



Pencak Silat as an extracurricular activity: A literature assessment of its significance in addressing the issues of character education in the 21st century

Review Article

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Abstract.

Background

Education in the 21st century demands a paradigm shift from merely transferring knowledge to shaping individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, and socially competent. Schools are not only places where educational processes occur, but also where learning takes place. However, many schools still focus more on academic achievement than on non-academic values, which often leads to the neglect of character education such as students' discipline, which is beginning to decline.

Objectives

This article aims to examine the role of pencak silat as an extracurricular activity in addressing the challenges of 21st-century education through a literature review approach.

Methods

The research method used in this study is a literature review, which is conducted by collecting, reading, examining, and analyzing various sources of literature relevant to the topic or issue being studied.

Results

Pencak silat, as a cultural heritage of the nation, holds great potential in character building and the development of students' soft skills. Based on a review of various literature, it is found that pencak silat not only contributes to physical development but also instills values such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and nationalism. This article recommends that pencak silat be optimally utilized as part of a holistic character education strategy. The six articles used as references indicate that pencak silat is not merely a physical activity, but also a form of teaching that can significantly contribute to the development of students' values and character.

Conclusion

Based on the review of the six articles above, it can be concluded that Pencak Silat contains elements of character education such as discipline, responsibility, and respect. Regular training in Pencak Silat instills perseverance and a strong fighting spirit. In addition, through social interaction in group training, students learn to cooperate and appreciate differences. Moreover, 21st-century education demands the mastery of soft skills. In Pencak Silat, students are trained to focus, think strategically, and manage their emotions. These values are highly relevant to the demands of today's workforce and the complexities of social life. As an extracurricular activity, Pencak Silat plays a strategic role in addressing the challenges of 21st-century education. Through a literature-based approach, it is found that Pencak Silat not only supports the development of students' character and soft skills, but also strengthens the nation's cultural identity.

Keywords: pencak silat, extracurricular, character, 21st-century education.

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INTRODUCTION

Discipline is a character trait that must be instilled in students from an early age, as the current state of student discipline is highly concerning (Supiana et al., 2019). Character education itself can be understood as a conscious and planned effort to provide guidance and learning to help individuals recognize what is good and right, and to practice it consistently in their daily lives both in their personal conduct and in interactions with others (Haryanto & Fuadi, 2025). As we all know, the negative impact

of changing times includes the emergence and widespread adoption of new cultures and habits in society, which can hinder the development of good character in our children. Therefore, the education system implemented in schools must place greater emphasis on the cultivation and development of character values (Andrean Safitri et al., 2023). Character education serves as a fundamental pillar of a nation and must be instilled in children from an early age (Amri et al., 2022).

School is defined as a place where the process of education and learning takes place. However, many schools are still more focused on academic achievement than non-academic values, which often leads to the neglect of character development (Nubatonis, Manna, et al., 2025). For instance, the value of discipline is increasingly being overlooked. This can be observed through students' declining discipline, such as their habit of arriving late, not completing homework, wearing untidy uniforms or incomplete attributes, being noisy in class especially during lessons, using inappropriate language, and so on (Kartika, 2019).

Education in the 21st century demands a paradigm shift from merely transferring knowledge to shaping individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, and socially competent (Laksana, 2021). Extracurricular activities play a vital role in supporting the formal education process, particularly in character development and non-academic skills (Nandana, 2020). One extracurricular activity that holds significant cultural and pedagogical value is *pencak silat* (Kartika, 2019). Education plays a crucial role in the development of a nation and state (Nubatonis, Runesi, et al., 2025). It is a conscious effort by educators to carry out activities aimed at developing students into well-rounded individuals in accordance with established educational goals (Fitria Kautsari Azizah & Lu'luil Maknun, 2022).

Pencak silat is not merely a martial art, but also a means of character education that instills noble values such as respect, discipline, courage, and patriotism (Supiana et al., 2019). In the context of 21st-century educational challenges, where students are required to master the 4C competencies (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication), pencak silat can serve as a relevant and contextual learning medium (Mahendra et al., 2020). Pencak silat encompasses values and learning concepts that can enhance students' personality and moral character (Nubatonis et al., 2024).

Most juvenile delinquency is influenced by the surrounding environment (Laksana, 2021). The education system has made a significant contribution to national development; however, it is currently considered to be less effective in cultivating students with strong national character (Zunika Agung Rahayu, Arri Handayani, 2024). Therefore, it is necessary to revitalize character education in primary schools as part of the 21st-century transformation, in order to prepare students to face the increasingly advanced and modern progress of the nation. This way, students will not only master science and technology, but also possess strong character and uphold the cultural values of the Indonesian nation (Zunika Agung Rahayu, Arri Handayani, 2024). now, character building in educational settings remains a key issue being promoted by the government to be integrated into every subject taught in schools.

This study is important to address the need for character development among students in the context of 21st-century education, particularly within the school environment, which not only focuses on classroom learning but also involves extracurricular activities. Therefore, this research is expected to make a meaningful contribution to improving the quality of character education through the integration of local culture, such as *pencak silat*, into school extracurricular programs.

METHOD

Research Study.

This study employs a literature observation or literature review approach aimed at exploring and identifying various findings related to *pencak silat*, extracurricular activities, and 21st-century character education. The sources were selected based on thematic relevance and scientific validity (Martín-Moya & González-Fernández, 2022). This research is a qualitative descriptive study based on a literature review. Its purpose is to summarize and analyze information from the literature in order to gain insights and draw conclusions relevant to *pencak silat*, extracurricular activities, and 21st-century character education. Data collection was conducted by following the guidelines of systematic observation and standardized meta-analysis (PRISMA) (Page et al., 2021).

Data collection in this study was carried out through the following steps. The research process involved a systematic search of electronic databases, including Google Scholar, PubMed, and ScienceDirect, using specific keywords such as "extracurricular," "pencak silat," "extracurricular activities," and "21st-century character education." Other sources used included university libraries,

conference proceedings, and online articles. The process also involved source selection and content analysis. Data analysis in this study was conducted qualitatively (Page et al., 2021).

Exclusion Criteria.

The following steps were taken: Categorization involved grouping research findings based on themes or subtopics, such as physiological muscle mechanisms, effective types of exercise, or external factors affecting arm muscle endurance. Synthesis entailed compiling conclusions from the literature to identify patterns, similarities, and differences among various sources. Interpretation was then applied to the synthesized data to provide in-depth insights into the influence of pencak silat extracurricular activities, extracurricular involvement in general, and 21st-century educational character development.

Procedure.

Initially, 199 publications were identified through database searches (Google Scholar, PubMed, and ScienceDirect). After applying the exclusion criteria, only 6 articles remained. Most records were excluded because the articles did not mention the lateral epicondyle in patients with lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow). All articles were extracted from their sources and analyzed using Mendeley software to eliminate duplicates. The PRISMA flowchart is presented in Figure 1.

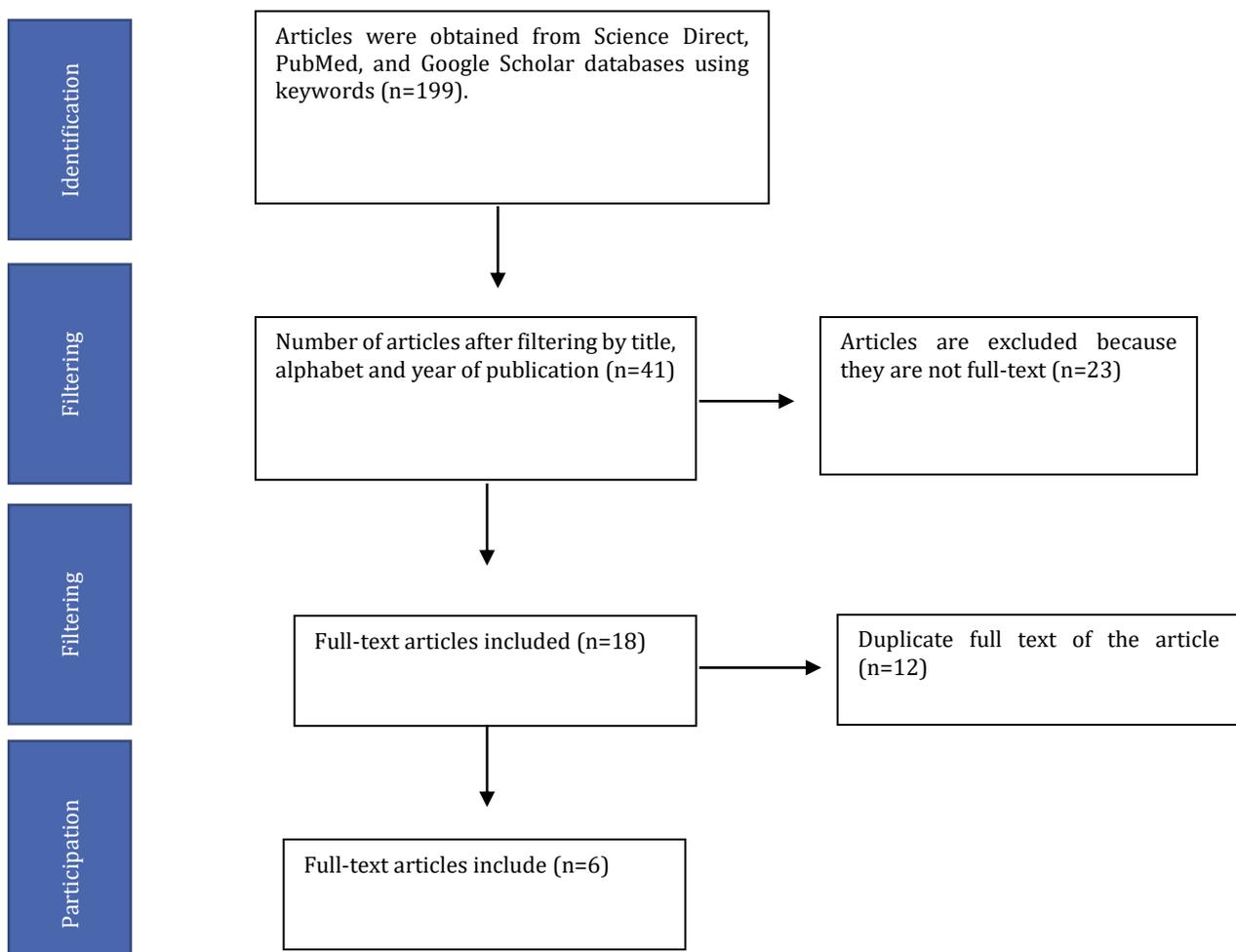


Figure 1. PRISMA research flowchart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The author used fifteen publications as the main reference sources in completing this research project, as shown in Table 1. The articles listed in the table below serve as the research database. The table includes several key elements from these fifteen articles: 1) Author(s) and Year; 2) Title and Publisher of the Study; 3) Method; and 4) Research Findings. Descriptions of the reviewed articles are provided below Table 1.

Table 1. The Role of Pencak Silat in Addressing the Challenges of Character Education in the 21st Century

No	Author(s) and Year	Methodology and Research Type	Study Content	Objective of the Study	Research Results
1.	(Haryanto & Fuadi, 2025)	This research adopts a qualitative descriptive method	The Role of Pencak Silat Extracurricular Activities in Fostering Religious Character among Students of SMP Negeri 4 Kaliwiro, Wonosobo	The purpose of this study is to foster religious character through the Pencak Silat extracurricular activity at SMP Negeri 4 Kaliwiro, Wonosobo	The research findings indicate that the extracurricular pencak silat activities at SMP Negeri 4 Kaliwiro play a positive role in instilling religious values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, and self-control. These values align with Islamic teachings and are cultivated through regular training, religious guidance, and the habituation of attitudes and behaviors that reflect religious principles.
2.	(Suci Muzfirah, 2020)	This study uses a quantitative approach with an ex post facto research method.	The Influence of Pencak Silat Extracurricular Activities on the Character Development of Students at MI Salafiyah in Cirebon City	This study aims to describe: (1) the extracurricular Pencak Silat activities at MI Salafiyah in Cirebon City, (2) the character development of students at MI Salafiyah in Cirebon City, and (3) the influence of extracurricular Pencak Silat activities on the character development of students at MI Salafiyah in Cirebon City	The results of the student observation recap showed that the implementation of pencak silat extracurricular activities reached 77%, which falls into the strong (good) category. The results of the character development questionnaire reached 83%, categorized as very strong (very good). Based on the regression test results, the significance value was 0.000. According to the hypothesis, since the significance value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected. This means that pencak silat extracurricular activities have an influence on students' character development. The magnitude of the influence is 37.9%, indicating a weak level of effect.
3.	(Rizal et al., 2021)	The researcher used a qualitative descriptive research method	Model of Character Development to Enhance Self-Confidence in Elementary School Students Through the Tapak Suci Pencak Silat Extracurricular Program	This study aims to examine the changes in students' attitudes and behaviors before and after participating in the Tapak Suci Pencak Silat program	The research findings indicate that the Tapak Suci Pencak Silat extracurricular activity contributes positively to shaping students' character, making them more self-confident, courageous, and mentally resilient. This is evident from the reduction in negative attitudes and the improvement of positive traits among participants after joining the activity.
4.	(Athoriq & Junaidi Sitika, 2024)	The method used in this study is a qualitative research method	The Role of the Sapu Jagat Cimande Pencak Silat Extracurricular Activity in Fostering the Religious Attitude of Students at SDN Rawa Endah, Bogo	This study aims to explore the actual implementation of the Pencak Silat Sapu Jagat Cimande extracurricular activity in fostering students' religious attitudes at SDN Rawaendah, Bogor. It	The results of this study indicate that the Pencak Silat Sapu Jagat Cimande extracurricular activity has a significant influence on the development of students' religious attitudes at SDN Rawaendah, Bogor. Students who participate in this activity show positive

				also seeks to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in cultivating students' religious attitudes at school, as well as the outcomes achieved regarding the development of students' religious attitudes.	progress both academically and behaviorally. Moreover, the school has observed notable improvements in students' religious attitudes and moral development, especially among those who previously exhibited deficiencies in these areas. This suggests that the extracurricular activity not only provides physical and mental benefits but also plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and fostering stronger religious values
5.	(Nandana, 2020)	This study employs a quantitative descriptive research type and uses a causal-comparative design	The Influence of Pencak Silat Training on the Development of Students' Self-Concept and Self-Confidence	The purpose of this study is to identify the differences in the development of self-concept and self-confidence between students who participate in pencak silat extracurricular activities and those who do not, as well as to examine the relationship between gender and both self-concept and self-confidence	The results of the one-way ANOVA test indicate that students who participate in Pencak Silat extracurricular activities have better self-concept and self-confidence compared to those who do not participate. Furthermore, gender does not have a significant influence on the development of students' self-concept and self-confidence
6.	(Sutriani & Hidayat, 2023)	This study employs a qualitative method.	The Implications of Extracurricular Activities on Students' Islamic Character Education	This study aims to examine the implications of Islamic character education through extracurricular activities at MTs Alkhairaat Sakita	The results of the study show that extracurricular activities have implications for the character education of students at MTs Alkhairaat Sakita. The extracurricular activities at the school include Islamic Study or Yasinan, Hadrah, Pencak Silat, and Scouting. These activities have a positive impact both physically and spiritually. Students are able to practice Islamic teachings, implement Islamic educational values in their daily lives, and develop a complete and noble personal character. Keywords: extracurricular activities, Islamic character education.

Discussion

Research methods, focus, and key findings of each qualitative study. The discussion in this research is divided into two groups. The first group discusses the first article, the role of pencak silat extracurricular activities in developing religious character in students of SMP Negeri 4 Kaliwiro, Wonosobo. The results of the study indicate that the pencak silat extracurricular activities at SMP Negeri 4 Kaliwiro play a positive role in instilling religious values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, and self-control. These values align with Islamic teachings and are instilled through regular training, religious guidance, and the habituation of attitudes and behaviors that reflect religious principles (Haryanto & Fuadi, 2025).

The second article in the first group is titled a model for developing elementary school students' self-confidence through tapak suci pencak silat extracurricular programs. The study shows that the Tapak Suci Pencak Silat extracurricular activities contribute positively to shaping students' character to become more self-confident, courageous, and mentally resilient. This is evidenced by a reduction in negative attitudes and an increase in positive traits among participants after taking part in the program (Rizal et al., 2021). Group one article three. the role of the sapu jagat cimande pencak silat extracurricular activity in fostering students' religious attitudes at SDN Rawa Endah, Bogor. The results of this study indicate that the sapu jagat cimande pencak silat extracurricular activity has a significant influence on the development of students' religious attitudes at SDN Rawa Endah, Bogor. Students involved in this activity demonstrated positive development both academically and behaviorally. Additionally, the school observed a noticeable improvement in students' religious attitudes and moral development, especially among those who previously showed deficiencies in these areas. This suggests that the extracurricular activity not only provides physical and mental benefits but also supports the formation of better character and fosters students' religious attitudes in a more positive direction (Athoriq & Junaidi Sitika, 2024).

Group one article four. The Implications of Extracurricular Activities on Islamic Character Education for Students. The findings of this study show that extracurricular activities have significant implications for students' character education at MTs Alkhairaat Sakita. the extracurricular activities offered by the school include quran recitation (Pengajian/Yasinan), Hadrah (Islamic music), pencak silat, and Scouts. These activities positively impact students both physically and spiritually. Through participation, students are able to practice Islamic teachings, apply the values of Islamic education in their daily lives, and shape a well-rounded personal character (kamil insani). Keywords extracurricular activities, Islamic character education (Sutriani & Hidayat, 2023).

second group first article the first article discusses the influence of pencak silat extracurricular activities on character development among students at MI Salafiyah in Cirebon City. The research findings, based on a recap of student observations, show that the implementation of pencak silat extracurricular activities reached 77%, categorized as strong (good). Meanwhile, the questionnaire results on character development show a score of 83%, categorized as very strong (very good). Based on the regression test results, the significance value was 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This means that pencak silat extracurricular activities do have an influence on students' character development. The degree of influence is 37.9%, which indicates a weak effect (Suci Muzfirah, 2020).

Second group second article the second article explores the influence of pencak silat training on the development of self-concept and self-confidence in students. The results of a one-way ANOVA test showed that students who participated in pencak silat extracurricular activities had better self-concept and self-confidence compared to those who did not. Furthermore, the study found no correlation between gender and the formation of students' self-concept and self-confidence (Nandana, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the review of the six articles above, it can be concluded that Pencak Silat contains elements of character education such as discipline, responsibility, and respect. Regular practice in Pencak Silat instills perseverance and a strong fighting spirit. In addition, through social interaction during group training, students learn to collaborate and appreciate diversity. Moreover, 21st-century education demands mastery of soft skills. In Pencak Silat, students are trained to stay focused, think strategically, and control their emotions. These values are highly relevant to the demands of today's complex work environment and social life. As an extracurricular activity, Pencak Silat plays a strategic role in addressing the challenges of 21st-century education. Through a literature-based approach, it is found that Pencak Silat not only supports the development of students' character and soft skills but also strengthens national cultural identity. Therefore, support from schools and policymakers is necessary to empower Pencak Silat systematically and sustainably within the national education system.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

JDN was responsible for conceptualizing and designing the study, collecting data, and drafting the manuscript. SR contributed to the analysis, interpretation of the results, and critical revision of the manuscript. JDN also served as the corresponding author, handling all correspondence and revisions related to the publication.

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