

Developing Moral Education Through Service Learning: Indonesia Higher Education Context

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Abstract: Moral Education (ME) is essential for establishing desirable personality characteristics in a multicultural society. However, many graduates in Indonesia still show moral decadence due to low educational standards, and in particular, universities still do not optimize ME. Therefore, this study aims to develop ME through service learning through *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* (KKN) or the subject of community service for university students. The case study design reveals the depth and richness of information on the service learning program in Indonesia, including students and lecturers in the multicultural community. Data collection would entail recording students working on service-learning projects and thematic analysis. The results show that service learning has successfully promoted social responsibility, solidarity, and tolerance among students. The effectiveness of the lecturer's innovative pedagogy can be seen in the students' awareness and behaviour. This research offers recommendations and insights that should be utilized to lessen moral issues in youth.

Keywords: Service Learning, *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* (KKN), Moral Education (ME), Multicultural Society

1. Introduction

Moral Education (ME) is a planned effort to realize the learning process so students have good character or personality. Each country has a different ME programme, depending on its culture or ideology (Splitter, 2017), including Indonesia. In the context of higher education, ME implementation is a challenge for curriculum policymakers, lecturers, and the community. The ME standards can fulfil cognitive (moral knowledge and thinking), psychomotor (moral skills), and affective (moral feelings) components. Moral sensitivity must also be present in responding to the cultural diversity of a nation (Balakrishnan, 2023). Suppose the implementation of ME is less than optimal, society will have a moral crisis, especially among the younger generation, such as disrespect for fellow humans and the natural environment, intolerance, bullying, physical violence, pornography addiction, drug addiction, and many others (Malihah, 2015). Therefore, proper ME is essential for all nations (Kim & Taylor, 2017) at the micro as well as macro level.

Meanwhile in Indonesia, at higher education level, ME teaches fundamental values based on *Pancasila* (Indonesian ideology) such as religious values, caring, sympathy, empathy, cooperation, tolerance, social responsibility, respect for individual rights and differences, democratic, and justice values (Agus et al., 2021; Siswoyo, 2013). The teaching and learning pedagogy include class lectures, group discussions, role plays, and real-life examples (Muzakir et al., 2022). However, optimizing ME curriculum in Indonesia still has issues involving morals of the young generation (Nurpratiwi, 2021). The problem is that ME in higher education is still dominated by knowledge aspects such as memorizing

and understanding moral theories or concepts. For example, the ME, which has been integrated into civic education courses in Indonesian universities, still emphasizes on cognitive aspects only, so it tends to be boring and less impactful. Students become passive and not interested, and they consider ME as just a graduation requirement (Widiatmaka, 2016). In addition, there must be more consistency between what is taught in the classroom and how students approach real-life moral situations (Balakrishnan, 2021). According to study concerning morality, teaching students to be competent is more straightforward than being "good" students (Midgette, Ilten-Gee, Powers, Murata, & Nucci, 2018). Therefore, there is a need for an innovative pedagogy so that the moral learning that has taken place in the classroom will now be implemented outside of the classroom and offer the platform for students to apply what they have learned in real-world settings like in the community as well as for the learning process to involve reflection and empowerment. Thus, experiential learning is increasingly important in all aspects of education.

One of these innovative learning methods is through service learning programs in higher education. Service learning is a cutting-edge approach to education and learning that combines meaningful community service with reflection and empowerment on particular learning objectives to enhance students' softskills, foster civic responsibility, and empower society (Resch & Schritteser, 2021; Salam, Awang Iskandar, Ibrahim, & Farooq, 2019). The service learning program is also a program that is relevant to the mission of the new Indonesia education transformation policy, Freedom to Learn / the *Merdeka Belajar- Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM), which focuses on experience-based learning and student-centred learning approach (Nursita & Purwanto, 2022). One of MBKM's programs, *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* (KKN), has several elements similar to service learning, such as credit-based learning and community service. Several scholars and academics have considered the KKN course to be the Indonesian version of a service learning program in Indonesia (Ferdiansyah, Winarno, & Ardhita, 2022; Nugroho, Iqbal, Ramadhan, Swastika, & Hidayat, 2023). However, there are significant differences regarding the characteristics of KKN as service learning in Indonesia, with some service learning in other notable countries, namely service learning in Indonesia, which tends to be more about community service activities, so there is less focus on student development. In contrast, service learning at the international level emphasizes what students have learned in class; they practice it in society with rich reflection and empowerment.

In the past decade, research on service learning has continued to develop. Researchers from America, Europe, and Asia dominate the literature on the conditions for implementing service learning, their perspectives on service learning, and the benefits that can be obtained from service learning programs. In terms of ME, a research result, according to Muzakkir, Hussin, & Razak (2022), shows that using literature through storytelling and role play can improve moral development. Then, Balakrishnan (2017) states that ME is based on universal values and local cultural values where the community lives. As for service learning research, Halberstadt, Timm, Kraus, & Gundolf (2019) revealed that service learning in tertiary institutions can improve two main competencies in students, namely communication and interaction skills. Another finding states that global citizenship skills can be developed through service-learning programs (Ali & Hidayah, 2021). In addition, according to Resch & Schritteser (2021) in their qualitative research, service learning links theory and practice, involvement, community needs, and work-related skills through learning outside the classroom. Other research shows that service-learning programs in tertiary institutions can develop the higher-order thinking skills students need in the current era (Siti Manisah Ibrahim, Zainudin Hassan, & Rudy Bayang, 2020). In Indonesia, Ferdiansyah, Winarno, & Ardhita (2022) said that service learning can improve soft skills, especially leadership skills.

From various literature regarding service learning in several countries, including Indonesia, there is still less research that evaluates service learning in higher education on student patterns of character or moral development. Therefore, the research in this article focuses on development of ME through service learning@KKN for multicultural society and provide solutions to curriculum makers in higher education institutions so that lecturers can teach effective ME and create good character or behaviour in college graduates. Furthermore, in terms of empirical gaps and literature, this study investigates the challenges of learning ME in higher education institutions through service learning.

2. Moral Education in Higher Education

Conducting ME is one the most efficient way to cultivate morals. According to Splitter (2017) ME is an apparent attempt to enhance values so that students can become good citizens by the principles and policies of each region or country. It alludes to the formal lessons incorporated into the curriculum to advance students' moral character (Betawi, 2020). To form good character, every student must master three aspects of moral education: moral knowledge, feelings, and behavior (Komara, 2018). Therefore, moral education is not enough to be taught only from the cognitive or knowledge aspect because it is not easy to create students into people with good character (Muzakkir et al., 2022). It is generally agreed that a country's future development depends significantly on its young generation's educational outcomes. Educational outcomes will benefit society and the country more if graduates have noble moral values (Chankseliani, Qoraboyev, & Gimranova, 2021). Through ME, the younger generation will learn to have a good sense of nationalism, honesty, discipline, and responsibility (Iwasa, 2017). Thus, ME must be effectively taught to students in the classroom since this impacts the university and lecturers purposefully developing students' morals. Like other fundamental disciplines, ME has its philosophy and can be studied independently. Every country has a different ME since it is determined by its philosophy, history, politics, culture, and goals in terms of education (Kim & Taylor, 2017). For instance, ME will be applied toward an ultimate objective that brings happiness to the largest group in society in a country that prioritizes utilitarianism (ethics that states that proper action is to maximize happiness and minimize struggle to the largest group); consequently, the decision made is a collective decision (Balakrishnan, 2023).

Today, hedonism and materialism are becoming increasingly evident in social life. These issues erode the morality and morals of society, especially the young generation (Carr, 2017). The phenomenon of moral decadence is expressed and socialized through various mass media shows, including social media in the digital era. There are so many shows that teach not only violence but also immoral behavior, such as betrayal and promiscuous behavior. The results are predictable: deviant behavior among youth is increasing. Therefore, ME deserves an essential place in higher education because students at higher education begin to search for their identity amidst various bad influences (Fitzgerald, 2023). Therefore, ME in universities is crucial to be further developed.

University students are members of the scientific and academic community who require an original and all-encompassing ethical framework to inform every choice they make in the scientific field. Therefore, making scientific decisions without considering morality could have unintended consequences and make the scientific community value-free (Andrews, 2021). Students must understand that every choice they make affects not just themselves but also their surroundings and social life as they function as independent and social beings (Prasetiyo, Kamarudin, & Dewantara, 2019). For students to study and address issues like corruption and other moral degeneration in the life of a nation, ME must be provided in higher education institutions. The students can benefit significantly through character education. According to Krettenauer (2021) developed nations' ability to produce professional-caliber human resources to advance human civilisation depends largely on ME. For instance, Japan has risen to be a developed nation in many fields because of its high social life values and the development of moral character standards based on local cultural wisdom that are consistently respected (Iwasa, 2017; Kim & Taylor, 2017). As members of the community, universities significantly impact students' ability to understand and be aware of ethical issues, provide implicit and explicit role models for young people, foster a sense of morality, and develop moral personalities (Nurpratiwi, 2021). Universities are thus viewed as establishments that help students become academically and morally capable of navigating life, especially as part of a multicultural society (Bandyopadhyay, Das, & Mahajan, 2022). Thus, students need to be aware of the importance of moral education through critical thinking in active experiential learning, such as service learning. (Garct'a-Romero & Mart'nez-Lozano, 2022).

2.1 Glimpse of Service Learning

All educational programs that are implemented will have some philosophical and psychological underpinnings. These pillars are crucial because they offer each program being carried out structure and life. Since service learning is a pedagogical strategy introduced in all universities, it

is critical to establish alignment from the outset (McDougle & Li, 2023). This pedagogy transformation emphasizes the student-centered rather than the teacher-centered learning approach (Halberstadt et al., 2019). Several aspects that need to be present in service learning based on the philosophy of service learning are credit-based, course-based, reflection, empowerment and community service (Ferdiansyah et al., 2022a; Setyowati & Permata, 2018). Supervising lecturers need to understand that service learning involves not only helping and serving the community but also developing student competency and character (Diana, Paidi, & Paulus, 2020). The supervisor/ lecturer at each stage of service learning must be able to guide or direct students to reflect on each activity in the project and empower them continuously (Case, Schram, Jung, Leung, & Yun, 2021)

Service learning is an innovative approach to learning that aims to create students into human beings who are helpful to society through services to the public through the fields or skills studied by students to increase concern for others (Salam et al., 2019). The higher a person's education, the more their caring spirit should develop and contribute to helping solve various problems in society. Several other definitions of service learning include those from Martín (2022) in *Building Partnerships for Service Learning*; service learning is a form of education that focuses on experiential learning where students are involved in activities that concern humans and community needs with opportunities that are deliberately planned to improve student development and learning. Meanwhile, according to Tan & Soo (2020) service learning is an innovative pedagogy that connects real, meaningful action in society with academic learning, meaning that students do positive things in society according to what they learn in class to develop their personality and responsibility as citizens. Resch & Schritteser (2021) added in *The Essence of the Pedagogy* that service learning is a curriculum-based service to society that integrates learning in the classroom with activities serving the community.

Service learning is essential in developing moral values regarding equity, diversity, and inclusiveness, especially in multicultural societies, to unite a nation amidst differences (Otten, Faughnan, Flattley, & Fleurinor, 2022). Apart from that, service learning can promote civic character values such as justice, equity, inclusion, and sustainability as an effort to form global citizens in the fourth industrial revolution. (Ali & Hidayah, 2021; Yodpet et al., 2023)

3. Methodology

The qualitative approach using case study was applied for in-depth analysis of small units by including a lecturer and students with different backgrounds. Though the findings cannot be generalised due to the nature the qualitative approach but insightful findings that offers rich descriptions and explanations of the service learning projects is worth analysing and further developed (Yin, 2018; Gustafsson, 2017). Table 1 below shows the data collected from the Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia community through observation, interview, and study documentation in the different stages of service learning:

Table 1. Data Collection in the different stage of service learning@KKN

Data Collection Instruments	Pre-Service Learning	During Service Learning	Post-Service Learning
Observation	The discussions between students and lecturers regarding service learning preparations and analyzing all the information provided by the lecturer to students	Recording all activities in society are based on the philosophy and elements of service learning.	capturing student moral development.
Interview	Focus group discussions semi-structured interviews lasted 40-60 minutes.	In-person and focus group discussions semi-structured interviews lasted 40-60 minutes.	In-person and focus group discussions semi-structured interviews lasted 40-60 minutes.

Data Collection Instruments	Pre-Service Learning	During Service Learning	Post-Service Learning
Study Documents	Analyzing service learning proposals.	Analyzing daily and weekly student and lecturer journals.	Analyzing student and lecturer reports.

The interviews also addressed the community around participants and were carried out to support the research data. Furthermore, the interview questions to the students illustrated KKN and service learning, the moral literacy, social responsibility, and participation they showed in the KKN Program.

3.1 Participants

This study used the purposive sampling technique to obtain accurate data, have appropriate sources and informants, and have a thorough understanding of the research issue. In the sampling process, researchers selected locations for data collection by considering the presence of people who "can best help us understand our central phenomenon (Creswell, 2009). The researcher recruited participants who fulfill a particular inclusion criteria. The first inclusion criteria were college students registered in Civic Education, Indonesian Education, and Accounting Education Departments from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia, who took KKN courses after completing a minimum of 120 credits. The students were between the ages of twenty and twenty-one. Meanwhile, a lecturer has experience guiding KKN for more than five years. The age range of the lecturer is between 35 and 40. The second inclusion criteria were students and lecturers who previously had experience in community service and had participated in socialization about the philosophy and aspects of service learning by the researcher.

Apart from that, reducing informant bias is important if some biased data or participants do not convey accurate information. MacAulay (2010) recommends comparing data with information from other participants or various data sources to reduce informant bias. Therefore, the researcher does not rely on just one data source; the researcher use approaches such as semi-structured interviews and group discussion forums so that the researcher gets enough data for analysis and consideration.

3.2 Data Collection

Data was collected between March 2023 and August 2023. Open-ended and semi-structured interviews were completed to get comprehensive and in-depth data. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian as a school medium of instruction. During interview session, the researcher conducted face to face in person and focus group discussions (FGDs). The FGDs which consisted of 3-4 participants. The duration face to face interview 40-60 minutes. All interview answers were recorded; later, the researcher highlighted or annotated interview transcripts after verbatim transcription to differentiate between interview questions and participant responses. A professional translator and proofreading service first translated the transcription from Indonesian to English. Regarding research ethics, all names and identities of participants are disguised. In addition, the interview questions focused on their knowledge of KKN and service learning, moral attitudes, and involvement in the service learning@KKN Program. The sample interview instrument protocol is as follows:

- a) Can you provide examples of specific moral values that you have gained or strengthened through participating in service learning during KKN?
- b) Among elements of service learning, which are the main components of service learning can add moral values to KKN for value-based graduate?

In terms of observation, the researchers made direct observations at the service learning@KKN location, including the presence of lecturers, student activities, forum group discussions, and the surrounding neighborhood. The researcher has recorded the process of implementing service learning

from the pre-service learning@KKN stage to the post-service learning@KKN stage. Several essential things that the researcher has done during observation were observing the conditions in the field where the service learning@KKN is, the behavior or attitude of informants, and the interaction between fellow informants and informants and the community. According to Creswell (2012), before focusing on making more in-depth observations, the researcher initially visited the location and took a general overview. Additionally, documentation studies such as student journals, KKN vision and mission statements, and pictures of service learning@KKN activities were needed to assist with collecting data. Applying various techniques for collecting data and informants enhances the triangulation of data to validate data findings better (Gustafsson, 2017).

3.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis method is carried out in parallel with all data collected in the field, first familiarizing with the data. Next, the researcher wrote and transcribed the transcripts of interviews and then read them thoroughly and attentively to understand from the informants' perspective entirely. Then, codes are given in the coding; significant data is grouped as data categorization, using triangulation to determine themes for answering each research question. Gerring's (2017) data coding was used to analyze the data collected. This procedure involved coding, re-reading, and reorganizing data findings to identify the corresponding data group to each category. According to Creswell (1991) this stage aims to investigate the significance of the collected information. Themes are then selected, coded inductively (data-driven) from raw qualitative data and deductively (theory-driven) from the findings of prior studies based on the arrangement of multiple categories based on data analysis employing triangulation (Creswell, 2009). In this series of data analysis processes, researchers manually triangulate all research instruments and then review them with a researcher and lecturer who are experts in qualitative research.

In addition, researchers applied validity and reliability to ensure data accuracy. In this study, researchers used the concept of Lincoln and Guba (1995), which justified qualitative findings through the criteria of credibility, dependability, transferability, and compatibility. On the other hand, credibility focuses on internal validity. According to Creswell (2012), there are several strategies for validating data found in qualitative studies, such as member checking and data triangulation.

4. Findings

KKN is one of the university courses carried out in the community or outside campus. This program intends to serve society with a cross-scientific and sectoral approach over a certain period. Usually, KKN is carried out for one month to three months. Students will be formed into several groups. Each group consists of 10-15 students, whom one supervisor guides. The KKN program includes service activities, mingling, teaching, and learning with the community where the KKN is held. The location is usually in a village or specific area that needs empowerment. KKN aims to increase social awareness, provide learning experiences to students through direct involvement in the community, and empower villages or target areas.

KKN is mandatory at all Indonesian universities, including the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia. This study found a gap between expectations and reality in the KKN program. In the pre-KKN stage, most students did not understand the vision and mission, objectives, what activities must be carried out in KKN, and learning outcomes in KKN. They only have the perception that KKN is a mandatory subject that must be taken, and this program brings students into the community to live directly involved in various activities in the community accompanied by a facilitator for a certain period. So far, they have only followed lecture procedures without realizing that KKN has the potential to develop students' character and soft skills. This opinion was conveyed by the result of an interview with one of the students before they went to the community:

For me, KKN is only a mandatory subject that all undergraduate students must take and is one of our graduation requirements. The perception of KKN for me is that we serve the community with activities that are good for the community; that is all. (Semi- structured interview with Student B2, and F3 are provided similar responses)

According to the statement above, KKN implementation has been ineffective, especially regarding character and ME. The students did not know why it was necessary to conduct KKN in higher education. Therefore, this research integrated KKN with service learning. Meanwhile, the service learning pedagogy has main stages (pre-, during, and post-service learning) and critical elements (empowerment and reflection) that play an essential role in the experience-based learning process (Mamat, Amran, Ismail, & Ishak, 2019). For example, pre-service learning is crucial because it gives students knowledge, skills, and moral values. In this stage, students and lecturers carefully plan to identify and analyze societal problems before starting service learning@KKN. On the other hand, a facilitator must empower and guide the students as they make careful three main stages.

The following study shows a description of the attitudes of students and lecturers towards service learning@KKN. Table 1 indicates that 85% of respondents, from ten students and one lecturer, are enthusiastic and optimistic about KKN programs integrated with service learning and can instill moral values or character in students and the community. However, a small number of respondents have yet to show a significant response to this pedagogy. This data was obtained through interviews and observations as follows:

Table 2. Description of students and a lecturer attitudes toward service learning

Description	Number of Participant	Percentage
Enthusiastic & Optimistic	11	85%
Not Enthusiastic	0	0%
Neutral	2	15%
Total	13	100%

The following notes provide examples of responses regarding students' enthusiasm in carrying out service learning@KKN to develop moral values:

Honestly, this KKN helps me and other friends in the KKN program in directing what we should do for society according to our knowledge. I feel happy and touched because the knowledge I have learned so far can be helpful for society as a form of social responsibility. Apart from that, I learned how to have empathy, sympathy, and care for others through the reflection method in all service learning@KKN activities. (Semi- structured interview with Student B2, F5 and F8 are provided similar responses)

Meanwhile, the statement from the student above is in line with the response from the service learning@KKN supervising lecturer carrying out empowerment as follows:

Service learning @KKN makes it easy to guide students because the elements and stages are comprehensive and precise. I encourage them to be confident and independent and guide students to mobilize their abilities in programs that can help and empower society to overcome various problems. (Semi- structured interview with Lecturert (L1) is provided similar responses)

4.1. Key approaches to build morality in Service Learning: Reflection and Empowerment

Based on interviews with students and supervisors, reflection has succeeded in creating students as active learners in instilling moral values such as social responsibility and caring. For example, in Figure 1, civic education students are given space to think critically to question their understanding of the issues in a multicultural society in the Salatiga area. Then, students explore new ideas and action plans that can be used to overcome social problems such as ethnocentrism, primordialism, and exclusivism through various activities such as counseling on moral values and Pancasila, teaching character values in elementary to middle schools, and so on. They also evaluate and analyze the programs they carry out during service learning regarding benefits and impacts for them as students and the pluralistic society there.



Fig. 1 Reflection in service learning@KKN between Student and Supervisor

These reflections are carried out through group discussion forums, creative projects, writing daily journals, field notes, mapping, community events, portfolios, multimedia presentations, and evaluations in Google form. According to Balakrishnan (2022), the more experiences students have, the more they can reflect, learn, and progress in constructing knowledge, skills, and values so that this pedagogy can reduce the dominance of cognitive elements in ME in higher education, which only emphasizes elements of knowledge and understanding. Emphasizing the element of knowledge alone is not enough or less effective in instilling moral values; a comprehensive learning process is needed, which is included in the learning process (Muhibbin et al., 2022; Muzakkir et al., 2022). As stated by Dewey (1933), we do not learn from experience but from reflecting on experience.

Another essential component in service learning is empowerment (Ferdiansyah, Winarno, & Ardhita, 2022b; McDougale & Li, 2023). Both reflection and empowerment have a philosophical basis in service learning. Empowerment in this pedagogy gives someone power or authority to do something of positive value (Zainuri & Huda, 2023). In this context, lecturers empower students to plan and complete service learning@KKN projects, so students are given the authority to create and organize their projects from pre-, during, to post-service learning@KKN. This empowerment process makes students more confident, independent, and responsible in making decisions and solving problems. In the end, students are expected to be able to face challenges in the service learning@KKN project by being more open-minded and independent in carrying out their projects. Based on data in the field, the empowerment method has the potential to instill morals in students. The following is an excerpt from a semi-structured interview with students.

There are many benefits to the empowerment method of service learning. From the start, the supervisor or facilitator empowered us to be independent and have the authority to create work programs in this KKN. I am more confident in my abilities and strengthen each other to empower other friends and the community to overcome their problems. From here comes the awareness of sympathy and empathy and taking action in contributing to helping the community itself because we see, feel, and experience for ourselves the challenges faced by the community. (Semi- structured interview with Student B2, B4, F7, and F9 are provided similar responses).

Students are empowered to be involved in various activities in the community according to their respective fields of study; for example, the supervisor gives authority and thoroughly guides students to create a literacy corner to encourage people to love and enjoy reading and scientific discussions. The result of their project, namely the literacy corner (*Pojok Literasi*) in Figure 2, received a lot of appreciation from the local community, besides increasing knowledge and providing a moral message to each individual.



Fig. 2 Student after empowerment at Literacy Corner as a creative project in service learning@KKN

The Figure 2 shows that active student participation is based on individual awareness, reflected in the results of individual positive thinking. The involvement process starts from a critical perspective and then leads to individual actions that move the soul and mind in this service learning@KKN program. Therefore, supervisors or facilitators must implement learning methods that allow students to develop skills, attitudes, and character to participate effectively in community life. Ultimately, empowerment in service learning@KKN is an activity that raises awareness that students and supervisors need to learn a lot from each other.

4.2 Service Learning: Efforts to build Social Responsibility, Solidarity and Tolerance in Multiculture Society

One of the KKN groups at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, has implemented a service learning program in a pluralistic society in Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia. One of the goals of this program is to instill moral values at the tertiary level through experience-based learning. Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation studies, three moral values of the service learning program are most widely believed and implemented by students in a multicultural society. The three central moral values are social responsibility, solidarity, and tolerance. The following is an explanation of the three most moral values embedded in service learning@KKN, as shown in Table 2.

Table 3. Moral values developed in service learning at KKN

Forms of service-learning	The role of student	Cultivating the moral values
Building Literacy Corner	Students built a literacy corner equipped with reading books, both academic and non-academic, which received help from fellow students in donating books.	Students have developed the value of social responsibility, where there is sensitivity in applying their knowledge for the common good.
Raising funds for children and older people	Students raised funds from fellow students via social media and also asked directly to community officials.	Students become more patient in working together in programs that aim to help others. In this case, they have instilled the value of

Forms of service-learning	The role of student	Cultivating the moral values
Mutual Cooperation	Students invited residents in Salatiga from various backgrounds to work together to plant trees, clean the surrounding environment, and improve several facilities.	solidarity, where they realize that they are part of society. Students have developed the values of tolerance and civic responsibility amidst differences in a multicultural society with the awareness that differences are like a beautiful mosaic.

Based on Table 2 above, service learning@KKN activities can instill students' moral values such as social responsibility, solidarity, and tolerance through implementation in daily life with full awareness of themselves. In this pedagogy, they have also practiced collaborating and working with many individuals with different backgrounds and principles. As expressed by one student as follows

The service learning program attracted my attention because I learned a lot through this service learning, such as being patient consistent, and carrying out mandates and responsibilities properly and correctly for humanity regardless of different backgrounds. (Semi- structured interview with Student B6, F7 and F9 are provided similar responses)

Service learning activities provide enthusiasm for students and lecturers because the response from students and the community is good, thus providing full enthusiasm to instill moral/character education in students based on *Pancasila* in a multicultural society, for example, through empowerment. Each student's awareness of the importance of ME is reflected in the way they think ethically and prioritize moral values through a critical perspective (Garç'a-Romero & Mart'nez-Lozano, 2022). Furthermore, students tend to lead to moral behavior that moves their minds and souls automatically. Apart from that, through the service learning @ KKN program, students can mobilize their potential, talents, and interests, as well as their common sense in the learning process in society, to gain a wealth of knowledge.

5. Discussion

ME is a planned and structured effort to shape an individual or nation's desired character or disposition based on the fundamental values, culture, and ideology of a particular region or nation (Kim & Taylor, 2017). Other terms for ME can also be called character education or values education (Vishalache, 2023). In essence, ME guides each individual to become a good citizen according to the values believed and adhered to by each region or nation (Splitter, 2017). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, ME seeks to make the values of *Pancasila* the guiding principles for thinking and acting in everyday life so that you become a good citizen and are expected by society (Nurpratiwi, 2021). In social, national, and state life, students must be nurtured by three character formation aspects: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior to actively contribute positively to help societal problems (Komara, 2018). In terms of producing good quality ME, there needs to be serious attention and thought from all parties interested in ME. ME must be comprehensive, focusing on cognitive learning processes, and practice-based, as is done in service learning (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2022).

This finding reveals that KKN can support students as prospective graduates in instilling social responsibility, concern for others, solidarity, tolerance, justice, equality, sustainability, and other moral values needed in a multicultural society with students' full awareness. It is no longer because of the doctrinalization contained in each *Pancasila* principle. Aspects of service learning, namely reflection and empowerment from students' experiences, have a significant role in developing student attitudes (Otten et al., 2022). In addition, the moral values embedded in the service learning@KKN project support UNESCO's vision. It is aligned with Ali & Hidayah (2021) that service learning projects are a strategy for promoting global citizen characteristic. Furthermore, the advantage of reflection in service learning is that it is structured so that students can develop a more systematic, systemic, and in-depth

understanding of ME material (Resch & Schritteser, 2021; Zainuri & Huda, 2023). So, this structured reflection improves students' soft skills and increases social responsibility, caring, empathy, sympathy, and other moral values in a multicultural society. The community service aspect of service learning@KKN is also essential because students can instill national identity and solidarity. In this case, this central element of community service can shape students into more tolerant individuals with mutual respect for diversity and create harmony and peace between ethnicities, religions, customs, and cultures (McDougle & Li, 2023; Resch & Schritteser, 2021). So that students can show awareness of preserving local wisdom that can be in harmony with global wisdom.

Developing of ME in higher education requires seriousness amidst the current challenges of moral decadence. All aspects, both in terms of knowledge and experience-based learning, need to be implemented in forming value-based graduates. Therefore, every higher education institution needs to understand in depth what service learning is based on a service learning philosophy where what students have learned in class can be implemented to help various societal problems. In the end, the beneficiaries of this service learning program do not only focus on society, but students can increase the cultivation of morals or character as provisions for building a nation's civilization (Salam et al., 2019).

Moreover, previous studies on moral education focused more on theoretical frameworks or cognitive learning. Likewise, prior research on service learning also focuses more on developing student skills (soft skills) rather than morals. Research related to the topic of service learning in Indonesia is still rarely conducted. Therefore, the position of this research is to fill the gap in the scarcity of guidelines regarding service learning@KKN in the development of moral or moral education, especially in Indonesia. Furthermore, it is hoped that the usefulness of results of this research will become transformational material to provide a reference for stakeholders in designing appropriate guidelines for developing practical and applicable moral education in higher education, which can prepare graduates to become individuals who have good character or morals required by society 5.0.

Tabel 4. Strategy of Service Learning in Cultivating ME

Informant	Problem	Strategy	Impact
University Students	Moral Decadency	Implementing the pillar of service learning: course-based, reflection, and empowerment.	increasing the character of social responsibility, solidarity, and tolerance
	Lack of enthusiasm in experiential learning processes in society.	Combining academic learning with community service with rich reflection and empowerment.	Creative and active learning
Lecturer	The knowledge aspect dominates the practice of moral education	Sharing transformative pedagogy from many countries	<i>Kuliah Kerja Nyata</i> towards international service learning level.

Supervisors or facilitators play an essential role in the entire process of all stages of service learning@KKN. They facilitate students with knowledge, skills, and positive moral values. To shape students into individual characters that the lecturer hopes can empower and invite students to reflect on the experience of each activity in the service learning@KKN program, as shown in Table 4. For example, students can provide their thoughts, opinions, and ideas for solving problems. In society, both individually and in small groups. Based on the example above, the service learning@KKN supervisor has empowered and ensured that every student can be socially responsible, respect each other, and tolerate pluralism.

Every supervisor must understand that moral cultivation is not just a knowledge or cognitive aspect (Muzakkir et al., 2022). They must be facilitators with quality knowledge and competence and are aware of societal issues, what society needs, and what can be learned from a multicultural society (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2022). Therefore, the role of universities is visible in society, especially in a multicultural society. As supervisors in service learning, they must realize that the experiential learning process must be a student-centered approach, not a supervisor-centered one (Halberstadt et al., 2019).

So that students can instill morals through interactions between students and supervisors, between students, and no less critical, between students and the community.

Integrating service learning into KKN helps supervisors improve KKN according to the service learning philosophy. Students do not only focus on community service; more is needed to fulfill the service learning element (Diana, Paidi, & Paulus, 2020; Salam et al., 2019). It should be noted that KKN is credit-based, so the benefits of the service learning program must be obtained by students, especially in character building through the cultivation of ME. The educator must ensure that group efforts are made to facilitate needs analysis, issue resolution, and choices in service learning (Tan & Soo, 2020). At each stage of service learning, students should be guided to reflect on each activity in the project and empowered continuously, not just instructed (Case et al., 2021). It is acceptable for students to make mistakes in their planning and other activities as long as they learn from them. The service learning facilitator is there to inspire and consistently encourage the students. They learn from each other and help build civilization as an academic, moral responsibility to the broader community. In contrast to previous research, service learning empowerment tends to focus on increasing soft skills and knowledge (Ferdiansyah et al., 2022; Halberstadt et al., 2019). However, this study reveals that service learning@KKN can also develop moral values of responsibility, caring, solidarity, tolerance, and cooperation in students, lecturers, and the community.

6. Conclusion

Efforts to develop ME in higher education require a more innovative pedagogical transformation to shape students into active learners. The service learning program integrated into KKN has succeeded in developing more effective and applicable ME. The values of social responsibility, solidarity, and tolerance can be developed through student participation in service learning based on their self-awareness from the results of thinking critically and positively in reflection and empowerment. The results of this research support the view that the more experiences students have, the more they can reflect on and the more they learn and progress in constructing moral knowledge, feelings, and behavior. This study can also contribute to theoretical and practical discourse to overcome moral decadence in multicultural societies, especially among graduates or the younger generation, due to the low quality of ME in universities. However, this study's limitations are that it only examines a private higher education institution in Indonesia; public universities are not included. In addition, it just focuses on lecturers and students; if policymakers, deans, rectorates, and community members are included, more viewpoints can be acquired, and more data can be analyzed to accomplish the research questions. This study offers several suggestions for further research. First and foremost, a suitable ME curriculum model must be analyzed. Service learning in higher education is valuable to convince schools and policymakers to design an effective ME curriculum. Second, a larger participant is needed who can involve policy makers such as the chancellor, academic quality assurance and the community with different research methods that provide comprehensive and more critical research findings.

7. Co-Author Contribution

The authors affirmed that there is no conflict of interest in this article. Literature review, O.T.H conceptualization, O.T.H. and V.B ;methodology, O.T.H data analysis, O.T.H; review-editing and writing, O.T.H. and V.B; original manuscript preparation, O.T.H and V.B. All authors have read and approved the published on the final version of the article.

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9. Ethical Approval

UM.TNC2/UMREC_2609

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