



## **Role of Schools in Shaping Morality and Controlling Social Deviance in Society**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Rapid social changes in modern society have significantly impacted youth attitudes and behaviours, leading to increased social deviance such as student violence, juvenile delinquency, and drug abuse. These problems often stem from weak moral value internalization, which should be fostered through educational institutions.

**Objective:** This research aims to critically examine the role of schools in shaping student morality and controlling social deviance, particularly in addressing current moral crises among adolescents.

**Methods:** A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, collecting data through in-depth interviews with educators, students, and school administrators from various educational institutions in Jakarta. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Data collection included semi-structured interviews, observations of school activities, and document analysis of curriculum materials. Data were analysed using thematic analysis, focusing on patterns related to moral education, teacher roles, and challenges in addressing social deviance.

**Results:** Schools shape student morality through three dominant mechanisms: institutional culture, teacher role modelling, and structured moral learning experiences. Effective moral education develops internal moral frameworks, strengthens social bonds, and cultivates empathy. However, external factors—including family influence, peer pressure, socio-economic conditions, and societal contradictions—significantly limit school-based intervention effectiveness.

**Conclusion:** Schools play crucial roles in moral formation and deviance prevention, though their effectiveness depends on institutional commitment, teacher capacity, family–community support, and broader socio-structural conditions. Comprehensive integration of moral education across curricula, strengthened teacher roles, and enhanced collaboration with families and communities are essential for effective moral development and deviance prevention.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Rapid social changes in modern society have notably impacted the attitudes, behaviours, and mindsets of the younger generation. Issues such as student violence, juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, and excessive consumerism have become serious concerns (Menti Susanti & Muhammad Naufal Luthfi, 2024; Najafov, 2024). These problems often stem from weak internalization of moral values, which should be fostered early on through educational institutions (Ballantine et al., 2022; Kay, 2025). Schools, as formal institutions, are responsible not only for imparting knowledge but also for shaping moral and ethical values. However, in practice, schools tend to emphasize academic achievement over moral development, treating moral

education as an addition rather than a core component of the curriculum (Kavanagh et al., 2021; Supriani et al., 2023). This imbalance results in a lack of guidance for character formation, with external influences such as social media, peer pressure, and lifestyle trends often having a stronger impact than the educational system itself (Cioban & Cioban-Kudelca, 2024; Ibrahim & Gordon, 2015).

One critical aspect of education is morality, which serves as a framework for distinguishing between right and wrong actions. Morality guides individuals and societies in determining what is acceptable, just, and good. To effectively educate students, teachers must embrace ethical frameworks like Kant's categorical imperatives to encourage autonomous moral reasoning. However, the role of schools in shaping student morality and addressing social deviance has yet to be fully examined (Lianingsih & Lestari, 2025; Rizal, 2023; Zauddin & Bakar, 2022). Are schools fulfilling their role as moral guides? What educational strategies are employed to instill moral values? And how do these strategies relate to current social conditions? These questions highlight the need to critically reassess the function of schools beyond academic learning and explore their contribution to controlling social deviance, especially in the context of the rising moral crisis among adolescents (Aprilia et al., 2024; Hasanah et al., 2022; Rusmin et al., 2020).

Giddens' socialization theory, declared in 2009, explains that socialization is a process that enables individuals to learn and internalize the norms, values, and ways of life that apply in the society in which they live (Ibnu, 2024). This process is crucial because it shapes individuals into members of society who can behave according to social expectations (Thai, 2022). Socialization is not just a process of learning behavior but also a process of forming social identity. In this process, a person learns about status, roles, rights, and obligations within the social structure. Socialization shapes individuals' awareness that they are part of society while also teaching them how to behave according to prevailing norms (Kavanagh et al., 2021; Kechaeva & Salynina, 2023).

Behavioral theory, as proposed by John B. Watson, asserts that human behavior is shaped through interactions with the environment. According to Watson, observable behavior is the product of learning, influenced by external stimuli. Schools can leverage this approach to guide students' moral development by reinforcing positive behavior and providing moral guidance through structured interactions (Junaidi et al., 2018; Junaidi & Cahyani, 2016; Mashoedi et al., 2025). This perspective highlights the importance of shaping behavior through positive reinforcement, ensuring that students are influenced by moral principles that can prevent deviant behavior.

The existing literature acknowledges the importance of moral education in schools but often lacks critical comparison regarding the efficacy of different approaches and the contextual factors influencing their success. Previous studies emphasize the role of schools in addressing social deviance, yet few explicitly explore how schools can systematically integrate moral values into their teaching strategies. This research aims to fill this gap by critically examining the contribution of schools to student morality and their role in controlling social deviance, particularly in light of current social challenges. By addressing these issues, the research seeks to clarify the contribution of schools to fostering moral development and preventing deviant behavior, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the school's role in shaping societal values. The novelty of this research lies in its critical exploration of how schools can effectively act as agents of character formation, beyond their traditional role of academic instruction.

## METHOD

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the role of schools in shaping student morality and their influence on controlling social deviance. The data were collected through in-depth interviews with educators, students, and school administrators from various educational institutions. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, ensuring they were directly involved in moral education programs and character-building activities within schools. Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews, observations of school activities, and document analysis of curriculum materials related to moral education and character development. The interviews aimed to uncover the strategies employed by schools to instill moral values, while observations and document analysis helped assess the

practical application of these strategies in real-world settings.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on recurring patterns and themes related to moral education, the role of teachers, and the challenges schools face in addressing social deviance (Najafov, 2024). The analysis also explored the influence of external factors, such as social media and societal pressures, on students' moral development. The findings were compared with existing literature on moral education, socialization theory, and Kohlberg's stages of moral development, to critically evaluate the effectiveness of current educational strategies in shaping student morality. By synthesizing the data with theoretical frameworks, this research aims to contribute to the development of more effective policies and practices in moral education that address both individual character development and the broader issue of social deviance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### *The Role of Schools in the Formation of Morality*

Analysis of in-depth interviews with 15 teachers, 3 school principals, and observations across five schools in Jakarta reveal that schools play a multifaceted role in shaping student morality through three dominant mechanisms: institutional culture, teacher role modeling, and structured moral learning experiences.

#### 1. Institutional Culture and Environment

School principals consistently emphasized that institutional culture serves as an implicit moral curriculum. One principal explained:

*"The school environment itself teaches values. When students see cleanliness maintained, rules enforced fairly, and respect demonstrated in every interaction, they internalize these values without us having to preach."*

Observational data confirmed that schools displaying visible moral symbols character value posters, honor codes, and recognition boards for prosocial behavior created environments where moral expectations were continuously reinforced.

Students corroborated these findings. A tenth-grade student stated:

*"When you walk into school and see everyone following the same expectations, like greeting teachers respectfully or keeping the campus clean, it becomes normal. You don't think about it as rules anymore; it's just how things are done here."*

This illustrates how school culture creates normative frameworks that students internalize, supporting Giddens' socialization theory that individuals learn social norms through continuous institutional exposure. The findings align with Durkheim's assertion that schools function as secondary socialization agents transmitting collective values through daily practices and institutional norms.

#### 2. Teacher Role Modeling

Teacher exemplary behavior emerged as the most influential factor in moral development. Twelve of fifteen teachers acknowledged that their actions constitute the primary moral curriculum. One senior teacher reflected:

*"Students watch everything we do. I've learned that my actions speak louder than any moral lesson I teach. When I admit mistakes, treat all students fairly regardless of academic performance, or show compassion during difficult situations, students notice and often emulate these behaviors."*

Students provided specific examples. One recounted:

*"My history teacher once returned extra change from the canteen and explained why honesty matters even in small things. That stuck with me more than any textbook lesson about integrity."*

Another shared:

*"When our math teacher helped struggling students without making them feel bad, it taught me that kindness doesn't require recognition. I started helping classmates too."*

These narratives demonstrate that teacher behavior creates powerful learning moments transcending formal curriculum, validating the Indonesian National Education System Law emphasis on teachers as moral guides shaping students into faithful, responsible individuals with noble character.

However, teachers expressed challenges maintaining consistent role modeling. One admitted:

*"The pressure to meet academic targets sometimes conflicts with being a moral role model. We're expected to push students for high test scores, which can lead to cutting corners or creating competitive rather than collaborative environments."*

This tension highlights the systemic challenge when academic performance metrics overshadow character development priorities.

### 3. Structured Moral Learning Experiences

Document analysis revealed varying approaches to moral education. Three schools demonstrated systematic integration of character values across subjects, with lesson plans explicitly identifying moral objectives alongside academic goals. A language arts teacher explained:

*"I select literature presenting moral dilemmas and facilitate discussions where students analyze characters' choices. Recently, we discussed a story about honesty versus loyalty, and students debated which value should take precedence. These discussions develop their moral reasoning beyond memorizing right answers."*

Extracurricular activities emerged as powerful platforms for experiential moral learning. A principal overseeing student government observed:

*"Through student council, young people learn democracy, responsibility, and conflict resolution by actually practicing these values. They organize events, mediate peer disputes, and make decisions affecting their community. This hands-on experience develops moral capacity that classroom lectures cannot achieve."*

Students confirmed developmental benefits. One student council president reflected: *"Leading student government taught me that authority comes with responsibility. You have to consider how decisions affect everyone, not just your friends. It's taught me fairness and accountability in ways classroom lessons never could."*

The "honesty canteen" program, implemented in three schools, provided unique context for moral education through practical application. A principal explained:

*"We operate a canteen where students take items and deposit payment without supervision. Initially, we had discrepancies, but over time, as we discussed honesty and trust with students, payment accuracy improved significantly. Now students monitor each other and take pride in maintaining the trust-based system."*

Students described this as transformative. One reflected:

*"The honesty canteen makes you think about who you are when no one's watching. It's not about rules or punishment; it's about choosing to be trustworthy because it matters to you and your community."*

Teachers noted that external factors often counteract school-based moral education. One lamented:

*"We teach empathy and respect, but students spend hours on social media where cyberbullying, comparison, and validation-seeking dominate. The values they encounter online frequently contradict what we're trying to instill."*

Students acknowledged this tension. One admitted:

*"Sometimes there's a disconnect between what we learn at school about being good people and what seems to get rewarded in the real world like popularity through being edgy or breaking rules."*

Despite challenges, educators expressed belief in schools' potential when approaches are authentic and sustained. A veteran teacher concluded:

*"Moral education works when it's not performative when the entire school community genuinely commits to living these values. Students can detect hypocrisy instantly. But when they see consistency between stated values and actual practices, they internalize these principles."*

## Discussion

### ***Education as an Agent of Social Change***

Examination of schools as agents of social change revealed tensions between traditional moral frameworks and evolving societal realities, with three major themes emerging: value transmission, challenges addressing contemporary issues, and innovative approaches fostering social responsibility.

#### **1. Role in Value Transmission**

Teachers described their work as bridging generational divides. A civics teacher explained:

*"We're teaching students to balance respect for tradition with openness to change. Indonesia's values of gotong royong and musyawarah remain relevant, but students also need to understand democratic participation, human rights, and global citizenship. Our challenge is showing how traditional and modern values can coexist."*

This reflects Durkheim's theory that education serves moral functions in fostering social solidarity while adapting to changing conditions.

Teachers implementing dialogical curricula described their approach. One shared: *"Rather than telling students what to believe, we present situations where values conflict like economic development versus environmental protection and guide them through analyzing different perspectives. This develops their capacity to navigate complex moral terrain, essential for being agents of positive change."*

Students appreciated this but noted its rarity. A twelfth-grade student observed:

*"Most classes still focus on memorization, but in classes where teachers actually engage us in discussing real issues, we learn to think critically about our society. These are the classes that make us want to contribute to solving problems."*

#### **2. Challenges Addressing Contemporary Issues**

All educators acknowledged difficulty addressing sensitive topics including inequality, corruption, and discrimination. One principal explained:

*"There's often pressure to avoid controversial topics. Some parents want schools to focus on academic preparation, not social issues. But how can we prepare students for citizenship if we don't discuss the actual challenges our society faces?"*

Digital citizenship emerged as particularly challenging. A guidance counselor stated: *"We're trying to teach digital citizenship—responsible social media use, critical evaluation of online information, respectful online communication—but students are digital natives who've grown up in these spaces. Sometimes they're more sophisticated about technology than we are, yet they lack the ethical framework to use it responsibly."*

Students confirmed this disconnect. One admitted:

*"I'd never say certain things to someone's face, but online it feels different less real somehow. The school's trying to help us see it's still real harm, just through a different medium."*

Environmental education showed mixed results. A teacher coordinating waste reduction programs described:

*"We started a waste sorting initiative and lessons about environmental responsibility. Initially, compliance was low. But as we connected it to broader issues—how plastic affects marine life, how waste impacts their own communities—some students became genuinely committed."*

However, sustained behavior change remained challenging without constant reinforcement.

#### **3. Innovative Approaches to Social Responsibility**

Community services learning programs emerged as particularly impactful. A teacher supervising such programs explained:

*"We partner with local organizations where students volunteer teaching in underserved communities, assisting elderly residents, environmental clean-ups. These experiences expose students to social realities beyond their usual circles and develop empathy and sense of responsibility."*

Students described transformative experiences. One shared:

*"Volunteering at an orphanage completely changed my perspective. I'd lived in a bubble, focused on my problems and goals. Seeing kids without family support struggling for basic education made me realize my privilege and responsibility to contribute to solutions."*

Another reflected:

*"Community service taught me that social change isn't abstract—it's about people helping people. Now I think about how my future career choices can serve society, not just my personal ambitions."*

However, structure and facilitation significantly affected impact. A teacher emphasized: *"The service itself isn't enough. We have structured reflection sessions where students process their experiences, connect them to course concepts, and consider their responsibilities as community members. This reflection transforms service from charity to consciousness-raising."*

Schools attempting to serve as change agents face institutional constraints. One principal explained:

*"I'd love to expand our social engagement programs, but resources are limited and there's immense pressure to prioritize academic outcomes measured by test scores. Social change education requires time, flexibility, and resources that are often unavailable."*

Despite constraints, educators expressed commitment. A teacher stated:

*"Education is our best hope for social progress. Where else do we have the opportunity to shape how young people think about themselves, their communities, and their responsibilities? Yes, we face challenges, but giving up means abandoning the next generation to repeat past mistakes."*

#### 4. Moral Education Strategies in Schools

Analysis of curriculum documents, classroom observations, and interviews revealed diverse strategies schools employ to foster moral development, with four primary approaches emerging: curriculum integration, extracurricular programs, school culture and teacher exemplarity, and disciplinary approaches.

#### 5. Curriculum Integration

Three of five schools maintained formal character education frameworks explicitly embedding values across subjects. A science teacher explained:

*"When teaching scientific method, I emphasize intellectual honesty—accurately reporting results even when they don't match hypotheses. This connects scientific practice to moral principle."*

However, implementation quality varied. One teacher candidly reflected:

*"I include character objectives in my lesson plans because it's required, but honestly, I'm not always sure how to meaningfully integrate them into calculus. It feels forced sometimes."*

In schools without formal frameworks, moral education appeared sporadic and teacher-dependent. One principal acknowledged:

*"We focus primarily on academic preparation because that's what parents demand and what determines school reputation. Character development happens informally but isn't systematically planned."* Students perceived these differences. One noted:

*"Every subject connects to bigger questions about how to live well and contribute to society. You see patterns across classes, which reinforces the values."*

Conversely, another observed:

*"We have one 'character building' class per week that feels disconnected from everything else."*

#### 6. Extracurricular and Habitual Programs

All schools offered extracurricular activities with varying emphases. A teacher supervising student government described its function:

*"Through student council, participants learn democratic deliberation, accountability, and servant leadership. They must negotiate competing interests, make decisions considering diverse perspectives, and follow through on commitments. These experiences develop practical moral capacity."*

Scouting emerged frequently as character-forming. A coordinator explained:

*"Scouting develops discipline, cooperation, and resilience through structured challenges."*

*Activities like camping require students to depend on each other, follow through on responsibilities, and persevere through difficulties. These build character traits useful throughout life."*

Habitual programs showed promise but required sustained commitment. The "morning literacy movement," implemented in two schools, aimed to develop discipline by dedicating the first 15 minutes daily to reading. Teachers reported that consistent implementation improved students' reading habits and time management, though maintaining consistency required vigilant oversight.

#### *School Culture and Teacher Exemplarity*

All participants acknowledged that school climate powerfully shapes moral learning. A principal articulated:

*"School culture is our hidden curriculum. Students absorb values from observing how their community operates. If they see fairness, respect, and compassion modeled consistently, these become normalized."*

Teachers recognized their role as moral models. One reflected:

*"Being a moral exemplar is demanding. Students notice inconsistencies. If I preach punctuality but arrive late, if I demand respect but speak dismissively to struggling students, I undermine my moral authority."*

Students confirmed teacher behavior's significance. One stated:

*"The teachers I respect most aren't necessarily the best lecturers but those who treat everyone fairly, show genuine care, and practice what they preach. Their example makes me want to be a better person."*

However, students also identified contradictory behaviors. One noted:

*"Some teachers show obvious favoritism to high-achieving students, which teaches us that people's worth depends on performance rather than inherent dignity."*

Another observed:

*"When teachers use sarcasm or public humiliation as discipline, it contradicts lessons about respecting others' dignity."*

#### *Disciplinary Approaches*

Schools varied between punitive and restorative approaches. Traditional punitive discipline remained dominant, with a vice principal defending:

*"Clear consequences deter rule-breaking. Students need to learn that actions have consequences, which is a fundamental moral principle."*

However, critics noted limitations. A guidance counselor argued:

*"Punishment might stop behavior temporarily, but it doesn't develop moral reasoning or repair harm. Students learn to avoid getting caught rather than understanding why the behavior was wrong."*

Two schools experimented with restorative justice, emphasizing accountability and harm repair. A counselor explained:

*"When students violate norms, we facilitate dialogues where they confront the impact of their actions on others, take responsibility, and work toward making things right. This develops empathy and genuine understanding of why moral norms matter."*

Students involved in restorative processes described them as more meaningful. One reflected:

*"Having to face the person I hurt and understand their pain was harder than any punishment. But it actually changed how I think about my actions affecting others."*

Cross-cutting challenges emerged affecting effectiveness. Teachers explained that academic curriculum demands left limited space for moral education. One stated:

*"I'm expected to cover extensive material preparing students for standardized tests. Pausing for moral discussions feels like luxury I can't afford, even though I value them."*

Inconsistency between school and broader social contexts also undermined efforts. Teachers noted:

*"We teach honesty, but students see corruption normalized in society. We teach cooperation, but the world they see rewards cutthroat competition. These contradictions create cynicism about whether moral values actually matter."*

#### 7. The Influence of Moral Education on Social Deviance

Investigation into relationships between moral education and social deviance revealed complex dynamics through three major themes: mechanisms mitigating deviance, types of deviant behavior and differential susceptibility to intervention, and limitations of school-based prevention.

#### 8. Mechanisms of Deviance Mitigation

Educators and students identified internal and external processes through which moral education reduces problematic behaviors. The first mechanism involves developing internal moral frameworks. A guidance counselor explained:

*"Effective moral education helps students internalize values so they make ethical choices not because they fear punishment but because they've developed personal commitment to doing right. This internal compass is more reliable than external control."*

Students confirmed this internal mechanism. One reflected:

*"There have been times I could easily cheat without getting caught, but I don't because it would bother me. The school's emphasis on integrity has become part of how I see myself. Violating it would mean betraying my own values."*

This aligns with Hirschi's social control theory, which posits that individuals with strong internal moral beliefs are less likely to deviate from social norms.

The second mechanism involves strengthening social bonds. A counselor explained:

*"Students who feel connected to school, who have positive relationships with teachers and peers, who are involved in constructive activities these students are far less likely to engage in deviant behavior because they have too much to lose."*

Students confirmed attachment's protective influence. One stated:

*"There were times my friends wanted to do risky things skip school, try drugs, whatever. But I thought about my teachers who've invested in me and my parents' expectations, and I couldn't do it. Those relationships matter more than temporary thrills."*

The third mechanism involves developing empathy that reduces aggressive behaviors. A counselor explained:

*"We explicitly teach perspective-taking understanding how others feel and how our actions affect them. Students who develop empathy are less likely to engage in behaviors that harm others because they can imagine the impact."*

A former bully reflected:

*"I used to think teasing was just joking around, no big deal. But through our school's program, I heard directly from people hurt by bullying and realized the real pain it causes. Understanding that changed my behavior."*

#### 9. Types of Deviant Behavior and Differential Susceptibility

Educators observed that some deviances respond more readily to moral education than others. Academic dishonesty appeared particularly responsive. A teacher explained:

*"We've implemented an honor code with regular discussions about academic honesty's purpose not just avoiding punishment but maintaining learning integrity and personal character. We emphasize that cheating betrays yourself by preventing genuine learning."*

Teachers reported reduced cheating following such initiatives.

However, academic pressure sometimes overwhelmed moral education's influence. A student admitted:

*"I understand why academic honesty matters, and I believe in it. But when I'm overwhelmed with assignments, sleep-deprived, and terrified of failing, the pressure to cheat becomes intense. Sometimes survival mode overrides principles."*

Bullying showed mixed responses. Schools implementing comprehensive anti-bullying programs reported reductions in incidents. A principal described:

*"Our multi-year anti-bullying initiative has created cultural change. Students are more likely*

*to intervene when witnessing bullying and more willing to report serious situations."*

However, complete elimination remained elusive. Teachers acknowledged:

*"While overt physical bullying has decreased, more subtle forms—social exclusion, cyberbullying, reputation destruction—persist. These are harder to address because they're less visible."*

Substance experimentation presented the most resistant form of deviance. A guidance counselor explained:

*"We provide drug education explaining health risks and legal consequences. But for students facing peer pressure, family dysfunction, or mental health struggles, these lessons often feel irrelevant. Substance issues typically require more intensive intervention than schools can provide."*

A student corroborated:

*"Everyone knows drugs are bad—we've heard it a million times. But that doesn't stop people dealing with serious problems from using substances to cope. The school's 'just say no' approach doesn't address why people say yes in the first place."*

#### 10. Limitations of School-Based Prevention

Teachers and administrators identified several constraining factors. First, family influence often supersedes school influence. A counselor explained:

*"Students spend more time with families than schools. When family environments normalize or even model deviant behavior substance abuse, violence, dishonesty—our moral education efforts face an uphill battle."*

Second, peer influence powerfully shapes adolescent behavior. A teacher observed:

*"Adolescents are developing independence from adults and increasingly look to peers for cues about acceptable behavior. When peer groups normalize deviance, even students with strong moral formation can be swayed by desire for belonging."*

Third, broader societal factors including poverty, inequality, and trauma create risk factors beyond schools' capacity to address. A principal explained:

*"Many students face adversities food insecurity, unstable housing, exposure to violence that generate stress and trauma. While we try to provide support, we're educators, not social workers or therapists. Addressing root causes of deviance requires resources beyond what schools possess."*

Fourth, developmental factors limit immediate effectiveness. A psychology teacher explained:

*"Adolescent brain development means impulse control and long-term thinking are still maturing. Even students who understand moral principles intellectually may lack the neurological maturity for consistent moral behavior, especially in emotionally charged situations."*

Despite limitations, educators maintained that moral education remains valuable. A principal articulated:

*"We can't prevent all deviance, and expecting schools to do so is unrealistic. But we can reduce its prevalence, mitigate its severity, and provide students with moral tools they'll carry into adulthood. Even if some students deviate during adolescence, the values we've taught may guide them back to prosocial behavior as they mature."*

Students offered final perspectives validating moral education's significance. One reflected:

*"Not everyone follows what the school teaches about morality, but I think most of us are influenced by it. Maybe we don't become perfect people, but we're probably better than we'd be without that guidance."*

Another concluded:

*"Schools can't fix everything wrong with society or prevent every bad choice students make. But they can provide a foundation—teaching us what's right, modeling good behavior, giving us opportunities to practice moral living. Whether we build on that foundation is partly up to us, but the school gives us something to build on."*

This qualitative exploration reveals that while schools play significant roles in moral formation and deviance prevention through various strategies and mechanisms, their effectiveness depends on numerous contextual factors including institutional commitment, teacher capacity, family and community support, and broader socio-structural conditions. Moral education emerges not as a panacea for social deviance but as one crucial element within a comprehensive ecosystem of influences shaping adolescent development.

### CONCLUSION

This research shows that schools play an important role in the formation of student morality and the prevention of deviant behavior through various mechanisms such as institutional culture, role models from teachers, and structured moral learning experiences. However, external influences such as social media, peer pressure, and socioeconomic conditions often reduce the effectiveness of moral education in schools. Overall, while schools can facilitate students' moral development, external factors and systemic challenges affect outcomes.

The recommendation of this research is for schools to increase their commitment to integrating moral education into every aspect of the curriculum and extracurricular activities. Schools are also advised to further strengthen the role of teachers and support the consistent development of students' character. In addition, cooperation with families and communities is needed to create an environment that supports the reinforcement of moral values outside of school, so that moral education can be more effective in preventing deviant behavior among students.

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### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The first author is responsible for research conceptualization, literature review, research design, methodology development, data collection through in-depth interviews and observations, interview protocol development, thematic analysis, data interpretation, manuscript writing, and manuscript revision. The second author contributed to research conceptualization, theoretical framework development, methodology validation, data analysis, data interpretation, and manuscript revision. The third author contributed to literature review, document analysis, thematic analysis, and manuscript editing. All authors have reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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