A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING NOBLE MORALS IN STUDENTS WHO ACTIVELY USE SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Character education in the digital era presents challenges for teachers in instilling noble moral values in students who actively use social media. This study aims to describe the strategies teachers use to develop noble morals in elementary school students who actively use social media. This study employs a descriptive qualitative design using a case study approach and was conducted in two elementary schools in Gugus Dwi Jorini, Maos, Cilacap. The subjects were four teachers, five students in fifth and sixth grade, and two principals. Research data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, & Saldana model, which includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data was validated through triangulation of techniques and sources. The results of the study indicate that teacher strategies in developing noble morals in students who actively use social media include (1) instilling faith by combining the habit of worship and role models with digital literacy; (2) instilling honesty through role models in real behavior and digital contexts, moral reflection, and digital ethics education; (3) fostering compassion by integrating real social activities and kindness campaigns on social media; (4) instilling politeness by combining exemplary behavior and habituation with digital ethics education; and (5) fostering responsibility through habits, active roles, and digital ethics education. It was concluded that the noble morals of elementary school children in the social media era is developed through a holistic and contextual approach (through habituation, role modeling, reflection, and digital literacy), so that character values are internalized in both real and virtual life. Support from schools, parents, the community, and related parties is essential to developing noble morals sustainably

INTRODUCTIONS

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping the whole person, encompassing intellectual, moral, and spiritual aspects that form the basis of life's behavior. The essence of education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but also the formation of character and personality based on moral, spiritual, and ethical values (Hasbullah, 2015; Abdurrahman, 2016; Roehanan & Hasanah, 2021; Daulay, 2022). Education aims to produce intelligent individuals with noble character, responsibility, and usefulness to society (Suyitno, 2021; Andriani, 2023). Through teacher role models and the instilling of positive behavior, education serves to foster individuals with noble character, ethical awareness, and the ability to act according to norms of goodness (Quddus, 2020; Wahyuni, 2021; Wakhudin et al., 2024; Hidayati & Andriani, 2025; Prameswari & Andriani, 2025). This aligns with Kohlberg's moral theory framework (in Salamah, 2023), which emphasizes the development of individual moral reasoning abilities, and Lickona's (in Damariswara et al., 2021) character education principles, which emphasize habituation and role modeling.

However, the rapid development of technology and social media presents new challenges for education. Teachers now work with students who inhabit a digital environment saturated with information, entertainment, and virtual interactions that can influence their language, lifestyle, and behavior, making character and moral formation increasingly complex (Wakhudin, 2020; Abdillah, 2022; Ayub, 2022; Azzahra et al., 2024; Meiliyani & Sajawandi, 2024). Research shows that social media users in Indonesia will reach more than 68.9% of the total population by 2024, with the majority being the younger generation, making online interactions a significant part of their lives (Pandjaitan, 2024). This condition requires teachers to develop adaptive and contextual strategies to instill moral values, guide students to use technology wisely, and internalize digital ethics as part of character education (Maolia et al., 2020; Emroni, 2023; Arifin et al., 2023; Andriani et al., 2024)

The phenomenon of changes in student behavior and character due to digital culture and social media is evident at the elementary school level. Research by Ananda (2022) and Nabilah & Suprayitno (2022) shows a decline in polite behavior due to the influence of social media, where children tend to imitate viral trends without considering ethics. A similar situation was evident from the researchers' initial observations at two elementary schools in one cluster in Maos, Cilacap. Students were seen imitating viral dances like Trend Fuji or Goyang Popo, using offensive language such as "anjir," "bacot," "ngab," and "slebew," and exhibiting impolite behavior in the school environment and places of worship. Islamic Religious Education teachers reported that many students did not memorize prayer recitations, rarely prayed at home, and imitated bullying scenes from YouTube.

Previous research shows that teachers play an important role in moral development, especially in the digital era, although the focus and context of the subject vary. Several studies emphasize the negative impact of social media on students' morality and behavior, such as the degradation of character values due to exposure to digital content in high school students (Ferniati et al., 2023), the influence of social media during the pandemic on the behavior of elementary school students (Rachmawati & Ratnaningrum, 2024), and the importance of teacher role models in digital character education that emphasizes empathy, role models, and the habituation of ethical values (Sya'roni, 2020; Renindita, 2024; Hukubun et al., 2024; Chen & Xiao, 2022; Iba et al., 2024; Sholekah, 2024; Timung & Bordoloi, 2024). Furthermore, research also highlights innovative teacher strategies in digital character education, such as adaptive storytelling (Musthofa et al., 2025), group work, and direct guidance through counseling (Khotimah et al., 2023), as well as systematic character education planning (Maulana, 2022). Overall, these findings emphasize that teachers serve not only as academic instructors but also as moral guides who can instill moral values through daily practice and the wise use of digital media.

Although many studies emphasize the role of teachers in developing moral character, most are descriptive and limited to specific contexts, resulting in a lack of understanding of teacher strategies in elementary schools facing the challenges of the digital era. Previous research tends to emphasize habituation, role modeling, or intervention in a specific aspect of character, without comprehensively examining how moral values are internalized in the interactions of students who actively use social media. Based on this, this study presents novelty by conducting a qualitative analysis of teacher strategies in developing noble morals in elementary school students who actively use social media

by integrating the moral value framework according to Zubaedi (2015), namely: (a) relationship with God: faith; (b) relationship with others: caring and politeness; and (c) relationship with oneself: honesty and responsibility.

The focus of this research is to answer the question: "What are teachers' strategies for developing noble morals in elementary school students who actively use social media?" This research aims to describe teachers' strategies for developing noble morals in elementary school students who actively use social media. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich studies of moral-based character education in the digital era. Practically, it can provide tangible contributions to teachers and educational institutions in designing contextual, relevant, and effective moral development strategies so that students grow into a generation with noble morals amidst the massive development of information technology.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design using a case study approach. The aim is to analyze in-depth teacher strategies for developing noble character in elementary school students who actively use social media, including the values of faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the meaning, process, and social context behind moral development practices in a natural and in-depth manner. This aligns with Creswell (2019) perspective, which states that qualitative research focuses on understanding the meaning of individual experiences with social phenomena in their natural contexts, and Aryani (2021) asserts that a qualitative approach is holistic and emphasizes a profound understanding of complex social realities.

This research was conducted from September to November 2025 in two elementary schools within the Dwi Jorini Cluster in Maos, Cilacap. This is because the area has a high level of student participation in social media use, allowing researchers to obtain relevant data related to the implementation of noble character development strategies in an elementary school environment contextualized to the challenges of the digital era. Subjects were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in character education practices. The following table presents the subjects and their selection criteria:

Table 1. Research Subjects and Criteria

Code	Role	Total	Selection Criteria
P1–P4	Teachers	4	Have direct experience in guiding and fostering students' character development; understand the dynamics of students' behavior in the school environment.
A1-A5	Student	5	three fifth grade students and two sixth grade students who actively use social media so that their behavior, interactions, and impact on character development can be observed and analyzed.
K1–K2	School Principals	2	Play a role in planning, policymaking, and managing character education activities within the school environment.

Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were used to directly observe the interactions between teachers and students during the implementation of the moral development strategy. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and the principal to explore the experiences, perceptions, and forms of implementation of moral development in the context of social media use. Examples of questions asked included, to teachers, "How do you instill faith values in students who actively use social media?"; to students, "How do your teachers help improve faith through activities at school?"; and to the principal, "How do you view teachers' strategies in instilling faith values in students?" Documentation studies were conducted through a review of school documents, activity photos, and teachers' reflective notes to strengthen and verify the findings from the observations and interviews.

The data was analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2019) which includes three stages, namely data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification. Analysis was conducted continuously from collection to final interpretation to understand teachers' strategies in developing noble character in students who actively use social media. Research data (interviews, observations, and documentation) were selected and grouped based on five indicators of noble character, as outlined by Zubaedi (2015): faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility, during the condensation stage. Data were presented narratively and thematically to clearly demonstrate the relationships between findings. Conclusions were drawn through repeated verification and confirmation with informants to ensure the validity, depth, and concrete context of teachers' practices in developing moral character in the digital age.

Data was validated through triangulation of sources and techniques (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019). Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from teachers, students, and the principal. Technical triangulation was conducted by combining the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. This procedure ensured that the data obtained was credible, in-depth, and authentically described teachers' strategies in developing noble morals in students in the digital age.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS
Result

The results of this study are compiled based on three primary sources: observations, interviews, and documentation studies. These were conducted in an integrated manner to gain a deeper understanding of teacher strategies in developing noble moral values in students who actively use social media. Five indicators of noble morality serve as an analytical framework based on Zubaedi (2015), which include relationships with God (faith), relationships with others (caring and politeness), and relationships with oneself (honesty and responsibility). Each data source plays a crucial role in strengthening the validity of the findings and providing a comprehensive picture of learning practices in elementary schools.

The following presents the results of observations that concretely illustrate how teachers implement strategies for instilling moral values in learning activities and daily interactions at school. These observational data serve as the initial basis for deeper analysis alongside interview and documentation findings.

Table 2. Observation Results and Documentation of Teacher Strategies for Developing Noble Morals in Students Who Actively Use Social Media (Critical Analysis)

Indicator of Noble Character	Observation	Documentation	Main Meaning / Main Theme
Faith	P1 leads prayers before and after lessons while connecting the material to religious video content; P2 opens and closes lessons with prayer while showing short dakwah videos; P3 initiates morning prayers, asks students to write weekly gratitude reflections, and emphasizes the use of social media for positive content; P4 uses social media to insert moral messages and model spiritual character.	Photos of group prayers, students' uploaded worship journals, and digital dakwah videos	Strengthening faith by combining worship routines and teacher role modeling with digital literacy, allowing spiritual values to emerge in both real and online interactions.
Honesty	P1 instills honesty in daily life and on social media; P2 asks students to write honest feelings and	Digital reflection journals, anti-hoax	Cultivating honesty through exemplary behavior in real and

Indicator of Noble Character	Observation	Documentation	Main Meaning / Main Theme
	experiences on the class digital platform; P3 models honesty and emphasizes the consequences of dishonesty in social media use; P4 uses online educational games to appreciate students' willingness to admit mistakes.	posters, and teacher notes.	digital contexts, moral reflection, and digital ethics education, encouraging students to act honestly both offline and online.
Caring	P1 encourages students to share and help their peers; P2 organizes communal work and donation activities with online documentation; P3 guides students to help friends, share tasks, and comfort peers who feel sad, supported by class social media; P4 addresses indifferent behavior and encourages students to share stationery and strengthen togetherness online.	Photos of social activities, donation records, and social media posts promoting kindness.	Developing caring attitudes by integrating real social activities with ethical digital kindness campaigns, fostering empathy in both real-life and online environments.
Politeness	P1 speaks politely and corrects students gently while emphasizing online communication ethics; P2 trains polite communication in class and online groups using the 5S culture; P3 conducts short drama performances and social media conversation simulations; P4 monitors online comments and provides guidance on digital etiquette.	Short drama recordings, screenshots of class WhatsApp group, and teacher notes on the 5S culture.	Instilling politeness by combining exemplary behavior and habitual practice with digital ethics education, creating a polite culture both in everyday life and in online spaces.
Responsibility	P1 establishes classroom rules, duty schedules, and learning discipline; P2 assigns digital reflections on social media posts along with submission deadlines; P3 assigns rotating roles as social media administrators and guides content management; P4 emphasizes consistent task completion, online attendance, and posting etiquette.	Duty schedule documents, records of class social media management, and students' digital reflections.	Building responsibility through habituation, active involvement, and digital ethics education, reinforcing both personal and social responsibility

The observations and documentation in Table 2 show how teachers instill noble morals through direct classroom practice and online interactions, starting with fostering faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility. These findings were further reinforced through interviews with teachers, students, and the principal (Table 3), which confirmed that the strategies implemented by teachers were positively received by students, supported by the principal's policies and role models, and enabled them to internalize moral values in daily life, both at school and in the digital world.

Table 3. Interview Results (Teachers, Students, and Principals) Regarding Teacher Strategies in Developing Noble Morals in Students Actively Using Social Media (Critical Analysis)

Indicators of Noble Character	Teacher Strategies	Students' Perspectives	Principal's Perspectives	Main Themes / Core Meanings
Faith	Combining habitual collective prayers, congregational worship, and integrating faith-based values in learning through the use of religious digital content	Experiencing habitual worship activities and strengthened spirituality through digital media	Supporting through routine religious programs and teachers' exemplary behavior	Integration of faith through habituation, role modeling, and religious digital literacy
Honesty	Role modeling, storytelling and discussions about honesty, behavior reflection	Emphasizing honesty, refusing to cheat, verifying information	Supporting teachers in emphasizing honest behavior and digital literacy	Honesty internalized through real actions, moral reflection, and ethical digital literacy
Caring	Social activities, digital kindness campaigns, anti-bullying programs, student appreciation	Accustomed to helping, sharing, and rejecting bullying	Supporting through official school accounts and digital literacy guidance	Caring developed through real social activities and ethical, productive digital engagement
Politeness	Teacher role modeling, 5S culture (smile, greet, salute, polite, courteous), digital communication ethics	Understanding manners, using polite language online	Providing guidance on digital etiquette and modeling politeness	Politeness internalized through habituation, role modeling, and digital communication literacy
Responsibility	Assigning tasks, class roles, managing school social media accounts, evaluating digital ethics	Learning discipline, being cautious when posting content, being responsible	Monitoring behavior and assigning roles of responsibility	Responsibility strengthened through habituation, active participation, and awareness of digital ethics

The interview findings confirm that teachers' efforts to develop students' noble character are systematic, consistent, and fully supported by the school. Both teachers and students demonstrated a shared understanding of the importance of habituation, role modeling, and digital ethics as part of strengthening noble character. This allows noble moral values to be internalized in the real-life and online behavior of students who actively use social media.

Analysis of findings from observations, interviews, and documentation shows that teachers implement strategies for developing noble character holistically and contextually, adapting pedagogical practices to the challenges of the digital era, namely:

Instilling Faith

Teachers instill faith in students by combining the habit of worship and role models with digital literacy through joint prayer activities, congregational prayers, congregational prayer, and the integration of faith values into learning through the use of digital religious content. This approach is taken because spiritual habits and teacher role modeling serve as important foundations for the development of students' faith, while digital media makes learning more relevant to their daily experiences. This strategy is implemented through habitual prayer before and after lessons, showing short Islamic preaching videos, asking students to write weekly gratitude reflections, and incorporating moral messages through social media. The implication is that students can internalize spiritual values not only in real-life interactions at school but also when using social media. This was reinforced by an interview with one student, who

said, "I often watch Islamic preaching videos recommended by my teacher and try to write a gratitude journal every day" (interview with A5, 29/09/2025). The principal added, "The school supports teachers with regular religious activities and teacher role models, including the use of social media to strengthen spiritual values" (interview with K2, 1/10/2025).

Fostering Honesty

Honesty is fostered through teacher role models and direct practice in the real and digital world, moral reflection, and digital ethics education. This strategy is important because students need to understand the consequences of lying and the importance of integrity, especially in the context of social media, which is vulnerable to misinformation. Teachers uphold integrity during online tests by requiring students to write about their honest experiences in digital journals, emphasizing the prohibition of cheating, and teaching students to check facts before sharing information. In this way, students learn to be honest in both real-life and online settings, as well as to understand digital ethics. One student stated, "The teacher reminded me not to share hoaxes and to always write about my experiences honestly in the online class journal" (interview with A2, 30/09/2025). The teacher emphasized, "We emphasize honesty in everyday life and when using social media" (interview with P1, 29/09/ 2025).

Fostering Compassion

Teachers foster student compassion through the integration of real-life social activities and kindness campaigns on social media. This approach is used because empathy is not sufficiently developed through theory but needs to be practiced in various contexts, including the digital space, which has now become students' primary place of interaction. Teachers guide students to share with friends, help when someone is in difficulty, participate in community service and donation programs, and create online anti-bullying campaigns on the classroom platform. One teacher said, "I encourage my children not only to donate at school but also to spread kindness on social media so they realize that empathy applies in both the real world and the digital world" (interview with P2, 29/09/2025). As a result, students become accustomed to sharing and helping ethically, both directly and through interactions on social media. This aligns with a student's statement, "I participate in kindness campaigns created by teachers and help friends who are struggling in online class groups" (interview with A1, 30/09/2025). Through repeated practice, social concern develops naturally and becomes part of students' daily behavior.

Instilling Politeness

Politeness is instilled through a combination of behavioral modeling, habituation, and digital ethics education. This is done because both real-life and online interactions require self-control and ethical awareness to maintain harmonious social relationships. Teachers gently reprimand students, practice polite communication both in class and in WhatsApp groups, conduct conversation simulations or short skits simulating social media situations, and review students' online comments to provide guidance on communication ethics. One teacher emphasized, "I always remind students that politeness isn't just for school; it should also be evident in how they write and respond to messages on social media" (interview with P3, 29/09/2025). Consequently, students internalize politeness as a culture, behave politely in their daily lives and online, and are able to avoid conflict. A student stated, "My teacher always reminds me to write polite comments and not to offend my friends on social media" (interview with A3, 30/09/2025).

Fostering Responsibility

Responsibility is fostered through active participation, habituation, and digital ethics education. This strategy is implemented because personal and social responsibility are crucial, especially when students manage digital content that can impact themselves and others. Teachers establish class rules, schedules for on-duty tasks, digital reflection assignments, assign students rotating social media admin roles, and monitor posting ethics. In this way, students learn discipline, consistency, and an awareness of their personal and social responsibilities. One student stated, "I was given the responsibility of managing class content, so I learned to be disciplined and careful when posting" (A4, 30/09/2025), and the principal emphasized, "The school supports the development of responsible student morals through habituation, active participation, and digital ethics education" (interview with K2, 01/10/2025).

Discussion

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that teacher strategies for developing noble morals in elementary school students who actively use social media are carried out in a planned, holistic, and contextual manner, adapting pedagogical practices to the challenges of the digital era. Strengthening faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility is not only built through habituation and direct role modeling in the school environment but is also reinforced through digital literacy and ethical social media practices so that these values remain alive in student interactions online. Teachers utilize faith-based learning, moral reflection, social activities, polite communication, and an active role in digital content management to instill noble morals sustainably. The impact of this strategy is reflected in the emergence of spiritual awareness, integrity in actions, empathy for others, polite digital communication, and personal and social responsibility in students. Thus, moral education not only occurs conventionally in the classroom but has also evolved into digital literacy-based character development relevant to students' lives amidst technological advancements.

The findings of this study align with those of Suseno (2021), who demonstrated that teachers' strategies for fostering students' morals are carried out through habituation, role modeling, and discipline. The similarities lie in the emphasis on habituation and role modeling as the core of moral development. However, this study differs in both the subject and context. While previous research focused on high school students, this study was conducted with elementary school students in a cluster that actively uses social media. Furthermore, this study broadens the dimensions of moral development by adding elements of digital literacy, reflection, and managing digital interactions as new strategies relevant to the challenges of character education in the digital age. Thus, moral development is not only oriented toward actual behavior in school but also focuses on strengthening moral values in the digital space, enabling teachers to act as role models and moral guides both in the real world and on social media.

This finding is relevant to Sholekah (2024), who emphasized the importance of habituation in instilling morals in early childhood through activities such as prayer, Dhuha prayer, and memorization of short surahs, with support from parents and schools. The similarity lies in the use of habituation as the primary strategy for character building, while the difference lies in the research subjects and the context of its implementation. The difference is that previous research examined early childhood in kindergarten, where moral habituation was carried out within the scope of care and basic religious activities. This research was conducted in elementary schools and provides added value by strengthening five moral values (faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility), which are not only practiced through school routines but also through student interactions in cyberspace. This reflects the shift in character education needs for elementary school-aged children, who live socially in two spaces simultaneously: the real world and the digital world.

Relevant with Sya'roni (2022) research are evident in the teacher's role as a moral role model influencing student behavior. However, the differences lie in the context and breadth of the approach used. Previous research was conducted in junior high schools, focusing on moral development within a conventional school environment, such as practicing prayer, maintaining cleanliness, and being polite. This research, however, focuses on elementary school students living in the digital age, where social media is a major challenge in character formation. The teacher's strategy in this study is more adaptive and comprehensive. Teachers not only develop students' moral values (faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility) face-to-face through habituation and role modeling, but also monitor and direct student communication on digital media platforms and social media groups. Thus, this study expands the classic approach to moral development to be more contextualized to the challenges of today's digital culture.

The findings of this study are relevant to the research of Musthofa (2025), which emphasized the application of digital-based, adaptive storytelling learning strategies to instill noble moral values in madrasah students. The similarities lie in the use of technology as a means of developing engaging and contextual character for the digital generation. The difference is that previous research focused on the use of digital media in madrasas as part of moral learning methods, while this study utilizes social media as a space for habituation and direct practice of moral values in public elementary schools. The added value of this research is seen in the digital ethics-based experiential learning

approach, which assigns responsibility for managing digital classroom content to students, so that character development occurs not only through content consumption but also through production and self-control in the digital realm.

The findings of this study align with those of Khotimah et al. (2023), which showed that faith and moral teachers foster students' character values through habituation, advice, additional assignments, group work, and presentations. The similarities lie in the emphasis on habituation and role modeling as the core of moral development. However, these studies differ in terms of subject and context. The previous research focused on madrasah-level students, while this study was conducted on elementary school students who actively use social media. In addition, this research expands the strategy of moral development by adding reflection and management of digital interactions, and emphasizing the five noble moral values of faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility in real and digital activities.

This is also in line with Maulana (2022), who emphasized the importance of teachers' role in implementing character education, which encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects, although this is often done unplanned and influenced by experience, context, and teacher expectations. The similarity lies in the focus on teachers as the primary actors in instilling character values through teaching strategies that influence student behavior. The difference is that previous research focused on character education implementation at the secondary school level and demonstrated limitations in planning and measurement. This study emphasizes elementary school teachers as the subjects of the strategy, using a structured and holistic approach, including the integration of digital literacy, so that noble morals can be effectively internalized in the social and digital behavior of younger students.

Overall, these findings align with previous research, such as that of Suseno (2021), Sholekah (2024), and Sya'roni (2022), which emphasizes the role of teacher habituation and role models in moral development, and Musthofa (2025), who highlights the importance of utilizing digital media and digital literacy in character formation. This research not only confirms previous findings but also presents a new perspective: moral development in elementary school students is no longer sufficient if carried out solely through conventional practices. Moral education requires the continuous integration of habits, role models, and digital literacy so that the values of faith, honesty, caring, politeness, and responsibility can be internalized in students' real-life and digital behavior. Therefore, moral development in students requires an integrated approach that combines conventional practices and digital literacy, as well as the active role of teachers, schools, and parents to ensure the comprehensive internalization of moral values. This added value is the main contribution of this research, while also opening up space for the development of a digital literacy-based moral development model in elementary schools as a response to the challenges of character education in the era of social media.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' strategies in developing noble morals in students who actively use social media in elementary schools are carried out holistically and contextually by adapting pedagogical practices to the challenges of the digital era, including: (1) fostering faith by combining the habit of worship and role models with digital literacy, so that spiritual values emerge in both real and virtual interactions; (2) fostering honesty through role models in real behavior and digital contexts, moral reflection, and digital ethics education, thus encouraging students to be honest in the real world and in the virtual world; (3) fostering concern by integrating real social activities and kindness campaigns on social media, so as to build empathy in real life and the virtual world; (4) instilling politeness by combining exemplary behavior and habits with digital ethics education, thus creating a culture of politeness in everyday real life and the virtual world; (5) fostering responsibility through habit models, active roles, and digital ethics education, thus strengthening personal and social responsibility.

The implication is that strengthening moral character in students in the digital era requires the continuous integration of direct practice (habituation and role models) and digital literacy so that noble character values can be internalized in everyday life and online, thus remaining relevant to the challenges of character education in the

Merdeka Curriculum era. Therefore, teachers are advised to continue developing character development strategies by integrating conventional practices and digital ethics in learning activities. Schools need to support this by providing facilities, teacher professional development, and consistent character program implementation. Parents are encouraged to actively participate by monitoring their children's digital behavior, fostering polite communication, and fostering religious practices and responsibilities at home. Furthermore, local governments are expected to strengthen digital-based character education policies through teacher training programs, relevant digital literacy curricula for elementary schools, and providing supporting facilities so that character development efforts can be carried out uniformly and sustainably across all schools.

This study has limitations because it only focuses on teacher strategies in fostering moral character in students who actively use social media; thus, the perspectives of students and parents have not been explored in depth. The research location was also limited to a single school cluster, so the results cannot be generalized to regions with different socio-cultural characteristics. For future research, it is recommended to involve students and parents to obtain a more comprehensive picture of moral development at school and at home. Furthermore, further research can be conducted in regional or school contexts with diverse conditions to assess the effectiveness of digital literacy-based moral development models in different environments. Experimental research is also recommended to quantitatively test the effectiveness of digital literacy-based moral development models so that they can inform policy-making on character education practices in elementary schools.

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