

Building A Moral Generation: Reflections On Islamic Values In Modern Life

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify relevant Islamic values in developing noble character in the younger generation, describe their application in modern life, and analyze the challenges and opportunities faced. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach, through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The results show that the values of honesty (shidq), responsibility (amanah), politeness (adab), and tolerance (tasamuh) are the main foundations for character formation of the younger generation. The implementation of these values can be done through habituation in the family, educational, and community environments, as well as through the positive use of digital media. Key challenges include the influence of popular culture, negative behavior on social media, and the lack of role models. However, significant opportunities arise through the hijrah trend, the proliferation of Islamic content, and the use of technology for creative and adaptive moral development.

INTRODUCTION

Social changes and technological advances in the modern era have had a significant impact on the mindset, lifestyle and behavior of the younger generation, where social interactions are no longer limited to physical space but extend to the fast-paced and dynamic digital world (Sudarman, 2023). Unlimited access to information through the internet and social media creates a more open perspective, but it is also vulnerable to negative influences such as instant culture, unfiltered content consumption, and a decline in the quality of face-to-face interactions (Salsabila & Anshori, 2025). Traditional values and moral teachings often shift due to exposure to global culture, while the demands of the times require the younger generation to have the ability to adapt, think critically, and manage their identity amidst the rapid flow of information. This phenomenon demands the development of strong character, particularly based on religious values, so that the younger generation is not only intellectually intelligent but also has noble morals in facing the challenges of modern life (Marjuni, 2020).

Globalization facilitates cultural exchange between nations through advances in transportation, communication, and information technology, so that global values, lifestyles, and trends can be quickly accessed and adopted by society, including the younger generation (Salsabila et al., 2024). On the one hand, this opens up

opportunities to broaden horizons, increase tolerance, and enrich local cultural treasures through the positive adaptation of foreign cultural elements. However, on the other hand, the current of globalization also brings serious challenges in the form of moral degradation, hedonism, and deviant behavior arising from the influx of values that are inconsistent with the nation's religious and cultural norms. This phenomenon often erodes local cultural identity, weakens social control, and decreases sensitivity to ethical and spiritual values (Subiantoro et al., 2025). If not balanced with a strong moral filter and solid character education, the younger generation risks falling into a consumerist, individualistic lifestyle, and neglecting social responsibility. Therefore, the active role of families, educational institutions, community leaders, and the media is needed to instill noble values so that globalization can be utilized for progress without sacrificing morality and national identity.

Islamic values, such as honesty, responsibility, politeness, and respect, are essential foundations for building strong character amidst the rapid and complex currents of change. Honesty instills integrity in every action, enabling a person to be trusted and uphold the truth even in the face of temptation (Ruhaina et al., 2025). Responsibility fosters an awareness of one's obligations to oneself, one's family, one's community, and God, which fosters disciplined behavior and social awareness. Politeness maintains good manners in interactions, both in the real world and in digital spaces, so that social relationships remain harmonious and respectful. Respect fosters an appreciation of differences, obedience to parents, teachers, and leaders, while also respecting the rights of others. If these values are instilled from an early age and practiced consistently, the younger generation will be able to face the challenges of globalization and technological advancement without losing their identity, thus developing individuals with noble character, competitiveness, and who can become role models in society (Handoko, 2025).

Moral education based on Islamic teachings is a strategic need in forming a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also morally noble, especially amidst the rapid flow of information and the influence of global culture (Herawati et al., 2025). Through moral education, students are not only equipped with knowledge of right and wrong, but also develop an awareness and commitment to practice it in their daily lives. Islamic teachings, which emphasize the balance between knowledge and faith, between individual rights and the common good, provide a solid foundation for developing individuals with integrity, discipline, and empathy. With an approach relevant to current developments, moral education can serve as a bulwark protecting the younger generation from deviant behavior, hedonism, and moral degradation, while also encouraging them to become agents of change who bring good to society (Atin & Maemonah, 2022). This effort requires synergy between families, schools, and the social environment, so that Islamic values can be fully internalized and become an integral part of the character of the next generation.

Many efforts at moral education have been carried out in schools and in the family environment, both through formal learning, role models, and positive behavioral habits, but not all have succeeded in integrating Islamic values with the challenges of modern life (Jannah, 2020). In practice, moral education often falls into the trap of theoretical delivery without a contextual approach relevant to the social, cultural, and technological realities facing today's young generation. As a result, there is a gap between the understanding of the Islamic values taught and students' ability to apply them in real-life situations, such as interactions on social media, consumer lifestyles, or

decision-making amid moral dilemmas. This challenge demands innovation in moral education methods, including the use of engaging media and technology, experiential learning, and close collaboration between families, schools, and communities, so that Islamic values can live and serve as guidelines in facing the complexities of modern life (Jamil, 2023).

The purpose of this study is to identify relevant and essential Islamic values in developing noble morals in the young generation in the modern era, taking into account their need to adhere to moral principles amidst the dynamics of rapid social change. This study also aims to describe in depth the forms of application of these values in everyday life, both in the context of social interactions within the family, school, and community, including in the digital space that has now become an inseparable part of the lives of the younger generation. In addition, this study critically analyzes various challenges, such as the negative impact of globalization, technological advances, and instant culture, and identifies opportunities that can be utilized to strengthen the internalization of Islamic values through educational approaches, role models, and innovative learning methods. Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide practical and theoretical contributions to the development of moral education strategies that are adaptive to current developments while remaining grounded in Islamic teachings.

This research gap lies in the limited number of studies that in-depthly examine the practical reflection of Islamic values in the context of modern life. Most previous research focuses on theoretical aspects without describing their actual implementation in the field. The majority of previous studies also focus more on formal education in schools, while exploration of the integration of Islamic values into various aspects of social life, digital interactions, and the family environment remains very limited. Furthermore, existing research tends to be fragmented and partial, thus failing to produce a comprehensive model or framework capable of guiding the adaptive application of Islamic values to the challenges and opportunities of the modern era. This creates an urgent need for research that not only identifies relevant Islamic values but also offers applicable and integrated strategies that can be consistently applied across various aspects of young people's lives.

The background of this research reflects the changing behavior of the younger generation in the modern era, characterized by increased use of social media, instant lifestyles, and short, informal communication patterns. Globalization has accelerated the influx of foreign cultures that are not always aligned with Islamic values, such as consumerist, individualistic, and hedonistic lifestyles, which influence thought patterns and behavior. Cases of moral degradation, such as bullying, hate speech on social media, and ethical violations in educational settings, are increasingly reported, indicating a moral crisis among adolescents. Changes in family interaction patterns due to parents' busy schedules and dependence on gadgets have also reduced the intensity of direct moral development at home. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of migration (*hijrah*) and the increase in Islamic content in digital media prove that the younger generation still has an interest in studying and practicing Islamic teachings, but requires a creative, relevant, and modern approach. The challenge of integrating Islamic values into the modern workplace and education is also a concern, as an orientation toward material achievement often neglects the moral and spiritual principles that should underpin all activities.

The novelty of this research lies in combining an Islamic literature approach with field findings through interviews and direct observation of the younger generation,

resulting in a richer and more contextual perspective. This research not only discusses Islamic values normatively, but also presents a reflective framework that is adaptive to modern challenges, such as the influence of social media, popular culture, and digital lifestyles that increasingly dominate the lives of the younger generation. Furthermore, this study offers practical recommendations for moral education that can be implemented in an integrated manner in schools, families, and communities, while remaining grounded in Islamic values, thus being able to shape the character of a generation that is resilient, has integrity, and is relevant to the demands of the times.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach that focuses on exploring the meaning, perception, and implementation of Islamic values in modern life (Ni'am, 2025). The approach used includes literature study (library research) to examine verses of the Qur'an, hadith, and scientific works related to morality, as well as a phenomenological approach to understand the experiences of individuals and communities in practicing Islamic values in the modern era. Data sources consist of primary data in the form of in-depth interviews with religious leaders, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and the younger generation, as well as secondary data from books, journal articles, official documents, and digital sources on morality and Islamic education. Data collection techniques include semi-structured interviews, participant observation of religious activities and moral development, and document analysis of Islamic literature and previous research. The research instruments used are interview guides containing open-ended questions related to perceptions and practices of Islamic values, as well as observation sheets to record behavior, habits, and patterns of moral development. Data analysis is carried out through data reduction to sort relevant information, data presentation in the form of thematic narratives, and drawing conclusions to find patterns, themes, and meanings from the results of interviews, observations, and literature. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation (interviews, observations, documents) and discussions of the results with Islamic education experts to avoid biased interpretation. The research was conducted in schools/madrasas, mosques, and religious communities active in moral development, with the timing adjusted to accommodate the availability of informants and observation activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the modern era, Islamic values that are considered most relevant include honesty (*shidq*) as the main principle amidst the rise of hoaxes and information manipulation, responsibility (*amanah*) in the use of social media, work, and study, politeness (*adab*) in speaking, dressing, and interacting across cultures as a positive benchmark for morals, and tolerance (*tasamuh*) towards differences of opinion, religion, and culture which are increasingly important in the era of globalization (Yusuf & Mustapha, 2024). The implementation of these values is reflected in various forms, such as the use of digital platforms by the younger generation to share positive and educational content based on Islamic teachings, community activities and youth organizations that serve as a forum for internalizing morals through Islamic guidance and study, and the integration of Islamic values into school activities through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects and extracurricular activities such as the Islamic Religious Council (Rohis) (Rafsanjani et al., 2024).

However, the implementation of Islamic values faces challenges such as the current of popular culture that encourages a consumerist and individualistic lifestyle, the influence of social media that often normalizes behavior that is contrary to Islamic morals, and the lack of role models who consistently practice these values in the real and digital world (Zulyatina et al., 2024). On the other hand, there are significant opportunities to be exploited, such as the growing trend of migration and Islamic content on digital platforms, the potential of technology for creative da'wah and moral education, and the support of online and offline communities in fostering the morals of the younger generation.

Relevance of Islamic Values

The relevance of Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, politeness, and tolerance lies not only in their position as a fundamental part of religious teachings, but also as social competencies that are very much needed to face the dynamics of life in the global era (Iqbal et al., 2024). Honesty is the foundation of integrity and trust in every form of interaction, both in the real world and in digital spaces that are vulnerable to hoaxes and information manipulation (Dharmajaya & Minangkabawi, 2024). Responsibility shapes individual awareness to act with full moral consideration in various roles, from wise use of social media to carrying out mandates in the workplace and education. Politeness maintains harmony in interpersonal relationships, while tolerance is key to building social cohesion amidst the diversity of cultures, religions, and worldviews. This research confirms that Islamic teachings are universal and contextual, capable of responding to the challenges of the times without losing their spiritual and moral essence, while also making a real contribution to shaping an inclusive, ethical, and competitive society amidst the currents of globalization (Rahman et al., 2023).

Integration in Modern Life

The integration of Islamic values in modern life requires an adaptive and contextual approach, so that principled teachings can be applied in a relevant manner amidst rapid social, cultural and technological changes (Assaidi, 2025). Digital da'wah is an effective strategy, where Islamic messages can be creatively packaged through social media, podcasts, educational videos, and interactive platforms to reach a younger generation familiar with the digital world. Character-based education in schools and families also plays a crucial role in instilling Islamic values through role models, habituation, and reflection, so that these values are not only cognitively understood but also become part of everyday behavior. Furthermore, strengthening religious communities, both offline through mosque activities and youth organizations, and online through discussion forums and virtual study groups, can provide a conducive space for the internalization of Islamic values. This approach aligns with the theory of value internalization, which emphasizes the importance of habituation in various life contexts, so that Islamic values can thrive, take root, and serve as guidelines in facing the challenges of the modern era.

Challenges and Strategies to Face Them

The challenge of moral degradation resulting from the penetration of popular culture, which often normalizes consumerist, hedonistic, and individualistic behavior, requires a focused and sustainable strategic response. One effective way to address this is by improving media literacy, enabling the younger generation to critically analyze

information, evaluate content, and understand the long-term impact of media exposure on thought patterns and behavior. This media literacy needs to be integrated into formal education, community programs, and family development to foster collective awareness of the importance of using media wisely (Astna et al., 2025). Furthermore, the formation of communities that encourage positive behavior, whether in the form of religious communities, social organizations, or digital forums, can serve as a platform for consistent moral guidance and support. This strategy aligns with the concept of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, implemented at a scale and in a communication style relevant to the digital era, such as online campaigns, positive content sharing movements, and collaborations between Muslim influencers to disseminate messages of goodness widely and effectively.

Opportunities in the Context of Modernization

The phenomenon of digital migration and the increasing interest of the younger generation in Islamic studies shows that modernization and technological progress are not always a threat to morality, but can be used as an effective means to build noble morals (Nugraha & Misra, 2025). Digital platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and podcasts have become creative *da'wah* media capable of presenting Islamic material in an engaging, concise, and easily accessible manner. This trend also opens up opportunities for the emergence of virtual communities that support each other in the process of learning religion, sharing experiences of migration, and strengthening commitment to Islamic values. The use of technology in the form of prayer reminder apps, Islamic e-learning, and online discussion forums further expands access to quality moral education. With the right communication strategy and content relevant to the needs of the digital generation, modernization can be directed into a positive force that integrates Islamic values into daily life without losing the essence of its teachings (Suwin, 2024).

Implications for Education

The results of this study confirm that education requires a curriculum that consciously and structuredly integrates Islamic values into learning and extracurricular activities, so that moral development does not stop at the theoretical realm, but is also manifested in the real behavior of students (Mollah, 2024). This integration can be achieved through contextual learning methods that link religious material to the challenges of modern life, such as social media ethics, responsibility in the workplace, and tolerance in a multicultural society (Boiliu, 2024). Extracurricular activities such as Islamic spiritual groups (*rohis*), mentoring programs, and community service can also serve as a medium for internalizing values through direct experience. With this approach, students not only understand Islamic teachings as concepts but also become accustomed to applying them in decision-making, social interactions, and daily lifestyles. This implication requires collaboration between teachers, families, and communities to ensure the process of moral education is sustainable and adaptable to the dynamics of the times.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Islamic values such as honesty (*shidq*), responsibility (*amanah*), politeness (*adab*), and tolerance (*tasamuh*) remain relevant and essential for shaping the character of the younger generation in the modern era. These values can be implemented through integration into daily life, positive use of digital media,

and habituation within the family, educational, and community environments. Challenges include the influence of popular culture, the normalization of negative behavior on social media, and the lack of role models who consistently practice noble morals. However, significant opportunities exist, such as the migration trend, increasing interest in Islamic content, and the use of digital technology for da'wah and moral development. Therefore, an adaptive, creative, and contextual model of moral development is needed so that Islamic values can be effectively internalized amidst the rapid flow of globalization and technological development.

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