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Blended Learning as a Pedagogical Ecology: Relational-Regulatory Functions in the Internalization of Pancasila Values and the Strengthening of Good Character

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ABSTRACT

Blended learning (BL) has become increasingly established in higher education, yet research has focused more on effectiveness, engagement, and learning regulation than on how face-to-face and online learning jointly facilitate value internalization. In Pancasila Education, this issue matters because learning outcomes extend beyond knowledge of values to students' decision-making and relationships. This exploratory qualitative study analyzed open-ended questionnaire responses from 67 Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia students using directed qualitative content analysis, complemented by a contextual review of learning materials and activities available through SPOT UPI. The findings reveal four patterns. First, students perceived face-to-face learning primarily as a relational space for dialogue, clarification, deliberation, and collaboration. At the same time, online learning served mainly as a regulatory space for flexibility, access to materials, time management, and independence. These functions complemented each other but were not exclusive. Second, value internalization became visible when Pancasila shifted from content to be understood into a basis for decision-making, respect for differences, rule compliance, and responsibility. Third, good character was associated with relational pathways toward justice and collaboration and self-regulatory pathways toward discipline, responsibility, and work ethic. Social support, digital culture, and LMS reliability influenced these processes. Fourth, discrepancies between ideal values and reality triggered moral reflection for some students, described as productive moral dissonance. The study interprets BL as an architecture of relational-regulatory functions and suggests connecting social interaction, self-regulation, authentic cases, reflection, process assessment, and reliable digital infrastructure in Pancasila Education.

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■ INTRODUCTION

Blended learning (BL) has moved from being an additional innovation to becoming an important part of the architecture of higher education learning. Accordingly, BL can no longer be adequately explained by face-to-face meetings and online activities alone. What matters more is how the two modes are designed to perform different but interconnected pedagogical functions. Studies have shown that the quality of BL is shaped by the integration of activities, interaction, flexibility, learning support, and how technology is used to extend rather than merely replace face-to-face learning experiences (Alammary et al., 2014; Dziuban et al., 2018; Hrastinski, 2019; Anthony et al., 2022). Thus, the increasingly important question is no longer simply whether BL is effective, but what each mode does to students' learning experiences and how their combination shapes the ways students think, interact, reflect, and act.

Although the BL literature has expanded rapidly, research attention remains dominated by academic achievement, student engagement, flexibility, satisfaction, and instructional design. For example, De Bruijn-Smolders & Prinsen's (2024) systematic review of 15 studies involving 1,428 participants found moderate-to-high effects of BL on various forms of student engagement and learning outcomes. However, the same review showed that BL research still mainly links student engagement to academic achievement and explicitly called for further research on learning outcomes in

personal, social, and civic dimensions. Reviews of systematic reviews likewise indicate that BL research concentrates on higher education, technology adoption, learning outcomes, and competency and infrastructure challenges, with most evidence coming from developed countries (Ashraf et al., 2021). A clear gap therefore remains: we know a great deal about how BL supports learning, but much less about how experiences within BL function as spaces for the formation of values, moral judgment, and student character.

This gap becomes even more apparent when BL is viewed from the perspective of learning regulation. Recent research has widely explained that BL environments require students to manage their own goals, time, effort, learning resources, and motivation, making self-regulated learning one of the central themes in BL scholarship (Eggers et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2023; Luo & Zhou, 2024; Fayaza & Ahangama, 2024). This perspective matters because it explains how students become more independent learners who can manage academic demands. However, the ability to regulate learning alone does not explain how students learn to respect others, deal with differences, consider the common good, understand justice, or translate those values into action. Even in global higher education, programs that deliberately integrate learning with character development remain relatively rare; Brooks et al. (2024) showed that BL can bring together knowledge development, self-reflection, and character formation, but such practices have not yet become mainstream in higher education. The research gap in BL is therefore not merely a technical issue of how to combine two modes, but also a pedagogical question of how that combination can mediate the formation of values and character.

The Indonesian context makes this issue even more significant. Pancasila Education in higher education carries a mandate that extends beyond mastering knowledge of the state ideology; it also expects students to reflect the values of belief in God, humanity, unity, deliberation, and justice in their decisions and relationships with others. Empirical evidence shows that technology can support these aims, but the outcomes are not automatic. A study of 265 students from three Indonesian higher education institutions found that value-based blended learning contributed to character strengthening, with the developed model explaining 50.8% of the variance in students' character strengthening; prominent characteristics included independence, collaboration, hard work, responsibility, tolerance, and democracy (Komalasari et al., 2023). Other studies have shown that multimedia use in BL can strengthen student character (Indrawadi et al., 2023), while research involving 576 teachers in Indonesia found that the internalization of character education in virtual learning occurred through value integration, habituation, and role modeling, but became more difficult when face-to-face interaction was reduced (Hidayat et al., 2022). These findings reveal an important paradox: digital spaces can broaden opportunities for value learning, yet some moral processes, such as role modeling, direct interaction, dialogue, and habituation, still require a quality of pedagogical relationship that technology cannot easily replace. This paradox suggests that the relevant issue is not whether online or face-to-face learning is inherently more conducive to character formation, but how different learning conditions shape students' psychological experiences and opportunities to enact values.

The same problem also appears in students' lives beyond the classroom. Digital environments expose students to streams of values, opinions, and behaviors that are not always consistent with the values formally taught. A study of Generation Z university students in Bandung showed that social media has become an important space for forming and circulating tolerance values, while also showing how closely students' value orientations connect to their digital experiences (Suhendra et al., 2024). Studies of digital ethics among Indonesian university students likewise show that social media spaces present issues such as cyberbullying, misinformation, privacy violations, and varied ethical responses among students. Pancasila Education delivered through BL therefore takes place in a setting far more complex than a simple movement between the classroom and the LMS. Students learn values on the one hand while continually encountering social and digital realities that may reinforce, negotiate, or even contradict those values. Such encounters can create tension between what students recognize as normatively desirable and what they observe, experience, or must do in everyday settings. Rather than treating this tension only as a barrier to value internalization, it is analytically important to examine how students respond to it psychologically and socially, whether by adjusting their behavior, questioning their assumptions, regulating themselves, or reconsidering how values should be enacted. This gap between ideal values and lived experience is what makes value internalization worthy of deeper explanation.

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) provides a relevant context for examining this

issue. UPI has used digital learning systems, including the Integrated Online Learning System (SPOT) UPI, to support the integration of face-to-face and online learning. Previous research on Pancasila Education courses at UPI involving 60 students showed that BL implementation included direct activities, self-directed learning based on online materials, collaboration, assessment, and performance support; students also reported benefits from digital media such as Zoom and YouTube (Chairiyani et al., 2023). That study helped explain how BL was implemented. However, it left a more specific question unanswered: what happens to students' moral experience as they move between physical classrooms and digital spaces? More specifically, how do the relational opportunities created by face-to-face interaction intersect with the autonomy and self-regulation demanded by online learning, and how does this intersection shape the ways students negotiate and enact Pancasila values? Do the two modes perform the same pedagogical work, or do they create different conditions for developing respect for differences, deliberation, collaboration, discipline, responsibility, and the enactment of Pancasila values?

This article addresses that question by positioning BL as a pedagogical ecology rather than merely a combination of technologies. The Community of Inquiry framework, Self-Determination Theory, and the distinction between moral character and performance character are therefore treated as analytically connected rather than as separate categories for organizing students' responses. The Community of Inquiry framework helps explain the relational conditions through which students encounter values: teaching presence structures the learning process, social presence enables students to encounter and negotiate perspectives with others, and cognitive presence provides space for reflection and meaning-making (Garrison et al., 1999; Arbaugh et al., 2008). These relational conditions intersect with the psychological demands described by Self-Determination Theory. When students move into online learning, greater flexibility and independence may support autonomy and self-regulation, but they may also reduce immediate social cues and relational support. Conversely, face-to-face interaction may offer stronger opportunities for relatedness and social engagement while also requiring students to negotiate, respond to, and adjust to others. Thus, moving between modes can create psychological tension between self-regulation and responding to others, rather than simply producing different forms of instructional convenience (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

This tension matters for character formation because the capacities required to regulate oneself differ from those needed to negotiate values with others. The distinction between moral character and performance character provides a further interpretive bridge: experiences of deliberation, respect, justice, and collaboration may primarily involve the moral orientation of how students relate to others, whereas discipline, responsibility, persistence, and work ethic involve the performance-related capacities through which values are enacted in action (Davidson, 2014). Importantly, these dimensions are not independent. A student may understand respect as a moral value but still need self-regulatory capacity to enact it consistently in an online discussion; similarly, autonomy in managing online learning may strengthen independence while requiring relational encounters to determine how that independence should be exercised responsibly toward others. In this sense, CoI helps explain the social and reflective conditions in which values are negotiated, SDT helps explain the psychological processes through which students regulate and sustain their engagement, and the moral–performance character distinction helps explain the different but interconnected character qualities that may emerge from these experiences.

The three frameworks therefore form an interpretive sequence rather than three parallel lenses: pedagogical interaction creates relational and reflective conditions through the Community of Inquiry framework; these conditions are experienced through students' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness and their efforts at self-regulation, as explained by Self-Determination Theory; and the resulting negotiations between values, self-regulation, and social demands become visible in different forms of character enactment through the distinction between moral and performance character. This perspective also allows the analysis to attend to moments in which students experience a mismatch between valued principles and lived realities. Such moments may generate discomfort, require self-regulation, invite dialogue or reflection, and potentially lead students to reconsider how values should be enacted. The frameworks are therefore used not to predetermine what should be found, but to interpret how students make sense of these tensions across face-to-face and online learning experiences.

Given this gap, the study does not test whether BL is more effective than conventional learning. Instead, it examines how students make sense of the division of functions

between face-to-face and online experiences as they learn, negotiate, and enact Pancasila values, with particular attention to the interplay between relational interaction, self-regulation, and character formation. Specifically, the study addresses four questions: (1) how do students interpret face-to-face and online experiences in the process of internalizing Pancasila values; (2) what changes in good character do they perceive, and through what experiences do those changes occur; (3) what personal, social, and technical conditions support or hinder the internalization process; and (4) what form of BL integration do they consider most relevant to value education? With this focus, the article advances two contributions: first, it explains how the relational conditions of blended learning interact with students' psychological processes of autonomy, relatedness, and self-regulation to shape the enactment of Pancasila values and good character; second, it develops productive moral dissonance as an interpretive category for understanding conditions in which the distance between ideal Pancasila values and social reality becomes a trigger for students' moral reflection.

■ METHOD

Research Design

This study used an exploratory qualitative design to understand students' experiences of blended learning in Pancasila Education, particularly how they interpreted the functions of face-to-face and online learning, enacted Pancasila values, and perceived changes in their character. The design was selected because the study did not aim to measure character levels or test causal relationships, but to gather narrative accounts of experience and the meanings students attributed to the learning process. An online open-ended questionnaire was chosen because it enabled the same questions to be posed to all participants while allowing responses that were not restricted by predetermined response categories (Braun et al., 2021). UPI was treated as a single institutional case; therefore, the article provides a contextual explanation rather than claiming to represent Indonesian higher education as a whole. Participation was voluntary, and all 67 students were informed about the study's purpose and procedures before completing the questionnaire. Students provided informed consent and were told their responses would be used for research purposes. To protect participants' privacy, the analysis and reporting included no personally identifying information, and responses were treated confidentially. The research was conducted with institutional permission and followed procedures designed to ensure voluntary participation and confidentiality.

Research Site, Context, and Participants

The study was conducted at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), where Pancasila Education combines face-to-face meetings with digital activities through the Integrated Online Learning System (SPOT) UPI and other supporting media. Sixty-seven students participated voluntarily, comprising 47 Primary School Teacher Education students (70.1%) and 20 Accounting Education students (29.9%). Sixty-six students (98.5%) were in their third semester, while one semester response could not be classified with confidence. Platform use was relatively homogeneous, with 63 students (94.0%) identifying SPOT UPI as the primary LMS and four mentioning Google Meet, Zoom, browsers, or other supporting tools. The two programs represent different professional orientations: Primary School Teacher Education prepares prospective elementary school teachers, whereas Accounting Education focuses on accounting and business education. This disciplinary context was considered when interpreting students' accounts of character and moral considerations. However, exploratory reading of the responses revealed no sufficiently consistent pattern to indicate substantive differences between the groups. Given the unequal group sizes and the study's exploratory qualitative design, program affiliation was therefore treated as contextual information rather than as a basis for systematic group comparison.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a Google Form containing 13 open-ended questions. The questions were designed to explore face-to-face and online learning experiences, understanding and enactment of Pancasila values, work ethic and discipline, justice and collaboration, independence and relatedness, gaps between values and social reality, the influence of the environment and digital culture, experiences of using the LMS, and students' views of an ideal blended learning design. Google Forms was used as a medium for collecting written narratives rather than as a quantitative measurement instrument; accordingly, no scales, scores, or character indices were used. Participants were asked to respond based on experiences they had actually encountered and, where possible, to provide concrete examples.

To contextualize the questionnaire responses, the researchers reviewed learning activities and materials available through SPOT UPI, the primary learning management system most participants identified. The review focused on the availability of course materials, learning activities, and task-related information relevant to students' accounts of online learning. The

researchers considered these platform features alongside students' descriptions of how they accessed learning resources, managed learning activities, and experienced the flexibility and demands of online learning. The review was intended to establish the instructional context of the reported experiences, not to measure individual students' actual platform use, engagement, or learning outcomes. Because the questionnaire responses and platform review provided different types of evidence, the latter was used to contextualize and compare students' accounts rather than to independently verify claims about value internalization or character development.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using directed qualitative content analysis. The process began with repeated reading of participants' open-ended responses, guided by five operational categories: relational functions, regulatory functions, value internalization, contextual factors and gaps, and ideal learning integration. These categories guided the initial coding while keeping interpretations sensitive to participants' contextual meanings.

To assess coding consistency, two coders independently coded a subset of 260 response units from 20 participants. Each category was coded as a binary decision indicating whether relevant content was present. Percentage agreement and Cohen's Kappa were calculated separately for each category using Microsoft Excel. Percentage agreement ranged from 85.00% to 88.85% (mean = 87.23%), while Cohen's Kappa ranged from 0.692 to 0.771 (mean = 0.731). These values represent agreement before discussion and reconciliation and were used to assess coding consistency rather than interpretive validity. The coders subsequently discussed discrepancies and clarified the application of the operational categories before proceeding with the broader dataset.

A descriptive code co-occurrence network was constructed from the same 260 response units to examine overlaps among the five operational categories. Node values represent the number of units in which both coders independently identified a category. In contrast, edge values represent the number of units in which both coders independently identified both connected categories during initial coding. The network was used to describe category co-occurrence, not to establish causal relationships or directly measure value internalization.

The five categories informed the interpretation of patterns across the broader dataset. Relational and regulatory functions were examined together to understand the distinct but complementary roles of face-to-face and online learning. The remaining categories informed interpretations of value internalization, tensions between ideal values and lived realities, and students' preferred integration of learning modes. The review of SPOT UPI materials, activities, and task-related information provided contextual information for interpreting students' accounts of online learning, particularly their experiences of flexibility and independent learning. It did not establish individual students' platform use, task completion, self-regulation, or interpersonal experiences. Student responses therefore remained the primary evidence for interpreting reported experiences and perceived character changes, while the platform review served a complementary contextual role.

The analysis yielded four interrelated themes: (1) the distinct but complementary functions of face-to-face and online learning; (2) value internalization and the strengthening of good character; (3) contextual factors and productive moral dissonance; and (4) students' preferred integration of learning modes. These themes provided the basis for interpreting blended learning as a pedagogical ecology.

■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis generated four interrelated thematic patterns: differentiated functions of face-to-face and online learning; a shift in values from knowledge toward judgment and action; an ecology of supporting and constraining factors, including gaps between values and reality; and students' preference for function-based integration of blended learning. Rather than separating empirical data from their interpretation, this section follows a journal-article format that integrates results and discussion: each theme begins with evidence from students' experiences, followed by interpretation, dialogue with the literature, and pedagogical implications. A summary of the main patterns is presented in Table 1.

To complement the thematic findings, an empirical code co-occurrence network was constructed from a random subsample of 260 response units drawn from the 871-unit dataset. The network shows how often both coders jointly identified the five operational categories in the initial coding. It provides a descriptive overview of relationships among categories, rather than testing causal relationships or measuring value internalization.

Node values indicate response units in which both coders assigned the respective category, while edge values and widths indicate response units in which both coders jointly assigned both connected categories. The network

Table 1. Summary of Results and Discussion Themes

Theme	Empirical pattern	Dominant experiential evidence	Analytical meaning
Face-to-face–online functions	Face-to-face tends to be relational; online tends to be regulatory	Dialogue, clarification, deliberation, collaboration; flexibility, access to materials, time management, independent learning	The quality of BL is determined by functional differentiation and continuity across modes, not by time proportions alone.
Internalization and good character	Values move from course content toward reasons for judging and choosing actions.	Deliberation, respect, role distribution, rule compliance, discipline, responsibility	Moral character and performance character develop through different but interdependent pathways.
Supporting–constraining ecology	The process is shaped by personal, social, digital, and technical factors	Autonomy, lecturer/ peer support, family/ campus, social media, LMS and network conditions	The gap between values and reality may weaken conviction or, for some students, trigger moral reflection.
Ideal integration	Students prefer a division of functions based on the intended experience	Face-to-face for deliberation; online for preparation, reflection, access, and self-regulation; process assessment	Value-based design requires alignment among modes, activities, assessment, and infrastructure.

is based on a random subsample of 260 of the 871 response units and reflects initial coding before reconciliation. The links are undirected and do not imply causality.

Differentiation of Relational and Regulatory Functions in Face-to-Face and Online Learning

Rather than functioning as two equivalent channels for delivering course content, students experienced face-to-face and online learning as different learning environments that shaped how they participated, responded, and regulated their engagement. What distinguished these experiences was not simply the presence or absence of physical interaction, but how much each setting created opportunities for immediate response, social interpretation, and individual control. In face-to-face classes, students described a greater awareness of lecturers and peers through direct observation, spontaneous responses, and ongoing interaction. In contrast, online activities provided greater temporal and procedural flexibility, especially when students needed to revisit materials, search for information, or complete tasks independently. This distinction was also contextualized through the researchers' review of SPOT UPI, the primary LMS identified by most participants. The review of learning activities and materials available through the platform showed how the online component gave students access to course materials, learning activities, and task-related information they could revisit beyond the immediate classroom encounter. Thus, the online environment supported not only access to content but also a more individually regulated mode of participation. This difference became particularly meaningful in Pancasila Education because learning often involves interpretation, discussion, and consideration of different perspectives rather than acquiring factual knowledge alone. One student explained:

> *"In face-to-face learning, I feel that I gain a stronger sense and more intensive knowledge because we meet directly, whereas in online learning I feel that I gain only the knowledge, without that same sense." (MHS-UPI-19)*

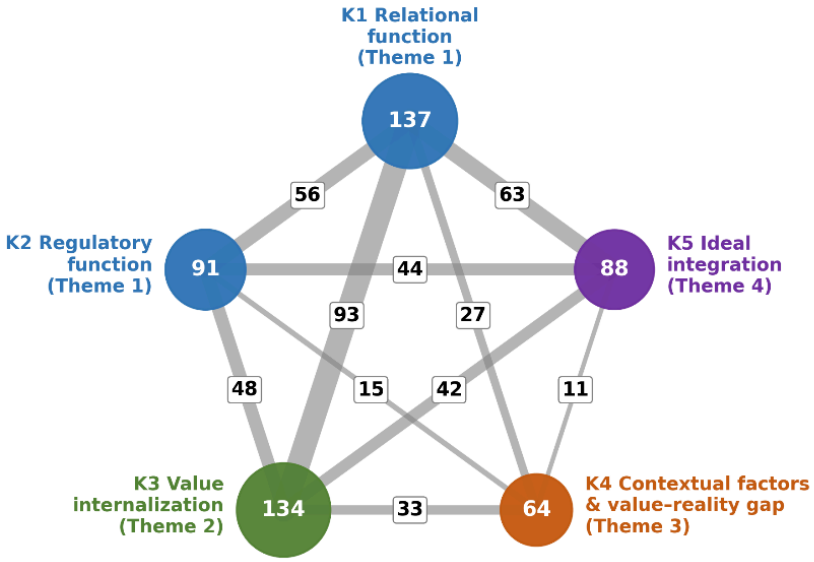


Figure 1. Empirical co-occurrence network of the five operational coding categories.

The student's reference to a stronger "sense" suggests that the perceived value of direct learning was tied to the social and interpretive context around the content. Intonation, eye contact, spontaneous responses, opportunities to clarify meaning, and classmates' reactions can make abstract values more socially situated. This observation aligns with the Community of Inquiry framework, where social presence and teaching presence support meaningful interaction (Garrison et al., 1999; Arbaugh et al., 2008). Previous studies have also linked social presence to satisfaction and perceived learning in online and blended environments (So & Brush, 2008; Richardson et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2022). In this context, however, social presence extends beyond students' perceptions of connectedness. Interaction gives students opportunities to encounter disagreement, listen to others, negotiate meaning, and coordinate participation. These experiences directly relate to enacting Pancasila values. The absence or weakening of such interaction was particularly noticeable when online communication became technically or socially limited. One student noted:

> *"In face-to-face learning, we can see the people in the classroom directly and hear our classmates very clearly… in online learning… many people do not turn on their cameras, which makes the learning feel one-way." (MHS-UPI-67)*

This account illustrates that students' experiences were shaped by the interaction between pedagogical design and the conditions under which digital interaction occurred. Online learning was not perceived as inherently incapable of supporting social presence. Rather, its relational potential depended on whether instructors deliberately facilitated interaction through collaborative activities, instructor visibility, timely feedback, and opportunities for participation. Recent studies of online social presence and teaching presence also emphasize these conditions (van der Stap et al., 2024; Li, 2022; ElSayad, 2024). The UPI experience therefore suggests that the pedagogical question is not which mode is inherently more relational, but how each mode is structured to produce meaningful participation.

Students' accounts also revealed a less visible dimension of blended learning: the redistribution of responsibility for learning. Flexibility in online activities let students control when and how they accessed materials. However, this autonomy also required them to organize their attention, manage deadlines, and sustain engagement without continuous physical supervision. One student described this tension explicitly:

> *"Face-to-face learning makes it easier for me to interact directly with lecturers and classmates… online learning is more flexible, but sometimes requires greater concentration and discipline to stay focused during the learning process." (MHS-UPI-59)*

This tension matters because flexibility was not simply experienced as a benefit. For some students, increased control over learning also meant increased responsibility for regulating their own participation. The broader blended learning literature similarly indicates that online

Table 2. Triangulation Matrix of Student Narratives and SPOT UPI Contextual Evidence

Analytical aspect	Student narrative evidence	SPOT UPI contextual evidence	Relationship between sources and interpretation
Relational experience in face-to-face learning	MHS-UPI-19 described face-to-face learning as providing a stronger sense of learning than online learning.	The SPOT UPI review described the online learning environment but did not directly capture the quality of face-to-face interpersonal experiences.	The two sources are complementary rather than directly corroborative. The relational interpretation rests primarily on students' accounts.
Interaction in online learning	MHS-UPI-67 described online learning as feeling one-way when many students did not turn on their cameras.	The platform review contextualized the online learning environment, but the availability of materials and activities alone could not establish the quality of interpersonal interaction.	The narrative identifies a perceived interactional limitation that the platform review described in this study cannot independently confirm.
Flexibility and self-regulation	MHS-UPI-59 described online learning as more flexible but requiring greater concentration and discipline.	The review identified learning materials, activities, and task-related information available through SPOT UPI.	The platform evidence contextualizes the conditions for independent learning, while the narrative explains students' perceived demands for concentration and discipline.

components can provide greater flexibility while placing greater demands on learner self-management and on the quality of instructional design (Müller & Mildenberger, 2021; Eggers et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2026). Thus, students' experiences point to a reciprocal relationship between autonomy and regulation rather than a simple advantage of online learning.

The comparison in Table 2 shows that student narratives and the SPOT UPI review provide complementary but not equivalent evidence. Students' accounts illuminate their perceived relational experiences, online interaction, and demands for self-regulation, whereas the platform review contextualizes the learning resources and activities available in the online environment. The comparison supports an interpretation of blended learning in terms of relational and regulatory affordances, but it does not establish that these affordances necessarily translated into particular student behaviors. Accordingly, interpretations of value internalization and good character remain grounded primarily in students' reported experiences and reasoning rather than in outcomes independently verified through the platform review.

SPOT UPI's availability of learning materials and task-related information allowed students to revisit course content beyond face-to-face meetings. However, the platform review alone could not establish whether students consistently used these resources to prepare for classroom discussions or connect learning experiences across modes. Continuity between online and face-to-face learning is therefore understood here as a pedagogical possibility whose realization depends on how learning activities are designed and taken up by students. This interpretation is consistent with the conception of blended learning as an intentional integration of learning modes rather than merely a combination of technologies or instructional settings (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Alammary et al., 2014; Boelens et al., 2017; Anthony et al., 2022).

Taken together, these findings suggest that face-to-face and online learning offer distinct but potentially complementary conditions for participation. Face-to-face encounters provide opportunities for interaction, dialogue, and negotiation, whereas online activities offer flexibility and access to resources that may support independent learning. Their pedagogical contribution depends not simply on the availability of each mode but on how learning activities connect social engagement with individual responsibility. In this context, relational and regulatory functions are best understood as interconnected pedagogical affordances rather than fixed properties of particular learning modes or independently verified outcomes of value internalization and character development.

Value Internalization and the Strengthening of Good Character

The most substantive changes did not always appear in explicit statements that students' character had "improved." Stronger evidence emerged in how students described using Pancasila values to interpret concrete situations and guide their decisions. Rather than merely recalling values as course content, students connected deliberation with resolving differences, justice with the distribution of roles, responsibility with completing tasks, and respect for diversity with the way they treated their peers. These responses indicate a shift from knowing Pancasila values to considering them when judging how to respond to everyday situations. This perceived shift was clearly reflected in one student's before-and-after account:

> *"Before: I thought Pancasila Education was just a memorization course and group assignments were merely a formality for getting grades. Afterward: I came to appreciate the process and the true meaning of mutual cooperation." (MHS-UPI-60)*

The shift from memorization toward judgment also appeared in everyday and civic experiences. One student reported becoming more aware of traffic violations they had previously taken lightly. At the same time, another explained that they no longer accepted public policy at face value and instead examined it critically when it seemed unjust. This pattern matters because value internalization appeared not only as compliance, but as using values to evaluate personal choices and public issues.

> *"What I have newly realized is that I am more aware of rules that are often taken lightly, for example, violating traffic regulations or riding without a helmet." (MHS-UPI-45) "At first, I accepted government policies at face value… now I critically examine them first, and if something is not appropriate, I speak up in whatever way I can." (MHS-UPI-67)*

Moral education literature has long identified authentic issues, differences in perspective, and dialogue as important conditions for developing moral judgment (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Schuitema et al., 2008; Cummings et al., 2010). In value education, learning becomes stronger when values are not presented as declarations but are tested through situations that require students to justify their choices (Veugelers, 2000). Role modeling remains important, but it becomes educational when learners understand why the modeled qualities have moral significance (Sanderse, 2013). This study also finds that internalization occurs horizontally through relationships among students, not only vertically through lecturers' role modeling.

Group work provided the clearest arena for this process. Students described justice not simply as dividing tasks equally, but as considering members' abilities, giving everyone a chance to speak, and seeking decisions the group could accept. At the same time, discipline and responsibility acquired social consequences: failure to manage one's own time could shift the burden onto other group members.

> *"When differences of opinion arose in a group project, we agreed to deliberate first (applying the fourth principle) rather than forcing a vote that could make one side feel ignored. We listened to each member's objections and then worked out a fair middle ground that everyone could agree on." (MHS-UPI-60) "Blended-learning-based Pancasila Education has made me more disciplined, responsible, and committed… I have to manage my time between face-to-face meetings and online assignments so that I can complete them on time." (MHS-UPI-40)*

This pattern provides a basis for interpreting two interrelated pathways of character development. Davidson (2014) distinguishes moral character, such as justice, respect, and collaboration, from performance character, such as discipline, work ethic, and perseverance. The data show that the two did not develop as separate lists. Justice and collaboration require personal discipline, while discipline becomes morally meaningful when one person's negligence affects others. Self-Determination Theory helps explain this relationship: autonomy, competence,

and relatedness support the internalization of regulation and more self-determined engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020), while a sense of connectedness within a learning community is associated with the fulfillment of these needs (Geary et al., 2023). Learning presence likewise positions self-efficacy and self-regulation as part of the experience of online and blended learning communities (Shea & Bidjerano, 2010, 2012; Wertz, 2022).

These findings are consistent with Indonesian studies reporting stronger independence, collaboration, responsibility, tolerance, and other character qualities through value-based blended learning and multimedia (Komalasari et al., 2024; Indrawadi et al., 2023). The present study does not merely repeat the claim that blended learning can "strengthen character." However, it explains the experiential mechanisms students perceive: social interaction provides space for moral-relational practice, while managing online activities provides space for practicing self-regulation. This relationship is also consistent with the moral identity literature, which suggests that moral qualities are more likely to guide action when they are relevant to how individuals understand themselves and are activated by social situations (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Aquino et al., 2009). Nevertheless, this article does not directly measure moral identity and therefore limits its claims to changes reported by students.

Ecology of Supporting and Constraining Factors and Productive Moral Dissonance

Supporting and constraining factors did not appear as separate lists. Independence, competence, relationships with lecturers and peers, family, campus culture, social media, network quality, and LMS reliability were intertwined within the same experiences. Students could have good access to materials yet still find learning less meaningful when interaction was weak; conversely, strong social support was not always enough when digital access failed near a deadline.

> *"Honestly, this blended learning system has taught me to manage myself… the most memorable moments of interaction actually occurred during the face-to-face sessions. The online class gave me the theoretical foundation, while the face-to-face class became a space where ideas could really flow." (MHS-UPI-60)*

In the literature, self-regulated learning is one of the most consistent themes in online and blended learning, particularly through planning, time management, effort regulation, and metacognition (Broadbent & Poon, 2015; Wong et al., 2019; Eggers et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2023; Luo & Zhou, 2024; Fayaza & Ahangama, 2024). However, UPI data show that self-regulation does not operate independently of social context. Autonomy works best when students feel competent, understand instructions, receive support, and stay connected to lecturers and peers. This is consistent with Self-Determination Theory and findings on basic psychological needs in online learning (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020; Geary et al., 2023).

Popular culture and social media were viewed ambivalently. Some students saw globalization as an opportunity to broaden their perspectives, while others highlighted individualism, imitation of trends, hate speech, cyberbullying, and polarization. Digital citizenship requires more than the ability to use technology; it also involves responsible participation and an ethical orientation in digital spaces (Choi et al., 2017). Findings among Generation Z university students in Bandung likewise show that social media use is associated with experiences of tolerance values (Suhendra et al., 2024). At the same time, online disinhibition can change how individuals express themselves and reduce behavioral restraints (Suler, 2004), suggesting that digital spaces should be treated as moral contexts, not merely channels of information.

> *"Popular culture and globalization influence the way I think, communicate, and behave… the negative influence of social media, such as individualistic attitudes and easily following trends without considering appropriate values, can become an obstacle." (MHS-UPI-40)*

Technical aspects also carry pedagogical consequences. SPOT UPI was generally regarded as practical for accessing materials and submitting assignments, but network or system disruptions close to deadlines became a source of anxiety. Reviews of BL have shown that technology quality, institutional support, and challenges in the online component affect the learning experience (Kintu et al., 2017; Rasheed et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2026). In value education, this issue has a justice dimension: demands for responsibility lose legitimacy when students lack equal technical opportunities to fulfill them.

> *"SPOT UPI is quite practical because materials and assignments can be accessed online. The main obstacles are usually network problems or occasional SPOT*

disruptions, especially close to assignment deadlines." (MHS-UPI-60)

The most distinctive pattern emerged when students compared ideal Pancasila values with social reality. They mentioned injustice, discrimination, uneven development, hate speech, political conflict, and the conduct of public officials as examples of realities that did not align with the values they had learned. For some students, these contradictions raised doubts about the effectiveness of value education; for others, they triggered a re-examination of Pancasila's meaning and a personal response perceived as more consistent with its values.

"The character change I felt most after participating in blended Pancasila Education was greater independence, discipline in managing my time, and deeper concern for the values of togetherness. Blended learning trained me to develop a disciplined work ethic, while Pancasila values made me more aware of respecting different perspectives and acting fairly in everyday campus life." (MHS-UPI-27)

This article refers to the second possibility as productive moral dissonance. The term is not intended as a final psychological construct, but as an interpretive category for naming situations in which contradictions between ideal values and reality trigger reflection, self-evaluation, and ethical choice. This pattern resonates with traditions of dilemma-based moral education and engagement with differing perspectives (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Schuitema et al., 2008; Cummings et al., 2010), as well as with transformative learning, which regards disorienting dilemmas as opportunities for restructuring perspectives when space is available to process them (Feng et al., 2025). The productivity of dissonance lies not in the conflict itself, but in the reflection it facilitates once the conflict emerges.

This qualification matters because value tensions can also lead to cynicism or moral disengagement. Bandura (1999) shows that individuals can detach moral standards from action through various justification mechanisms. Exposure to injustice or hate speech is therefore not automatically educational. Pancasila Education needs to help students unpack the interests, evidence, impacts, alternatives, and moral consequences of the cases they encounter. Recent Indonesian research on challenges related to national identity, globalization, and digital literacy further reinforces this urgency (Mistiani et al., 2024; Sanusi et al., 2026).

Functional Integration for Value-Oriented Learning

When asked to describe ideal learning, students did not primarily ask for equal proportions of face-to-face and online time. They asked for a more meaningful division of functions. Face-to-face meetings were considered appropriate for case discussions, deliberation, group work, presentations, clarification, and activities requiring immediate responses. Online spaces were considered useful for pre-class materials, resource searches, reviewing content, reflection, assignment submission, and activities that require self-management.

"Developing a character of mutual respect should take place face to face, while discipline and good time management can be trained effectively by combining learning with online activities." (MHS-UPI-50)

This preference strengthens the argument that blended learning design should begin with the intended experience rather than with percentages of each mode. This principle is consistent with the notion of thoughtful integration in blended learning (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004) and with studies that identify the quality of design, support, activities, and interaction as determinants of engagement and successful implementation (Boelens et al., 2017; Anthony et al., 2022; Kintu et al., 2017). Students also repeatedly requested real social cases, social media issues, decision-making simulations, group projects, and community-engaged activities. These requests suggest that values become more meaningful when used in situations involving consequences and differing perspectives, consistent with the literature on moral education and experiential approaches to character learning (Schuitema et al., 2008; Saripudin et al., 2021; Brooks et al., 2024; Oldham & McLoughlin, 2026).

"Online LMS sessions should focus on interactive tasks that train discipline, while face-to-face sessions should be maximized for discussing real cases and conducting group projects that develop work ethic, justice, and collaboration." (MHS-UPI-12)

Assessment emerged as an important issue because timely assignment submission alone is insufficient to demonstrate character internalization. Students proposed process assessment, self-reflection, and peer assessment so that responsibility, honesty, group contribution, and respectful attitudes could become visible. This idea closely relates to

experiential learning and service learning, which position reflection as a key bridge between experience and character education (Hidayat & Balakrishnan, 2024). The LMS can therefore do more than serve as a repository: when deliberately designed, it can become a space for documenting processes, reflection, feedback, and accountability.

To clarify how these functions may contribute to value-oriented learning, Figure 2 presents a proposed experiential flow derived from patterns identified in students' responses. The process begins with exposure to a moral dilemma or socially relevant case online, where students independently access information, examine perspectives, and formulate an initial response. The issue is then brought into face-to-face dialogue, where students encounter alternative viewpoints, clarify assumptions, deliberate with peers, and consider the consequences of different choices. This interaction supports movement from initial awareness toward moral judgment. The resulting decision is subsequently enacted or articulated as an ethical response and documented through online reflection or process assessment, creating an opportunity for students to reconsider their reasoning and regulate subsequent action.

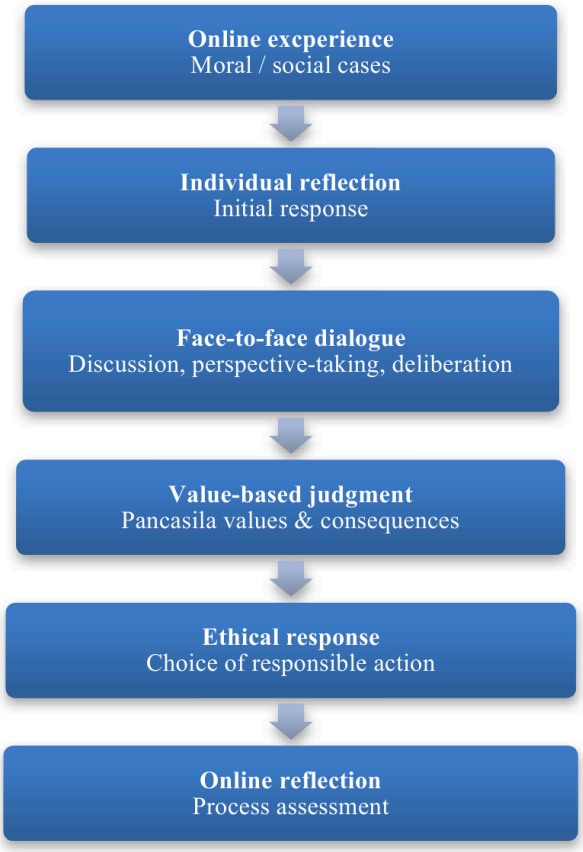


Figure 2. Experiential Flow of Value-Oriented Learning in Blended Pancasila Education

The flow shows that character formation does not occur exclusively in either learning mode. Rather, it emerges through their continuity. The online space can introduce students to problems and provide time for individual reflection, while face-to-face interaction adds social consequences, perspective-taking, and deliberation. Online reflection and process assessment then make the reasoning and responsibility associated with the decision more visible. In this sense, blended learning functions as a pedagogical ecology in which movement across modes supports a progression from encountering a value-related problem, to interpreting and deliberating about it, and finally to making and reflecting on an ethical choice.

Thematic Synthesis and Conceptual Framework

Together, the four patterns show that internalizing Pancasila values through blended learning is not a linear process moving from content delivery to behavioral change. Instead, the data reveal a more layered process. Students experience values through direct interaction with lecturers and peers, the demands of managing

Table 3. Principles for the Design of Value-Based Functional Integration

Design component	Pedagogical logic	Example practices	Targeted character/ process
Face-to-face–relational	Increase the density of interaction and social consequences	Case deliberation, discussion, group work, peer feedback, simulations of conflicts of interest	Respect, justice, collaboration, social responsibility
Online–regulatory	Provide space for learner control and personal accountability	Pre-class materials, resource searches, staged deadlines, reflection, assignment submission	Discipline, independence, work ethic, responsibility
Bridge across modes	Maintain continuity of experience and meaning.	Online cases brought into face-to-face dialogue; face-to-face experiences written up in online reflection	Consistency among understanding, judgment, and action
Authentic moral friction	Use the gap between values and reality as material for inquiry	Cases of intolerance, injustice, digital polarization, public policy; structured reflection	Moral reasoning, critical perspective, value commitment
Process assessment	Make internalization and social contribution more visible	Self-reflection, peer assessment, group-process rubrics, portfolios explaining decision rationales	Honesty, accountability, justice, self-awareness
Infrastructure and support	Ensure fair opportunities to fulfill responsibilities	Stable LMS, clear instructions, realistic deadlines, backup channels during disruptions	Equitable participation and self-regulation without unnecessary technical friction

online activities, encounters with differences, the use of values in decision-making, and engagement with social and digital realities that sometimes contradict ideal values. The strength of blended learning in value education therefore lies not in the mere presence of two modes, but in the kinds of experiences produced by the relationship between them. This pattern aligns with the view that blended learning quality depends on pedagogical integration across modes rather than a simple combination of face-to-face activities and technology (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Alammary et al., 2014; Boelens et al., 2017).

The four themes emerging from the data show how these relationships operate. First, students distinguished face-to-face and online experiences by the functions they perceived: face-to-face learning supported dialogue, deliberation, clarification, group work, and encounters with difference, whereas online learning offered greater flexibility, access to materials, time management, and responsibility for independent learning. Second, internalization became visible when students no longer saw values merely as course content but used them to evaluate situations, consider others' interests, make decisions, and explain their actions. Third, this process did not occur in a vacuum; personal, social, technical, and digital-environmental conditions shaped it. Fourth, students did not seek a uniform balance of face-to-face and online learning; instead, they integrated them based on the intended experience: interaction-rich activities were placed in spaces that support relationships, while activities requiring independence, preparation, and reflection could be extended through online spaces. The synthesis of these four themes is presented in Figure 3.

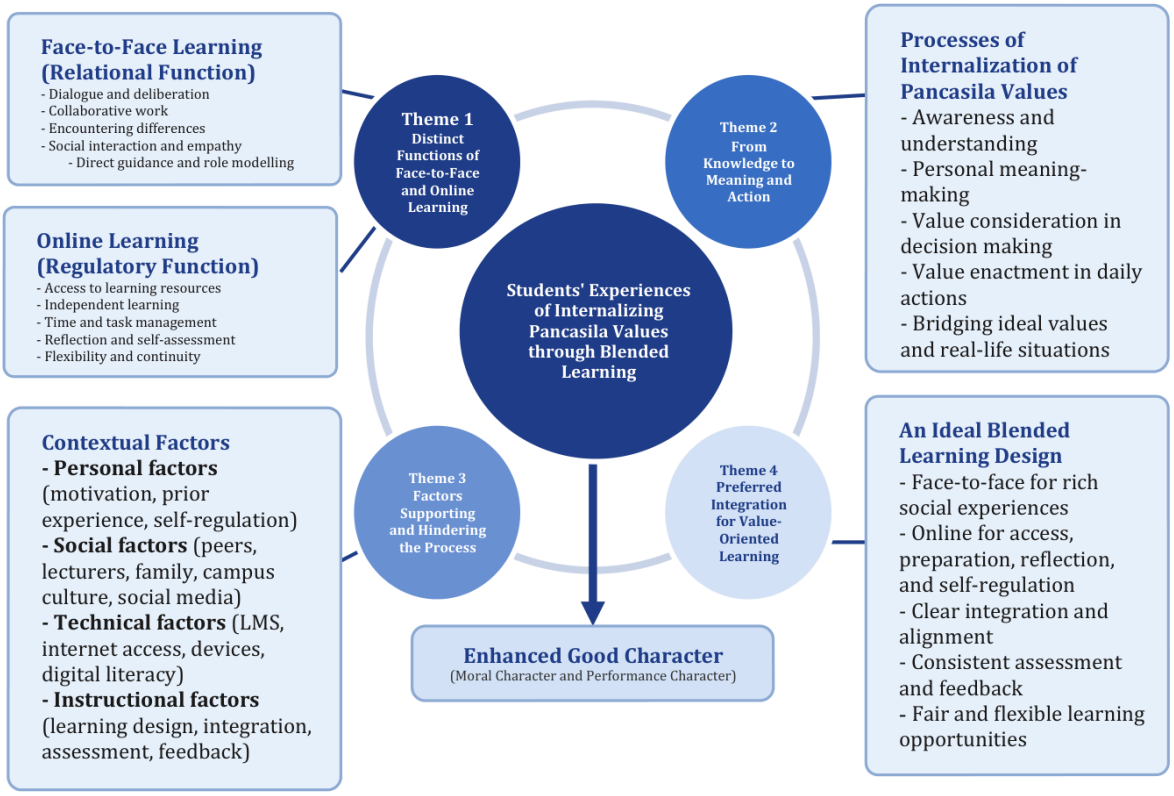


Figure 3. Thematic map of students' experiences in internalizing Pancasila values through blended learning

The thematic map shows that the four themes are not separate categories. For example, the relational function of face-to-face learning is linked to students' experiences of listening to opinions, deliberating, sharing roles, and resolving differences. This gives a more specific meaning to the concept of social presence: in this study, social presence not only makes students feel connected or satisfied with learning, but also provides an arena in which relational moral qualities are practiced (Garrison et al., 1999; So & Brush, 2008; Richardson et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2022). By contrast, the regulatory function of online learning places students in situations where flexibility must be translated into the management of time, priorities, tasks, and commitments. In this context, autonomy is not synonymous with freedom without structure, but with the ability to regulate oneself responsibly, as explained by Self-Determination Theory and research on self-regulation in blended learning environments (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020; Eggers et al., 2021; Geary et al., 2023).

Another important finding is that the two pathways intertwine when linked to good character. Students more clearly associated relational experiences with justice, respect, empathy, and collaboration, whereas they more often associated regulatory experiences with discipline, independence, work ethic, and responsibility. This distinction corresponds to moral character and performance character (Davidson, 2014), but the data show that the two do not operate separately. For example, a student who fails to fulfill their share of a task does not merely demonstrate a problem of personal discipline but may also create unfairness for other group members. Conversely, fair collaboration requires each member to regulate themselves and fulfill their commitments. Relations and self-regulation therefore form two distinct but interdependent experiential pathways for strengthening character, while also extending previous findings on the contribution of value-based blended learning to collaboration, independence, responsibility, tolerance, and student character (Komalasari et al., 2023; Indrawadi et al., 2023).

The data also suggest that internalization is better understood as a movement from knowing to meaning-making, judgment, and action. Stronger evidence lies not in students' statements that they had "become better," but in their accounts of using values to choose deliberation over imposing opinions, consider justice in the distribution of roles, follow rules they had previously taken lightly, or critically evaluate public issues. This pattern aligns with moral

education literature that positions dialogue, authentic cases, differences in perspective, and reflection as key experiences in developing moral judgment (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Schuitema et al., 2008; Cummings et al., 2010). In the Indonesian context of virtual learning, internalization has likewise been reported to require value integration, habituation, and role modeling rather than merely the delivery of normative content (Hidayat et al., 2022).

From this synthesis, the relationships among the themes are then elevated into the conceptual framework shown in Figure 4. The framework positions blended learning as a pedagogical ecology: face-to-face learning primarily provides relational forms of experience, while online learning primarily expands opportunities for self-regulation. The two modes converge through engagement, communication, reflection, self-regulation, and value negotiation; these processes open pathways toward the internalization of Pancasila values and the strengthening of good character.

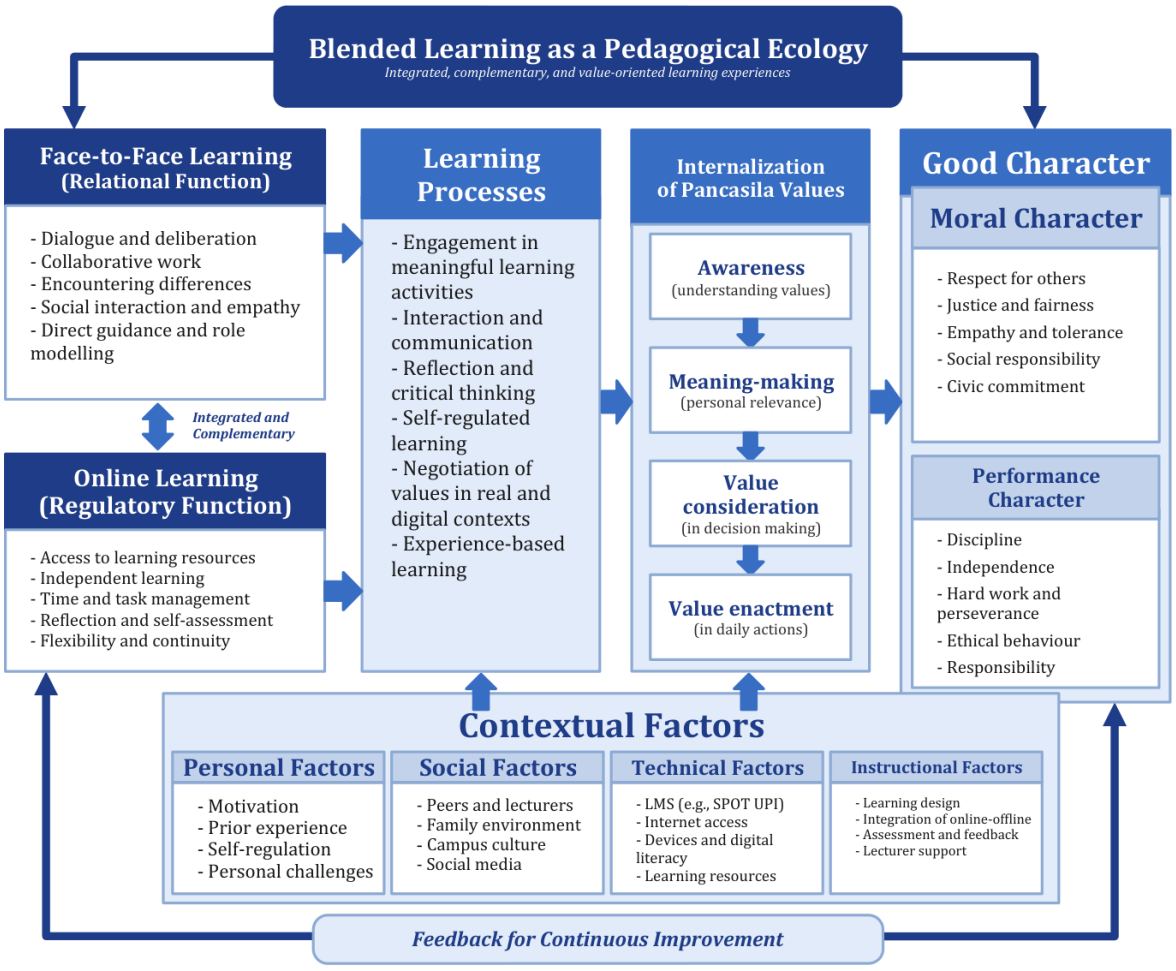


Figure 4. Conceptual framework of the relational-regulatory functions of blended learning in the internalization of Pancasila values and the strengthening of good character

As shown in Figure 4, internalization unfolds through four layers: awareness and understanding of values, personal meaning-making, using values as considerations in decision-making, and enacting values in action. This process does not occur automatically. The Community of Inquiry helps explain how interaction, reflection, and social-cognitive presence shape learning conditions (Garrison et al., 1999; Arbaugh et al., 2008), while Self-Determination Theory explains the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in enabling more internalized regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020). At the outcome level, the distinction between moral character and performance character helps show how relational qualities such as respect, justice, empathy, and collaboration, and performance-oriented qualities such as discipline, perseverance, work ethic, and responsibility, may develop through

different experiences while reinforcing one another in practice (Davidson, 2014).

The framework also shows that context always mediates the internalization process. Students' motivation and prior experiences, relationships with lecturers and peers, family and campus culture, social media, learning design, assessment, LMS quality, internet access, and institutional support may strengthen or hinder the process. Findings on LMS disruptions, for example, show that infrastructure is not purely a technical factor external to character education. When responsibility is assessed through timely task completion, but the system does not provide a stable opportunity to fulfill that responsibility, technology quality helps determine whether the learning experience is perceived as fair. This reinforces findings that student characteristics, design, technology, interaction, and environmental support shape the success of blended learning (Kintu et al., 2017; Rasheed et al., 2020; Anthony et al., 2022).

Another important dimension of the synthesis is the gap between ideal values and reality. The data show that when students encounter injustice, intolerance, hate speech, political conflict, or public behavior inconsistent with Pancasila, they do not always respond by rejecting the values. For some students, these contradictions instead prompt questions about Pancasila's relevance, followed by reflection on their own position and actions. This study calls this pattern productive moral dissonance. Its productivity lies not in the value conflict itself, but in the opportunity to process that conflict through reflection and dialogue. Without such a process, the gap between values and reality may instead lead to cynicism or moral disengagement (Bandura, 1999), particularly in digital environments that can reduce social inhibitions in expression (Suler, 2004). Productive moral dissonance is therefore better understood as an interpretive proposition emerging from the data rather than as a validated psychological construct.

Overall, this synthesis produces two main conceptual contributions. First, the study shifts attention from "how much learning takes place face to face and online" to what pedagogical functions each mode should perform. In value education, face-to-face and online learning do not need to do identical work; added value emerges when they are deliberately designed to complement one another. Second, the study extends understanding of value internalization by showing that character formation occurs not only through consistency between values and experience, but, under certain conditions, may also grow from friction between ideal values and reality, provided there is space for reflection, dialogue, and moral positioning.

■ CONCLUSION

This study examined how students interpreted the functions of face-to-face and online learning in internalizing Pancasila values, the changes in good character they perceived, the conditions that supported or hindered those changes, and the form of blended learning integration they considered most relevant. Based on 67 responses from UPI students, they experienced face-to-face learning primarily as a relational space for dialogue, deliberation, clarification, and collaboration. In contrast, they experienced online learning primarily as a regulatory space for access, flexibility, time management, and independence. Internalization was most visible when Pancasila was no longer treated simply as course content but was used to justify action. Good character then appeared through two interrelated pathways: a relational pathway toward respect, justice, and collaboration, and a self-regulatory pathway toward discipline, responsibility, and work ethic.

The study's main contribution shifts the interpretation of blended learning from a question of the proportion of modes to a question of the pedagogical functions each mode must perform. In Pancasila Education, face-to-face learning provides relational density for testing values through interaction, while online learning provides space for self-regulation, preparation, and reflection. The study also proposes productive moral dissonance as an interpretive category for describing situations in which the distance between ideal values and social reality, for some students, triggers reflection and ethical choice rather than functioning merely as an obstacle.

The practical implication is that blended-learning-based Pancasila Education should begin with intended values and experiences. Deliberation, negotiation, and collaboration require rich interaction; structured online activities can strengthen discipline, preparation, and responsibility; authentic cases and reflection should bridge the two modes; and process assessment, together with reliable digital infrastructure, is needed so that value internalization is not reduced to administrative compliance. The study remains limited by its focus on a single institutional context, the uneven composition of study programs, and the use of open-ended questionnaires without immediate probing. The reported changes should therefore be understood as perceived change rather than causal or longitudinal evidence. Future research should examine the relational-

regulatory functions and productive moral dissonance across different university contexts.

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