

The Development of Human Virtue Through Ethical Education

Jimi Harianto^{1*}, Berliana Dwika Agnesia², Cantika Ananda Han³,
Hamidah Putri⁴

STKIP Al Islam Tunas Bangsa

Corresponding Author: Jimi Harianto jimiharianto@stkipalitb.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Development of
Nobility, Moral Education

Received : 10 November

Revised : 15 December

Accepted: 30 January

©2026 Harianto, Agnesia,
Han, Putri: This is an open-
access article distributed
under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ABSTRACT

This research examines initiatives aimed at enhancing human dignity through moral education in modern contexts marked by moral crises, dehumanization, and diminishing social sensitivity. Moral education grounded on Islamic and Pancasila ideals serves as both a normative foundation and a pedagogical framework for cultivating pupils who are civilized, respect human dignity, and possess civic responsibility. This research seeks to investigate the role of moral education in fostering human dignity, establish essential dimensions of character education rooted in morals relevant to Indonesian national contexts, and evaluate its practical ramifications for families, educational institutions, society, and the state. The research employed a qualitative methodology, encompassing a literature evaluation of moral education, character education, Islamic educational philosophy, and national educational rules, which were subjected to descriptive and analytical analysis. The findings suggest that moral education significantly enhances affective dimensions, cultivates virtuous behavioral habits, promotes leadership and social responsibility, encourages independence and creativity, and establishes a school environment that upholds ethical ideals. This research asserts that moral education is a fundamental basis for fostering human dignity, necessitating a holistic and cooperative strategy at the levels of curriculum, school culture, and pedagogical methods

INTRODUCTION

Recent times have confronted society with a concerning social phenomenon: moral degradation and an ethical crisis affecting the younger generation. This indication is reflected in the increasing violations of existing norms, whether religious, legal, or cultural, which have served as the foundation for community life. Phenomena such as free sexual behavior, drug abuse, and the erosion of ethics and manners are clear indications of the moral disorientation currently affecting a segment of the younger generation. Disrespectful attitudes toward parents and teachers, fights between students, and even criminal acts are indicators of a concerning social condition.

These cases could actually be prevented if moral values were instilled in children from an early age. Currently, almost all segments of society are facing dire social pathology problems. Most students and members of society seem detached from the values of civilized, polite, and religiously based Eastern civilization. This condition is not too surprising in the context of Indonesian society, which tends to adopt a hedonistic lifestyle and uncritically accept Western civilization's influence. Additionally, the national education system places more emphasis on cognitive mastery aimed at increasing IQ (Intelligence Quotient). Both the public and academics are often drawn to methods of right-brain development and left-brain function stimulation, but they don't pay enough attention to the importance of instilling and developing good character (Dewi & Surat, 2022).

These concerns prompt us to reexamine the issue of moral education, which has not received sufficient attention in the past. Reorientation toward character education has become an important discourse that needs to be studied together to identify solutions to existing social conditions and realities. The reorientation and revitalization of character education as an effort to address the failure to create individuals with noble character is a collective responsibility shared by parents, educational institutions (especially teachers), and the government. Constitutionally, the implementation of policies formulated by the government and used as guidelines by the Ministry of National Education includes strengthening the mastery of science and technology, internalizing character education, and developing literacy competencies as an integral part of improving the quality of national education (Bamkin, 2022) (B. Additionally, Director General of Basic and Secondary Education Decree No. 64/c/Kep/PP/2000 from the Ministry of National Education states that a student is considered to have completed their education if they meet certain criteria, including a graduation certificate after considering their third-quarter report card grades, pure national exam scores (NEM), pure school exam scores (NESM), and the student's character aspects (Ulum, 2020).

The debate regarding the urgency of character education alongside religious education prompted the Ministry of National Education to establish a policy requiring character assessment as one of the requirements for student graduation. (Nugroho et al., 2025). In this context, the Department of Religious Affairs is expected to clearly formulate the concept of character education and its position in the learning process, which runs parallel to religious education,

considering that both fields have similar goals: to shape the perfect human being. Character education plays a very important role because it is one of the indicators in determining student graduation. In its implementation, the government did not establish character education as a separate subject but rather integrated it into other disciplines already taught in schools, intending to avoid excessive dominance of cognitive aspects (Anis et al., 2025).

Character education is a complex field that is often considered abstract. Thus, sustained efforts to enhance educator capacity, including conceptual understanding, pedagogical skills, and an appreciation for values and attitudes aligned with character education, are an important prerequisite for achieving quality learning that is oriented toward the development of students' personalities (Hodriani et al., 2025). Furthermore, the integration of character education within the existing curriculum necessitates a comprehensive review of teaching methodologies to ensure that ethical and moral values are not merely taught but actively cultivated through experiential learning and role modeling (Harianto, 2024). This holistic approach necessitates a synergy between family, school, and society to reinforce these values consistently (Fadilah et al., 2025). Such collaborative efforts are crucial for instilling values like honesty, discipline, and respect from an early age, thereby fostering individuals who possess not only academic proficiency but also strong ethical foundations and social responsibility (Anggun et al., 2024).

The success of such programs is contingent upon the active involvement of all stakeholders and the consistent implementation of activities, accompanied by periodic evaluations (Rizani & Wiranti, 2025). Specifically, the Directorate of Islamic Religious Education within the Ministry of Religious Affairs underscores the integration of religious values into the school curriculum, aiming to cultivate students' character based on Islamic teachings (Sholihah & Zaenurrosyid, 2025). This integration emphasizes morality concerning God and people, fostering a strong work ethic, social attitudes, and an internalization of faith (Syafi'i & Yusuf, 2021). This approach aligns with the understanding that character education encompasses not only cognitive and affective domains but also includes conative elements, where values are translated into consistent actions and habits (Quari, 2024).

This comprehensive strategy aims to produce individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also possess strong moral integrity and are prepared to contribute positively to society (Idris, 2023). This framework is further reinforced by policies such as the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 450 of 2024, which mandates character development rooted in Islamic religious values as a central tenet of the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah curriculum (Ghofur et al., 2024). This integration underscores the importance of a holistic educational approach, where moral and religious principles are woven into the fabric of daily schooling to cultivate well-rounded individuals (Anisah, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

These cases could actually be prevented if moral values were instilled in children from an early age. Currently, almost all segments of society are facing dire social pathology problems. Most students and members of society seem detached from the values of civilized, polite, and religiously based Eastern civilization. This condition is not too surprising in the context of Indonesian society, which tends to adopt a hedonistic lifestyle and uncritically accept Western civilization's influence. Additionally, the national education system places more emphasis on cognitive mastery aimed at increasing IQ (Intelligence Quotient). Both the public and academics are often drawn to methods of right-brain development and left-brain function stimulation, but they don't pay enough attention to the importance of instilling and developing good character (Dewi & Surat, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this article is qualitative research with a literature study (library research) method, structured according to the general format of accredited journal articles. The research focuses on a conceptual study of developing human dignity through moral education from an Islamic educational perspective (Hamidi & Nurhakim, 2025). Research Design This study uses a qualitative-descriptive design with a literature review method. This approach was chosen because it aims to understand and elaborate on the concepts, principles, and theoretical findings related to moral education and human dignity based on authoritative written sources, rather than through numerical measurement (Mubin et al., 2025). Data sources and collection procedures. The data sources in this study are written documents, including Books that explore ethics, moral education, and human dignity/nobility in Islam are among the sources of data for this study. The study also includes articles from national and international scientific journals that focus on Islamic education and character education. Research reports and other academic documents that are relevant to the theme of moral and humanitarian education are also included.

The data collection procedure was carried out through the following steps:

1. Setting keywords such as "moral education," "human dignity," "Islamic education," and "humanization."
2. Searching literature through libraries, institutional repositories, and scientific journal databases according to the study focus.
3. The selection of sources is based on the relevance of the topic, the credibility of the author or publisher, and the recentness of the publication.
4. The process involved the recording and organization of important information based on research theme categories.

The collected data were analyzed using content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis was used to identify and interpret key concepts related to morals, human dignity, and the goals of Islamic education. Thematic analysis was used to group the findings into major themes, such as the nature of human dignity, the role of moral education in shaping human dignity, and the implications of moral education for social life (Don et al., 2025). This analytical

approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic philosophical underpinnings contribute to character formation, aligning knowledge with inherent values (Oktarini et al., 2025).

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

After long neglect, the concept of good character has garnered widespread attention. In an era when the foundations of life are crumbling due to moral erosion, good character becomes crucial and needs to be revived. Good character generally refers to good morality and behavior in life. Good character serves as a fundamental foundation for internalizing ethics, norms of politeness, moral principles, and constructive behavior that are reflected in social relationships, professional environments, and the dynamics of daily life.

Morality is initially shaped by parents and family within the home environment, undergoes further development through the process of formal education in schools, and is significantly influenced by interaction with society, both directly and indirectly. Morality has a clear and simple definition: actions or behavior (ethics) that originate from clear thinking and feelings filled with goodness (virtue). With such a clear, simple, and straightforward definition, every individual should be able to wisely and effectively accept and internalize moral values in their life (Szalados, 2021).

Moral values are essentially first instilled through early interactions within the family environment, particularly by parents as the primary educators in a child's life. Furthermore, morality develops through the process of formal education in schools and is reinforced by the influence of the broader social environment, both directly and indirectly (Suyanto, 2021). Conceptually, morality refers to behavior based on the integrity of conscience and clarity of thought, which gives rise to ethical and civilized actions (Zubaedi, 2022). In this context, "moral" meaning noble behavior originating from a pure heart and a clear mind implies that every individual should be able to wisely accept and internalize moral principles in daily life (Hasanah, 2023).

1. Human Perfection

a. Psychological Beauty and Perfection

Humans are creatures of Allah SWT, blessed with the most perfect form and possessing noble innate potential. This perfection is reflected in the harmony of values they possess, which creates a balance between physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of their lives. A perfect human harmonizes and stabilizes various human potentials rather than just highlighting one of their many values. The term "insan kamil" refers to an individual whose human values are fully developed in a balanced and stable manner, without any values growing out of sync with others. In the Quran, a person who demonstrates the full and harmonious development of human values is described as a believer. Faith in this context reflects the harmony between spiritual, moral, and intellectual dimensions, all of which grow from awareness of God and human responsibility (Al-Attas, 2021). A person of faith possesses theological beliefs and demonstrates a balance of values in their behavior and social life (Haidar, 2021).

From an Islamic viewpoint, humans are regarded as entities fashioned by God in the most exalted and flawless form and appearance. As Ahmad Daudi stated, the optimal quality of human beings does not lie solely in their status as the most noble creatures on earth, reflecting the Divine image, but also as a manifestation of Al-Asma'ul Husna, endowed with various potentials to live life. These potentials are depicted through Al-Asma'ul Husna, which are the 99 attributes of Allah that humans can develop within themselves. The development of these qualities is considered a form of worship in the broad sense, because the purpose of human creation is to worship Allah SWT (Shofiyah et al., 2023).

Human perfection as an authentic entity is realized through the comprehensive embodiment of fundamental characteristics or natural traits that are balanced across various dimensions, encompassing individual and social aspects, physical and spiritual, as well as worldly and otherworldly (Hidayat, 2023). Human nature is monodualistic, meaning humans exist as both individual and social beings, possessing a soul with intellectual, affective, and volitional capabilities, and simultaneously being God's creation and entities with freedom and autonomy. Islamic teachings view the essence of human perfection as inseparable from the Quran and the Hadith, which serve as the foundation and primary source of Islamic law. The term "essence" comes from the Arabic language, specifically "al-haqiqat," which means truth or essential core. The concept of human nature refers to a profound understanding of humans, encompassing aspects that are constant and unchanging, namely the essential identity that determines an individual's existence and distinguishes them from others (F. Sari et al., 2020). Understanding human existence or essence should be used as a comprehensive conceptual framework for analyzing various phenomena, which do not stand alone but need to be interpreted holistically. The entirety of human existence is found in its harmony and perfection, which does not stem solely from material aspects but is rather a synergy between material and spiritual aspects. Furthermore, the spirit encompasses not only intellectual aspects but also the dimension of conscience. Therefore, a truly perfect human individual is not limited to physical and intellectual aspects but is an integrated unity of body, mind, and heart. Human perfection is not solely based on the diverse potentials they possess but also on the presence of the spiritual potential that accompanies them. The study of the human soul refers to the verse in Surah Al-Isra', verse 85, which states that:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ٨٥

Meaning: And they ask you about the spirit. Say, "The spirit is from the affairs of my Lord, and you have not been given knowledge except a little." (Qur'an 17:85)

The spiritual dimension inherent in humans is a transcendental element originating directly from Allah SWT, the Creator. The soul possesses heavenly attributes that serve as the foundation of power and spiritual capacity in humanity. The soul, as a non-material substance, cannot be accessed through sense organs or empirical means; it can only be understood through faith and spiritual practices. Its existence constitutes the essence of human perfection and acts as the nucleus of intrinsic motivation. From an Islamic viewpoint, the essence of the soul is in the domain of the unseen, which is epistemologically the sole prerogative of God, and so eludes complete comprehension by human rationality

(Nasr, 2021). Due to the constraints of empirical methods in examining this non-physical phenomenon, the endeavors of philosophers to comprehend the soul are often theoretical and metaphysical.

The potential of the soul possesses tremendous value, is noble, and occupies a prominent position in human existence. The presence of the soul endows people with distinctive attributes, individuality, and dignity, so they are referred to as "khalqan akhar," signifying beings distinct from other creations. This concept is further upon in the Quran, Surah Al-Mu'minun, verses 12 to 14.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ ۚ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ۚ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ۙ ١٤

Meaning: And indeed, we created man from an extract of clay. Then we made him into a sperm drop in a secure place (the womb). Then we made the sperm drop into a clot, and we made the clot into a lump of flesh, and we made the lump of flesh into bones, and we covered the bones with flesh. Then we made him into another creature. So blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators (Qur'an 23:12-14).

The term "khalqan akhar" can be interpreted as "another creation" or "a different creation," indicating an essential difference between humans and other creatures, such as animals, caused by the presence of the al-ruh dimension in the human soul. The process of human physical and psychological growth described in the verse initially shows similarities to animals. However, after humans received the soul, there was a striking difference due to its presence. With the inclusion of the soul, humans become special and unique beings, possessing characteristics that are significantly different from other creatures (Ricca, 2025)(Ricca, 2025)

After reaching perfect development and coming into the world, the soul, equipped with the spirit, is ready to receive divine blessings in the form of the ability to hear, see, and understand. These three instruments serve as the primary means of activating the potential of the 'aql (Gillani & Khan, 2025). The Quran mentions that the main gateway to the growth of spiritual consciousness is the ability to hear, see, and feel.

ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِهِ ۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ۙ ٩

Meaning: Then He perfected him and breathed into him of His spirit, and He made for you hearing, sight, and hearts; (but) you are little grateful (Surah As-Sajdah [32]: 9).

b. Physical Beauty and Perfection

Humans were created by Allah SWT in the most perfect and beautiful form, as stated in the Quran (Surah At-Tin [95]: 4). This perfection is evident in the human physical and biological structure, which is harmoniously and functionally designed. The physical aspect of human beings encompasses the entire system of bodily organs that are interconnected to support life. According to Sari and Nurhayati (N. L. Sari, 2022), the physical dimension includes biological elements that play an important role in shaping an individual's response to the environment and serve as a foundation for the development of cognitive and spiritual aspects. The biological physical structure of humans is considered the most complex and perfect among all living beings. This statement aligns with God's revelation in Surah At-Tin, verse 4, which states:

خَلَقَ السَّمُوتَ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ٣

Meaning: He created the heavens and the earth with truth. He formed you and made your forms beautiful, and to Allah is the return (Q.S. At Taghaabun:3).

Regarding this verse, humans are given superiority over other creatures through their beautiful physical form and perfect body structure. They are equipped with various potentials, such as the ability to think (reason), intellect (al-aqlu), heart (qalbu), desires, and soul (ruh), as well as physical aspects (body). The beauty of the human physical form is also the result of harmonious creation by Allah, as explained in Allah's words in Surah Al-Hijr, verses 28-29, which state:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلُقُ بَشَرًا مِّن صَلَاسِلٍ مِّن حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ٢٨ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ٢٩

Meaning: And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I am going to create a human being from dry clay (originating) from black mud shaped into form. Then, when I have perfected his creation and breathed into him My spirit, prostrate yourselves before him." (Qur'an 15:28-29)

In this verse, the word "sawwaitu-hu" refers to Allah SWT's perfection of the human form, which encompasses not only physical aspects but also the integration of body, mind, and soul. This word indicates that humans' creation is the result of a perfect and balanced creation process, both biologically and spiritually (Al-Maraghi, 2021).

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ٧٢

Meaning: "So when I have perfected him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down before him in prostration." (Qur'an 38:72)

Another verse that explains how the perfect form of humans is achieved thru balance and the complexity of structure. The Arabic verb "rakkaba" means to assemble something from various components, as explained in the verse of Allah in Surah Al-Infithaar, verses 7-8, as follows:

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ٧ فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ ٨

Meaning: (It is) He who created you, then fashioned you in due proportion and in the best form, arranging your bodies from components in whatever form He willed. (Q.S. Al Infithaar: 7-8).

Regarding the verses that describe the physical perfection of humans in their role as an integral part of the total physical-psychological system, the physical aspect plays a crucial role as a means of actualizing the functions of the psychological and spiritual aspects, along with their various dimensions (Hariyanto & Fathurrahman, 2022). In the Quran, human physical functions not only demonstrate the greatness of Allah SWT's creation but also serve as an important foundation for the functioning of human psychological and intellectual aspects. Some body organs are explicitly mentioned in the Quran along with their functions that support cognitive, spiritual, and social activities:

1. The skin (al-jild) serves as the primary sensory organ for experiencing touch (al-lams), which is part of the physical experience that connects humans with their environment. This is implied in Surah al-An'am [6]: 67, which describes the importance of perception in responding to reality.
2. The nose (al-anf) functions as the sense of smell (al-syumm), which in Q.S. Yusuf [12]: 94 is described as a means of connecting memory, feelings, and spiritual experiences, just as Prophet Ya'qub smelled Yusuf's scent from afar.
3. The ear (al-udzn) functions as an instrument for receiving information thru hearing (al-sam'), which is the basis for human moral and intellectual accountability, as mentioned in Q.S. al-Isra' [17]: 36, al-Mu'minun [23]: 78, al-Sajdah [32]: 9, and al-Mulk [67]: 23.
4. The eye (al-'ain) is the organ of sight (al-abṣār) that plays a role in understanding the signs of Allah SWT's greatness in the universe. This function is emphasized in Q.S. al-A'raf [7]: 185, Yunus [10]: 101, and al-Sajdah [32]: 27, which encourages humans to reflect and learn from His creation.
5. The tongue (al-lisān), both lips (al-syafatain), and the mouth (al-famm) have a vital articulatory function (al-qawl) in communication. These organs are essential tools for conveying knowledge, disseminating information, and fostering social relationships, as stated in Q.S. al-Balad [90]: 9-10, Ṭahā [20]: 27-28, and al-Fath [48]: 11.

Based on that explanation, it can be concluded that humans are creatures created by God who possess special qualities and the highest level of perfection. This title of excellence and perfection indicates that no other being is capable of matching human existence in terms of its ability to achieve happiness and satisfaction. Human beauty originates from within, radiating not only through physical aspects but also through mental and intellectual qualities, as well as the abilities one possesses.

2. Islamic Education in Schools

Educational institutions play a highly strategic role in children's learning process, considering their primary functions include developing intellectual talents, forming sound judgment skills, increasing awareness of values, preparing for professional life, and cultivating individual interests and potential to shape individuals with noble character (Zhang et al., 2025). Ethically, educators in the school environment play a crucial role in instilling positive values and attitudes in students. Therefore, educators are required to have high credibility in the eyes of students, because the greater the level of student trust in the educator, the more significant the educator's influence in the guidance process will be. Teachers must have a deep understanding of the characteristics of an ideal teacher based on students' perceptions and serve as role models by demonstrating attitudes and behaviors aligned with the principles of "ing ngarso sung tulodho, ing madyo mangun karso, tut wuri handayani." To foster a positive attitude, schools are required to implement creative and innovative teaching methods, differing from conventional formal teaching methods (Nayla et al., 2025).

This awareness is essential for every educator to be able to influence and internalize the values that shape positive attitudes in students. In carrying out these complex tasks, educators are required to continuously improve their knowledge and teaching and guiding skills to be more effective and insightful (Hodriani et al., 2025). To build moral values, educators are expected to have the ability to create a supportive environment to foster the development of positive attitudes that have the potential to impact the school community. The values and attitudes formed within the school environment reflect the process of internalizing life values implemented by teachers, who play a role in creating a conducive atmosphere. The human element is an essential component of the social environment, playing a significant role (Grădinariu & Vechiu, 2025). These individuals directly embody and interact with certain values. Therefore, if an educator aims to instill positive values and attitudes in the school environment, they must actively embody and represent those values. An educator is required to consistently implement the learning process and self-development to be present in the school community as a manifestation of these values. The self-development process is continuous and long-term, in line with the principle of lifelong learning. Although the primary task of a teacher is to teach students inside the classroom, the role of a teacher as an educator is always present, both in the context of classroom learning and in the environment outside the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al., 2025).

The influence of teachers in instilling values in students, leading to the formation of positive attitudes, is quite significant. This goal can be achieved if the teacher is present directly in front of the students as a manifestation of the life values they wish to instill. Students' level of trust in teachers must be very high; when a teacher's credibility is deeply ingrained in students' hearts, the teacher's presence will be fully accepted, allowing students to observe and emulate the teacher's example in implementing life values (Grădinariu & Vechiu, 2025). By consistently setting an example, students will gain motivation, encouragement, and intrinsic motivation to emulate their teachers in applying correct values in their daily lives. In addition to the aspects previously outlined, students need to be allowed to optimize their potential within the school environment through various activities, such as sports, arts, scouting, the Red Cross Youth, and religious activities. Participating in these activities gradually internalizes moral values in a conducive environment, facilitating the optimal expression of various positive emotions (Jakandar et al., 2025).

Regarding the duties and functions of teachers in character education, teachers are expected not only to convey knowledge conceptually but also to play an active role in shaping the character and morals of students so that they become individuals with noble character. Therefore, the methodological approach in education should not be authoritarian but rather dynamic and capable of accommodating and developing students' thinking and reasoning abilities, as well as their responses. Teachers must be able to teach dynamically, avoiding one-sided, monotonous, monological, and authoritarian learning methods (Aljamaan et al., 2025). In the context of learning, it is crucial to create a dialogic interaction between educators and students to encourage an emotional response

and respect from students toward their educators. Therefore, it's crucial to foster emotional closeness and a warm atmosphere without overindulging students. The active, creative, effective, and enjoyable learning approach (Emslander et al., 2025). Thus, teachers are the primary factor determining the quality of the educational process and outcomes.

Teachers who possess comprehensive competence in the field of education encompassing personal, social, pedagogical, and professional aspects significantly contribute to students' learning outcomes in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. This competency is not only the responsibility of religious education or social studies teachers, but must be possessed by all educators across all subjects (Hamidi & Nurhakim, 2025). Therefore, every teacher is required to continuously develop relevant strategies for implementing character education in the subjects they teach. These efforts can be made through the process of integrating character values into learning materials, as well as through internalization in daily classroom learning practices. In this context, schools are expected not only to be places for academic learning but also to function as laboratories for character development, where students can concretely experience, instill, and live out noble values in real life.

Conceptually, character education is based on three main theoretical frameworks: cognitive development theory, social learning theory, and psychoanalytic theory. The theory of cognitive development was initially introduced by Jean Piaget and was later further developed by Lawrence Kohlberg, who identified six stages in the development of moral or ethical thinking. The initial stage is an orientation toward incentives and consequences, which typically develops in children around the age of three. The second stage is known as the instrumental relativist orientation, which reflects an emphasis on individual interests in the pursuit of personal satisfaction. The third stage is further referred to as the obedient child orientation, which describes a child's behavior to meet expectations and gain recognition from their surrounding social environment (Scholz-Kuhn et al., 2025). The fourth stage involves an orientation toward norms and order, which reflects respect for established social systems. The fifth stage is called the social contract and individual rights, which affirms adherence to officially recognized rights and procedures. Meanwhile, the sixth stage focuses on universal ethics based on principles of conscience (Jati et al., 2025).

In the context of studying the implementation of character education, an educator can refer to social learning theory based on the empiricism approach as proposed by John Locke, as well as behaviorism theory developed by John Watson and B.F. Skinner. This theory perceives individuals as "blank slates," shaped by societal experiences. The multidimensional social environment, including family, race, institutions, ethnicity, and customs, also makes a significant contribution to the formation of a person's character. The assessment of whether an individual's behavior is good or bad is determined by the norms prevailing in that society. School is then considered a microcosm of society, with the role of moral authority (Rosadi et al., 2025).

Additionally, character education can also be explained through Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes that humans are driven by irrational impulses that need to be controlled. According to Freud, there are three main components of personality: "id," which represents primal and instinctive drives; "ego," which functions as the reality principle to assess actions; and "superego," which acts as the ultimate control agent that regulates and prevents actions that are wrong, bad, or immoral while also teaching right and wrong values. In this process, the roles of parents and teachers have a very significant influence on the formation of a child's superego so that it can develop optimally (Hafidz et al., 2025). Based on the theories put forth by these experts, the implementation of moral character by educators in Indonesia should ideally refer to religious norms and national culture, which is rich in local wisdom values. Attitudes and behaviors that reflect solid character include at least five main aspects, namely:

1. Attitudes and behaviors related to God reflect the responsibility of every individual in Indonesia to know, remember, pray, and surrender to God as part of the character-building process based on religious values.
2. Attitudes and behaviors related to an individual's relationship with themselves require every Indonesian citizen to have a strong self-identity, enabling the individual to optimally value themselves through the formation of a positive self-concept.
3. An individual's attitudes and behaviors within the context of family relationships are very important, considering that individuals cannot live without the closest social environment that supports their development, namely, family. Therefore, a process of personal adaptation is needed between the values believed by the individual and the values prevailing within the family environment.
4. Attitudes and behaviors related to social interaction within the context of society and the nation are a fundamental manifestation of self-adjustment to a broader environment, where individuals can express themselves more widely after reaching adulthood.
5. Individual behavior and attitudes in interacting with their surroundings are a crucial aspect, considering that human survival is highly dependent on appropriate, harmonious, and suitable environmental support that meets needs.

Therefore, maintaining the sustainability and balance of the relationship between humans and their surrounding environment requires strict adherence to rules. Although these norms and codes of conduct are very ideal and beautiful when applied in daily life, especially to students, and reflect highly commendable behavior, their implementation is not simple. A teacher must have the capacity to be an efficient learner to optimally implement character education, which ultimately contributes to respecting human dignity. Character development in students cannot be firmly established solely through formal teaching processes; rather, it needs to be cultivated through education that can touch and awaken awareness in the deepest conscience. In this regard, educators in schools are expected to implement a high-touch (intensive interaction)

educational approach in character and moral development (Bararah, 2022). The concept of high-touch here refers to an educational method that prioritizes the application of:

1. Recognition refers to the acceptance and treatment provided by educators to students based on their identity and humanity, which includes respect for human dignity. Additionally, recognition also encompasses the acceptance and attitude of students toward educators based on their superior status, role, and qualities.
2. Affection and gentleness are attitudes, behaviors, and forms of communication that educators use with students, based on a close, intimate, and open socio-emotional relationship. This approach is facilitative and constructively permissive with the goal of student development. This relationship is based on love and care, with a focus on humanistic principles that prioritize the students' interests and well-being.
3. Reinforcement is an effort made by educators to strengthen students' positive behavior through appropriate and reinforcing rewards. This reinforcement is given based on the principles of behavior change.
4. Guidance is an effort made by educators to determine the direction of students' development and self-improvement. This directive effort, which involves the educator's leadership function, still respects the freedom of the learners as inherently autonomous subjects and is aimed at developing independent individuals.
4. Firm and educational actions are efforts undertaken by educators to guide behavioral changes in students that are not in line with expectations by providing understanding of the mistakes that have been made while still respecting the dignity of the students and maintaining a harmonious relationship between students and educators. Implementing these firm and educational measures can avoid the application of punishments that could negatively impact students.
5. An educator sets an example by displaying positive and norm-compliant behavior, which students then accept and emulate. This concept of role modeling is based on conformity, which is the result of social influence from others, and progresses through the stages of compliance, identification, and internalization.

The implementation of the high-touch approach, as previously explained, must be accompanied by teachers' competence in integrating high technology (high-tech) into the learning process. This includes curriculum development, teaching methods, and learning media, while simultaneously creating a conducive socio-emotional environment to support the effectiveness of the educational process.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The formation of noble character plays a crucial role in the development and maintenance of students' human perfection in the school environment, especially through the implementation of Islamic religious education. Character education should ideally begin at an early age in the family environment, where parents play a central role in guiding children toward positive life values. On the other hand, schools, especially teachers as educators, are required to provide positive guidance to students. At the societal level, it is important to develop harmonious social interactions, which include mutual respect, reciprocal honor, and adherence to prevailing norms, so as to create a community with high character and morality.

Educators bear significant moral responsibility regarding the decline in morality and ethics among students, including both children and adolescents. Therefore, educators are required to be able to face these challenges by demonstrating a strong commitment to the learning process and continuous development so that their roles as teachers, educators, and mentors can be carried out optimally. As educators, teachers are expected to be able to integrate advanced technology into the learning process, encompassing curriculum, methods, and learning media, while also creating a conducive atmosphere to support learning effectiveness. As educators, teachers must implement a high-touch approach in instilling moral values so that they can deeply touch the souls of their students. Thus, teachers truly become "a lamp in the moral darkness" and "a refreshing dew in the thirst for example and compassion." In this way, the students' human perfection can develop and be maintained in accordance with the principles of truth.

REFERENCES

- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (2021). *The Concept of Education in Islam*. Ta'dib International.
- Al-Maraghi, A. M. (2021). *Tafsir Al-Maraghi*. Pustaka Amani.
- Aljamaan, A., Alsaber, A., Coffie, E., & Alkandari, A. (2025). Leveling up learning effectiveness in STEM education through gamification: an empirical study on behavioral intention and digital literacy among undergraduate students in Kuwait. *Frontiers in Education*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1586466>
- Anggun, S., Jimi, H., Tri, D., & Herpratiwi, H. (2024). The Influence of the Montessori Method on Early Childhood Development. *Bulletin of Science Education*, 4(1), 301–308.
- Anis, F., Nugroho, P. A., Hutami, T. S., Puspitaningrum, D. A., Nasution, N., & Katsuhisa, S. (2025). Integrating Gresik's local cultural wisdom into character education for shaping the Pancasila student profile. *Jurnal Civics Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 22(2), 228–240. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v22i2.86062>

- Anisah, A. (2023). Implementation Strengthening Education Character Student School Al-Anwar's Foundations Through School Culture. *Assyfa Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.61650/ajis.v1i1.296>
- Bamkin, S. (2022). Policy change in moral education: Working through the Ministry of Education. In *Japan's school curriculum for the 2020s: Politics, policy, and pedagogy* (pp. 103-120). Springer.
- Bararah, I. (2022). Peranan Etika Profesi Pendidik dalam Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik. *Jurnal Mudarrisuna: Media Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 12(4), 996-1011.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Wojcikiewicz, S. (2025). Design principles for teacher preparation: Enacting the science of learning and development. <https://doi.org/10.54300/115.854>
- Dewi, D. G. D. P., & Surat, I. M. (2022). Pkm. Pengembangan Soft Dan Hard Skill Berbasis Tri Hita Karana Dalam Mempersiapkan Diri Untuk Mampu Bersaing Di Era 5.0. *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Widya Mahadi*, 2(2), 110-120.
- Don, A. G., Puteh, A., & Sham, M. R. B. R. (2025). The Role of Integrated Da'wah Education in Shaping the Holistic Character of muallaf in Malaysia. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 3250-3259. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2025.906000239>
- Fadilah, L. N., Istikomah, N., & Afriantoni, A. (2025). Kontribusi ilmu pengetahuan islam dalam pembentukan karakter untuk meningkatkan mutu pendidikan. *Cendekia Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan*, 5(2), 496-508. <https://doi.org/10.51878/cendekia.v5i2.4707>
- Ghofur, A., CHOIRIYAH, F., Nashrullah, M. F., Purwoko, B., & Budiyanto, B. (2024). Analisis Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Kurikulum Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI). *LEARNING Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 4(4), 1128-1135. <https://doi.org/10.51878/learning.v4i4.3761>
- Gillani, U., & Khan, M. J. (2025). Achieving our highest potential through character development (Husn-i-Akhlaaq): an Islamic perspective on holistic personality development, spiritual growth and human flourishing. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1569393>
- Grădinariu, T., & Vechiu, A.-P. (2025). Teacher leadership competence in cultivating an anti-bullying school climate. *Perspectives on the hidden curriculum (BY ARTS). Review of Artistic Education*, 30, 349-362. <https://doi.org/10.35218/rae-2025-0047>

- Hafidz, N., Ma'mun, A. A. J., & Syifa, W. A. (2025). A Religious Education Model Through the Habituation of Religious Values in Early Childhood. *JOYCED Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 5(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.14421/joyced.2025.51-01>
- Haidar, A. (2021). *Pengembangan Nilai-nilai Insani dalam Pendidikan Islam*. Deepublish.
- Hamidi, A., & Nurhakim, M. (2025). Character Building Based on Tazkiyatun Nafs: A Conceptual Study on the Development of Moral Education Materials. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(26), 8068–8077. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2025.903sedu0604>
- Harianto, J. (2024). The Role Of Islamic Religious Education In The Era Of Information And Communication Technology. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Jurisprudence, Economic and Legal Theory*, 2(1), 205–214.
- Hariyanto, D., & Fathurrahman, M. (2022). Korelasi Ayat-ayat Musibah dan Muhasabah dalam Alquran. *Izzatuna: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 3(1).
- Hasanah, U. (2023). Pendidikan Karakter dalam Perspektif Islam dan Budaya Lokal (S. A. Ramdhani (ed.)). *Pustaka Pelajar*.
- Hidayat, N. (2023). Konsep manusia dalam pendidikan hakikat manusia the perfect man. *Didaktik: Jurnal Ilmiah PGSD STKIP Subang*, 9(2), 1035–1049.
- Hodriani, Pinem, W., Sutrisno, S., Safitri, I., & binti Bahaiddin Bahaiddin, N. A. (2025). Integrating Civic Engagement to Foster Soft Skills and Teacher Professionalism. *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan*, 22(2), 228–245. <https://doi.org/10.24114/jk.v22i2.66124>
- Idris, M. (2023). The Role of Character Development in Islamic Religious Education: An Islamic Values-Based Approach at one of the MAN Schools in South Sulawesi. *West Science Interdisciplinary Studies*, 1(8), 621–629. <https://doi.org/10.58812/wsis.v1i08.187>
- Jakandar, L. I. E., Pantiwati, Y., Sunaryo, H., & Fikriah, A. (2025). Integration of Religious Values in Character Education. *AL-HAYAT Journal of Islamic Education*, 9(1), 124–141. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v9i1.107>
- Jati, S. N., Latipun, & Hasanati, N. (2025). Moral awareness: Contributing factors among adolescents in conflict with the law (a literature review). *Springer Link* (Chiba Institute of Technology). <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202522406007/pdf>

- Mubin, N., Haryanto, S., Syam, R. S. T., & Hita, I. P. A. D. (2025). Enhancing Moral and Spiritual Development in Early Childhood Education Through the Ponakawan Philosophy. *Jurnal Obsesi Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 9(1), 229–241. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v9i1.6869>
- Nasr, S. H. (2021). *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*. Kazi Publications.
- Nayla, A., Nurgayyah, F., Naila, W., Desianti, N. R., & Zulkifli, N. N. (2025). The Relevance of Ki Hajar Dewantara's Philosophy of Education in Modern Education. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5057233>
- Nugroho, T., Rahman, A., Al-Makky, A. R. A., & Surur, M. (2025). Indonesian Salafi Education: Change and Sustainability Attitudes toward Ideology in PPIM al-Mukmin Ngruki. *INFERENSI Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, 19(1), 115–136. <https://doi.org/10.18326/infs13.v19i1.115-136>
- Oktarini, D., undefined, S., undefined, A., & Ayu, C. (2025). *Ontologi, Epistemologi, Dan Aksiologi Dalam Pendidikan Islam: Membentuk Karakter Yang Berkualitas*.
- Quari, T. Q. S. (2024). The Implementation of Industrial Work Culture as an Effort to Educate Students' Character in Qualitative Analysis Practical Learning for Grade XI of Analytical Chemistry Department at SMTI Yogyakarta Vocational School. *IJCER (International Journal of Chemistry Education Research)*, 24–31. <https://doi.org/10.20885/ijcer.vol8.iss1.art4>
- Ricca, M. (2025). *The Stream of Human Dignity and its Relational/Generative Ecology: Biblical Past, Human Rights, Planetary Future*. *Jus Cogens*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42439-025-00108-8>
- Rizani, A. H., & Wiranti, D. A. (2025). Analisis program penguatan pendidikan karakter jiwa nasionalisme di kelas 4 sd negeri 6 suwawal. *Learning Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 5(2), 1013–1025. <https://doi.org/10.51878/learning.v5i2.6439>
- Rosadi, A., Mahmud, M., Arifin, B. S., & Nursobah, A. (2025). The Influence of School Culture and Religious Activity Habituation Through Discipline on Students' Religious and National Character. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 8(8). <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v8-i8-79>
- Sari, F., Badrah, N., & Muslimin, M. (2020). Ayat Al-Qur'an Tentang Potensi Manusia. *Jurnal Bilqolam Pendidikan Islam*, 1(2), 72–81.

- Sari, N. L. (2022). Psikologi Islam Kontemporer: Integrasi Tubuh, Jiwa, dan Ruh dalam Pendidikan (D. Nurhayati (ed.)). Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Scholz-Kuhn, R., Makarova, E., Bardi, A., Litzellachner, L. F., Benish-Weisman, M., & Döring, A. K. (2025). Children's personal values and their behavior in the classroom in the early elementary school years: mapping longitudinal trajectories. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 40(3). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-025-00966-2>
- Shofiyah, N., Sumedi, S., Hidayat, T., & Istianah, I. (2023). Tujuan Penciptaan Manusia Dalam Kajian Al-Quran. *ZAD Al-Mufasssir*, 5(1), 1-17.
- Sholihah, H., & Zaenurrosyid, A. (2025). Internalization of Islamic Values and Piousness of Daqu Primary School Students Based on Tahfidz and National Curriculum. *Al-Fikri Jurnal Studi Dan Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 49. <https://doi.org/10.30659/jspi.8.2.49-71>
- Suyanto, S. (2021). Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan Moral: Teori dan Praktik dalam Keluarga dan Sekolah. Deepublish.
- Syafi'i, I., & Yusuf, S. (2021). The role and challenges of islamic education in indonesia in the disruptive era: the analysis of the system of islamic education character in indonesia. *Akademika Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 26(1), 107. <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v26i1.3285>
- Szalados, J. E. (2021). Morality, ethics, the foundations of the American legal system, and ethical challenges in the digital age. In *The Medical-Legal Aspects of Acute Care Medicine: A Resource for Clinicians, Administrators, and Risk Managers* (pp. 1-18). Springer.
- Ulum, M. (2020). Kebijakan standar nasional pendidikan. *Syaikhuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pranata Islam*, 11(1), 105-116.
- Zhang, X., Chen, H., Chen, Y., Guo, C., Ju, W., Li, X., Kaixuan, L., MA, X., Chen, P., Qi, L., Qu, Y., Wang, L., Yu, Y., Yuan, Q., Ning, Z., Wei, Z., Chen, J., Ge, J., Kong, C., ... Qi, M. (2025). *International Journal of Social Sciences in Universities*.
- Zubaedi. (2022). Desain Pendidikan Karakter: Konsepsi dan Aplikasinya dalam Lembaga Pendidikan. Kencana.