

# Professional and Character-Based Teachers: Embodying Exemplary Behavior and Humanitarian Values through Digital Media

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Submitted: 02-02-2025    Revised : 17-02-2025    Accepted: 02-03-2025

**ABSTRACT** This study aims to analyze the practices of professional and character-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at the UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto in shaping exemplary behavior and humanitarian values through digital media. The research employed observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation to obtain comprehensive data on teacher learning practices and student responses. The collected data were then analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that teachers act as active facilitators, utilizing digital presentations, learning videos, interactive quizzes, AI-based discussions, and digital e-portfolios to encourage student reflection, creativity, and critical thinking. Teacher role-modeling practices strengthen the internalization of character values. Digital media increases student motivation and participation, making character learning more effective. These findings emphasize the importance of digital innovation in shaping a superior generation with noble character.

**Keywords:** *Professional, Character, Behavior, Humanitarian Values, Digital Media*

**How to Cite**    Miladiyah, N. M., & Aziz, A., (2025). Professional and Character-Based Teachers: Embodying Exemplary Behavior and Humanitarian Values through Digital Media. *IJCRE - International Journal of Culture, Religion, and Education*, Volume 1(1), 1-11.

## INTRODUCTION

21st-century education demands that teachers possess more comprehensive competencies, not only in mastering subject matter but also in shaping students' character (Arifin & Mu'id, 2024). Teachers are required to be role models capable of instilling human values such as honesty, discipline, empathy, and a sense of responsibility. Furthermore, the development of digital technology has brought about significant changes in education, requiring teachers to adapt technology-based learning methods to enhance the effectiveness of the learning process (R. A. Putra et al., 2024). The use of digital media such as videos, interactive presentations, and learning applications has become an important tool for simultaneously strengthening students' understanding of moral and academic values. Thus, the role of teachers in the modern era is not only as instructors but also as facilitators, motivators, and character mentors.

In Indonesia, particularly at the UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto, professional and character-driven teachers play a strategic role in shaping a superior generation capable of competing in the global era. Teachers are required to continuously innovate in developing digital learning media so that students not only master academic competencies but also develop strong

character and adequate technological literacy. By utilizing various digital applications and platforms, teachers can create a more engaging, interactive, and relevant learning environment tailored to students' developmental needs. This approach also enables more personalized learning, allowing students to explore according to their individual abilities and learning styles. Through the professionalism and exemplary behavior of teachers, it is hoped that a generation of young people will be created who are intelligent, creative, and virtuous, and ready to face future challenges.

The increasing adoption of digital learning media in Indonesia is increasingly evident. According to BPS data cited in a study on digital education transformation, 59.33% of students aged 5–24 years old used the internet for learning by 2023, up from 33.98% in 2016 (Rahmawati, 2025). This demonstrates the increasingly widespread penetration of technology among students and opens up significant opportunities for teachers to utilize digital media in the learning process. Furthermore, according to a report by an online education platform, the ratio of student access to technology for learning reached 77.5%, confirming that the majority of students in Indonesia are now digitally connected in educational contexts (Fadhilah et al., 2021).

However, not all students are equally comfortable using digital media. A 2022 national survey showed that while many students prefer online learning, a significant percentage feel less comfortable with the technology due to limited infrastructure and teacher preparedness (Hadi, 2023). Furthermore, access disparities persist in various regions. For example, research shows that in remote and frontier (3T) areas, internet access and devices remain major barriers to digital integration in learning. This phenomenon demonstrates that while digital learning media promises efficiency and flexibility, infrastructure and digital literacy challenges must still be addressed for education transformation to be truly inclusive.

Educational transformation in the digital era demands a paradigm shift in the teaching and learning process. Teachers are no longer simply delivering material face-to-face; they are also required to master a variety of modern, interactive and adaptive learning media (Hadi, 2023). The use of technology in learning not only facilitates material delivery but also increases student engagement, enables active learning, and facilitates deeper understanding of concepts through enjoyable learning experiences. This emphasizes the importance of teachers' ability to innovate and adapt quickly to advances in educational technology.

Furthermore, the integration of digital media into learning provides opportunities to personalize the learning process according to students' needs and characteristics. For example, the use of interactive quizzes, digital simulations, or project-based learning platforms allows teachers to tailor learning strategies to ensure optimal learning for each student. This approach not only increases student motivation and participation but also helps teachers monitor learning progress more systematically and objectively. Thus, digital media serves as a tool that supports the creation of more inclusive, adaptive, and effective learning.

The educational transformation triggered by the digital era also encourages the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, and character in students (Oktafia et al., 2025). Teachers serve not only as conveyors of information but also as facilitators, guiding students in internalizing positive values through both digital interactions and traditional learning. The combination of technology, personalized teaching strategies, and teacher guidance enables students not only to master academic material but also to build character, self-reflection, and social skills essential for everyday life. This transformation demonstrates that education in the digital era demands a balance between technological innovation and a humanistic pedagogical approach.

The transformation of education in the digital era encourages teachers to adapt quickly, utilizing modern learning media to improve the quality of student interaction and understanding (M. S. Putra, 2025). Professional teachers with strong character not only deliver material but also

serve as role models in instilling humanitarian values. The UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto implements this strategy to develop students who are intelligent, virtuous, and adaptable to technological developments.

The role of teachers in shaping students' character and competencies is increasingly complex in the digital era. The use of modern learning media is a crucial strategy for increasing student engagement and motivation. At the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School (UPT SD Negeri), professional and character-driven teachers strive to combine role models, partnerships, and humanitarian values through digital innovation in every learning activity.

Advances in information technology have brought significant changes to learning methods, requiring teachers to possess digital skills in addition to pedagogical competencies. Professional and character-driven teachers are able to serve as role models for students in the application of humanitarian values. At the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School (UPT SD Negeri), the use of modern learning media is utilized to support an effective, creative learning process that is oriented toward student character development.

Digital learning media enables teachers to deliver more interactive and contextual learning experiences. However, the success of digital learning depends heavily on the professionalism and character of teachers as role models. The UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto places teachers at the center of educational transformation, ensuring that each student receives guidance that not only focuses on academics but also fosters human values.

Quality education is not only measured by academic achievement, but also by teachers' ability to instill character and human values in students (Dewi, 2017). The use of digital media is one way teachers at the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School (UPT SD Negeri) improve learning effectiveness while exemplifying good behavior in their daily lives. This approach is expected to produce a superior generation ready to face global challenges with strong character.

By using videos, simulations, or interactive presentations, students can process information visually and kinesthetically, making moral concepts and human values easier to understand. However, constructivism also emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role as a more knowledgeable other who guides students in their zone of proximal development (Stojanov, 2023). Therefore, the success of digital learning remains highly dependent on the professionalism and character of teachers as role models. At the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School (UPT SD Negeri), teachers are positioned at the center of educational transformation, ensuring that each student receives both academic guidance and character development.

Digital learning media enables teachers to deliver more interactive and contextual learning experiences, particularly in conveying character values to students (Paling et al., 2024). By utilizing video, animation, visual presentations, and digital simulations, moral concepts can be explained concretely, making them easily understood by students. This approach aligns with constructivist principles, which emphasize the importance of meaningful learning experiences as a foundation for knowledge and character development. However, technology is only a tool, and learning success is still determined by the teacher's professionalism as a facilitator and moral role model in the classroom.

Character education cannot be achieved solely through theoretical instruction; it must be reinforced by the teacher's practical role model in everyday life. Through the use of digital media, teachers can connect life values to concrete situations presented in visuals or case studies. However, the most important aspect remains the teacher's ability to demonstrate consistent behaviors, such as empathy, honesty, discipline, and responsibility, which are then observed and imitated by students. This combination of digital technology and teacher role modeling creates a more lively, engaging, and meaningful learning environment. Thus, students not only understand

moral values cognitively but also experience them and are encouraged to apply them in their daily lives.

In the digital era, teachers play a strategic role in shaping the future generation through role models and humanitarian values. The UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto prioritizes professional and character-driven teachers who are able to optimally utilize modern learning media. This strategy not only improves the quality of teaching but also develops students who are creative, adaptive, and possess high integrity, in line with the demands of 21st-century education.

At the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School (UPT SD Negeri) in Wonotirto, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers' practice in developing professionalism and character still faces various challenges. Although teachers have made efforts to deliver material and instill character values, the implementation of systematic and adaptive learning strategies has not been optimal. Some teachers struggle to utilize modern learning media effectively, while the diverse characteristics and needs of students have not been fully taken into account in lesson planning. This situation indicates the need to improve the competency of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers so that teaching practices are more professional, innovative, and able to consistently develop students' character.

The use of digital media is a crucial strategy for developing strong character in students who are ready to face the challenges of the 21st century (Khasanah & Herina, 2019). Activities such as digital reflection, interactive quizzes, AI-based discussions, and e-portfolio creation help students develop critical thinking and creativity, as well as self-awareness. Teachers then guide this process so that each activity focuses not only on academic understanding but also on the development of human values such as empathy, caring, and social responsibility. According to Nurhasanah et al. (2024), this approach aligns with the goals of modern education, namely balancing technological literacy with moral literacy. Through a focused and humanistic learning process, it is hoped that a superior generation will emerge who are not only digitally savvy but also possess noble character.

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## **METHOD**

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to in-depth describe the practices of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in integrating exemplary values, character, and digital media at the UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto. This approach was chosen because it captures learning phenomena holistically, particularly related to teacher behavior, learning interactions, and student responses in digital media and AI-based activities. The research focuses on the processes, strategies, and learning experiences that occur during character education. This research is not oriented toward numbers, but rather focuses on in-depth meaning and interpretation of teachers'

professional practices. Thus, the qualitative approach allows researchers to understand the dynamics of learning in a concrete and contextual manner.

Data sources in this study include Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, students, and digital learning documents such as e-portfolios, reflection sheets, and presentation materials. Data collection techniques used were direct observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis to obtain a comprehensive picture of the application of digital media in character education. Observations were conducted during classroom activities that included the use of videos, interactive presentations, digital quizzes, and AI-based discussions. Interviews were used to explore the experiences and perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of digital learning. Data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques according to the Miles and Huberman model, so that patterns, meanings, and findings could be arranged systematically.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School strive to implement high professionalism in character education. They consistently prepare materials thoroughly and adapt methods to students' needs. The learning process consistently emphasizes role models and humanitarian values. Students appear to grasp moral concepts more easily through interactive approaches. This demonstrates that teachers are not only instructors but also role models.

One key practice is the use of interactive digital presentations. Material is presented using PowerPoint and Canva, featuring illustrations of exemplary Islamic figures. The visualizations help students understand the concept of exemplary behavior concretely. Teachers also combine animations and interactive questions to engage students. As a result, students are more active in asking questions and discussing moral values.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers begin lessons by presenting material on exemplary values using interactive PowerPoint and Canva. The steps taken include: organizing materials with illustrations and animations, telling stories of exemplary Islamic figures, and facilitating interactive Q&A sessions. The use of digital media enhances student engagement, facilitates conceptual understanding, and emphasizes the practical application of humanitarian values in everyday life.

Teachers utilize interactive learning videos to demonstrate positive behavior in everyday life. After watching the film, the teacher facilitated a class discussion on humanitarian values (Rachmawati & Suhari, 2025). Students were asked to write personal reflections using Google Docs. This enabled them to connect moral theory with real-life practice. As a result, the internalization of humanitarian values became more effective. The use of interactive quizzes through Kahoot! and Quizizz served as part of the learning evaluation. Real-life situation-based questions encouraged critical thinking and encouraged students to reflect deeply on their answers. The teacher provided direct feedback to strengthen their understanding of character. As a result, students became more aware of the importance of behaving in accordance with moral values.

Another innovation implemented is an AI chatbot-based discussion. Students pose a moral dilemma, and the chatbot provides answer options. The teacher then guides a group discussion to evaluate various alternative courses of action. This practice encourages students to think critically and creatively. As a result, students' moral analysis skills significantly improve. Teachers encourage students to create digital e-portfolios using Google Sites and Padlet. These e-portfolios contain personal reflections, behavioral documentation, and creative work. This allows students to regularly assess their character development. Teachers provide feedback to correct inappropriate behavior. As a result, students are more motivated to instill humanitarian values in their daily lives.

Students actively construct knowledge through interactions with their environment and real-life experiences (Enjellika & Yudha, 2024), in this case through interactions with an AI chatbot that presents moral dilemmas and various alternative solutions. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding students in evaluating and interpreting information so that moral understanding develops independently. Creating a digital e-portfolio allows students to regularly reflect on their behavior and work, in accordance with the principles of reflective practice, so they can continuously assess their character development. The combination of these two practices encourages students' critical, creative, and introspective thinking skills, while strengthening the internalization of humanitarian values in everyday life.

Digital media enables teachers to act as active facilitators. Teachers not only deliver material but also guide students through interactive learning experiences. This approach empowers students to become more independent in understanding exemplary values. They can learn through visualization, reflection, and digital interaction. As a result, character education becomes more enjoyable and effective. Observations show that students grasp moral values more quickly through digital media. Interactive videos and presentations facilitate visual and practical understanding of concepts. AI-based discussions add a dimension of critical analysis to students' learning. The use of interactive quizzes increases students' active participation in learning. As a result, exemplary values and humanitarian values are more easily applied by students.

From a constructivist perspective, teachers act as active facilitators, guiding students to construct their own understanding through interactive learning experiences, such as videos, presentations, and digital quizzes. This approach enables students to learn independently and reflect on exemplary values gained from visual experiences and real-world practice (Jufri et al., 2023). Meanwhile, experiential learning theory emphasizes learning through concrete experiences, reflection, conceptualization, and application, as seen in AI-based discussions and interactive quizzes that encourage critical analysis and active student participation. Thus, the use of digital media not only increases student engagement but also facilitates the effective internalization of moral and humanitarian values.

Teachers implement digital reflective assignments as part of the evaluation. Students write about their experiences and application of character values using Google Docs. This assignment encourages students to objectively assess their own behavior. Teachers provide feedback to help improve their character. As a result, students' awareness of morality increases consistently. AI-based discussions also strengthen students' critical thinking skills. Students learn to evaluate various alternative solutions to moral dilemmas. Teachers guide students to understand the consequences of each action. This practice combines analytical thinking with humanitarian values. As a result, students become more skilled at dealing with real-life moral issues.

Digital e-portfolios make it easier for teachers to monitor each student's character development. Teachers can systematically view student reflections, work, and behavior. Teacher feedback helps students improve and cultivate positive character traits. This practice also encourages students to consistently instill humanitarian values. As a result, student character growth appears more focused and measurable. In addition to digital media, teachers implement role modeling in daily interactions. Teachers demonstrate behavior consistent with moral values such as honesty, empathy, and discipline. Students naturally imitate their teachers' actions and attitudes. This strengthens the internalization of humanitarian values. As a result, teacher role models serve as an important foundation for student character development.

Students learn through observing and imitating teacher behavior, so teacher role modeling that demonstrates honesty, empathy, and discipline strengthens the internalization of moral values. Meanwhile, digital e-portfolios enable students to systematically reflect on their behavior and work, in accordance with the principles of reflective practice, so that character development can be continuously monitored and guided. Teacher feedback through e-portfolios helps students correct inappropriate behavior and foster positive character traits. The combination of these two

practices ensures more effective and measurable character learning and fosters students' awareness of consistently applying humanitarian values in their daily lives.

Students learn a great deal through observing and imitating teacher behavior in and outside of class. This concept aligns with social learning theory, which emphasizes that behavior observed from respected figures will be imitated and modeled by students (Tampubolon & Sibuea, 2022). When teachers consistently demonstrate honesty, empathy, discipline, and responsibility, students not only understand these values theoretically but also see their application in real life. Teacher role modeling is an important foundation for internalizing moral values, as students tend to emulate actual behavior rather than simply listening to verbal advice.

In addition to direct observation, digital technology also supports character learning through e-portfolios. E-portfolios allow students to systematically store, review, and reflect on their work and behavior over time. This practice aligns with the principle of reflective practice, where ongoing reflection helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the impact of their actions on the environment. Through reflection, students become more aware of behaviors that need improvement and values that should be upheld.

Teacher feedback through e-portfolios adds a personalized dimension to character learning. Teachers can provide concrete direction, constructive comments, or specific recommendations for improvement tailored to each student's individual development. This helps students clearly understand areas for improvement and encourages them to actively correct inappropriate behavior. With structured and continuous guidance, the character-building process becomes more systematic and focused.

The combination of teacher role modeling and reflective practice through e-portfolios creates a synergy that strengthens the internalization of values. Students not only imitate positive teacher behavior but also actively reflect and critically evaluate themselves. This process ensures that character learning is not passive, but rather involves awareness, personal responsibility, and a commitment to consistently practicing human values (Abdurahman et al., 2025). Furthermore, the use of digital media facilitates objective documentation and monitoring of character development.

Thus, the integration of these two practices makes character learning more effective and measurable. Role modeling provides inspiring real-life examples, while digital e-portfolios provide a means for ongoing reflection and evaluation. As a result, students not only understand the concepts of values and morals but are also able to apply them consistently in their daily lives. Structured character learning, supported by technology and teacher guidance, develops individuals with good morals, who are responsible and able to contribute positively to society.

The use of digital media also increases students' motivation to learn. They are more enthusiastic about participating in learning due to the interactive and innovative methods (Trikesumawati et al., 2025). Students find learning more enjoyable than conventional lecture methods. Active student participation increases in discussions, quizzes, and digital reflections. As a result, the effectiveness of character learning increases significantly. Professional teachers are able to adapt digital media to students' needs. For example, interactive quizzes are for competitive students and digital reflections are for students who enjoy writing. This adjustment ensures that each student can learn optimally. Teachers also monitor learning outcomes and adjust strategies when necessary. As a result, learning becomes inclusive and adaptive to students' characteristics.

Interactive digital media increases students' intrinsic motivation because they feel involved, have autonomy, and can master the material through enjoyable learning experiences (Trikesumawati et al., 2025). Furthermore, the implementation of strategies tailored to student characteristics, such as quizzes for competitive students and digital reflection for students who enjoy writing, reflects the principle of differentiated instruction, which emphasizes adapting methods so that each student learns optimally according to their style and needs. Teachers monitor learning outcomes and adjust strategies when necessary, ensuring inclusive and adaptive

learning. Thus, the combination of digital media and personalized learning strategies significantly increases the effectiveness of internalizing character values and student active participation.

Interactive digital media plays a crucial role in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation because it provides a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience. Students not only passively receive information but also actively engage through simulations, educational games, or interactive modules that challenge their abilities (Ahmad, 2025). This sense of involvement gives students a sense of control over their learning process, fostering a sense of autonomy and the ability to master the material independently. As a result, they are more motivated to learn and explore the material in greater depth without external encouragement. Furthermore, learning strategies tailored to students' characteristics and learning styles further strengthen the effectiveness of digital media use (Dilonia & Melki, 2024). For example, interactive quizzes can stimulate competitive students, while digital reflections or online journals can support students who prefer to express themselves through writing. This approach aligns with the principle of differentiated instruction, which involves tailoring learning methods and content so that each student can learn optimally according to their individual needs, interests, and learning styles. With personalized strategies, each student feels cared for and learns in a way that best suits them.

In addition, learning strategies tailored to students' characteristics and learning styles further enhance the effectiveness of digital media use (Dilonia & Melki, 2024). The implementation of digital media not only serves as a tool for delivering material but also as a means that can be adapted to individual learning preferences. This allows teachers to provide a more personalized learning experience, enabling each student to interact with the material in a way that best suits their understanding and enjoyment.

For instance, interactive quizzes can motivate students who are competitive and enjoy challenges. With gamification features, students feel encouraged to compete against the clock or their own scores, making learning more engaging and dynamic. Digital quizzes also provide instant feedback, helping students immediately recognize their understanding and correct mistakes independently.

Meanwhile, digital reflections or online journals support students who prefer expressing themselves through writing. By writing reflections or documenting their learning experiences digitally, students can develop critical and reflective thinking skills. This approach also encourages students to become more aware of their learning processes, not just the outcomes, making learning more meaningful and personal. This tailored approach aligns with the principles of differentiated instruction, which adjusts teaching methods and content so that each student can learn optimally according to their individual needs, interests, and learning styles. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to vary activities, materials, and media used, ensuring that students with diverse characteristics can engage actively and productively in the learning process. With a personalized learning strategy, each student feels acknowledged and valued. This creates an inclusive learning environment where students feel comfortable participating, asking questions, and developing their creativity. When students feel recognized, their intrinsic motivation increases, and they are more likely to take an active role in their learning.

Expanding on this, integrating digital tools for reflective writing not only strengthens students' critical thinking but also enhances their digital literacy, an essential skill in the 21st century. By documenting learning experiences through blogs, e-portfolios, or collaborative platforms, students gain opportunities to organize ideas, analyze their progress, and receive feedback from peers and teachers. This process transforms passive learners into active participants who can evaluate their own growth and set personal learning goals. Moreover, the combination of differentiated instruction and personalized reflection fosters a sense of ownership over learning, encouraging students to connect academic content with their personal interests and real-life experiences. Ultimately, this holistic approach cultivates self-directed learners who are more confident, adaptable, and capable of applying their knowledge creatively in various contexts.

Overall, the use of digital media combined with strategies tailored to students' characteristics and learning styles proves to enhance learning effectiveness. Teachers do not merely deliver content passively but also act as facilitators who can maximize each student's potential. This approach makes learning more interactive, meaningful, and capable of developing students' critical thinking, creativity, and reflective skills comprehensively. Furthermore, the role of teachers remains crucial in maximizing the effectiveness of interactive digital media (Trikesumawati et al., 2025). Teachers regularly monitor learning outcomes, assess students' understanding of the material, and adjust strategies when necessary. This approach makes learning more inclusive and adaptive, as it accommodates the differences in abilities and characteristics of each student. By combining interactive digital media with personalized learning strategies, the internalization of character values, mastery of the material, and active participation of students can significantly increase, creating a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

Digital media and AI support the strengthening of students' role models and humanitarian values. Islamic Religious Education teachers act as role models, facilitators, and motivators. Students are able to understand, reflect on, and apply character values in their daily lives. Digital media makes learning more engaging and interactive. As a result, character education at the Ngeni 06 Wonotirto Elementary School has successfully developed a superior generation with noble morals. Building on this, the integration of digital media with personalized learning strategies not only enhances academic achievement but also strengthens students' social and emotional development. Teachers can design activities that encourage collaboration, discussion, and problem-solving, allowing students to learn from each other's perspectives while deepening their understanding of the material. The use of AI and interactive platforms provides instant feedback, enabling students to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, which fosters self-directed learning. Moreover, embedding character education within digital learning helps students internalize ethical values, empathy, and responsibility in meaningful contexts. Consequently, this comprehensive approach cultivates well-rounded learners who are academically competent, morally grounded, and equipped to thrive in a rapidly evolving society.

## CONCLUSION

In an effort to embody exemplary behavior and humanitarian values, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at the UPT SD Negeri Ngeni 06 Wonotirto integrate professionalism, role models, and the use of digital media to shape students' character. Teachers not only deliver material, but also act as facilitators, motivators, and role models through various interactive strategies such as digital presentations, learning videos, interactive quizzes, AI-based discussions, and digital e-portfolios. These practices encourage active student participation, improve critical, reflective, and creative thinking skills, and strengthen the internalization of humanitarian values in everyday life. The application of role modeling and learning strategies tailored to students' characters makes learning more inclusive, adaptive, and effective. As a recommendation, teachers should continue to develop digital media and AI innovations, expand the use of e-portfolios, and improve personal guidance, so that character learning becomes more in-depth and has an impact on the formation of a superior generation with noble morals.

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