

Moral Learning with a *Deep Learning Approach* at Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

Moral learning in elementary schools plays an important role in shaping students' character, especially respectful behavior towards teachers. However, at SD Negeri Blubuk, student behavior is still found that shows low respect, as well as moral learning that tends to be textual and less connected to students' real experiences. This study aims to analyze the implementation of moral learning with a *deep learning* approach at SD Negeri Blubuk. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type carried out at SD Negeri Blubuk, Kulon Progo. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation with purposively selected principals, teachers, students, and parents. The data was analyzed using an interactive analysis model with triangulation (sources and techniques) to ensure the validity of the findings. The results of the study concluded that moral learning with a *deep learning* approach at SD N Blubuk was carried out systematically through the stages of planning, implementation, and continuous evaluation which were strengthened by school culture and habituation programs. This approach encourages students to understand moral values in depth, apply them in daily life, and reflect on them through meaningful learning experiences. The implementation integrates the principles of *mindful*, *meaningful*, and *joyful learning* deep learning which are packaged in a learning framework including pedagogical practices, the creation of a conducive learning environment, partnerships, and the optimal use of digital technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Moral learning in elementary schools has a strategic role in shaping the morals of students because education is not only oriented towards the mastery of knowledge, but also on the formation of moral, social, and spiritual attitudes of students. Morality is basically inherent in a person, united with behavior or deeds (Saputra & Sutarman, 2022). From the perspective of Islamic education, respect for teachers is an important part of the process of acquiring knowledge. Classical thinking places manners as the foundation of learning, where students are required to respect the teacher so that knowledge brings blessings (Az Zarnuji, 2019). This view is strengthened by the concept of moral education which places the attitude of *tawadhu'*, seriousness of learning, and respect for educators as the core of shaping students' character (Al Ghazali, 2000). In the context of modern education, moral learning is also understood as a process of internalizing values that must touch the cognitive, affective, and behavioral realms in an integrated manner (Nata, 2021). Islamic education has entered a new chapter in its long journey. That is the era of digitalization and the acceleration of industries that have penetrated in all aspects of life (Rahman & Nuryana, 2019). This development has not been accompanied by the strong morals of our students. In reality, education shows a serious challenge in the form of declining students' respect for teachers. This phenomenon can be seen from the weak communication ethics of students, low discipline, and the emergence of various forms of disrespectful behavior towards teachers in the school environment (Bere, 2025; Cipta, 2025; Hartono, 2024). This condition indicates that moral learning is not fully able to internalize values into students'

real behavior. One of the causes is learning that is still textual, memorization-oriented, and lacks to associate grades with students' life experiences so that it fails to touch the affective dimension that is the core of character education (J. Suprihatiningrum, 2013; Zurqoni, 2016). The emphasis on cognitive aspects and an indoctrinative-normative approach makes religion seem rigid and limits students to textbooks as the only source of learning (Rahma & Perawironegoro, 2024).

A number of recent studies have shown that the formation of students' character is greatly influenced by the learning approach used. Research in the field of Islamic Religious Education shows that learning that emphasizes meaningful experiences, reflection of values, and emotional involvement of students is able to increase the understanding of religious values and shape students' religious character (Abdussyukur & Zulfah, 2025; Azima et al., 2023; Irfanuddin, Selamat, & Widodo, 2025a). Other research also confirms that students' respectful attitude towards teachers is influenced by learning that touches on affective aspects, teacher examples, and emotional relationships in the classroom (Khotimah, 2017; Mutiah, Saprijal, & Irwansyah, 2023). These findings show that the exemplary approach has an important role in the success of moral education. Regarding examples in moral learning, it is also contained in the following QS Al Ahzab 21:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

One of the approaches that is considered relevant to answer these needs is the *deep learning* approach in learning. This approach emphasizes that learning must produce deep, meaningful, and applicative understanding so that students are able to connect knowledge with real life. Deep learning integrates the intellectual, emotional, and social aspects of students so that values do not stop at knowledge, but develop into awareness and action (Fullan, Quinn, & McEachen, 2018). Deep learning is defined as a glorifying approach by emphasizing the creation of a learning atmosphere and learning process that is conscious, meaningful, and joyful through holistic and integrated thinking, heart exercises, tastes, and sports (Suyanto, 2025). In the context of Indonesian education, this approach is also in line with the philosophy of education that emphasizes example, empowerment, and mentoring in the learning process (Dewantara, 2013). Thus, *the deep learning approach* has the potential to be a pedagogical strategy that is able to strengthen moral learning in elementary schools. However, based on the analysis of previous research, studies on the implementation of *deep learning* approaches are still limited, especially those that integrate with moral learning in elementary schools. This condition shows that there is a research gap that is important to study further. Based on the background and gaps in the research, the main problem in this study is how moral learning with a *deep learning* approach is applied in SD N Blubuk. To answer these problems, this study uses a qualitative approach of case studies to deeply understand the moral learning process with a *deep learning approach* in the real context of schools. This study aims to analyze the implementation of moral learning with a *deep learning approach* at SD Negeri Blubuk Pengasih Kulon Progo. This research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of moral learning studies as well as practical contributions to the development of more contextual, meaningful, and transformative learning models in elementary schools.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. This approach was chosen because the research aims to understand in depth the implementation of moral learning with a *deep learning* approach in the real context of schools. Case studies allow researchers to comprehensively examine phenomena in real-life contexts by considering the social, pedagogical, and cultural aspects that surround them (Creswell, 2018; R.K.Yin, 2018). The research was carried out at SD Negeri

Blubuk, Kapanewon Pengasih, Kulon Progo Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. This school was chosen *purposively* because it has implemented learning with a *deep learning approach* through teacher training and classroom learning practices. The research was carried out from August to December 2025 to allow the observation of the learning process to take place in its entirety according to the school's academic calendar. The research subjects amounted to nine informants who were selected using *the purposive* sampling technique. The informants consisted of school principals, Islamic Religious Education teachers, several classroom teachers, grade IV students, and parents of students. The selection of informants is based on their direct involvement in the implementation of deep learning-based moral learning so that it is expected to be able to provide rich and comprehensive data about the learning process and its implications for student behavior.

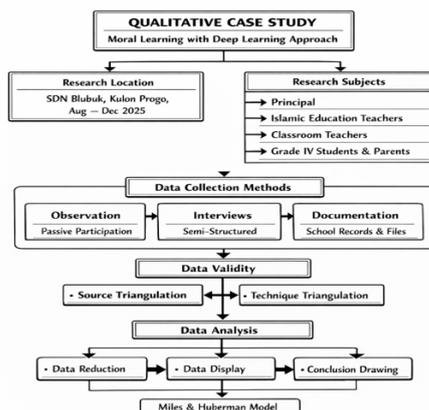


Figure 1. Methods

Research data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out in a passive participatory manner to obtain data on the implementation of moral learning, teacher-student interaction, and the manifestation of respectful behavior of students in the school environment. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with principals, teachers, students, and parents to explore their experiences, learning strategies, and perceptions of the implementation of *deep learning* approaches. Documentation is used to complete the data through the analysis of learning tools, school archives, activity records, and other documents relevant to the research. The use of these three techniques is intended to obtain in-depth and mutually reinforcing data (Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2013). The validity of the data is maintained through source triangulation and triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from school principals, teachers, students, and parents. The triangulation technique is carried out by comparing observation, interview, and documentation data to ensure the consistency of research findings (Moleong, 2001). Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman interactive model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The analysis is carried out continuously from data collection until the research is completed so that it allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of the implementation of deep learning-based moral learning and its implications for students' respectful behavior to teachers (Huberman, 1994).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Deep learning is an approach that Indonesia has only officially implemented in the new school year 2025/2026. Although initially it began to be known in early 2025. SD Negeri Blubuk has implemented *deep learning* at the beginning of the 2025/2026 school year in July. Research shows that the implementation of moral learning at SD Negeri Blubuk is not only the responsibility of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, but is carried out collaboratively by all teachers and

school residents. Every teacher has a role as an educator as well as a moral example for students in displaying attitudes, speech, and behavior that reflect noble moral values. Moral learning is not only taught conceptually, but also internalized through daily interactions in learning activities and school life. The implementation of moral learning at SD Negeri Blubuk is carried out through the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. At the planning stage, teachers have integrated moral values in learning tools such as teaching modules, learning objectives, and attitude habituation activities in the classroom. Teachers also determine student-centered learning strategies, approaches, methods, and techniques in order to actively and creatively engage them in learning. This shows that moral learning is systematically designed so that moral values can be embedded in the learning process. In learning theory, good planning is an important factor in determining the success of the learning process (Dimiyati dan Mudjiono, 2015; J. Suprihatiningrum, 2013). At the implementation stage, teachers instill moral values through example, habituation, and educational interaction between teachers and students. Teachers show a polite attitude, provide examples of good behavior, and guide students in behaving in accordance with moral values. This is in line with the concept of moral education in Islam which emphasizes the importance of manners and teacher examples in the educational process (Az Zarnuji, 2019; Ulwan, 2015). In fact, Al-Ghazali emphasized that the formation of morals is not enough through the transmission of knowledge, but must be habituated continuously until it becomes a character in a person (Al Ghazali, 2000). This concept is in line with research that reveals that habituation in learning by way of habituation of morals and the habit of worship educating children with habits and discipline are the most good and effective supporting factors for education (Ahad & Perawironegoro, 2024).

In addition, school culture also has an important role in supporting the implementation of moral learning. The habit of greetings, good manners, and good relations between teachers and students are part of the process of forming students' character. The findings of this study are in line with previous research that shows that learning that emphasizes habituation and example can increase students' respect for teachers (Khotimah, 2017; Mutiah et al., 2023). Thus, the implementation of moral learning that is integrated in learning activities and school culture can support the formation of students' character more effectively and sustainably.

The *deep learning* approach in moral learning at SD Negeri Blubuk is carried out through learning experiences that allow students to understand, apply, and reflect on moral values. The ability of students to understand, appreciate, and apply religious values in their daily lives will greatly affect their religious maturity (Masduki & Warsah, 2020). This approach provides students with the opportunity to not only understand the concept of morality theoretically, but also relate it to real-life experiences in everyday life at school. Moral learning planning with *deep learning* is carried out by preparing a plan for the implementation of deep learning by teachers. Based on the results of the analysis of the RPP document, it appears that teachers at SD N Blubuk have included the principles of learning and deep learning experiences. In addition, the teacher also mentioned the use of digital used, the learning environment used, the partnerships implemented in learning, and the pedagogical practices used. This is in accordance with the principles of deep learning presented by Suyanto in the Academic Manuscript of Deep Learning (Suyanto, 2025).

The implementation of *the deep learning* approach in moral learning is carried out through three main learning experiences, namely understanding, applying, and reflecting (Suyanto, 2025). At the level of understanding, teachers help students understand the concepts of rules, rights, and obligations, as well as moral values related to life at school. This stage aims to build students' conceptual understanding of the moral values learned. In the context of deep learning, the process of

understanding becomes the basis for students to develop more reflective and meaningful thinking (Fullan et al., 2018; Suyanto, 2025). Furthermore, at the application stage, students are invited to apply moral values through discussion activities, case studies, and problem solving related to real situations in the school environment. This approach is also supported by the use of a problem-based learning model that allows students to learn from the problems they experience in their daily lives (M. Savery, 2006). Through this process, students not only understand moral values conceptually, but also learn to apply them in real life. In the reflection stage, students are invited to reflect on the learning experiences they have had as well as the behaviors that emerged during the learning process. This reflection helps students understand the meaning of moral values more deeply and realize the importance of applying these values in daily life. Previous research has also shown that *the deep learning* approach can improve understanding of religious values and better shape students' character (Abdussyukur & Zulfah, 2025; Azima et al., 2023; Irfanuddin et al., 2025).

The stage of moral learning with *deep learning* is carried out using the principles of deep learning, namely *mindful*, *meaningful*, and *joyful* (Suyanto, 2025). Teachers implementing these principles also pay attention to the *deep learning learning framework*, namely choosing pedagogical practices that are in accordance with moral learning materials, learning environments, partnerships, and digital utilization. Regarding the use of digital, in accordance with the findings of Ardi and Djamaluddin in their journal which stated that some teachers in schools are hit by the limitations of the use of technology and learning methods that are still monotonous (Ardi & Perawironegoro, 2024). Arif also said that the use of digital technology in learning not only functions as an auxiliary medium, but also as a means to expand students' learning experiences to be more contextual and interactive. Proper digital integration can increase student engagement while supporting the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies in achieving learning goals (Rahman, 2016). Regarding partnerships, teachers at SD N Blubuk partner with parents as the first madrasah for children. Teachers collaborate with parents in making family rules. This is a bridge for parents in disciplining their children to have good morals. The findings confirm that character formation does not only take place in schools, but also is rooted in the pattern of education in the family as the first school for children. Therefore, a directed and contextual educational design is needed so that moral values can be firmly and sustainably embedded in students (Masduki, 2020).

Moral learning with a *deep learning approach* at SD Negeri Blubuk began to be implemented at the beginning of the 2025/2026 school year through training, KKG and SIMPATIK activities, as well as observation and reflection processes. This learning is designed through three main learning experiences, namely understanding, applying, and reflecting. At the comprehension stage, students learn through videos, discussions, and *mind mapping*. At the application stage, students apply moral values in family and school rules as well as direct practices such as greeting and asking permission. Furthermore, in the reflection stage, students do *reflective exit tickets*, write journals, and make personal commitments.

This approach is based on *deep learning principles* which include *mindful* (focus, reflection, and self-awareness), *meaningful* (relating the material to school, family, and real-life rules), and *joyful* (creating a safe and fun learning atmosphere through games, *role play*, interactive assessments, and film media). Its implementation is supported by a learning framework that includes partnerships between teachers and parents, the use of learning environments such as classrooms, mosques, and homes, and the use of digital technology such as LCDs, infocuses, and educational games. The pedagogical practices used include *Project Based Learning*, discussions, assignments, *mind mapping*, *window shopping*, *exit tickets*, and *role play*, so that moral learning becomes more

contextual, participatory, and meaningful. Furthermore, at the evaluation stage, moral learning at SD Negeri Blubuk is carried out through observation of student behavior, formative assessments, and attitude assessments in learning outcome reports. This finding is in line with the theory of learning evaluation which states that evaluation is a process of collecting information to assess the achievement of learning objectives as well as providing feedback for further improvement of the learning process (Dimiyati dan Mudjiono, 2015). Thus, the implementation of moral learning with a *deep learning* approach at SD N Blubuk provides a more meaningful and contextual learning experience for students, so that moral values can be understood and lived in more depth.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the implementation of moral learning with a *deep learning* approach at SD Negeri Blubuk has been carried out systematically and collaboratively since the beginning of the 2025/2026 school year. Moral learning is not only the responsibility of Islamic Religious Education teachers, but involves all teachers and school residents as educators as well as moral examples, so that moral values are not only taught conceptually, but are internalized through daily school interactions and culture. The learning process is carried out through structured planning, implementation, and evaluation stages, with the integration of moral values in learning tools, student-centered strategies, and habituation of attitudes in the school environment. The *deep learning approach* is realized through three main learning experiences, namely understanding, applying, and reflecting on moral values, so that students not only gain conceptual understanding, but are also able to apply and interpret these values in the context of real life at school. This implementation is supported by the application of the principles of *mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning* as well as a learning framework that includes pedagogical practices, learning environments, partnerships, and digital utilization. Learning evaluation is carried out through behavioral observation, formative assessment, and attitude assessment to ensure the achievement of learning objectives while providing feedback for continuous improvement. Overall, the implementation of deep learning-based moral learning at SD Negeri Blubuk provides a more meaningful, contextual, and sustainable learning experience in shaping character and internalizing students' moral values.

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