

Lived Moral Pedagogy: Enacting Moral Education Through Experience, Culture, and Religion in Indonesian Early Childhood Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Moral stimulation in early childhood education has received growing attention. However, relatively little is known about how teachers construct and enact moral pedagogy beyond the boundaries of formal educational theory. This study explores how Indonesian early childhood teachers foster children's moral development through experience, culture, and religion. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected from 46 teachers enrolled in a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program. Participants responded to a series of open-ended questions administered through an online questionnaire. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Four interrelated themes emerged from the analysis. First, teachers viewed moral values as principles that must be personally embodied and practiced before being taught to children. Second, moral values were enacted through everyday pedagogical practices, including habituation, modeling, storytelling, dialogue, and play. Third, teachers drew upon lived experience, cultural traditions, and religious teachings as the primary foundations for moral education. Finally, they emphasized that the sustainability of moral education depends on consistency across home, school, and digital environments. This study proposes Lived Moral Pedagogy as a contextual, embodied, and practice-based framework for understanding moral education in early childhood settings. The framework extends conventional models of moral education by shifting attention from the mere transmission of moral values and curriculum implementation toward the lived enactment of morality in everyday life, mediated through teachers' identities and experiences, cultural traditions, and religious values. The findings have implications for teacher education, early childhood curriculum development, and educational policy by highlighting the importance of cultivating teachers' moral identity and relational capacity, as well as the significance of culturally grounded pedagogical judgment.

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Introduction

Moral education has become a significant concern across educational contexts and is increasingly regarded as an urgent necessity in contemporary global society (Chen et al., 2023). Challenges such as social fragmentation, declining empathy, the influence of digital media, and growing cultural diversity have positioned moral development as a critical foundation for sustainable social life (Yan & Peng, 2025). In early childhood education (ECE), the early years are widely recognized as a crucial period for establishing the foundations of children's moral development (Kambali & Karim, 2026). At this stage, children primarily learn values, rules, and social relationships through concrete experiences and everyday interactions.

Recent international scholarship has increasingly examined moral pedagogy through multiple perspectives, including character education, teachers' moral beliefs, experiential learning, cultural pedagogy, and religiously informed education. Studies have explored how teachers interpret values education (Lin et al., 2025), how character education is embedded in school culture (Birhan et al., 2021), how experiential learning supports ethical development (Parry & Allison, 2019), and how cultural and religious contexts shape pedagogical practices (Broer & Kunz, 2026; Swartz, 2010). This body of work has broadened understanding of moral education beyond cognitive moral reasoning; however, much of the literature still examines these dimensions separately rather than investigating how they become integrated within teachers' everyday lived practice in early childhood classrooms.

This gap is important because teachers' practices are not determined solely by formal educational theories. In enacting moral education, teachers also draw upon professional experience, personal reflection, pedagogical intuition, cultural values, and religious beliefs that they personally uphold (Nikoopour & Esfandiari, 2017). This perspective suggests that teachers' knowledge is contextual and enacted in practice rather than being a mechanical application of theory. Such a view resonates with the concept of personal practical knowledge, which emphasizes that teachers' knowledge is constructed through lived experience and professional practice (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988), as well as with Schön's (1983) notion of reflection-in-action, which understands pedagogical action as emerging from reflection within practice itself. Furthermore, van Manen's (1990) perspective on lived experience highlights that educational meaning is constituted through experiences as they are lived in everyday life. However, the dominant theories of moral development and moral education in the international literature have largely been developed within Western contexts, particularly in North America and Europe (Nucci, 2015). Moreover, existing approaches often emphasize moral reasoning, value transmission, character programs, or curriculum implementation as relatively identifiable components of educational practice. While these perspectives offer important insights, they are less able to explain how teachers' moral identities, relational experiences, practical judgments, cultural traditions, and religious commitments become intertwined in the moment-to-moment enactment of classroom life. As a result, the lived, embodied, and contextual dimensions of moral pedagogy remain insufficiently theorized in early childhood education. Consequently, there remains limited understanding of how moral pedagogy is enacted in societies where local culture and religion are strongly embedded in everyday life, especially within the Global South.

Indonesia offers a particularly relevant context for extending this understanding. In Indonesian social life, moral values are often deeply intertwined with cultural practices, social relationships, and religious life. Therefore, moral education in Indonesian ECE settings cannot be understood merely as curriculum implementation. It is also a practice shaped by teachers' lived experiences, cultural traditions, and religious routines that are present in children's everyday lives. To address this gap, the present study proposes the

concept of Lived Moral Pedagogy, referring to a form of moral pedagogy enacted through teachers' embodied identities, relational interactions, habitual practices, cultural traditions, and religious experiences that are lived together with children in everyday classroom life. Unlike approaches that primarily focus on the delivery of moral content or the implementation of character programs, Lived Moral Pedagogy conceptualizes morality as a lived educational process that is continuously enacted, negotiated, and sustained through practice. The concept is related to earlier efforts that emphasize real-life practice in moral education, such as the life-practice model (Lian-yun & Jing, 2006), but it is specifically developed for the context of Indonesian early childhood education.

Against this background, this study aims to explore how experienced Indonesian early childhood teachers enact moral education through practices shaped by experience, culture, and religion. The study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do experienced Indonesian early childhood teachers enact moral education in their everyday classroom practices?

RQ2: How are teachers' pedagogical practices shaped by lived experience, culture, and religion?

RQ3: How do teachers understand the role of these pedagogical practices in supporting children's moral learning?

This study contributes to the fields of moral pedagogy, teacher knowledge, and early childhood education by extending perspectives from the Global South and by proposing Lived Moral Pedagogy as a framework for understanding moral education as a lived, contextual, and embodied practice. Beyond its conceptual contribution, the study also provides empirical insight into how experienced ECE teachers integrate lived experience, local culture, and religion into everyday pedagogical practices, a dimension that remains underrepresented in the international literature on early childhood moral education.

The novelty of this study lies in examining experienced Indonesian early childhood teachers and developing a practice-based conceptual framework that explains how moral education is enacted through the integration of lived experience, cultural traditions, religious commitments, relational practice, and ecological consistency across children's everyday environments.

Method

Research Design

This study employed an interpretive qualitative design informed by a constructivist orientation to explore how experienced Indonesian early childhood teachers enact moral pedagogy in their everyday classroom practices. The study sought to understand the meanings that teachers attribute to their pedagogical actions and how these meanings are shaped by experience, culture, and religion. An interpretive approach was considered appropriate because the focus was not on measuring predetermined variables, but on examining teachers lived pedagogical understandings and practices.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were 46 experienced early childhood education (ECE) teachers in Indonesia who were enrolled in an undergraduate Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program. The demographic and professional characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to recruit teachers who had direct and sustained experience in early childhood classrooms. The majority of participants had five or more years of teaching experience (87.0%), while a small number of teachers with less than five years of experience. Overall, the sample represented practitioners whose pedagogical knowledge was largely shaped by ongoing classroom practice, professional

experience, and engagement with children, families, and local communities. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) currently teaching in an ECE setting, (2) having active teaching experience in early childhood education, (3) being enrolled in the RPL program, and (4) voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics (N = 46)

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Teaching Experience	Less than 5 years	6	13.0
	5-10 years	19	41.3
	11-15 years	12	26.1
	More than 15 years	9	19.6
Educational Background	Senior High School (SMA)	27	58.7
	Vocational High School (SMK)	6	13.0
	Islamic Senior High School (MA)	3	6.5
	Diploma	10	21.7
Province	Bali	20	43.5
	Central Kalimantan	18	39.1
	Central Java	8	17.4

Data Collection

Data were collected through an online qualitative questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions. The questionnaire was designed to elicit rich descriptions of teachers' everyday moral pedagogical practices, classroom experiences, and reflections on moral education. Open-ended responses allowed participants to express their perspectives in their own words and provided access to practices that may not be easily captured through structured survey items. The online format enabled participation from teachers across different locations and allowed respondents time to provide reflective written accounts of their moral pedagogical practices.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) following Braun and Clarke (2012). The analysis involved six recursive phases: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) constructing themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the analytical narrative. Consistent with the reflexive approach, coding was treated as an interpretive and iterative process rather than a procedure aimed at achieving coder agreement. To enhance analytic transparency, Table 2 provides an illustrative example of how initial codes were clustered into focused codes and interpreted during the development of Theme 1. After the themes were developed, the analysis proceeded to a higher level of conceptual abstraction in which the relationships among themes were interpreted to formulate the concept of Lived Moral Pedagogy. This conceptual development was not treated as an additional formal phase of RTA, but as a theoretically informed interpretive step that emerged from the thematic findings. The analysis was conducted at two levels of interpretation. The first level involved semantic themes, which remained close to participants' explicit statements, such as modeling, habituation, storytelling, reflective dialogue, and religious routines. The second level involved conceptual interpretation, in which these practices were understood as interconnected manifestations of Lived Moral Pedagogy.

Trustworthiness

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, the researchers engaged in prolonged

engagement with the dataset, repeated reading of participants' responses, iterative coding, and continuous comparison between codes and themes. An audit trail documenting coding decisions and theme development was maintained throughout the analysis. Reflexive memo writing was also used to examine how the researchers' assumptions and interpretations may have influenced the analytical process.

Table 2. Illustrative Coding Process

<i>Focused Code</i>	<i>Illustrative Initial Codes</i>	<i>Interpretive Meaning</i>
Embodied Moral Presence	Greeting children, smiling, calling children by name, handshaking	Moral values are enacted through everyday interpersonal interactions.
Caring Relationships	Empathy, patience, listening, comforting children	Moral learning is embedded in caring teacher-child relationships.
Moral Language	Respectful communication, saying "please," "sorry," and "thank you"	Language functions as a medium of moral socialization.
Behavioural Modelling	Patience, honesty, fairness, emotional regulation	Consistent behaviour demonstrates moral character.
Teacher as Moral Exemplar	Being a role model, leading by example, discipline	The teacher becomes a living curriculum of moral education.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Participants received information about the purpose of the research and provided informed consent prior to participation. Participation was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time. To protect confidentiality, all responses were anonymized, and no identifying information was included in the analysis or reporting of findings

Results and Discussion

1. Morality Must Be Lived Before It Is Taught

Participants consistently described moral education as something that must first be embodied by the teacher before it can be taught explicitly. Rather than portraying moral education as a set of instructional activities, teachers positioned their everyday conduct as the primary pedagogical medium through which children encounter and gradually internalize moral values. Greeting children warmly, speaking respectfully, remaining patient during challenging situations, and showing empathy were described as integral expressions of moral pedagogy rather than routine classroom behaviors.

Teachers repeatedly emphasized that children learn moral values primarily by observing how adults communicate, respond to conflict, express gratitude, apologize, and treat others fairly. As one participant explained:

"The greatest resource I have in shaping children's morality is role modelling, life experience, and the values I uphold in everyday life. Children learn mainly from what they see, hear, and feel from the adults around them." (T05, <5 years)

Another teacher stated:

"The greatest resource I have is role modelling, patience, and sincere affection in accompanying children. Children learn more from what they see than from what they hear." (T10, <5 years)

Similarly, experienced teachers highlighted moral example as the core of their professional role:

"My greatest resource is role modelling and sincere affection." (T23, >15 years)

Across participants' accounts, being a moral person and being a moral educator were not treated as separate identities. Everyday interactions were understood as the first and most fundamental curriculum of moral education. Children were believed to develop moral understanding not primarily through verbal instruction, but through repeated encounters with consistent moral behavior in authentic social relationships.

2. Embedding Moral Values Through Everyday Pedagogical Practices

Beyond viewing their own conduct as the foundation of moral education, participants described a range of everyday pedagogical practices through which moral values were intentionally embedded in children's daily experiences. Rather than relying on separate moral lessons, teachers integrated moral learning into classroom routines, teacher-child interactions, play activities, storytelling, songs, and reflective conversations. Across the dataset, moral education emerged not as a distinct curriculum but as a continuous pedagogical process woven into the flow of everyday classroom life.

A dominant pattern concerned the use of habituation through classroom routines. Teachers repeatedly described greeting others, praying before and after activities, washing hands, waiting in line, tidying learning materials, expressing gratitude, apologizing, and helping peers as daily practices intended to transform positive moral behaviors into lasting habits. As one teacher explained:

"I introduce religious and moral values through daily habits such as praying before and after activities, sharing, waiting in line, saying thank you, and apologizing." (T08, 5-10 years)

Another participant added:

"Yes, I try to incorporate local cultural habits into children's character learning because cultural values are very close to their everyday lives. One practice I regularly encourage is greeting and respectfully shaking hands with teachers and older people when arriving at and leaving school as a way of teaching respect and good manners." (T05, <5 years)

"...praying, greeting others, washing hands, tidying play materials, and helping one another are carried out every day so that they become children's habits." (T24, >15 years)

Teachers further highlighted the importance of play, collaborative activities, stories, and reflective dialogue as opportunities for children to participate actively in moral learning. Through group play, sharing, turn-taking, problem solving, and collective responsibilities, children were encouraged to experience cooperation, responsibility, and empathy in authentic social situations. Stories and role play were used not only for entertainment but also to stimulate reflection on honesty, kindness, responsibility, and respect. As one teacher explained:

"After telling a story, I invite children to discuss the characters' feelings and how they should respond if they experience a similar situation." (T27, 11-15 years)

Taken together, participants portrayed moral education as a process of guided

participation in socially meaningful activities. Habituation, modelling, play, storytelling, and reflective dialogue were understood as complementary pedagogical mechanisms through which children repeatedly encounter, practice, negotiate, and reflect upon moral values within everyday classroom interactions.

3. Experience, Culture, and Religion as Interwoven Sources of Lived Moral Pedagogy

Participants consistently described their moral pedagogical practices as being shaped by the interaction of professional experience, cultural traditions, and religious values. These sources were not presented as separate influences but as mutually reinforcing foundations that guided how teachers interpreted children's behavior, responded to moral situations, and enacted moral education in everyday classroom life. As a result, participants portrayed moral pedagogy as grounded in practical wisdom accumulated through lived experience and embedded within local sociocultural and religious contexts.

A recurring pattern was that teachers rarely referred to formal pedagogical theories when explaining how they fostered children's moral development. Instead, they emphasized learning derived from years of teaching, observing children, interacting with parents, and reflecting on everyday classroom situations. One experienced teacher stated:

"My main resources are...I have learned from my family, religion, and everyday life experiences. Although I have not studied Western educational theories in depth, I am convinced that consistent role modelling is one of the most important keys to children's character formation." (T33, >15 years)

Culture emerged as another important source of moral pedagogy. Participants described integrating local practices such as *salim* (showing respect to elders), *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), helping peers, and respecting parents into classroom activities because these values were already familiar within children's families and communities. As one teacher explained:

"...yes, there is. I incorporate several local cultural practices into children's character formation at school. One of them is habituating children to greet and respectfully shake hands with teachers (salim) when they arrive at and leave school as a form of respect for elders. In addition, I teach the spirit of gotong royong (mutual cooperation), for example when tidying toys, cleaning the classroom, or organizing learning materials together. I also encourage children to use polite language when speaking with teachers and friends. Through these simple daily habits, children learn to respect others, care for their environment, cooperate with others, and develop good manners in accordance with the cultural values practiced in the community." (T45, 5-10 years)

Religious values were also deeply embedded in teachers' pedagogical practices. Participants referred to prayer, gratitude, honesty, compassion, forgiveness, and responsibility as ethical orientations that shaped daily interactions with children rather than merely as doctrinal instruction. Teachers often connected their pedagogical decisions to religious learning acquired through family, community, or religious educational experiences. One participant noted:

"I come from a pesantren background, so I use the knowledge I gained there as the basis for shaping children's morality." (T20, 5-10 years)

Across participants' accounts, experience, culture, and religion functioned as an

interwoven source of practical pedagogical wisdom. Teachers understood moral education not as the application of a single pedagogical framework, but as an ongoing integration of lived experience, cultural meanings, and religious commitments that enabled them to respond adaptively to the moral realities of early childhood classrooms.

4. Maintaining Moral Consistency Across Home, School, and Digital Contexts

Participants consistently recognized that moral education could not be sustained through classroom practices alone. Children's moral development was understood as being shaped by interactions across home, school, peer groups, and the wider digital environment. Consequently, teachers described moral pedagogy as an ongoing process of negotiation that required them to adapt their practices, collaborate with parents, and respond to changing influences in children's everyday lives. A dominant pattern concerned the challenge of competing moral messages across different environments. Teachers frequently reported that the values promoted at school were not always reinforced consistently at home or in children's broader social contexts. Digital media, including television, YouTube, social media, and mobile devices, was repeatedly identified as a powerful contemporary influence on children's behavior. Rather than rejecting technology itself, participants expressed concern that uncontrolled digital exposure could weaken opportunities for children to develop empathy, respect, patience, and other prosocial dispositions through direct interpersonal interaction. One teacher explained:

"The greatest challenge is maintaining consistency between what I teach children and what they see in their surroundings and in the digital world." (T05, <5 years)

Teachers also emphasized the importance of remaining consistent moral role models despite these external influences. Increased exposure to digital media, changing family dynamics, and diverse social experiences did not reduce the significance of the teacher's role; instead, they reinforced the need for teachers to demonstrate stable moral behaviour through patience, honesty, respectful communication, fairness, and emotional self-regulation. As one participant stated:

"Teachers must truly be disciplined, polite, and able to provide good examples for children wherever they are." (T06, >15 years)

Another teacher described the challenge as:

"Being a real role model amid invisible digital distractions." (T09, >15 years)

A further recurring theme was the need to strengthen teacher-parent partnerships. Participants did not view schools as the sole agents of moral education; rather, they considered parents indispensable partners in reinforcing children's everyday moral habits. Regular communication, shared expectations, and consistent guidance were seen as essential for ensuring that values introduced at school continued to be practiced at home. One teacher noted:

"Cooperation between teachers and parents is needed so that good moral habits can develop consistently at home and at school." (T02, <5 years)

Taken together, participants portrayed moral education as a collaborative and ecological process extending beyond the classroom. Moral consistency was believed to depend on the alignment of expectations across home, school, community, and digital environments, while the teacher's own integrity remained a central pedagogical resource in navigating these competing influences.

Discussion

Moral Pedagogy as Embodied Teacher Identity

This study aimed to understand how experienced Indonesian early childhood teachers enact moral education through lived experience, cultural traditions, and religious values. The findings show that participants did not primarily view moral education as the implementation of predetermined curricular content. Instead, they consistently described morality as something that must be lived before it can be taught. Warm greetings, patience, respectful communication, honesty, and empathy were not treated as supplementary classroom practices but as the substance of moral pedagogy itself. This interpretation supports perspectives that conceptualize teaching as an inherently moral profession rather than merely a technical activity (Broer & Kunz, 2026). Research on teacher identity has long emphasized that professional competence cannot be separated from teachers' ethical commitments and personal values. Similarly, traditions of care ethics suggest that children's moral learning develops through caring relationships characterized by empathy, attentiveness, and responsiveness. However, the present findings extend these perspectives by showing that experienced teachers did not simply regard moral identity as a desirable professional characteristic. Rather, they constructed their everyday pedagogical practice through that identity. Morality functioned simultaneously as curriculum, pedagogy, and learning environment, suggesting that children's moral understanding develops through repeated encounters with consistently enacted moral behavior in authentic relationships.

Moral Learning Through Everyday Participation

A second important finding concerns the way moral learning was embedded in everyday classroom participation. Teachers rarely referred to formal lessons dedicated exclusively to moral values. Instead, they described habituation, storytelling, dialogue, cooperative play, classroom routines, and spontaneous social interactions as the primary contexts in which children gradually developed moral understanding. This finding aligns with constructivist and sociocultural perspectives that view learning as emerging through active participation in meaningful social contexts rather than through passive transmission. Dewey's conception of education as lived experience (Parry & Allison, 2019) and Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on socially mediated learning both suggest that children learn through interaction, participation, and guided engagement with others. The present study adds an important refinement to these perspectives. Participants did not treat experience merely as a pedagogical method. They understood everyday participation itself as the core of moral learning. Moral concepts became meaningful because they were repeatedly practiced, negotiated, and reflected upon within the ordinary flow of classroom life. Thus, moral understanding emerged not through memorizing values but through sustained participation in socially organized practices.

Experience, Culture, and Religion as Practical Pedagogical Wisdom

Perhaps the most distinctive contribution of this study concerns the sources from which

teachers drew their pedagogical judgment. Participants consistently explained that their decisions were shaped not only by formal educational theory but by the ongoing integration of professional experience, cultural traditions, and religious commitments. These findings can be interpreted through the lens of practical wisdom (phronesis), understood as the capacity to make ethically appropriate judgments in context-specific situations (Fowers, 2003). Rather than applying abstract principles mechanically, teachers relied on accumulated experience, cultural meanings, and religious orientations to interpret children's behavior and select pedagogical responses.

The study extends contemporary discussions of teacher knowledge by demonstrating that practical wisdom in moral pedagogy is not derived from professional experience alone. It is produced through the interweaving of experience, culture, and religion. In the Indonesian context, practices such as *salim*, *gotong royong*, prayer, gratitude, and respect for elders were not peripheral cultural elements; they formed part of the epistemic resources through which teachers understood and enacted moral education. This highlights the importance of examining moral pedagogy from Global South perspectives, where moral learning is often embedded within communal, cultural, and religious life (Swartz, 2010).

Moral Pedagogy Beyond the Classroom

The findings further indicate that teachers understood moral education as extending beyond the classroom into broader ecological contexts. Participants repeatedly emphasized tensions between the values promoted at school and those encountered in homes, peer groups, and digital environments. Technology was not rejected outright, but teachers expressed concern that uncontrolled digital exposure could weaken opportunities for empathy, patience, and direct interpersonal engagement. This ecological perspective resonates with Bronfenbrenner's (1986) view that children's development is shaped by interacting systems rather than isolated settings. Moral learning was therefore understood as depending on the consistency of expectations across home, school, community, and digital contexts. Importantly, teachers did not respond to these challenges by abandoning established moral practices. Instead, they emphasized maintaining their own moral consistency and strengthening collaboration with parents. Teacher-parent partnerships were viewed not merely as administrative cooperation but as a shared moral responsibility aimed at creating coherent experiences for children across everyday environments.

Toward a Framework of Lived Moral Pedagogy

Taken together, these findings provide the basis for proposing Lived Moral Pedagogy as a practice-based conceptual framework for understanding moral education in early childhood settings. Existing approaches to moral education often emphasize moral reasoning, value transmission, character education programs, or curriculum implementation. While these perspectives remain valuable, they frequently position teachers primarily as facilitators of predetermined moral content (Gui et al., 2020). The present study suggests an alternative perspective. Moral pedagogy is not only implemented through instructional strategies (Brust Nemet et al., 2023), it is continuously enacted through teachers' lived identities, relational interactions, practical wisdom, and ongoing engagement with the cultural and moral realities surrounding children.

Four interconnected propositions emerge from the findings. First, morality is embodied before it is taught, meaning that teachers' moral identity forms the foundation of children's moral learning. Second, moral understanding develops through participation in everyday social practices, where routines, play, storytelling, dialogue, and cooperation transform

abstract values into lived experiences. Third, practical pedagogical wisdom arises from the integration of professional experience, cultural traditions, and religious commitments. Finally, moral pedagogy is sustained through ecological consistency across home, school, community, and digital environments. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed framework of Lived Moral Pedagogy, showing how embodied morality, everyday participation, practical wisdom, and ecological consistency operate as four interconnected dimensions emerging from the thematic findings. Collectively, these propositions position Lived Moral Pedagogy as a contextual and embodied framework that complements existing theories of moral education by shifting analytical attention from teaching techniques to the lived processes through which teachers enact, negotiate, and sustain morality in everyday educational practice.

This study is limited by its reliance on self-reported narratives from experienced Indonesian ECE teachers, which capture teachers' perspectives rather than direct classroom practices. In addition, the proposed framework reflects a particular sociocultural context and should therefore be interpreted with appropriate contextual sensitivity. Future research could examine Lived Moral Pedagogy through classroom observations, cross-cultural comparisons, longitudinal designs, and the development of empirical measures to further validate and extend the framework.

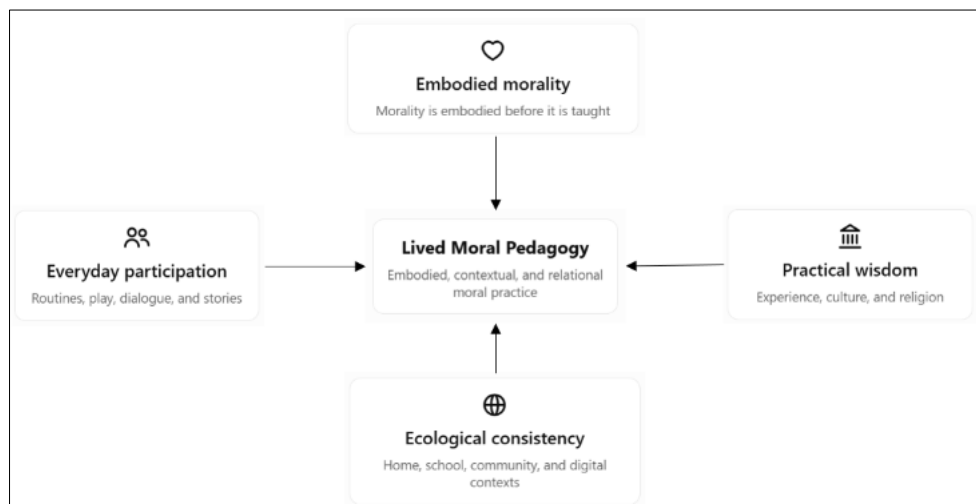


Fig. 1. The proposed framework of Lived Moral Pedagogy showing four interconnected propositions emerging from the thematic findings.

Conclusion

This study shows that experienced Indonesian early childhood teachers enact moral education not primarily through formal instruction, but through embodied moral identity, everyday pedagogical practices, cultural traditions, and religious commitments. Participants did not view morality as a separate curriculum component. They understood moral education as an integral dimension of their professional identity that is continuously expressed in daily interactions with children and sustained through meaningful relationships within the classroom and the wider community. Building on these findings, the study proposes Lived Moral Pedagogy as a practice-based conceptual framework comprising four interconnected dimensions: embodied morality, everyday pedagogical participation, practical pedagogical wisdom grounded in experience, culture, and religion, and ecological consistency across home, school, community, and digital contexts. By shifting attention from the transmission of moral knowledge to the lived enactment of morality, the framework extends contemporary understandings of moral pedagogy and

offers a new lens for interpreting teachers' roles in early childhood moral education. Although developed within the Indonesian context, Lived Moral Pedagogy may provide a useful conceptual foundation for future research examining how teachers' lived experiences shape moral education across diverse cultural settings. The framework also offers practical implications for teacher education and professional learning by suggesting that effective moral pedagogy depends not only on pedagogical competence, but also on the cultivation of teachers' moral identity, relational capacity, and practical wisdom.

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