



Deep Learning in Dance Education : A Strategy for Instilling Character Values in Today's Elementary School Children

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Abstract: This study aims to develop a character education model based on a deep learning approach in traditional dance learning for elementary school students in both urban and rural areas of Bandung. The Research and Development (R&D) method is employed, adapting the steps proposed by Borg & Gall, which include preliminary study, planning, model development, limited trial, revision, wider trial, and final model refinement. The model is structured around three core phases in the learning process: movement meaning exploration, value reflection, and expression through dance creation. Data collection utilizes observation sheets, interview guides, character assessment rubrics, and documentation, while analysis employs qualitative techniques (data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing) combined with descriptive statistics. Implementation of the model over three sessions in two elementary schools resulted in significant improvements across four key character aspects: independence, collaboration, responsibility, and critical thinking. The deep learning approach has proven effective in fostering students' value awareness through reflective, meaningful, and contextual learning experiences. This model is expected to serve as a strategic alternative for embedding character values into traditional dance instruction at the elementary school level.

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Introduction

Character education is an important foundation in shaping the personality of students from an early age, especially at the primary school level, which is a fundamental period in the development of children's moral, social, and emotional values (Dewi et al., 2020; Putra & Wulandari, 2022; Yuliani & Ramadani, 2021). In this context, art learning, especially dance, has strategic potential as a medium for instilling character values, considering that dance not only involves aspects of motor movement, but also expression, social interaction, and respect for culture (Putra & Wulandari, 2022; Dewi & Hartono, 2020). In the Merdeka Curriculum, dance education aims to develop students' character. Heri Gunawan (2022) explains that character reflects a person's relationship with God, self, others, the environment, and nationality, which appears in thoughts, attitudes, and actions according to applicable norms. According to Balraj Singh (2019), "Character education aims to optimize students' ethical behavior, preparing future leaders through continuous encouragement. This must be supported by concrete and long-lasting action plans, not just empty promises".

Presidential Regulation No. 87/2017 on Strengthening Character Education (PPK) emphasizes that the success of character education depends on the role of schools, families and communities. According to Musolin (2021), this concept is in line with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's tripartite education which emphasizes the importance of family, school and community environments in supporting the learning process. In line with this, Wibowo and



Suparlan (2021) discussed how the independent curriculum encourages the implementation of PBL in dance, in line with Trilling and Fadel's (2009) ideas regarding the importance of 21st century skills. The Minister of Education introduced the Deep Learning approach as an innovation in curriculum implementation to improve character-based 21st century competencies.

The reality in the field shows that dance learning in elementary schools is still technical and results-oriented, emphasizing more on mastering cognitive and psychomotor aspects, namely students are directed to learn dance material without a learning process that can explore critical, creative abilities, even affective aspects are sometimes forgotten, reflections on material related to the value of everyday life are sometimes not conveyed (Nugroho, 2023; Wijaya, 2022). The learning process has not been directed much towards a deep and reflective approach that is able to arouse value awareness in students. Karim (2022) emphasizes the importance of dance in shaping 21st century character, while Rahmawati (2021) highlights strategies for optimizing 21st century education through an arts approach. This causes values such as independence, communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning to be less optimally explored through dance learning. One of the contributing factors is that according to Malarsih (2013), the use of monotonous methods makes learning activities only focus on repetition of movements, without providing space for students to express and reflect. In addition, assessments tend to focus on technical aspects, both cognitive and psychomotor, so that affective aspects such as empathy, moral values, and the ability to self-reflect are often neglected. In fact, dance should be able to be a means to shape personality and instill life values. Meanwhile, Apriyani et al (2022) added that limited facilities such as practice rooms, audio-visual media, and other supporting equipment are also obstacles in creating creative and appreciative learning. On the other hand, Arrini et al (2021) revealed that many teachers are not accustomed to designing innovative learning activities, even though the role of the teacher as a creative facilitator is very important so that students can develop optimally in terms of creativity and imagination. Sarker (2021) explains that deep learning has grown rapidly and become a core technology of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, and discusses key techniques, applications, and future research directions (Sarker, 2021).

Along with the development of the 21st century education paradigm, a learning approach has emerged that emphasizes meaning processing, emotional engagement, and reflective processes known as deep learning. This approach is different from surface learning which only emphasizes memorization or mechanistic skills (Marton & Säljö, 2005; Biggs & Tang, 2011). Deep learning encourages students to relate learning experiences to real life, think critically, and build a deeper understanding of the material (Mezirow, 1997). In the context of art education, this approach becomes very relevant, because it is able to make art a space for the growth of students' character and socio-cultural awareness.

Previous studies have shown that the integration of character education and active learning methods can have a positive impact on the development of students' attitudes and values. However, not many studies have specifically developed and implemented a deep learning-based dance learning model in Indonesian elementary schools. Therefore, the research that has been conducted by the research team offers novelty in the form of developing a dance learning model that systematically integrates character values with a deep learning approach. Deep learning introduced in 2024 is still poorly understood by dance teachers. Aminah et al (2022), emphasize the need for methods that familiarize positive attitudes and train problem solving according to student intelligence. The deep learning approach encourages students' active involvement in fun and contextualized learning. However, the researcher's study when conducting a field survey in January 2025 showed that

90% of teachers do not understand the concept, 80% have not implemented it, and 70% do not understand the important elements, while 90% have difficulty designing lessons and 80% lack references and supporting materials. This research responds to the government's education policy and supports improving the quality of education according to UNESCO's global action plan in the SDGs. According to Sachs et al (2019), "The SDGs and the Paris Agreement urge deep transformations in all countries, requiring action from governments, civil society, science, and business, but stakeholders lack a shared understanding of how to implement the 17 SDGs". This research supports the achievement of KPI 5 through the utilization of lecturers' work by the community. The novelty of this study lies in the development of a deep learning-based character education model specifically designed for dance learning in Indonesian elementary schools, an area that has received limited scholarly attention. The purpose of this research is to produce and test a learning model that not only strengthens students' character values but also enhances teachers' understanding and capacity in implementing reflective and value-based dance education in primary schools in Bandung.

Based on this background, the purpose of this research is to develop a deep learning-based dance learning model aimed at instilling character values in elementary school students in Bandung. This model is expected to strengthen students' independence, communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning while also enhancing teachers' understanding of reflective and value-oriented dance education (Mulyani, 2021; Santoso, 2019).

Research Method

This research uses a Research and Development (R&D) method with a development model adapted from Borg and Gall. This research uses a Research and Development (R&D) method with a development model adapted from Borg and Gall, applied to dance learning in elementary schools (Mulyani, 2021; Santoso, 2019). According to Sugiyono (2013), in general, the steps of research and development consist of 10 steps as follows: (1) Potential and Problems, (2) Data Collection, (3) Product Design, (4) Design Validation, (5) Design Revision, (6) Product Trial, (7) Product Revision, (8) Usage Trial, (9) Product Revision, (10) Mass Production. Based on these R&D steps, the researcher implements the steps of activities in the field as below.

- 1) Defining the problem of character education in dance learning and the emergence of a new approach to deep learning that can be used as an approach in character education in dance learning.
- 2) Collecting initial data in the field related to character education and teachers' understanding of the deep learning approach in dance learning.
- 3) Designing a character education model using a deep learning approach in dance learning 4.
- 4) Carrying out validation with experts related to the character education model in dance learning using a deep learning approach
- 5) Revise the design of the character education model using a deep learning approach to dance learning according to expert input.
- 6) Pilot the character education model with a deep learning approach to dance learning at the elementary school level on a limited basis.
- 7) Evaluate and revise the character education model with a deep learning approach to dance learning in a limited and broad way
- 8) Pilot a character education model with a deep learning approach to dance learning at the elementary school level broadly

- 9) Finalize the character education model with a deep learning approach to dance learning at the elementary school education level
- 10) Disseminate the character education model with a deep learning approach to dance learning at the elementary school level.

Data collection was conducted through direct observation during learning, interviews with cultural arts teachers and school principals, and documentation of student activities. In addition, students' character development was assessed through four main aspects, namely independence, communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning. To ensure the reliability of the instruments, the observation sheets and character assessment rubrics were validated by two experts in art education and character education. An inter-rater agreement was conducted by involving two independent observers in assessing students' performance, and the consistency of scores was checked using Cohen's kappa coefficient, which showed substantial agreement. The interview guides were reviewed by experts to ensure clarity and relevance, while documentation was triangulated with observation and interview data. These procedures increased the reliability and trustworthiness of the findings. To ensure the validity of the data, triangulation of sources and methods was conducted, as well as consultation with experts in the field of art education and character.

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data were analyzed through the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Sugiyono, 2013), while quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to see the comparison of scores before and after the application of the learning model. While quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to see the comparison of scores before and after the application of the learning model. The whole research process lasted for three months, starting from the planning stage, the implementation of learning in three meetings, to the reflection of the results. The researcher was directly involved in all stages as a facilitator, companion, and observer.

Results and Discussion

This research produces a learning model concept that is derived into a deep learning-based dance learning model that is proven to be able to instill character values in elementary school students, especially in the aspects of independence, communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning. The main finding of this research shows that the deep learning approach is able to change the pattern of dance learning that originally focused on technical aspects and memorization of movements into more meaningful, reflective, and value-oriented learning. The following is a concept model of dance learning in elementary schools using a deep learning approach.

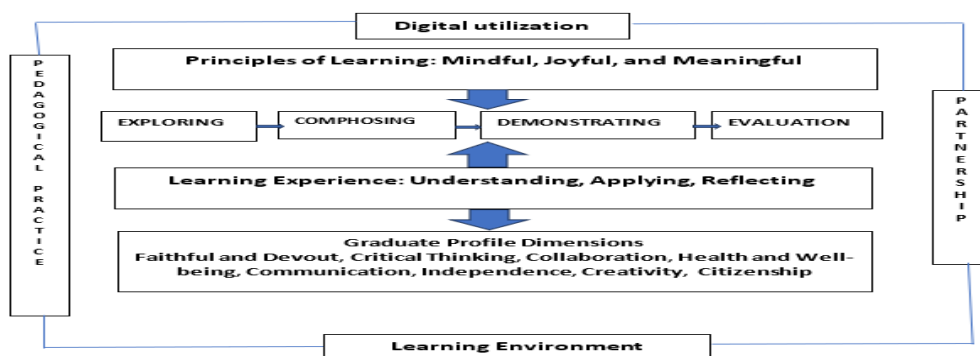


Figure 1. Deep Learning Model Concept

From the concept of the model above, as the next stage the researcher makes a dance learning design that will be implemented in the classroom. In each elementary school, the learning model is made into three meetings. The content and methods in the implemented dance learning design are based on the results of observations that have been made previously. In the learning model created, adapting the concept of educational dance proposed by Laban (1975). Based on the results of field testing, the following is the learning syntax for the character education model using a deep learning approach to dance learning in elementary schools.

Table 1. Syntax of Character Education Model

Step	Description	Deep Learning Step	Expected Accompanying Impacts
EXPLORING	At this stage students with the guidance of the teacher can show curiosity, experiment, develop ideas independently or in groups, connect knowledge and experience, and express themselves freely related to their bodies as a means of movement, levels, beats, floor patterns using various stimuli that are multi-stimulating.	EXPERIENCE	Critical thinking, creativity, perseverance, responsibility, cooperation, courage, empathy and tolerance.
COMPHOSING	At this stage students are able to combine, assemble, and modify and develop dance movements creatively.	APPLY	Creative, reflective, perseverance, independent, critical thinking, responsibility, expressive, collaborative, and aesthetic sensitivity.
DEMONSTRATING	At this stage students are able to show the ability to perform the dance creations made.	REFLECTION	Self-confidence, responsibility, courage, communication skills, openness, cooperation, discipline, reflectiveness, perseverance, and empathy.
EVALUATION	At the evaluation stage students can reflect on the learning that has been done how to assess their own abilities or their friends through the learning process or when performing dance creations.	REFLECTION	Critical thinking, reflective, honesty, fairness, objectivity, responsibility, empathy, perseverance, independence, and openness.

After the model was implemented for three meetings in two elementary schools (elementary schools in Bandung City and Regency), there was a significant improvement in the four character aspects observed. The value embedding strategy used in this lesson follows the deep learning formula which includes three main stages: constructing personal experience, reflecting on meaning, and expressing value through real action. First, the teacher invites students to explore the movement based on their own experiences and ideas, so that they feel personally involved in the learning process. Second, students are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of the movement, linking it to life values such as courage, responsibility and cooperation. Third, the results of these reflections are expressed in the form of dance works performed in front of their peers, which becomes a space for actualizing the values they have understood. This approach not only trains dance skills, but also strengthens the value internalization process in a deep and contextual way, because students not only know the value, but also experience and express it in real life. The following are aspects of indicators in assessing the cultivation of character values in elementary school children.

The aspect of independence in students has increased. In learning dance through the deep learning approach, it can be seen that students who were initially dependent on peers become more confident and more courageous to make decisions, and self-reflect. In addition, it shows an increase in decision making and courage to display the results of their work independently. This happens because the deep learning approach encourages students to explore the meaning of dance movements personally, not just mechanically imitating the movements. The communication aspect also experienced positive developments. Students who were initially passive and tended to be shy to convey ideas, began to be actively involved in group discussions, express opinions, and ask questions to the teacher. This is in line with the results of research by Putri et al (2022) which showed that reflection-based learning can increase students' courage in oral communication.

In the aspect of collaboration, learning dance through deep learning approach encourages students to work together in understanding the meaning of movements and composing simple choreography. When they are given space to discuss and evaluate their work in groups, their ability to respect their friends' opinions and complete tasks together increases. As for the critical reasoning aspect, students began to show the ability to interpret the cultural meaning of dance, relate it to life values, and reflect on the moral messages behind the dance movements they learned. This process indicates that learning has reached a deeper level of thinking. Theoretically, this is in line with the concept of deep learning where students not only recall information, but also understand and relate it to personal experiences.

Diagram 1. Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Results of Children's Character Values

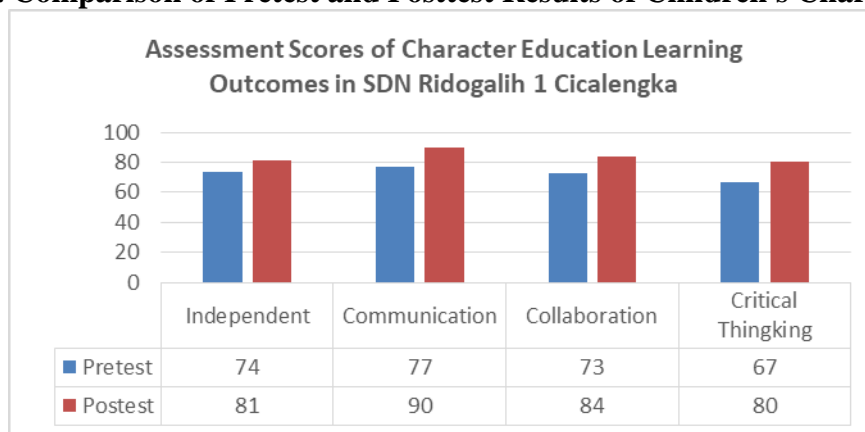
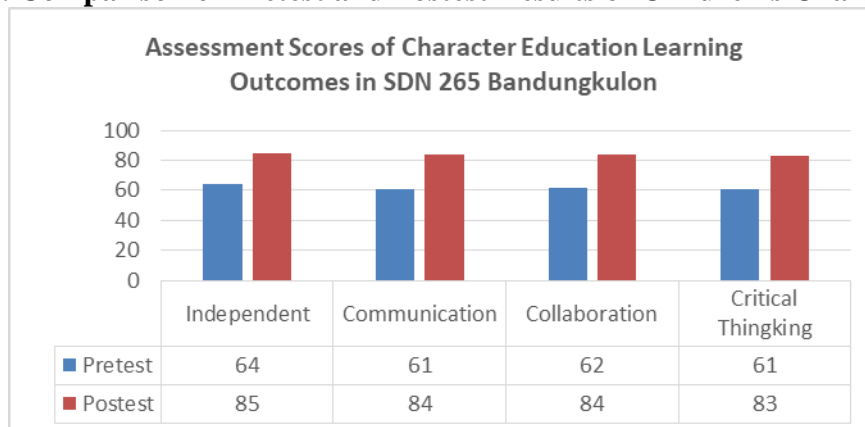


Diagram 1. Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Results of Children's Character Values



The results of the research on the implementation of the deep learning-based dance learning model showed a significant increase in strengthening students' character values, especially in four main aspects, namely independence, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. The research was conducted in two elementary schools with different characteristics and scope Ridogalih 1 Elementary School in Cicalengka in Bandung Regency as a limited test site, and an elementary school in the Bandung Kulon area as a broad test site. A comparison of the results from the two locations provides a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the developed model.

At Ridogalih 01 State Primary School, the implementation was done in a limited scope with a larger number of students. Initial results showed that students were polite and friendly, but lacked confidence in the learning context. In addition, the ability to reason, communicate and cooperate was still low. After the implementation of the model, there was an increase in scores in all aspects, especially in the aspects of independence and collaboration. Students began to show courage in expressing themselves and responsibility for group tasks. Although the improvement is quite significant, further habituation is still needed to strengthen the process of deep reflection in the context of critical thinking.

Meanwhile, in the second school, Sekolah Dasar Negeri 265 Bandungkulon, the implementation of the model was conducted as a broad test, with a more systematic scope of implementation and accompanied by more complete supporting strategies. The initial condition of students in this school showed a higher level of passivity, both in communication and group interaction. However, the exploratory and playful approach to learning succeeded in creating a safe and supportive environment for students. The assessment results showed a marked improvement, especially in the communication and critical thinking aspects. Students were more open in expressing their opinions, showed enthusiasm in discussions, and began to be able to relate the meaning of dance movements to the value of everyday life. Teachers also noted that students became more reflective and dared to convey personal meanings to the dance activities they were engaged in.

In general, the results from both schools indicate that this learning model can be adapted to various school contexts, both in the limited and broad tests. Despite the different starting points of students' abilities, this deep learning-based model consistently had a positive impact on students' character development. The limited test showed the basic potential of the model, while the broad test showed a more complete and in-depth scale of success. This confirms that a learning approach that combines exploration of meaning, reflection, and value is very relevant and effective to be applied in learning dance at the primary school level (Putra & Wulandari, 2022; Karim, 2022).

The increase in scores in all aspects of assessment indicates that the implementation of this model has a positive impact on student character development. This trend is supported by the learning environment that is explorative, fun, and allows students to reflect on the values learned through art activities (Rahmawati, 2021). In general, this model succeeded in answering the problems found in the early stages of the research, namely shallow dance learning and minimal value cultivation.

Teachers also gave positive responses to the implementation of the model. They stated that this model not only enriched the teaching method, but also helped students to be more active and responsible in the learning process. However, teachers also suggested that for more optimal results, a longer duration of time is needed so that the internalization of values can run deeply and sustainably (Arrini et al., 2021; Apriyani et al., 2022). Thus, the results of this study not only contribute to the development of dance learning models in elementary schools, but also strengthen the importance of the deep learning approach in instilling character values. These findings expand the discourse of art learning as a means of character education, not just an activity of movement expression (Mezirow, 1997).

Conclusion

This research shows that the development of a deep learning-based dance learning model is effective in instilling character values in elementary school students. Through an approach that encourages exploration of meaning, reflection, and application of values in everyday life, students experience improvements in aspects of independence, communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning.

This model answers the challenges of dance learning which previously tended to be technical and lacked character dimensions. The implementation of the model in two elementary schools in Bandung City and Regency shows that dance learning can be an effective vehicle for strengthening character education if it is designed in a meaningful, fun, and encourages active student involvement. These findings form the basis for the development of character-based art learning innovations in the future, especially at the basic education level.

Recommendation

Based on the research results, it is recommended that this deep learning-based dance learning model be further developed and implemented more widely at various levels of basic education. This model is proven to not only strengthen the art skills aspect, but also effective in instilling character values that are essential for students' personal and social development.

For policy support, schools and local education offices are encouraged to allocate sufficient time within the curriculum for reflective and value-based dance learning, provide adequate facilities such as practice rooms and audio-visual media, and ensure the availability of teaching resources to support meaningful implementation. Such policies will create a conducive environment for the sustainability of the model.

To increase teacher awareness and readiness, structured training and mentoring programs should be organized, enabling teachers to design lesson plans based on the deep learning approach and to conduct reflective practices independently. Establishing teacher communities of practice or peer mentoring groups can also help maintain consistency and innovation in applying the model across different school contexts. For further research, it is recommended that the development of the model be carried out for a longer duration so that the process of internalizing values can run more deeply and sustainably.

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