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## Instilling Moral Values through Dulmuluk Theater: A Qualitative Study on Character Education in Middle School Students

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# Instilling Moral Values through *Dulmuluk* Theater: A Qualitative Study on Character Education in Middle School Students



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**Abstract:** This study aims to identify the values of moral character contained in the traditional *Dulmuluk* theater and to analyze the implementation and its impact on the character development of students. The research method employed is qualitative phenomenology, with an interpretative approach to the participants' experiences in theater activities. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation, which were then analyzed using data reduction and categorization techniques based on the interactive analysis model by Miles and Huberman. In total, there were 20 subjects involved in this study. The results indicate that traditional *Dulmuluk* theater can shape students' character in various aspects, such as discipline, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, as well as social and cultural awareness. The interactions during rehearsals and performances play a significant role in fostering moral awareness, self-control, and togetherness. Evaluations of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains also show that performing arts-based learning can enhance students' social skills and empathy. As a recommendation, this study suggests that the traditional *Dulmuluk* theater be incorporated as part of the character education curriculum in schools. Furthermore, further research is needed using longitudinal methods to measure the long-term impact of arts-based learning on the moral and social development of students.

**Key Words:** *Dulmuluk Theater*, Character Education, Morality, Moral Learning, Social Values

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## INTRODUCTION

Tomas Lickona believes that moral character is the knowledge of good, the desire to do good, and the habit of goodness (Lickona, 2012). Character can also be seen as a consistent inner attitude in responding to situations morally. Furthermore, superior character consists of moral elements, moral sentiment, and moral actions (Bangun, 2023). Battistich also believes that a person's character consists of various attitudes, behaviors, motivations, and talents. From Jack Corley's perspective, character is the attitude and character of a person that enables and facilitates moral actions, emphasizing not only habits but also ethical actions (Samani & Hariyanto, 2011). Character is also seen as a mindset, attitude, and actions that are strongly ingrained in a person and are difficult to change, thus reflecting a consistency of values in facing life situations (Munir, 2012). Thus, moral character is a fundamental positive attitude that comes from an individual, which can also encourage others to do and care for their fellow beings to avoid harmful social behaviors.

Character education in formal environments aims to help students understand basic moral values and avoid behaviors that are harmful to themselves and others (Santrock, 2011). The goal of character

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education also includes the ability of students to internalize and personalize character values in their daily lives (Muslich, 2011). Character education also aims to create a conducive educational environment to foster noble values, such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, and tolerance (Mulyasa, 2011). The purpose of character education itself is to cultivate and develop students' values in life and to become a distinctive aspect of their personality. It teaches students to behave in accordance with school principals, transforming undesirable behaviors into desirable ones. It fosters positive relationships among communities, families, and schools to build a shared moral responsibility (Bangun, 2023). Character education does not stand alone but is integrated into the learning process, school culture, and extracurricular activities. The goal is to create a learning environment that supports the moral, social, and emotional development of students (Zulydawati & Asih, 2019). In line with this concept, through the art of *Dulmuluk* theater integrated with the existing cultural arts learning in schools, it reflects a cultural awareness in shaping the desired good morals.

The dimension of ethics refers to the principles and values that govern human behavior within society. In education, the purpose of ethics is not only to study ethical theories but also to enhance the intellectual dimension that will empower individuals to identify ethical dimensions (Hazarika, 2020). In Greek, the term 'ethos' denotes customs, habits, morality, attitudes, and mindsets. Ethics is the character of individuals, including the notion that an ethical person is a good person (Tas'Adi, 2014). K. Bertens perceives ethics as the moral values and norms that regulate the behavior of individuals or groups (Indah et al., 2018). Ethics is the science that defines and bad, explains what individuals should do to one another, establishes the goals of a person's actions, and provides instructions on what ought to be done (Bangun, 2023). On the other hand, ethics not only functions to describe moral behavior but also offers a normative framework for evaluating and guiding actions based on philosophically justifiable reasons (Frankena, 1973). It also involves norms mechanically but truly understands and internalizes the underlying values (MacIntyre, 2007). In this concept of ethics, the application of ethical norms in the *dulmuluk* theater has been manifested through the cultivation of internalized values in its learning.

Character education can be detailed as the actions and behaviors manifested in words, deeds, thoughts, attitudes, feelings, desires, and the results of work. It encompasses the daily actions of individuals, families, and communities based on values that are common within culture, identity, unity, and integrity, as well as a forward-looking vision within the framework of moral value systems (Bangun, 2023). The philosophy of character education, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, is rooted in the formation of an ideal human being who is physically and spiritually healthy, possessing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence (Oktafiolita & Wijastuti, 2024). "Learning is guiding" reflects the character education approach that emphasizes independence, individual uniqueness, and character formation through the among system (Khoir et al., 2024). Kilpatrick contends that a person's character can be developed using the foundation of abilities and habits of life based on the norms of the society in which they live. These societal norms serve as a reference for an individual's activities, including life aspirations, the means of achieving desires, and the willingness to cooperate with others in the community (Zuriah, 2007). Justice in education is not merely a goal of education but must also be an integral part of the learning process itself (O'Neill, 2025). The instillation of character values contained in the *dulmuluk* theater is implemented in classroom learning. Such values include religiosity, tolerance, self-respect, self-discipline, work and study ethic, responsibility, self-control, and personal potential.

Haidar (2004) categorizes character education into three domains, namely: a) the cognitive domain, which involves filling the mind, transforming ignorance into knowledge, and subsequently cultivating rational thought, enabling individuals to utilize their intellect to achieve intellectual intelligence. b) the affective domain, which pertains to feelings, emotions, and the formation of attitudes within an individual, leading to the development of responses such as sympathy, antipathy, love, hate, and so forth, thus shaping emotional intelligence. c) the psychomotor domain, which relates to actions, behaviors, and conduct, among others (Rokhman & Misbah, 2023). Among these three domains, there are aspects that are interrelated and interconnected regarding the levels of intellectual, emotional/attitudinal, and motor actions or behaviors. These three domains form a cohesive unit that mutually supports the development of students. Holistic education aims to shape students' character comprehensively, encompassing intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. Consequently, character education that addresses these three domains will produce individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess integrity and social responsibility (Sriyanta et al., 2025). In the

psychomotor domain of knowledge, students comprehend the historical context of *Dulmuluk* theater; in the affective domain, they enact and apply attributes such as religiosity, local culture, social values, and so forth. In the psychomotor domain, students are able to demonstrate *Dulmuluk* theater practically.

Education in Islam aims to shape an individual's personality to become honest, kind-hearted, responsible, respectful of others, and just and to embody other desirable qualities. Al-Ghazali equates character with morality, which is defined as behavior that has become integrated within an individual, manifesting spontaneously without further deliberation. This emphasizes that moral character is developed through profound habituation (Gunawan, 2012). The key principles in education aimed at shaping the character of students (Bangun, 2023), include: a) internal and external influences, whereby individuals are affected in two ways, namely by the truths that exist within themselves and by external forces that shape their awareness. b) Unity of belief, words, and actions; character education emphasizes the importance of consistency in students' thoughts, words, and deeds. c) Personal awareness: The goal of character education is to enhance students' personal understanding of the importance of possessing character. d) The objective of becoming *Ulul Albab*, character education guides students to become *Ulul Albab*, or self-aware individuals who are also cognizant of issues in their environment and strive to improve their lives in accordance with their knowledge and character. In education, is an intrinsic part of the educational experience itself (Henry et al., 2025). From the various theoretical concepts presented, it is aligned with this research that in the traditional *dulmuluk* theater, it is expected to shape the character from the training stage to the performance on stage, as taught by the guiding teacher in the learning activities at school.

Morality encompasses several meanings, including a. customs, b. etiquette, and c. behavior. However, the essential meaning of "character" is behavior. Morality develops through active participation in social life and ethical decision-making in real contexts (Dewey, 1916). Morality evolves through cognitive stages, from obedience to external rules to decision-making based on universal ethical principles (Kohlberg, 1981). Morality is not only taught but also developed through social interactions, ethical discussions, and value habituation within the school environment (Nucci, L., Narváez, D., & Krettenauer, 2014). Morality in education is not merely about the instruction of values but also about the creation of an environment that supports character formation (Ulfa et al., 2024). Morality is universal, independent of rules and authority, and is activated by avoiding harm to others (Bacchini et al., 2013). Good character will identify the positive behaviors that are expected to manifest in the actions, words, thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and personalities of learners (Zuriah, 2007).

The scope of discussion on the values of character, which is derived from ethics or moral philosophy, emphasizes the key elements of personality, namely awareness and the role of conscience and judgment in leading a good life based on a system and laws of moral values within society. The behavior that is considered 'morally right' and expected in such situations is based on both implicit and explicit rules, whether personal or collective, regarding how individuals relate to one another (Ter Heide, 2020). Conscience (sometimes referred to as the heart's voice, inner voice, or inner self) is the awareness that guides or directs a person's behavior towards good actions and away from bad deeds (Cahyoto, 2002). It includes the habituation of values such as discipline, exemplary behavior, responsibility, and respect for parents as well as interfaith respect (Johari & Nawaji, 2021). Furthermore, according to Solomon, virtue or goodness is an excellent character that is beneficial and pleasant for oneself and others in accordance with moral messages (Zuriah, 2007). Thus, there is a relationship between character and life norms, the elements of which comprise the scope of character discussion. The scope of character includes conscience, virtue, honesty, trustworthiness, discipline, politeness, neatness, sincerity, wisdom, self-control, courage, friendliness, loyalty, honor, and justice.

The values of character can also be referred to as moral values. According to Durkheim, an individual's morality is directly linked to their social structure (Edel et al., 1962). Character values are categorized into four major values, namely attitudes towards God, fellow human beings, oneself, and the universe (Fitri Ana et al., 2023). In English, these are translated as "morality." Morality encompasses several meanings, including a. customs, b. etiquette, and c. behavior. However, the essence of character is fundamentally behavior. Meanwhile, according to the competency-based curriculum draft (2001), character contains the values of human behavior that will be assessed based on goodness and badness through religious norms, legal norms, manners and etiquette, cultural norms, and the customs of society. This character education teaches children about fundamental human values, including honesty,

kindness, generosity, bravery, freedom, equality, and respect (Berkowitz & Melinda C, 2005). The ethical values contained in traditional theater are those that are implemented and their implications for education within society during learning activities in schools.

In line with the research conducted by (Trisnani et al., 2024) play therapy using *Ajining Dhiri puppetry* demonstrates effectiveness in enhancing students' self-esteem. This study examines the psychological mechanisms that play a role in this enhancement process and delves into the psychological factors contributing to the effectiveness of the intervention. Furthermore, the research by Abdul Rahman, (2018) offers several approaches to moral education, such as Kohlberg's Just Community School or Narvaez's integrative ethical education measuring the tangible impact of different moral education approaches on students' moral behavior. Research by Macpherson, (2025) explores the relationship between moral philosophy and metaphysical paradigms in educational leadership. Furthermore, the study by Dhony, (2018), indicates that research on *Dulmuluk* theater still needs to be expanded, particularly regarding the transformation from literature to theater, social and educational impacts, comparisons with other theaters, the role of improvisation, and adaptations in the digital era.

The research by Rolando & Walidah, (2021) highlights themes of sacrifice, loyalty, and justice, which evoke sympathy and empathy among students towards the noble values portrayed. Research conducted by Nurhayati et al., (2015) demonstrates that the increase in student appreciation includes three aspects: attitude, knowledge, and psychomotor skills. The findings from several previous studies contribute to an outline the positioning of this research. Based on the research background, the theme of this study is: Instilling Moral Values through *Dulmuluk* Theater: A Qualitative Study on Character Education in Middle School Students.

## METHOD

### Research Design

The research strategy is considered more capable of capturing diverse qualitative information with clear and meaningful descriptions. In this approach, the primary instrument is the researcher themselves (Craswell, 2015). This study employs qualitative phenomenological methods. Qualitative phenomenology emphasizes the subjective experiences of participants as they encounter and interpret various phenomena. Specifically, qualitative phenomenological research is intended to describe the common meanings shared by several individuals (the participants) regarding their life experiences related to conceptual and socio-humanities phenomena. Using the chosen approach, namely holistic phenomenology, this study focuses on developing a complex and comprehensive depiction of the problems or issues under investigation (Craswell, 2015). According to Creswell (2018), the analysis of qualitative research designs generally involves collecting multiple types of data, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials, rather than relying on a single data source. All these constitute forms of open data that allow participants to express their perspectives freely, without being constrained by predetermined scales or instruments. Furthermore, the researcher examines all data, seeks to understand it, and organizes it into codes and overarching themes that integrate information across the data sources (Werner R., 2022).

### Subjects

This research is focused on the junior high school level, specifically at Sriguna Junior High School in Palembang. The study involved teachers serving as facilitators and students as participants in traditional *Dulmuluk* theater learning activities. A total of 20 students, aged 13–14 years and representing diverse economic, social, and cultural backgrounds, along with one teacher facilitator, took part in the research. Sampling was conducted directly by engaging students and teachers through participation in classroom-based learning activities.

## Prosedure

This study was conducted from January to April 2024. In collecting data, interviews were carried out with both mentor teachers and students. The interviews were conducted face-to-face immediately prior to each *Dulmuluk* theater learning session.

This study observed students' abilities across three domains: intellectual knowledge, affective abilities, and practical skills. From the cognitive domain, it examined how students understood the history of *Dulmuluk* theater—from its origins to its performance. From the affective domain, it explored how the values embodied in *Dulmuluk* theater could be applied in daily life. Finally, from the practical domain, it assessed how students implemented their learning during rehearsals and performances of *Dulmuluk* theater at school.

O'Shea et al. (2016) argue that the principle of loyalty in research is intended to ensure that the findings authentically reflect data without manipulation (Ristian et al., 2025). The detailed interview questions were as follows: 1. Questions directed to the supervising teacher: 2. What specific strategies do you employ in teaching *Dulmuluk* theater? 3. What methods do you apply in conducting *Dulmuluk* theater lessons? 3. How do you implement the instillation of moral values in your *Dulmuluk* theater teaching? 3. What steps do you take in executing *Dulmuluk* theater education? 4. What challenges and obstacles do you face in carrying out *Dulmuluk* theater education? 4. What evaluations do you use to assess the outcomes of *Dulmuluk* theater education?

Questions directed to students: 1. Are you familiar with the history of *Dulmuluk* theater? 2. Did you encounter any difficulties in following the instructions given by the teacher during *Dulmuluk* theater lessons? 3. Do you feel the impact of the moral values embodied in *Dulmuluk* theater? 3. Have you noticed any changes in yourself after participating in *Dulmuluk* theater lessons? 4. What moral values do you think are contained within *Dulmuluk* theater?

## Data Analysis

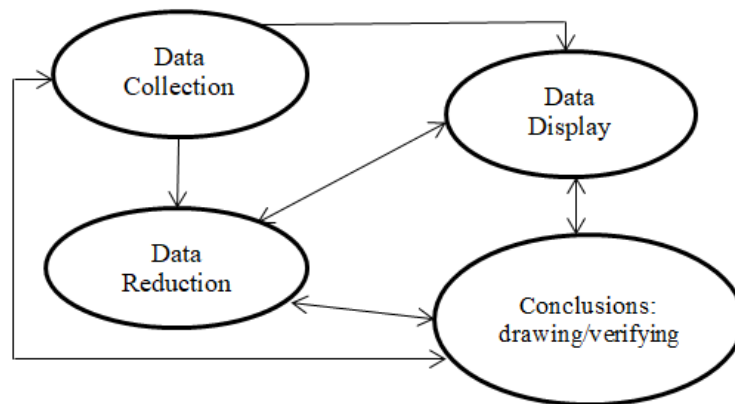
The data collecting in this research represents a crucial phase, as the main aim is to acquire extensive data for further analysis. This process can be examined via the lens of data gathering methodologies, which generally encompass observational studies, interviews, and documentation analyses (Sugiyono, 2019). Data analysis is a perpetual process necessitating ongoing contemplation of the gathered information, the formulation of analytical enquiries, and the documentation of concise observations throughout the research. The process entails collecting open-ended data through broad enquiries and methodically analysing the information acquired from participants.

The data analysis process involves categorising the acquired information (open coding) by meticulously reviewing the transcripts and annotating behaviours that exemplify moral principles. The subsequent step involves choosing a category and positioning it within a theoretical framework (axial coding), by identifying a central category that enhances social character and connecting it to other categories concerning causal conditions, context, strategies, and outcomes in the implementation of moral values. The researcher constructs a cohesive narrative from the interconnections among these categories (selective coding), elucidating how moral values inherently evolve through the dynamics of the *Dulmuluk* theatre (Creswell, 2013).

Data reduction entails the selection, concentration, simplification, abstraction, and transformation of the 'raw' data derived from field notes. This process transpires incessantly during the entirety of qualitative research initiatives. Data reduction constitutes a method of analysis that refines, classifies, directs, eliminates extraneous information, and systematically organises data to facilitate the derivation and validation of final results (Miles & Huberman, 2007). This study focusses on data reduction concerning the examination of character education in cultivating students' character through traditional theatre, with an analysis of its application and effects inside educational environments. The objective is to concentrate, distil, and convert the raw facts from field notes into content appropriate for analysis and discourse.

This study presents data that arises from data reduction, yielding an organised display that aligns with the research objectives: identifying the moral ideals inherent in traditional theatre and analysing their implications and impact in educational situations. The conclusions of this research are derived from

the results discussed in the data analysis, from which inferences are made through verification methods. The results indicate that traditional theatre arts can be effectively included and significantly influence character education when integrated into school curricula.



**Figure 1.** Interactive Data Model Analysis Chart (Miles, M. B., & A. Huberman, 2007)

## RESULTS

The implementation of character values applied in schools requires strategies for its execution. The strategies for implementing character education include various aspects, among them efforts for development, the nature of development, and supporting principles (Zuriah, 2007). Efforts in fostering, within the strategy of implementing character education to cultivate noble character (*akhlaqul karimah*) in students, require continuous and sustainable guidance in schools. Realizing noble character in students is not an task, as it involves habits of living.

In the cultivation of noble character, a concerted and consistent effort from all teachers is essential, employing appropriate approaches, including the following: a) Creating a conducive situation: A dialogical interaction between teachers and students, as well as between parents and teachers, can be conducted either privately or in groups. Communication regarding necessary actions should be conveyed effectively, allowing students to express themselves with the supervising teacher in various learning theater activities. Openness in dialogue must be communicated transparently, providing students the opportunity to develop their opinions. b) Optimizing character education: The material provided is related to noble character and also to the subject of good morals. The content pertains to gratitude and the importance of being grateful within the framework of noble character. c) Integrating character education with other subjects: Essentially, all subjects contain elements of character education. d) Enhancing cooperation with parents and students: the responsibility of education lies in the joint responsibility of the three educational centers, namely parents, schools/government, and society.

The nature of character building, whether a student possesses noble character, can be assessed through the tendencies shown in their behavior or actions in daily life. The qualities that encompass noble character include hard work, discipline, faith, gratitude, responsibility, empathy, diligence, frugality, honesty, appreciation for others' work, respect for time, self-control, willingness to sacrifice, humility, patience, loyalty, orderly behavior, etiquette, sportsmanship, morality, decisiveness, perseverance, resilience, punctuality, and steadfastness. Supporting principles encompass two key aspects of the character education principles: a) the method of maintaining positive behavior by creating a safe, calm, and enjoyable learning environment for students through fostering good relationships between teachers and students, as well as open communication. includes providing recognition in the form of verbal praise, body language, or gestures, such as a thumbs-up, which positively impacts students. Simple objects like pencils or books that are beneficial may also be given. b) Preventing undesirable actions or behaviors by providing attention or equitable service according to each student's needs to avoid feelings of envy and jealousy. Instilling the habit of courageously acknowledging one's own mistakes and being willing to apologize, as well as not repeating the actions again. Imposing

sanctions or reprimands. Providing warnings through stories. Avoiding the use of negative responses. The values applied in traditional theater education in schools can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Scope of moral values in the traditional dulmuluk theater at SMP Sriguna Palembang.

<b>Scope of Values of Character Education</b>	<b>Self Description</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Strategic Notes</b>
Believing in the existence of the One and Only God and always adhering to the teachings of one's religion	This is reflected in behavior that mirrors and demonstrates a belief in the existence of God.	Not all students have the habit of praying together; the diversity of religious backgrounds can lead to discomfort.	An inclusive approach and the strengthening of spiritual values as a shared experience, rather than a formality, are necessary.
Adhering to the teachings of religion	This reflects the attitude and behavior of adhering to the teachings of the religion they embrace by commencing the dulmuluk theater practice with a prayer. The prayer is typically led by a mentor or teacher.	Differences of opinion in the understanding of roles can trigger conflicts among students.	Collaborative exercises and open discussions are essential for instilling the values of pluralism.
Having and developing a tolerant attitude	This reflects the attitude and behavior towards the opinions of others and values differences, both in religious beliefs and in expressing opinions in the performance of the dulmuluk theater.	Students often arrive late to practice, indicating a low sense of responsibility towards time.	The theater supervisor needs to establish a discipline system based on habits and positive rewards.
Having self-esteem	This reflects the behavior and attitude of appreciating one's own abilities. It demonstrates the ability to complete the memorization of the script provided by the theater coach.	Students have doubts about their abilities, particularly in artistic expression and role improvisation.	The theater mentor expresses open appreciation for the process and expression without the pressure of evaluation.
Growing self-discipline	This reflects the attitude and behavior of discipline. Arriving on time when participating in the dulmuluk theater training.	Students often arrive late to practice, indicating a low sense of responsibility towards time.	The theater supervisor needs to establish a discipline system based on habits and positive rewards.
Developing a work and learning ethic	This illustrates the attitude and behavior of enthusiasm and self-motivation towards success in the roles played in the dulmuluk theater.	The dependence of students on teacher guidance is still high; initiatives and exploration are underdeveloped.	Improvisation exercises and independent practice can cultivate a sense of ownership over the learning process.
Having a sense of responsibility	This illustrates the attitude and behavior of having a sense of responsibility towards the trust entrusted to the theater instructors, both in maintaining cleanliness in the environment before and after conducting the learning activities.	Some students are inconsistent in maintaining cleanliness or adhering to the assigned roles.	Strengthening symbolic roles (for example, property chairperson, schedule supervisor) to instill real responsibility.
Being able to control oneself	This reflects the attitudes and behaviors of students in self-control and emotional management in order to master themselves in the	The competitive culture in the distribution of main and supporting roles	The facilitator provides an agreement on speaking and

Scope of Values of Character Education	Self Description	Challenge	Strategic Notes
	implementation of dulmuluk theater activities.	triggers disparities among students.	responding to fellow students.
Developing one's potential	This illustrates the attitude and behavior towards the actualization and potential, as well as the development of students' talents and interests in their ability to perform dulmuluk theater.	Students sometimes feel hesitant to express their potential due to embarrassment, fear of being mocked, or feelings of inferiority.	It is necessary to receive motivation and encouragement from theater mentors to cultivate self-confidence.
Having a sense of togetherness and mutual cooperation	This illustrates the attitude and behavior of togetherness and the spirit of mutual cooperation, in order to complete the theatrical script of Dulmuluk that has been assigned by the theater mentor.	The individual's ego and role dominance often disrupt the sense of togetherness.	The emphasis on collective values over mere individual success needs to be continuously reinforced.
Fostering honesty	This reflects the attitude and behavior of students in honesty, without diminishing or exaggerating their commitment to attending practice diligently and enthusiastically.	There is a tendency for students to provide reasons for their absence from practice or to conceal mistakes during performances.	The need for an open and safe evaluation space so that students become accustomed to being honest.

Comprehensive evaluation of student learning requires attention not only to the cognitive domain but also to the affective and psychomotor aspects that support the formation of a well-rounded character in students. Gulikers, Bastiaens, and Kirschner (2004) developed a five-dimensional framework for authentic assessment that encompasses task realism, social environment, and active student participation, all of which implicitly assess the psychomotor and affective domains (Gulikers et al., 2004). Previously, Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) revised Bloom's taxonomy by emphasizing that learning should be evaluated not only based on cognitive abilities such as understanding and evaluating but also on how learners internalize values and demonstrate practical skills (Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, 2001).

**Table 2.** The evaluation of the traditional theater dulmuluk at Sriguna Middle School in Palembang.

Responden	Criteria	Score
1 – 20	Religious	90
1 – 20	Sociality	80
1 – 20	Gender	85
1 – 20	Justice	80
1 – 20	Democracy	90
1 – 20	Honesty	85
1 – 20	Independence	85
1 – 20	Fighting Power	90
1 – 20	Responsibility	90
1 – 20	Natural Environment	85
	Average	85

Developed a revised taxonomy framework that divides the learning domain into cognitive process dimensions and knowledge dimensions. The cognitive process comprises six levels of thinking ranging from remembering to creating, while the knowledge dimension encompasses factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge. Although the focus is on the cognitive domain, Anderson and Krathwohl acknowledge that effective learning ideally integrates the development of the affective and psychomotor domains (Nafiati, 2021). Thus, the holistic evaluation approach through authentic

assessment becomes in the context of arts and culture-based learning, such as *dulmuluk* theater, as it can integrate emotions, skills, and knowledge into a single learning action. The results of this evaluation can be seen in Table 2.

## DISCUSSION

The impacts of moral principles in character education inside schools are evaluated through three stages: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor assessment. Sudjana (1998) asserts that evaluation fundamentally offers assessments or judgements based on defined criteria. This purpose is expressed through the delineation of anticipated behaviours that students should exhibit towards the completion of their educational experiences (Sutikno, 2021). Moreover, Gagne's theory accommodates behavioural knowledge theory, wherein intellectual skills manifest through behaviour in a distinct intellectual "language," akin to information processing theory. Educators must acknowledge and comprehend this learning process (Seifert, 2008). Gagne posits that the acquisition of specific abilities can be enhanced by hierarchical organisation of training, allowing for the sequential mastery of prerequisite skills (Nelson, 2000).

The assessment process in character education necessitates active student engagement to cultivate the desired character qualities through educational activities. This process includes cognitive and emotional dimensions of student participation. Evaluation functions to measure learning results and to furnish feedback on the learning process. Assessments intended to facilitate learning have demonstrated the potential to yield enhancements comparable to an average of two GCSE levels. These assessments—marked by reflective feedback, active student participation, and instructional modifications—are acknowledged as strategic instruments for improving accomplishment and promoting lifelong learning (Broadfoot et al., 1999). According to A. Mohrens (1984), evaluation is the process of articulating and enhancing pertinent information to identify alternatives. Evaluation may include tests and measures, but it also transcends these elements. The findings can guide professional judgements utilising both quantitative and qualitative data. (Asrul et al., 2014).

Chittenden (in Bangun, 2023) delineates evaluation objectives into four components: a) the monitoring aspect, to supervise students' adherence to the prescribed learning program; b) the examination aspect, to assess students' performance in the educational process and pinpoint their weaknesses for prompt remediation; c) the summarisation aspect, to present a comprehensive overview of students' competencies in particular skills, enabling teachers to communicate learning progress to stakeholders; and d) the diagnostic aspect, which seeks to identify errors or learning challenges and guide corrective measures.

SMP Sriguna Palembang conducts thorough assessments in the cognitive, emotive, and psychomotor domains, akin to traditional theatre education in schools. The cognitive domain pertains to knowledge levels, including the capacity to retain concepts, categorise information, and identify terminology. Gagne posits that learning and cognitive processes should serve as stimulus to cultivate diverse abilities and skills in pupils (Tria & Suryaningtyas, 2023). Cognitive psychology encompasses mental processes including attention, perception, memory, language, reasoning, and decision-making (Subedi, 2022). In practice, these levels of knowledge pertain to the retention of information within the mind, which can be accessed via recall or recognition. Commonly utilised operational verbs encompass recognising, describing, naming, matching, listing, and selecting (Asrul et al., 2014). Cognitive functions thereby place processes like perception, memory, attention, language, and problem-solving at the centre of human knowledge acquisition and application (Antonis, 2023).

This research evaluates the cognitive domain qualitatively through formative assessments in the form of essays conducted by theatre learning facilitators. Formative evaluation seeks to assess proficiency in particular subjects and evaluate students' understanding of the content. The findings enhance the educational process within a specified timeframe (Djamarah & Zain, 2006). The essay instrument consists of five short-answer questions addressing topics including the history of *Dulmuluk* theatre, distinctions from *Bangsawan* theatre, storyline structure, and character descriptions. The affective domain pertains to attitudes and behaviours in reaction to learning events. Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masria (1964) developed a taxonomy focused on affective components, demonstrating how

individuals identify and internalise values and attitudes that influence their behaviour (Asrul et al., 2014). Affective evaluation is conducted in the Dulmuluk theatre learning process at SMP Sriguna Palembang to evaluate students' progress towards reaching the targeted learning objectives and to offer insights for teachers to enhance instructional quality (Interview: Zul, 2024).

The goals of affective learning are clearly defined, rather than being incidental outcomes of cognitive learning. Learning techniques aim to promote reflection, empathy, value development, and attitude transformation (Song et al., 2021). A Likert scale interest questionnaire featuring five response categories—never, seldom, indifferent, frequently, and always—is employed to assess student interest. Indicators encompass class attendance, active participation, timely submission of assignments, neatness, engagement in practice, lesson review, and independent learning (Asrul et al., 2014). The psychomotor domain pertains to the evaluation of practice and performance. Psychomotor evaluation assesses students' learning outcomes related to physical skills, including self-assessment, self-management, spontaneous responses, and coordinated movements (Rahmawati et al., 2024). Motor experience, contextual stimulation, and social engagement are recognised to augment executive function (Shi & Feng, 2022).

Harrow (1972) delineates five levels of psychomotor testing. a) Imitation, wherein students replicate the instructor's demonstrations through both script reading and acting; b) Manipulation, in which students execute tasks devoid of visual aids, following verbal or written directives; c) Precision, where students execute movements with accuracy and fluency; d) Articulation, entailing clear and expressive dialogue delivery; and e) Naturalisation, wherein students internalise scripts and actions to perform them organically and spontaneously.

At SMP Sriguna Palembang, psychomotor evaluation is performed as a completion of educational objectives. It functions as a standard for student accomplishment and a framework for the ongoing enhancement of theatre education. Assessments are conducted based on distinct theatrical components, encompassing diction, entry methods, movement strategies, articulation, acting and characterisation, expressiveness, improvisation, performance conclusion, makeup and costumes, and the utilisation of stage objects.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this research, it can be concluded that traditional Dulmuluk theater holds significant potential for developing students' moral character through performing arts education in schools. The integration of values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and social awareness can be effectively instilled during rehearsals and performances.

From a cognitive perspective, students gain an understanding of the moral and social values embedded within the script and the characters they portray. The theater-based learning process encourages them to think critically and reflectively about the moral meanings presented in the narrative. From an affective perspective, students' involvement in theater helps them cultivate empathy, social awareness, and emotional skills, both in interacting with others and in internalizing the moral messages conveyed by the performances. Direct interaction during rehearsals and performances also enhances self-confidence and strengthens social bonds among students. From a psychomotor perspective, students' social and collaborative skills are developed through their participation in theater production. The experience of memorizing scripts, practicing expressions, and engaging in role-play provides dynamic and practical learning opportunities compared to conventional methods.

The implications of this research indicate that character education based on the arts, particularly through traditional Dulmuluk theater, can be integrated into school curricula as an innovative learning method. Therefore, there is a need for further support in the development of teaching materials, teacher training, and educational policies that encourage the use of performing arts as a tool for character formation in students. As a recommendation, this study suggests that future research should be conducted using a longitudinal approach to examine the long-term impact of this method on students' moral development.

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