# Pedagogical Modification in Instilling Moral Values Prompted by COVID-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract.** Changing the learning technique in school from traditional classrooms to online or blended learning classes is difficult for teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Particularly for kindergarten teachers. This study intends to examine the kindergarten teacher's methods, challenges, and benefits for cultivating moral values in students during the covid 19 pandemic. This study adopted a qualitative approach. Two teachers and a principal of a Muhammadiyah kindergarten in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, are the subjects of this study. In-depth interviews and observation were used to obtain data. To ensure the credibility of the data, the researcher used the triangulation technique of data sources. The data were analyzed utilizing the theory of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which includes data condensation, data display, and data verification. This study is significant because it can advise general and kindergarten teachers in particular in choosing the best strategy for instilling moral principles in the students.

**Keywords:** Modification · Prompted · Covid-19

## 1 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has compelled numerous sectors of the global world to undergo rapid change. Many sectors have been affected, such as tourism and hospitality [1], the healthcare system [2], mental well-being [3], food security, agriculture, and livelihoods [4], manufacturing [5], socio-economic and environment [6], including the education sector in many regions of the world, which has undergone unforeseeable upheavals [7]. As a result of COVID-19, the abrupt transition to online pedagogy in developing nations has shown disparities, obstacles, and benefits [7].

The first case of the covid 19 pandemic was reported in Indonesia at the beginning of March 2020 [8]. Consequently, diverse regulations were implemented in Indonesia to break the chain of the virus's transmission [9]. The policies triggered by Covid 19, including physical distancing and working from home [9], and the transition of face-to-face classes to an online mode learning system for all educational institutions, including kindergarten. Even though this decision was taken in an emergency and under unforeseen circumstances, online learning is regarded as the most excellent option for continuing education during the COVID-19 pandemic [10]. Home-based online learning is also

known as BDR, an acronym for *Belajar di Rumah* or home learning. The implementation of home learning presents numerous challenges [11]. Most parents have negative perceptions of the benefits and values of online learning and favor traditional learning in early childhood settings [12]. During the Covid 19 pandemic, parents and teachers face numerous hurdles in teaching-learning activities. The obstacles are experience in distance education technology, education skills, readiness to use e-learning, distance learning curriculum, and teaching and evaluation methods [13].

Moreover, in this pandemic, parents' obligation to instill moral values in their children is more vital than before [14]. The early years of life are an ideal time to begin and encourage moral education since this helps youngsters mature into morally responsible persons [15]. To maximize children's development, particularly moral development, through programs and activities created by the teacher, parents, and teachers must be able to work collaboratively [16]. According to the findings of preliminary research that involved interviewing two kindergarten teachers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, it was discovered that some parents' poor communication makes it more difficult for teachers to instill moral values in the students. As an illustration, some parents must be more timely in replying and reporting that their children have completed learning activities after the teacher has communicated the learning activities students must complete at home on the messaging platform.

This research aims to analyze the methods used by kindergarten teachers to instill moral principles in their students during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the difficulties they face. It is a crucial aspect of education, particularly for fostering moral values in the young generation. Both teacher and parent have a vital influence in developing the children's character. Failure to cultivate and build a succeeding generation with decent manners and ethical values would destroy civilization.

## 2 Method

This study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach. The data was collected through in-depth interviews and observation. Two teachers and a principal of a Muhammadiyah kindergarten in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, are the subjects of this study. To verify the validity of the data, the researcher utilized the triangulation of data sources technique. Moreover, the data were analyzed using the theory of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which includes data condensation, data display, and data verification or conclusion drawing. Data condensation involves choosing, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials [17]. The second component of the analysis is the display of data. This part composes systematic and dense material for drawing conclusions and formulating actions [17]. The last part of the analysis is drawing a conclusion and verification. This process begins with data collecting, identifying patterns, explanations, causality, and propositions [17].

## 3 Result and Discussion

### 3.1 Moral Value

In compliance with the requirements of the 2013 Curriculum, the kindergarten students at Muhammadiyah are instructed in moral values. Kindergarten children receive instruction

**Table 1.** Activity that promotes moral values.

| Moral Values | Activities |
|---|---|
| Sociable | Each student is accustomed to greeting the teacher and classmates with "Assalamu'alaikum" and shaking their hands. |
| Work together | The teacher familiarizes students with cleaning used toys and placing them on the toy rack. |
| Empathy | The teacher asks students to comfort a friend who is upset or sobbing in class. |
| Truthful | The teacher introduces a religious perspective on truthfulness in the class discussion after reading a story or performing a puppet show. |
| Maintaining order | Students must form a line and queue in an ordered manner to get their food and toy. |
| Helpful | Through social service programs, teachers encourage students to visit people in need around school and give them food. |
| Respect | Teachers remind the students to say "please," "thank you," and "sorry." |
| Discipline | All students must wash their hands upon entering the school and before and after each meal. |
| Self-confident | The teacher usually asks the students to sing, dance, or share stories individually or individually. |
| Independent | Students are responsible for independently cleaning their hands, eating, and wearing shoes. |
| Religious | The teacher teaches students to pray at the beginning and end of each teaching session. Also, students are habituated to reading prayers before and following meals. |

in the six pillars of character, considered the cornerstones of a sound moral education. The Six Pillars of Character consist of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, empathy, and citizenship [18]. The integration of character education principles into the curriculum of student learning activities in schools is done by teachers as part of an effort to foster the development of moral values. Teachers believed habituation was crucial for children since moral teaching is lengthy. Thus, students should be exposed to honest development activities from a young age so that they can distinguish various ethical principles in their daily lives [15]. Table 1 provides an overview of some of the activities that take place in school to teach students moral values.

## 3.2 Learning Methods

There are seven strategies for instilling moral principles. These strategies are integrated into daily activities, beginning when a student arrives at school in the morning and ending when he leaves at midday. The practice of instilling these moral ideals starts on the first day of school and continues until students graduate.

a. Storytelling

In Muhammadiyah Kindergarten, moral values are typically taught through storytelling. Storytelling has been a time-tested way of fostering an emotionally healthy culture [19]. Storytelling may improve children's understanding and critical thinking and educate them with strong ethical and moral ideals [20]. This strategy not only maintained the emotional bond between the two generations but also instilled in the younger generation the ideals that complete them as humans [19].

b. Project-based learning

Project-based learning is a student-centered, in-depth examination and analysis of a specific topic or theme. To impart the moral virtue of environmental responsibility, students are asked to plant one plant in their house, then care for it, water it, and observe its growth. The teacher then invited students to explain about the plants they had planted, emphasizing the need to establish plants to protect the ecosystem. As an innovative paradigm in education, project learning is applicable in preschool settings, as well as at all later levels of education and with students of varying ages; the only requirement is an active adaptation to the needs, interests, and intellectual capacities of students [21].

c. Demonstration

Learning by demonstration is an enjoyable way to spend class time because it allows students to hear and see what is being taught and put what they have learned into practice. During the pandemic covid 19, kindergarten teachers at Muhammadiyah constantly demonstrate how to wash hands in front of students properly. Research shows that the students' ability to wash their hands with soap was significantly improved by using demonstration methods [22].

d. Conversation

The teacher always encourages students to engage in conversation regarding both the subject matter and the student's daily activities. Through dialogue, a teacher can allow students to share their experiences and become a medium for instilling moral values.

e. Recreational activities

Children's play has traditionally had dual purposes for education and recreation [23]. The games the students play in Muhammadiyah kindergarten frequently include moral lessons imparted by their teachers. Furthermore, to provide kids with direct contact with nature, field trips and community service are also conducted in the school's area.

f.  Sing a song

According to studies, children's perceptions of social values improved due to exposure to songs with social messages [24]. Singing a song can enhance early childhood self-confidence and responsibility [25]. Songs, particularly religious songs, assisted teachers in improving their pupils' beliefs, worship, appreciation, knowledge, and morality [26].

g.  Reward

Commonly, teachers award stickers to students who demonstrate good moral values. Based on the study, reward and punishment can cultivate moral values in children, such as discipline [26]. On the other hand, if a child is educated with prohibitions and commands whose conduct is regulated by a reward system, then the child will act and think by the norm but without critical thought and understanding of the significance of his actions [27]. As a result, the teachers of Muhammadiyah Kindergarten instill moral principles by addressing the consequences of each student's behavior.

### 3.3  Challenges

a.  Communication media

The limited communication tools are one of the difficulties in instilling moral values during a pandemic. Parents and other family members utilize cell phones for work and study at home during the pandemic. Kindergarten students cannot take online programs since they share cell phones with other family members. In addition, many parents need a data connection on their cell phones, preventing their children from participating in online learning. Parents' lack of access to technological devices and limited internet connectivity prevent their children from participating in remote online teaching [28].

b.  Uncooperative parents

Due to the lack of face-to-face interactions during online learning, the teacher must be more knowledgeable about each student's personality. Uncooperative parents create an obstacle to moral teaching. Most parents are employed; therefore, they have limited time to assist their children with schoolwork. During the pandemic, a minority of parents collect their children's schoolwork, while the majority do not or respond late. Teachers report that fifty percent of parents need to be more actively involved in their children's education, despite continuous reminders via the messaging platform's group chats. By Clausen et al., parents were frequently unaware of homework assignments during online learning during the pandemic [29]. This circumstance decreases the effectiveness of learning.

In addition, the problem with instilling moral principles in children is that they forget them so quickly and do not use them in their day-to-day lives. One of the reasons for this is that parents need to become more accustomed to educating their children on how to put moral principles into practice at home. During online learning, parents serve as educators, evaluators, and controllers [30].

c.  New Routine

In the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, various new habits are implemented while schooling, including hand washing and keeping a safe distance. Numerous students are perplexed by these changes from the usual before the pandemic. In the beginning, students are puzzled because they must keep their distance, cannot bring their school equipment to school, and cannot borrow it from one another. Also, students are prohibited from bringing meals from home.

### 3.4  Benefits

a.  Follow health protocols

Several health protocols have had to be implemented in preschools; children were divided into small cohorts [31]. The learning process during the Covid 19 Pandemic familiarizes students with maintaining health protocols, such as washing hands, wearing masks, and maintaining a safe distance.

b.  Parent-teacher communication

In addition, communication with parents is getting better because all information is constantly shared with parents through chat groups. Parents may immediately read updates on student progress, grades, and participation due to the ease with which they can acquire information via technology [29]. This allows parents to become more informed about their children's academic progress and overall development in a short amount of time.

## 4   Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that obstacles throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have hampered internalizing moral values; however, educators have attempted a wide variety of solutions to overcome these obstacles. On the other hand, there are opportunities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic for cultivating particular moral principles among students.

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