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STRENGTHENING ISLAMIC MORAL VALUES IN CHARACTER BUILDING FOR THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION

Lendy Fathmi Lia Syachputri

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

24204012034@student.uin-suka.ac.id

Mahmud Arif

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

muhammadarif@fis.uir.ac.id

HIGHLIGHT

- *Strengthening Islamic moral values is a top priority in addressing the moral crisis of the millennial generation in the digital age. Strengthening Islamic moral values is a top priority in addressing the moral crisis of the millennial generation in the digital age.*
- *Internalizing the values of faith, honesty, responsibility, and social etiquette has proven effective in shaping excellent character.*
- *Integrative Islamic education that combines faith, knowledge, and practice plays a strategic role in developing a*

ABSTRACT

Strengthening Islamic moral values is urgent in facing the moral challenges of the millennial generation in the digital age. The phenomena of moral decadence, individualism, and technology abuse demand educational strategies that emphasize spiritual and ethical dimensions. This study aims to analyze the role of strengthening Islamic moral values in shaping the character of the millennial generation through a literature review of the latest scientific sources. The approach used is descriptive qualitative with a literature study method, sourced from 10 national and international scientific journals and official documents from the Ministry of Education and Culture on Character Education Strengthening (PPK). The results of the study show that strengthening Islamic moral values is effective in shaping the character of the millennial generation through the internalization of the values of faith, honesty, responsibility, and social manners. Islamic morals serve as a spiritual foundation that guides the younger generation to be adaptive to global changes without losing their Islamic identity. Islamic

civilized generation that is globally competitive.

- *Synergy between schools, families, and communities is necessary to instill Islamic morals in a sustainable manner through role modeling and habit formation.*

education that integrates the aspects of faith, knowledge, and charity is a strategic path in building a generation with superior character, civility, and competitiveness in the digital age.

KEYWORD

Islamic Morals, Character Education, Millennial Generation, Digital Age

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A. INTRODUCTION

The moral decadence affecting today's millennial generation has become a central concern in Islamic education. While rapid technological development facilitates access to information, it also contributes to moral crises, hedonism, and spiritual decline (Casika et al., 2023). In line with this, Suprayitno & Wahyudi emphasize that globalization and rapid technological developments have caused shifts in adolescent behavior patterns, weakened discipline, and increased vulnerability to moral crises if not accompanied by strong character education (Suprayitno & Wahyudi, 2020). Millennials growing up in the digital era tend to fall into a culture of instant gratification, narcissism, and moral disorientation.

The Ministry of Education and Culture emphasizes that strengthening character education is a national mandate aimed at developing individuals who are faithful, pious, and morally upright (Indonesia, 2016). Although the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) program promotes values such as integrity, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and religiosity, its implementation must be more closely connected to Islamic moral values rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Since morality constitutes the core of Islamic education, strengthening it is essential in shaping a spiritually intelligent and ethically grounded millennial generation (Zahira et al., 2024). Holistic Islamic education not only instills moral values but also shapes Muslim personalities through spiritual purification (*tazkiyah al-nafs*), the integration of faith, knowledge, and action, and the early inculcation of core values (Zafira & Subagyo, 2024).

Although previous studies have discussed character education and the moral decline of millennials, most works address these issues in general terms. Few studies specifically explore how Islamic moral values contribute to shaping millennial character in the context of digital-era challenges such as consumerism, individualism, and weakened empathy (Putri et al., 2023; Rogahang, 2024). This research gap highlights the need for a more focused analysis of Islamic moral values as a foundation for character building.

Therefore, this study aims to answer the research question: How do Islamic moral values contribute to strengthening the character of the millennial generation in the digital era?

Accordingly, this article examines Islamic moral concepts, their relevance to millennials, and their role in character formation through a review of recent academic literature.

B. METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a library research method. The primary data sources consist of the Qur'an, hadith, and the official Character Education Strengthening Assessment Guidelines published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Indonesia, 2016). Secondary sources include peer-reviewed national and international journal articles that discuss character education, Islamic moral values, and millennial morality, particularly those by Casika et al. (2023), Putri et al. (2023), Nudin et al. (2023), Rogahang (2024), Fikri et al. (2023), and Zahira et al. (2024). Publications from 2020–2024 were prioritized to ensure recency and contextual relevance.

Literature selection criteria were defined as follows:

1. the literature must be peer-reviewed;
2. it must address themes related to Islamic morals, character education, the millennial generation, or the national character education policy;
3. it must be conceptually relevant to the research focus;
4. it must be published within the last five years, except for foundational documents such as Indonesia (2016).
5. Sources lacking academic rigor or conceptual alignment were excluded.

Data collection was carried out systematically using keywords such as Islamic moral values, character education, millennial generation, moral decadence, and related terms. Relevant studies published in journals such as *Literaksi*, *Journal on Education*, *El-Tarbawi*, *Eduvest*, and *SUJIEM* were inventoried and organized for analysis.

Data analysis followed a content analysis technique consisting of:

1. open coding to identify essential concepts including Islamic morals, character education strategies, and moral decline;
2. grouping the codes into thematic categories such as Islamic moral concepts (Zahira et al., 2024), moral challenges (Casika et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2023), and strengthening strategies (Fikri et al., 2023; Rogahang, 2024);
3. axial coding to determine the interrelationships among themes, particularly the link between Islamic moral values and character formation;
4. thematic synthesis to construct a conceptual framework for strengthening Islamic morals among millennials.

To ensure validity, source triangulation was applied by comparing findings from journal articles, official documents, and supporting literature on character education. The

findings are presented descriptively and analytically to highlight the interplay between theory, policy, and Islamic educational practice.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Moral Challenges of the Millennial Generation

Millennials live in a VUCA era marked by rapid and unpredictable change (Nudin et al., 2023). This environment contributes to value disorientation as young people navigate fluctuating information and digital influences. Digital technology, while beneficial, also facilitates deviant behaviors such as cyberbullying, hoaxes, and media misuse (Rogahang, 2024). Roviadiani emphasized that the unstoppable digital wave has caused some young people to fall into behavior that leads to moral and spiritual degradation (Roviadiani et al., 2024). These issues indicate not only behavioral misconduct but also a deeper weakening of value orientation.

The decline in honesty, empathy, and politeness Casika et al (2023) shows that cognitive-based character education is insufficient (Casika et al., 2023). Putri et al. (2023) highlight the need for approaches that strengthen affective and spiritual dimensions. Thus, millennial moral challenges require a foundational moral framework that is stable and not easily swayed by digital culture—precisely the role provided by Islamic moral values (Putri et al., 2023).

These findings are in line with Suprayitno & Wahyudi, who explain that millennials, as digital natives, often experience confusion about values due to uncontrolled exposure to technology, thus requiring structured and continuous character building (Suprayitno & Wahyudi, 2020).

The Concept of Islamic Morality in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Sunnah

Islamic morality is rooted in divine values conveyed in the Qur'an, particularly in Surah Luqman 12–19, which teaches monotheism, gratitude, patience, worship, moral guidance, and social manners. These values address modern challenges: patience and gratitude counter digital instant gratification, while *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* offers guidance to correct online moral deviations.

Zahira et al. (2024) emphasizes the balance between the relationship with God and with fellow humans (Zahira et al., 2024). Yanti et al. (2025) highlight Islam as a universal source of compassion, requiring empathy and tolerance (Yanti et al., 2025). These principles are not merely theological ideals but function as practical ethical tools for millennials navigating moral challenges in digital spaces.

Strategies for Strengthening Islamic Moral Values

Strengthening Islamic moral values requires collaboration among family, school, and community, consistent with the PPK framework (Indonesia, 2016). Moral values must be instilled through role modelling, habituation, and supportive environments. This is reinforced by the findings of Uyun et al.'s research, which shows that character-based Islamic education requires teachers to set an example, integrate religious values into learning, and instill Islamic values in school routines (Uyun et al., 2025). Mukhlas

emphasized that the character of millennial children can only be shaped through the continuous instilling of values in the family, school, and community (Mukhlas, 2020).

Rogahang (2024) notes the importance of digital integration, where social media and digital platforms can serve as channels for moral reinforcement (Rogahang, 2024).

Fikri et al. (2023) emphasize that character formation must involve bodily, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual components. This aligns with Islamic moral teachings that view human development holistically (Fikri et al., 2023). Integrating values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility into learning activities Putri et al. (2023) demonstrates how Islamic schools can adapt moral education to contemporary millennial needs without compromising Islamic principles (Putri et al., 2023).

Implementation of Islamic Moral Values in the Millennial Generation

Implementing Islamic moral values requires educational innovation that aligns with the digital lifestyle of millennials. Hafiz et al. (2020) point out the role of religious and Pancasila education in maintaining moral identity amid globalization (Hafiz et al., 2020). Nudin et al. (2023) highlight the importance of close lecturer–student relationships in shaping Muslim character in universities (Nudin et al., 2023).

Digital platforms, e-learning, and social media enable Islamic values to be internalized in ways that match millennial habits. Technology becomes a medium for moral actualization rather than a threat to moral identity. Anwar & Salim found that without strong moral guidance, technological developments actually accelerate the decline in students' character (Anwar & Salim, 2018). This implementation produces spiritual, social, and intellectual dimensions of character that align with the Islamic vision of *insan kamil*.

D. CONCLUSION

Strengthening Islamic moral values is highly essential in shaping the character of the millennial generation amid rapid social, cultural, and technological transformations. Islamic morality serves as a foundational guide that directs young people to become faithful, ethical, and socially responsible individuals. The integration of religious education, character-strengthening policies, and digital learning innovations demonstrates that Islamic moral values can be internalized effectively and contextually.

Nevertheless, this study has limitations, as it relies solely on library research and does not incorporate empirical field data. The scope is also limited to literature published between 2020 and 2024, which may not fully capture the broader practices of Islamic moral education across different educational contexts.

Future research is recommended to employ qualitative fieldwork or mixed-method approaches to explore the real-world implementation of Islamic moral strengthening in schools, families, and communities. Empirical investigations into the effectiveness of digital strategies for moral internalization also present an important direction for further study.

Thus, strengthening Islamic morality is not only an educational agenda but also a national strategy to prepare a Muslim generation that is superior, adaptive, and capable of contributing positively to global civilization.

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