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# The Moral Example of the Rasulullah as a Basis for Generational Character Development

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## Abstract

Abstract:Krisis moral yang melanda generasi muda saat ini menjadi tantangan serius bagi pembangunan bangsa, ditandai dengan menurunnya etika, penyalahgunaan teknologi, perilaku konsumtif, serta melemahnya spiritualitas. Berdasarkan data Badan Narkotika Nasional (BNN), hasil Survei Prevalensi Penyalahgunaan Narkoba Tahun 2023 menunjukkan bahwa sekitar 312 ribu penyalahguna narkoba berasal dari kelompok usia anak dan remaja/pelajar (BNN, 2025). Sementara itu, Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia (KPAI) mencatat 329 pengaduan pada klaster pendidikan, waktu luang, budaya, dan agama sepanjang 2023, dengan salah satu persoalan utama berupa bullying atau perundungan di satuan pendidikan; bahkan menurut KPAI di tahun 2024 terdapat 20 kasus perundungan yang berakibat fatal dan menyebabkan kematian. Kondisi ini menuntut adanya solusi pendidikan karakter yang efektif dan berkelanjutan. Rasulullah SAW, sebagai figur teladan utama (*uswah hasanah*) sebagaimana ditegaskan dalam QS. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21 menawarkan nilai-nilai moral universal yang relevan untuk membina generasi muda. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan metode studi pustaka, yang mengkaji Al-Qur'an, hadis, literatur sirah, serta penelitian terdahulu. Fokus kajian diarahkan pada internalisasi nilai kejujuran, tanggung jawab, kecerdasan, komunikasi, kesabaran, dan kasih sayang sebagai dasar pembentukan karakter. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keteladanan Rasulullah tidak hanya menjadi solusi alternatif dalam mengatasi krisis moral, tetapi juga mampu memperkuat fondasi akhlak generasi muda di era modern. Implementasi nilai-nilai tersebut membutuhkan sinergi antara keluarga, lembaga pendidikan, dan masyarakat agar proses internalisasi berlangsung konsisten dan efektif. Dengan demikian, keteladanan moral Rasulullah dapat dijadikan paradigma dalam membangun generasi yang berintegritas, berkarakter, dan berakhlak mulia

*Keywords:*
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## *Abstract*

*The moral crisis affecting The moral crisis affecting today's younger generation has become a serious challenge to national development, as reflected in declining ethical standards, technology misuse, consumerist behavior, and weakening spirituality. Based on data from the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), the 2023 National Survey on Drug Abuse Prevalence indicated that approximately 312,000 drug abusers were children and adolescents/students (BNN, 2025). Meanwhile, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded 329 complaints in the education, leisure, culture, and religious cluster throughout 2023, with bullying in educational institutions being one of the major concerns; furthermore, 20 bullying cases were reported to have had fatal consequences resulting in death (KPAI, 2024). This condition calls for effective and sustainable character education solutions. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as the primary exemplary figure (uswah hasanah)* as stated in QS. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21, *offers universal moral values that remain relevant to the development of the younger generation. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a literature review method, examining the Qur'an, Hadith, Sirah literature, and previous studies. The study focuses on the internalization of values such as honesty, responsibility, intelligence, communication, patience, and compassion as foundations for character formation. The findings indicate that the exemplary conduct of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) not only provides an alternative solution to addressing the moral crisis but also strengthens the moral foundations of the younger generation in the modern era. The implementation of these values requires synergy among families, educational institutions, and communities to ensure that the internalization process takes place consistently and effectively. Therefore, the moral exemplary conduct of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can serve as a paradigm for developing a generation characterized by integrity, strong character, and noble morality.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the mindset, behavior, interaction patterns, and lifestyles of the younger generation. The presence of the internet, social media, and various digital platforms makes it easier to obtain information, expand access to knowledge, and accelerate the exchange of ideas in social life. On the one hand, these developments provide opportunities for the younger generation to increase knowledge, creativity, skills, and social participation. However, on the other hand, technological advances also present challenges to the formation of morals and character. The unlimited flow of information can bring values and behaviors that are not always in line with religious, cultural, and social ethical norms. This condition makes the younger generation increasingly vulnerable to various moral problems, such as low communication ethics, instant culture, social media abuse, bullying, and weakening social awareness. Luthfi et al. (2024) show that the moral degradation of adolescents in the digital era is not only related to individual factors, but is also influenced by the family, school, and community environment. In line with that, Yusnita et al. (2023) explained that technological developments that are not balanced with the strengthening of morals and religious values can affect adolescents' behavior and distance them from ethical and religious values.

These moral issues have become increasingly complex because the digital space has become an integral part of the lives of the younger generation. Social interactions that previously took place in person have now moved to virtual spaces, so the values of politeness, responsibility, empathy, honesty, and self-control need to be applied in the context of digital life. In these conditions, education has an important responsibility to build students' abilities to filter information, control behavior, and use technology responsibly. Islamic education has a strategic position because its orientation not only develops intellectual aspects, but also shapes students' beliefs, morals, personalities, and social responsibilities. Fadhila (2024) shows that Islamic education has an important role in overcoming adolescent moral degradation through instilling religious values and strengthening ethical understanding, while Luthfi et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of synergy between schools, families, and society in adolescent moral development. Thus, Islamic education in the digital era needs to move from just a transfer of religious knowledge to the process of internalizing values and forming character that can be manifested in daily life behavior.

A number of previous studies have examined the role of Islamic education in dealing with the moral degradation of the younger generation. Basri and Syamsul (2024) show that the internalization of Islamic values, habituation of religious activities, teacher examples, school religious culture, and digital literacy based on Islamic values are important elements in strengthening the moral resilience of students. Atmaja and Wantini (2025) also show that a humanist-religious approach can be an alternative in dealing with students' moral problems in the digital era, including the problems of cyberbullying, plagiarism, and gadget addiction. Recent research by Ulfa et al. (2026) further emphasizes the importance of optimizing the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers through character development strategies that are relevant to technological developments. These findings show that Islamic education has great potential in dealing with moral degradation, but its effectiveness is highly dependent on the ability of education to present religious values in a concrete, contextual, and close to the lives of the younger generation. Therefore, there is a need for a source of values and exemplary models that can serve as moral guidelines as well as be relevant to the challenges of modern life.

From an Islamic perspective, the Prophet PBUH is the best uswah hasanah or example that has a fundamental position in the formation of morals. The example of the Prophet PBUH includes the values of honesty (shiddiq), trust, the ability to convey the truth (tabligh), intelligence (fathanah), patience, compassion, justice, responsibility, and respect for others. These values have relevance to the needs of the character formation of the younger generation in the midst of the complexity of modern life. Research by Layyinah et al. (2022) shows that prophetic parenting sourced from the example of

the Prophet PBUH can be used to shape children's character through the cultivation of manners, honesty, trust, self-control, and example. Furthermore, Afif et al. (2024) specifically found that the exemplary values of the Prophet in the form of shiddiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah can be implemented in learning the Moral Faith and various educational activities to strengthen the character of students. These findings show that the example of the Prophet PBUH not only has normative-religious value, but can also be translated into an applicable character education approach.

Although various studies have discussed the moral degradation of the young generation and the role of Islamic education, as well as other studies that have examined the example of the Prophet PBUH in character education, there is still a research gap that needs to be studied further. Research on the moral degradation of the young generation generally focuses on the influence of digital technology, social media, family, school, and social environment, while research on the example of the Prophet is more about moral education, prophetic parenting, and the application of the Prophet's attributes in the educational environment (Yusnita et al., 2023; Luthfi et al., 2024; Layyinah et al., 2022; Afif et al., 2024). Thus, there are still limited studies that systematically integrate the exemplary values of the Prophet PBUH with the concrete moral problems of the young generation in the context of modern and digital life, such as low communication ethics, instant culture, social media abuse, cyberbullying, hedonism, and weakening of social responsibility. This gap is the space for the development of this research, which is to contextualize the exemplary values of the Prophet PBUH as the foundation of character education that can answer the moral problems of the young generation in the modern era. The value of shiddiq can be associated with honesty in communication and the use of digital information, trust with responsibility in using technology, tabligh with the ethics of conveying information, and fathanah with the ability to think critically in filtering various information.

Based on this description, research on the example of the Prophet PBUH as the foundation of character education for the young generation in the modern era is important to be carried out both academically and practically. Academically, this research is expected to enrich the study of Islamic education by connecting the concept of uswah hasanah of the Prophet PBUH with the problem of moral degradation of the young generation in the context of technological developments and social changes. Practically, this research is expected to provide a conceptual foundation for educators, educational institutions, families, and society in developing character development that is not only oriented towards the mastery of religious knowledge, but also on the internalization of values and moral habits in real life and the digital space. The urgency of this research is getting stronger because technological developments will continue to change, while the moral challenges of the younger generation are also increasingly complex. Therefore, a fundamental value foundation is needed that can be contextualized with the times. The example of the Prophet PBUH offers a comprehensive value framework through honesty, trust, intelligence, responsibility, compassion, justice, and self-control. Thus, this research is directed to analyze the exemplary values of the Prophet PBUH and its relevance as a foundation for character education in facing the moral degradation of the young generation in the modern era.

## METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a library *research* method that emphasizes an in-depth study of various literature sources that are relevant to the example of the Prophet PBUH and the formation of the character of the younger generation. The data sources in this study are divided into primary sources and secondary sources. Primary data sources include the Qur'an, especially QS. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21 about the Prophet PBUH as *uswah hasanah* and QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 4 about the moral glory of the Prophet PBUH, as well as the hadiths found in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Sunan al-Tirmiżī*, and *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. In addition, the books of sirah nabawiyah, such as *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishām and *Al-Raḥīq al-Makhtūm* by Ṣafī al-Raḥmān al-Mubārakfūrī, are used to obtain an overview of the exemplary practices of the Prophet PBUH in life.

In the analysis process, this research uses qualitative analysis techniques which include three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is carried out to

filter information that is in accordance with the focus of the research, then presented in the form of structured conceptual findings, and then conclusions are drawn to obtain a complete understanding. (Sugiyono, 2019). Through this approach, the research seeks to explore the relevance of moral values exemplified by the Prophet PBUH to the needs of character development of the younger generation in the modern era, so that it is expected to be able to make a real contribution to strengthening character education based on Islamic values.

## RESULTS

### 1. The Example of the Prophet PBUH as the Basis for Character Formation of the Young Generation

The results of the study show that the Prophet PBUH is a *figure of uswah hasanah* whose example covers various aspects of life. This example is not only in the spiritual dimension, but also includes leadership, education, family life, social relationships, and personal life. As a leader, the Prophet PBUH showed justice, deliberation, and orientation to the interests of the people. As an educator, he showed patience in guiding the community. In family life, he displayed affection and harmony, while in daily life he showed simplicity.

The results of the analysis of the sources studied show that there are several main values that are relevant to be instilled in the younger generation, namely *shidiq* (honesty), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabligh* (conveying the truth), *fathanah* (intelligence), patience, and compassion. These values have relevance to the condition of the younger generation who are facing social changes, globalization, and the development of digital technology. The example of the Prophet PBUH can thus be understood as a character model that is comprehensive because it integrates moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects.

### 2. The Educational Environment in Internalizing the Example of the Prophet PBUH

The results of the study show that the internalization of the exemplary values of the Prophet PBUH takes place through several main environments, namely the family, school, and community. The family is the first environment in character formation through example and daily habituation. Practices such as honesty, keeping promises, responsibility, discipline, and compassion are concrete forms of character education in the family.

The school environment has a strategic role in strengthening these values through the learning process, school culture, extracurricular activities, and teacher examples. The value of honesty can be realized in the implementation of exams, discipline through compliance with school rules, while responsibility can be developed through joint tasks and activities. Thus, character education does not stop at the delivery of concepts, but is realized through repeated and consistent practice.

The community is also an important space for the actualization of the character of the younger generation. Mosques, taklim assemblies, youth organizations, social activities, and Islamic digital communities can be a means of moral development. The forms of activities include Islamic studies, Islamic digital literacy, social service, environmental cleanliness activities, and social solidarity activities. The community environment thus functions as a space to practice the values that have been instilled through the family and school.

### 3. Moral Challenges of the Young Generation in the Era of Globalization and Digitalization

The results of the study show that globalization and digitalization provide opportunities as well as challenges for the moral development of the younger generation. Technological advances provide wide access to science, communication, creativity, and innovation. However, at the same time, the younger generation faces various problems such as hedonism, individualism, misuse of social media, declining social awareness, the spread of hoaxes, hate speech, pornography, and consumptive culture.

In this context, the value of the Prophet PBUH's example can be mapped based on the challenges faced. *Shidiq* is related to honesty in receiving and conveying information; *amanah* is related to responsibility in using digital media; *tabligh* is related to the delivery of information and da'wah in a polite manner; *fathanah* is related to intelligence and critical thinking skills; while *rahmah* is related to communication ethics that prevent the younger generation from bullying, hate speech, and intolerance.

The findings regarding the moral challenge are in line with the study of Fadhilah et al. (2023) which places the weak spiritual filter as one of the problems in facing social and technological changes. 

4. **The Role of the State in the Moral Formation of the Young Generation**

The results of the study also show that the moral formation of the younger generation is not only the responsibility of the family, school, and community, but also requires state support. The role of the state includes education policy, provision of educational facilities, media regulation, protection of the young generation, law enforcement, empowerment of religious institutions, and the creation of economic conditions that support people's lives.

The state has a strategic position in creating an educational ecosystem that supports the formation of a knowledgeable and moral generation. Education policies need to provide space for the strengthening of moral and religious values, while digital regulations are needed to protect the younger generation from destructive content. In addition, religious institutions such as mosques and Islamic boarding schools can be strengthened as centers for education and community development. 

## DISCUSSION

# The Example of the Prophet PBUH as a Paradigm of Moral Education

The findings of the study show that the example of the Prophet PBUH has a holistic character. This shows that moral education in the perspective of Islam cannot be separated from the formation of personality as a whole. Moral values are not enough to be taught as knowledge, but need to be realized through behavior that can be observed, imitated, and habituated.

This view is in line with the thinking of Al-Attas (1991) who places the formation of civilized human beings as an important orientation in Islamic education. Education is not solely directed at the mastery of knowledge, but also at the formation of attitudes and behaviors in accordance with Islamic values. Contemporary studies of Al-Attas' thought also confirm that the concept of *adab* has relevance in dealing with moral crises and educational fragmentation in the digital era.

In this context, the nature of *shidiq, amanah, tabligh,* and *fathanah* can be understood not only as individual traits of the Prophet PBUH, but as a principle of character education. *Shidiq* builds integrity, *trust* forms responsibility, *tabligh* develops the courage to convey the truth ethically, while *fathanah* encourages intelligence that is used responsibly. Patience and compassion complement these values by building the ability to control oneself and respect others.

Therefore, the example of the Prophet PBUH can be placed as a paradigm of moral education that integrates spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social dimensions. This approach is important so that Islamic education not only produces a generation that has religious knowledge, but is also able to implement religious values in real life.

### 1. Family, School, and Community Synergy

The results of the study show that character formation is ineffective if it is only imposed on one institution. The family, school, and society have complementary functions. The family is the starting place for character formation, schools strengthen and develop values through the formal education process, while society provides a space for actualization in social life.

Ramayulis (2013) emphasized the importance of the family as the main educational environment in the formation of Islamic character. The example of parents is important because children obtain education not only through advice, but also through observation and habituation. This finding is strengthened by Arizal and Husniyah (2025) who show the importance of strengthening family-based character education in forming honesty, responsibility, and social concern. 

In the school environment, teachers have an important position because they are figures who interact directly with students. The exemplary value of the Prophet PBUH needs to be reflected in the way teachers teach, provide assessments, communicate, resolve conflicts, and treat students. The findings of Arizal and Husniyah (2025) as stated in the manuscript show that the internalization of Islamic values through learning, extracurricular activities, and school routines can support the formation of discipline, honesty, and responsibility.

The community then functions as a social space to strengthen this character. Virga and Astuti (2024) emphasize the importance of the social environment and digital literacy in dealing with changes in the interaction patterns of the younger generation. Therefore, the activities of mosques, youth organizations, taklim assemblies, and Islamic digital communities need to be directed not only to religious activities, but also to the formation of social awareness and digital ethics. 

Thus, character education based on the example of the Prophet PBUH needs to be developed through an ecosystem approach. The values instilled in the family must be strengthened in schools and gain room for actualization in society. This pattern allows character education to take place continuously and not disconnect between educational environments and each other.

## 2. Actualization of the Example of the Prophet PBUH in the Digital Space

The development of digital technology presents a new form in social interaction so that the exemplary value of the Prophet PBUH needs to be translated into a digital context. Challenges such as hoaxes, hate speech, digital bullying, data abuse, pornography, and consumptive culture show that the younger generation needs moral guidelines that can be applied in digital activities.

The value *of shidiq* can be applied through the habit of verifying information before sharing it. *Trust* can be realized through responsibility in maintaining the privacy and data of others. *Tabligh* can be applied by conveying information and da'wah in a polite manner, while *fathanah* is realized through the ability to think critically in selecting, processing, and producing information. Rahmah is the basis for building digital communication that respects others.

This perspective shows that Islamic character education needs to be transformed from just teaching values to forming digital moral competence. It is not enough for the younger generation to know that hoaxes, hate speech, and bullying are negative behaviors, but they need to have the moral ability to restrain themselves, verify information, consider the impact of communication, and use technology for productive purposes.

This finding is also in line with Sendika, Firmansyah, and Adri (2024) who emphasize the importance of Islamic religious education in facing the challenges of the Digital Revolution through teaching, example, habituation, and behavior formation. Thus, the example of the Prophet PBUH can be the basis for digital ethics that connects Islamic values with the needs of the younger generation in using technology.

## 3. The State as a Strengthening of the Moral Education Ecosystem

The formation of the character of the younger generation requires structural support because families, schools, and communities operate in a social environment that is also influenced by state policies. Therefore, the state has a responsibility in creating conditions that allow moral education to take place effectively.

From an Islamic perspective, leadership is a mandate that contains responsibility to society. This principle implies that the state is not only tasked with managing administrative aspects, but also creating social life that supports the benefit of the community. In the context of education, this role can be realized through curriculum policies, improving the quality of teachers, providing educational facilities, and strengthening character education.

Herawati et al. (2023) as stated in the manuscript emphasized the importance of supporting state regulations so that the values of honesty, responsibility, and empathy can be internalized in the education system. Meanwhile, Maesak et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of the state's role in overseeing the media ecosystem and information flows that affect the younger generation.

In the legal aspect, *the principles of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* can be used as a framework to ensure that public policies are oriented towards human benefit. Auda (2008) developed a systems approach in understanding *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* by emphasizing holistic, multidimensional character, openness, linkage, and orientation to goals. This approach is relevant to understand that the protection of the younger generation cannot be done through one policy alone, but requires integration between education, law, social, economic, and information management.

In the field of economics, Chapra (2000) as used in the text emphasizes the importance of economic justice and social welfare. Social inequality and injustice can be factors that magnify social

vulnerability, so economic policies also have a relationship with the moral development of society.

Thus, the role of the state in shaping the morals of the young generation is comprehensive. The state needs to build a morality-oriented education system, create digital regulations that protect the community, strengthen religious institutions, enforce the law fairly, and create socio-economic conditions that support a moral life.

### 4. Implications for the Education of the Young Generation

Based on all the findings, the example of the Prophet PBUH has strong relevance as the foundation for the formation of the character of the younger generation in the era of globalization and digitalization. This relevance lies not only in the inherited moral values, but also in the possibility of translating these values into contemporary problems.

*Shidiq* can be the basis of information literacy, *amanah* is the ethical basis for the use of technology, *tabligh* is the guideline for public communication and digital da'wah, *fathanah* is the basis for critical and innovative thinking, while *rahmah* is the principle of social interaction that respects human dignity. With this translation, the exemplary value of the Prophet PBUH can remain actual without losing its Islamic substance.

Afiqah and Gusmaneli (2025) emphasized the importance of Islamic education that is integrated with state policies in forming a generation that is intellectually superior and has morals. These findings strengthen the argument that the education of the younger generation requires the involvement of various parties in an integrated manner.

Thus, the formation of a young generation with character is not enough through theoretical religious learning. It is necessary to integrate between example, habituation, formal education, family environment, society, digital literacy, and state policy support. This synergy is an important foundation in forming a generation that not only has intellectual intelligence and adaptability to technological developments, but also has integrity, social responsibility, spirituality, and noble morals.

## CONCLUSION

The example of the Prophet PBUH is a strategic solution in dealing with the moral crisis of the younger generation. The values of honesty, responsibility, intelligence, polite communication, patience, and compassion are very relevant to form a character with integrity. The implementation of these values needs to be carried out through the synergy of family, school, and society so that the younger generation is not only intellectually superior, but also morally and spiritually mature.

In addition, the state also has an important role in strengthening the character education of the younger generation through integrated Islamic education policies, regulations, and curriculum. State support in providing an education system based on moral values, strengthening ethical digital literacy, and fostering the younger generation through formal and non-formal institutions will ensure the creation of an environment conducive to the formation of noble morals. Thus, the state functions as a facilitator as well as a guide so that Islamic values can be applied in real terms in the lives of the younger generation.

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