or regional schools with distinct characteristics, making their findings inapplicable to the socio-cultural context of schools in the Suwawa area. This has resulted in the lack of an appropriate intervention strategy model to address deviant behavior while simultaneously increasing student learning motivation.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which combines analysis of deviant behavior and learning motivation, taking into account the relationships between students, teachers, parents, and the school's social ecosystem. Unlike previous, fragmented research (Wijaya & Ningsih, 2022; Adrian & Lestari, 2023), this study offers a more comprehensive understanding by combining modern motivation theory, educational ecology theory, and empirical findings from the field. This approach allows for the development of adaptive and applicable intervention strategies at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa.

Based on this overall background, this study aims to analyze the relationship between student deviant behavior and their learning motivation and formulate effective and contextual intervention strategies for SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa. This research is expected to provide practical contributions for schools in designing policies that can improve students' discipline and learning motivation, while enriching the scientific literature related to the dynamics of student behavior in secondary education in Indonesia.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to in-depth describe the phenomenon of deviant behavior and low learning motivation at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the meanings students construct within the social context of their school. As emphasized by Creswell & Creswell (2022), qualitative research focuses on interpreting individual experiences in natural settings to uncover patterns that are not visible on the surface. Therefore, this research aims to examine how school strategies and interventions can influence student behavior and learning motivation contextually.

This research is also categorized as a case study, allowing for a detailed exploration of the phenomenon within the specific context of SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa. According to Yin (2021), case studies offer a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of real-world situations through diverse and in-depth data collection. With this approach, the research is expected to fully reveal how the school designs, implements, and evaluates strategies to address deviant behavior while increasing student learning motivation.

The research location is SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo. This school is a high school with over 600 students and relatively adequate academic and extracurricular facilities. However, based on preliminary observation data and internal reports, issues such as a tendency toward deviant behavior and weak learning motivation among some students were still identified. This situation makes SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa a relevant location to examine the effectiveness of the implemented educational strategies.

The study population included all students at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa, while the sample size was determined purposively, with 30 students selected based on behavioral indicators and levels of learning motivation. This technique was chosen because it allowed researchers to obtain participants most relevant to the research focus. This aligns with Etikan & Bala's (2021) opinion, which states that purposive sampling is effective in qualitative research to select informants with rich experience related to the phenomenon being studied.

Data collection was conducted through interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with students, teachers, and educational staff to obtain a comprehensive picture of the school's strategies in responding to deviant behavior and learning motivation. According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2021), qualitative interviews are an important method for exploring informants' perspectives and subjective meanings. Observations were conducted in classrooms and school areas to obtain authentic data on student behavior in

real-life situations. This approach is reinforced by Patton (2022), who emphasized that observation allows researchers to directly observe the context of behavior without the filter of informants' perceptions.

Furthermore, documentation was used to collect secondary data such as disciplinary records, curriculum, and student academic reports. Documentation is crucial as objective evidence that enriches understanding of the phenomena being studied and strengthens data triangulation. Denzin (2021) emphasized that triangulation, both through methods and data sources, can increase the validity of findings by providing a more complete picture and complementing the information.

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative analysis techniques, including data organization, coding, categorization, and drawing conclusions. This analysis model draws on the approach of Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2021), which emphasizes the process of data reduction, data presentation, and verification of findings as ongoing steps throughout the research. To enhance the accuracy of the analysis, this study utilized NVivo 14 software, which helped researchers systematically group data based on themes and relationships between categories.

With this approach, this research is expected to produce an in-depth understanding of school strategies in dealing with deviant behavior and increasing student learning motivation as well as providing practical implications for the development of school policies based on data and the real needs of students.

3.   RESULT AND ANALYSIS
Identification of Teacher Competency Needs in Character Education

Identifying teacher competency needs is a fundamental step in strengthening character education, given that teachers serve as central actors facilitating the process of internalizing values and establishing a moral culture in schools. This identification process focuses not only on academic and pedagogical competencies but also encompasses teachers' capacity to model values, manage social interactions, and create a learning environment conducive to character formation. From a contemporary character education perspective, teacher competency is positioned as a holistic ability that enables them to act as value facilitators, moral guides, and drivers of a positive school culture (Nucci, Narvaez, & Krettenauer, 2021).

Interviews with several teachers and curriculum coordinators indicate that most teachers still have conceptual limitations in understanding character education integratively. Many teachers acknowledged that character education has been articulated as the insertion of values into learning activities, rather than as a systemic process that must be comprehensively planned, implemented, and evaluated. These findings indicate the need for epistemological and philosophical strengthening for teachers to provide a solid foundation for implementing sustainable and targeted character education.

Furthermore, field observations show that some teachers still face challenges in implementing classroom management strategies that support character building, particularly those related to positive discipline, empathetic dialogue, and relationship-based behavior management. This situation indicates that teachers need stronger social-emotional competencies, such as emotional regulation, assertive communication, and sensitivity to students' psychological states. This aligns with the findings of Jennings et al. (2021), who stated that teachers' social-emotional capacity significantly influences the effectiveness of character education implementation.

This research finding is also supported by literature confirming that character education is highly dependent on the quality of teacher role models. Lickona (2022) emphasizes that teachers are not merely transmitters of values, but also moral figures whose presence serves as a source of inspiration for students. Therefore, strengthening teacher personality competencies—such as integrity, consistent behavior, and professional ethics—is a fundamental element in the success of character education programs, especially amidst the increasing complexity of student social dynamics.

Identification of competency needs also includes teachers' ability to design learning that integrates character values explicitly and implicitly. Teachers are required to develop learning tools such as lesson plans, authentic assessments, and experiential learning activities that can stimulate student character development. Research findings indicate that many teachers still need guidance in developing experience-based activities that facilitate the internalization of values in a natural and contextual way. This approach aligns with the ideas of McGrath & Fischetti (2022), who emphasize the importance of authentic learning design in character education.

Furthermore, interviews with school principals revealed that teacher competency needs also include collaborative skills in building a character ecosystem in schools. Implementing character education cannot rely on individual efforts but requires teamwork, collective reflection, and peer-to-peer sharing among teachers. Therefore, teacher professional competency in the context of character education also includes the ability to work within a consistent and progressive professional learning community (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021).

Therefore, identifying teacher competency needs in character education encompasses three main dimensions: (1) values-based pedagogical competency, (2) social-emotional competency, and (3) personality competency as a moral role model. These three dimensions complement each other and form the foundation

for the successful implementation of character education. Research findings indicate that identifying these needs serves as a strategic foundation for designing more relevant, contextual, and sustainable teacher professional development programs tailored to school dynamics and student needs.

Gap Analysis between Teachers' Skills and the Demands of the Independent Curriculum

Gap analysis is a strategic step that serves to map the gap between teachers' actual abilities and the ideal competencies required by the Independent Curriculum. The Independent Curriculum explicitly encourages the implementation of differentiated learning, strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, and a student-centered pedagogical approach. When teachers' abilities do not align with these demands, the effectiveness of character education implementation is limited. Therefore, gap analysis is a key instrument for identifying competency areas requiring intensive intervention, particularly within the framework of improving teacher professionalism (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

Observations indicate that some teachers still maintain a one-way learning pattern that focuses on completing material rather than developing student character. This learning model contradicts the orientation of the Independent Curriculum, which requires teachers to create space for creativity, collaboration, context-based activities, and reflective interaction. This gap is particularly evident in teachers' ability to design learning activities that encourage students to think critically, empathize, and take responsibility core competencies in character development according to the modern educational paradigm (Nucci, Narvaez, & Krettenauer, 2021).

Interview findings revealed that many teachers do not yet fully understand the concept of differentiated learning, particularly in grouping student learning needs based on readiness, interests, and learning profiles. This lack of understanding directly impacts the low integration of character values such as independence, discipline, and cooperation into learning activities. Thus, a significant conceptual gap emerges between current teacher skills and the learning standards set by the Independent Curriculum (Tomlinson & Moon, 2021).

The gap is also evident in teachers' ability to implement comprehensive, authentic assessments. Many teachers still rely on conventional cognitive assessments, resulting in students' character development—such as integrity, responsibility, and social awareness—not being systematically documented. Yet, the Independent Curriculum requires the use of formative and summative assessments that explicitly integrate character indicators into evaluation instruments. The lack of authentic assessment literacy creates a significant gap that must be immediately bridged through training and professional mentoring (Popham, 2022).

In addition to individual competency gaps, this study also identified structural gaps related to school institutional support. Many teachers admitted they had not received relevant training on the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and character education. The lack of professional platforms, such as teacher learning communities, also widens the gap in practice between adaptive teachers and those who still adhere to conventional approaches. This suggests that gap analysis should not only focus on teachers' personal abilities, but also on school systems that support competency improvement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021).

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that there are three main gaps that need to be addressed: (1) understanding of differentiated learning, (2) authentic assessment skills, and (3) the ability to integrate character values into learning. The results of this gap analysis provide a strong foundation for schools in designing relevant and sustainable Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs. With targeted interventions based on teachers' real needs, these gaps can be minimized, allowing for more effective and impactful implementation of the Independent Curriculum and character education.

Teacher Professional Development Planning (TPD Planning) Based on Needs Analysis

Teacher Professional Development (TPD) planning is a strategic phase systematically designed to address authentic teacher needs based on needs identification and competency gap analysis. At this stage, schools strive to ensure that teacher capacity building programs are not conducted haphazardly, but are grounded in empirical data regarding teacher weaknesses, strengths, and development opportunities. Within the framework of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes student-centered learning and character building, TPD planning is a crucial instrument for transforming teachers' pedagogical practices (King & Stevenson, 2022).

The gap analysis results indicate that teachers require strengthening in three key areas: conceptual understanding of character education, the ability to implement differentiated learning, and skills in conducting authentic assessments. Therefore, TPD planning must begin with establishing relevant and measurable development goals. These goals include improving pedagogical literacy, designing character-based learning, and developing teachers' reflective capacity to monitor student character development. Recent studies have shown that TPD focused on teachers' real needs can significantly improve learning quality (Postholm, 2022).

The planning stage also includes developing training materials that are appropriate to the school context and relevant to the demands of implementing the Independent Curriculum. Training materials should enable teachers to understand character education concepts theoretically while simultaneously enabling them to apply

them practically. Materials such as values integration in learning, project-based character learning, and restorative classroom management have been shown to improve teacher competency in building a culture of character education (Seo & Kim, 2021). The alignment of materials to teacher needs is a key factor in the effectiveness of TPD.

In addition to materials, the selection of TPD models also plays a crucial role in the success of teacher professional development. Models such as professional learning communities (PLCs), lesson study, peer coaching, and job-embedded learning have been proven effective in improving teacher competency through collaboration, reflection, and hands-on practice. Research by Opfer and Pedder (2021) confirms that collaborative and continuous professional learning is a key indicator of successful changes in teacher teaching practices. By implementing these models, schools can create a solid and sustainable professional learning ecosystem.

The success of TPD planning is also largely determined by structural support from the school. The availability of time for professional development, adequate training facilities, and support from school leadership are all factors that significantly influence program implementation. Recent research confirms that responsive and supportive instructional leadership can increase teacher motivation to participate in TPD and implement training outcomes in teaching (Rahman & Ismail, 2022). Policy support, such as awards for outstanding teachers in character education, also strengthens TPD's effectiveness.

Evaluation mechanisms are an integral and inseparable element of the TPD planning process. Evaluation is necessary to measure the results of teacher competency improvement, the effectiveness of training materials, and obstacles to implementing character-based learning. Evaluation can be conducted through classroom observations, learning portfolio analysis, reflective journals, and teacher performance assessments. Recent studies indicate that data-driven evaluation is essential to ensure program sustainability and its impact on learning quality (Nguyen & Hallinger, 2023).

Overall, TPD planning based on a needs analysis offers a clear and strategic direction for improving teacher competency in the context of character education and the Independent Curriculum. Careful planning—including goal formulation, material development, TPD model selection, strengthening structural support, and implementing data-driven evaluation has the potential to drive change in educational quality. Through this approach, teachers not only enhance their professional capacity but also serve as agents of change in the systemic and sustainable development of student character.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore that the issues of deviant behavior and weak learning motivation at SMA Negeri 1 Suwawa cannot be understood separately from the quality of character education implementation and teacher readiness to implement the Independent Curriculum. The identification of competency needs indicates that teachers require strengthening in the areas of values-based pedagogy, social-emotional skills, and personal integrity as moral role models. The gap analysis also reveals a significant difference between current teacher capabilities and the ideal competency standards, particularly regarding differentiated learning, authentic assessment, and the development of learning activities that integrate character values. From these findings, a key lesson learned is that shaping student learning behavior and motivation requires a foundation built on teacher capacity and a supportive learning ecosystem, not solely through student-directed interventions. Thus, this study provides new insights into how the role of teachers and school dynamics can influence student behavior and motivational development in a more subtle and comprehensive manner.

The contribution of this research lies in its integrative approach, linking teacher competency analysis, the dynamics of Independent Curriculum implementation, and the construction of character education within a unified analytical framework. This study offers a new perspective that teacher professional development (TPD) planning based on authentic needs and gap analysis results can be a strategic path to improving the effectiveness of character education in schools. However, this study still has limitations, primarily because the research location was limited to a single school and the number of informants was limited, so variations in gender, grade level, and socioeconomic background were not fully represented. Further research with a broader scope, more diverse samples, and the use of additional methods—both quantitative and comparative is urgently needed so that the resulting findings can provide a more comprehensive picture and serve as a strong foundation for the development of educational policies that are more accurate and responsive to students' needs.

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