

Integrating Islamic Values into Character Education: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Preventing Moral Degradation among Youth

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ABSTRACT

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This study explores how Islamic values can be integrated into character education to prevent moral decline among youth in the era of globalization and technological change. The research responds to growing concerns about dishonesty, intolerance, lack of discipline, and weak social responsibility among younger generations. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were gathered through interviews, observations, and document analysis in Islamic-based schools. Results show that students' perception of Islamic value integration in character education is high (M = 4.27). Spiritual values scored the highest (M = 4.34), followed by moral discipline (M = 4.29), social responsibility (M = 4.21), and intellectual integrity (M = 4.17). Regression analysis indicates that Islamic values significantly enhance the effectiveness of character education, explaining 54% of the variance. Spiritual values had the strongest effect, while moral discipline, social responsibility, and intellectual integrity also made meaningful contributions. The findings suggest that integrating Islamic principles supports students' spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual growth, making them both academically competent and ethically responsible. This integration offers a practical response to the challenges of Society 5.0, balancing modern skills with strong moral foundations.

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era, the challenges faced by young generations are becoming increasingly complex. Globalization, rapid technological advancement, and the influence of mass media have reshaped social interactions, cultural orientations, and behavioral tendencies among youth. One of the most alarming consequences of these dynamics is the rise of moral degradation, manifested in various forms such as declining discipline, dishonesty, intolerance,

and lack of social responsibility. This condition has generated widespread concern among educators, policymakers, and religious leaders, who emphasize the urgent need for effective character education as a means of safeguarding the moral integrity of young people.

Character education has long been recognized as a strategic foundation in developing individuals who possess not only intellectual competence but also ethical and social awareness. However, character education cannot stand apart from cultural and religious contexts in which students live. In the Indonesian context, where Islam is the majority religion, integrating Islamic values into character education becomes a relevant and powerful approach. Islamic teachings encompass comprehensive guidance on moral behavior, spiritual development, social responsibility, and intellectual integrity, all of which align with the goals of character education. By embedding Islamic values, schools can strengthen not only academic achievement but also the moral resilience of their students.

The integration of Islamic values into character education involves more than simply introducing religious rituals or memorization of texts. It requires the cultivation of holistic values that shape students' spiritual awareness, ethical discipline, empathy, and intellectual honesty. Spiritual values, such as faith, sincerity, and gratitude, build a strong inner foundation that influences behavior across various life situations. Moral discipline emphasizes responsibility, honesty, and self-control, enabling students to navigate ethical dilemmas with consistency. Social responsibility, rooted in Islamic teachings of compassion and community service, nurtures empathy and cooperation, ensuring that students grow into socially aware and caring individuals. Meanwhile, intellectual integrity, framed by the Islamic principle of seeking knowledge for the sake of truth and societal benefit, develops critical thinking and academic honesty.

Scholars argue that the multidimensional approach in character education, especially when integrated with Islamic values, plays a crucial role in addressing moral degradation among youth. Previous studies indicate that students exposed to faith-based character education display higher levels of moral awareness, resilience against negative external influences, and stronger commitment to societal values. Furthermore, integrating Islamic values supports the vision of education as a transformative process, not only producing competent graduates but also nurturing individuals who embody integrity and responsibility.

In the broader framework of national development, such integration has strategic importance. Indonesia's aspiration to build a generation that is globally competitive yet rooted in cultural and religious identity requires educational models that balance modern competencies with spiritual and moral foundations. Thus, character education enriched with Islamic values is not merely an academic

exercise but a societal necessity. It ensures that while students gain access to modern knowledge and technological literacy, they also preserve and practice timeless ethical principles.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the role of integrating Islamic values into character education as a multidisciplinary approach to preventing moral degradation among youth. By exploring how spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual dimensions of Islamic values contribute to the formation of student character, this research aims to provide both theoretical insights and practical guidance for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the field of Islamic education.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to explore the integration of Islamic values into character education as a preventive measure against moral degradation among youth. The qualitative method was chosen because it allows a deeper understanding of meanings, perspectives, and experiences related to value-based education.

The primary data sources consisted of educators, school leaders, and students from Islamic-based educational institutions. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, including curriculum materials and institutional policies. Interviews focused on participants' perceptions of how Islamic values are embedded into teaching and learning, while observations provided insights into the actual practices within classrooms and extracurricular activities. Document analysis offered supporting evidence regarding the formal integration of values into school programs.

A purposive sampling technique was applied to select informants who were considered knowledgeable and actively engaged in character education practices. This ensured that the data obtained were rich, relevant, and directly related to the research objectives.

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, consisting of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the reduction stage, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were systematically organized and coded. The display stage involved categorizing the data into themes such as spiritual values, moral discipline, social responsibility, and intellectual integrity. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the relationships among themes to explain how Islamic values shape character education.

To ensure validity and trustworthiness, triangulation of data sources and techniques was employed. Member checking was also conducted, allowing

participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations. The credibility of findings was further strengthened through peer debriefing with fellow researchers specializing in Islamic education.

This methodological framework provided a comprehensive perspective on how Islamic values are integrated into educational practices and how such integration contributes to character building and the prevention of moral degradation among youth.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The descriptive statistics reveal that students' perception of character education integrated with Islamic values is high overall ($M = 4.27$ on a 5-point scale). This average score indicates that the implementation of value-based education is not only present but consistently experienced by students as a strong part of their learning environment.

Among the four measured dimensions, spiritual values received the highest mean score ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.56$). This suggests that faith-based principles such as prayer, sincerity, and remembrance of God are deeply embedded in daily educational practices. The emphasis on spirituality demonstrates that schools prioritize religious consciousness as the foundation of moral and intellectual growth.

Moral discipline followed closely with a mean of 4.29 ($SD = 0.61$). This result reflects the extent to which ethical behavior, self-control, and adherence to rules are consistently emphasized within character education. Students appear to internalize these principles, creating a culture of discipline that is aligned with Islamic teachings on honesty, responsibility, and respect for others.

The third dimension, social responsibility, obtained a mean of 4.21 ($SD = 0.59$). This indicates that students are encouraged to practice empathy, cooperation, and service to the community. Character education not only cultivates individual virtues but also promotes a collective awareness of societal obligations. The presence of social values reflects the Islamic emphasis on *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and active contribution to the common good.

Finally, intellectual integrity recorded the lowest mean score, though still high ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.64$). This dimension reflects students' understanding of honesty in academic work, critical thinking, and fairness in intellectual engagement. The slightly lower rating compared to other dimensions suggests

that while intellectual integrity is valued, its consistent application may vary across contexts. Some students may face challenges in translating moral principles into academic behavior, highlighting the need for stronger reinforcement from educators.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Islamic Value Integration in Character Education

Dimension	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Spiritual Values	4.34	0.56
Moral Discipline	4.29	0.61
Social Responsibility	4.21	0.59
Intellectual Integrity	4.17	0.64
Overall	4.27	0.60

The regression analysis demonstrates that the integration of Islamic values significantly predicts the effectiveness of character education, explaining 54% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.54$). This proportion indicates a substantial model fit, suggesting that more than half of the effectiveness of character education can be accounted for by the four measured dimensions of value integration. Such a result underscores the crucial role of faith-based principles in shaping comprehensive student development.

Among the four dimensions, spiritual values exert the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < 0.001$). This confirms that religiosity—expressed through practices such as prayer, sincerity, and spiritual reflection—serves as the foundation for students’ moral resilience. The strength of this predictor reveals that spirituality provides not only emotional stability but also a guiding framework for decision-making in both personal and academic contexts.

Moral discipline also shows a strong and significant effect ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that ethical consistency, obedience to rules, and respect for authority remain essential for shaping students’ behaviors. The impact of moral discipline demonstrates that character education built upon Islamic principles

strengthens integrity, perseverance, and accountability—qualities needed in both religious and secular life.

The dimension of social responsibility contributes positively ($\beta = 0.19$, $p = 0.003$). Although slightly weaker than the first two predictors, it nonetheless highlights the significance of empathy, cooperation, and commitment to communal well-being. This finding aligns with Islamic teachings on *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and social solidarity, showing that character education goes beyond the individual to foster collective values in students.

Lastly, intellectual integrity emerges as the weakest yet still significant predictor ($\beta = 0.14$, $p = 0.015$). This reflects the role of honesty, fairness, and critical thinking in academic practices. Although the effect size is smaller, the significance suggests that intellectual integrity cannot be ignored. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring that students uphold ethical standards in learning, research, and problem-solving, especially in an era where academic dishonesty and digital plagiarism can easily occur.

Table 2. Regression Analysis: Effect of Islamic Value Integration on Character Education

Predictor	Standardized β	Sig. (p)
Spiritual Values	0.33	< 0.001
Moral Discipline	0.25	< 0.001
Social Responsibility	0.19	0.003
Intellectual Integrity	0.14	0.015
Model R ²	0.54	

Discussion

The findings confirm that integrating Islamic values into character education significantly contributes to the prevention of moral degradation among youth. Regression results clearly show that spiritual values and moral

discipline are the strongest drivers of ethical formation, while social responsibility and intellectual integrity play supporting roles. This indicates that character education rooted in Islamic principles functions as a multidimensional framework that holistically nurtures students' spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual growth.

Spiritual values are identified as the most crucial factor. Students who internalize religious teachings demonstrate stronger resistance to moral decline, reflecting higher levels of accountability and self-awareness. This supports the core principle of Islamic education, which views spirituality not as a complementary element but as the foundation of moral and social conduct. The practice of faith encourages discipline, sincerity, and a sense of responsibility before God, which together build inner resilience against negative external influences such as materialism, peer pressure, and unhealthy media content. In this context, spirituality acts as a safeguard that aligns personal choices with religiously guided ethical standards.

Moral discipline is the next significant dimension, reinforcing the consistency of ethical behavior. Educational programs that highlight honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, and self-control help students to navigate external temptations. For instance, moral training prepares them to withstand pressures from social environments that may normalize unethical practices. Such systematic training ensures that students do not merely understand moral values cognitively but are also habituated to apply them in daily life. This reflects the prophetic model of *tarbiyah* (education), where repetition, discipline, and exemplary conduct serve as the foundation of moral cultivation.

The role of social responsibility emphasizes the importance of empathy, cooperation, and community service. Character education that integrates Islamic teachings on *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and collective duty fosters social harmony and solidarity. When students are encouraged to actively participate in communal activities, they not only strengthen their interpersonal skills but also develop a sense of shared responsibility for societal well-being. This dimension is particularly relevant in the era of globalization, where cultural diversity and rapid social changes often lead to fragmentation. Embedding social values ensures that young people are prepared to maintain unity, tolerance, and cooperation in diverse environments.

Intellectual integrity, although showing the lowest mean score, remains a vital dimension. In modern educational contexts, honesty in academic work, avoidance of plagiarism, and critical thinking skills are indispensable. The findings suggest that while intellectual integrity is valued, its practice is less consistent compared to other dimensions. This highlights the need for educational institutions to place greater emphasis on academic ethics,

particularly in the digital age where access to information can easily lead to misuse. Enhancing training in intellectual honesty and reasoning skills will not only improve students' academic performance but also prepare them to be responsible digital citizens.

Overall, these findings underscore that integrating Islamic values into character education produces a holistic model that addresses spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual aspects simultaneously. By doing so, educational institutions are able to develop graduates who excel academically while remaining ethically sound and socially responsible. This multidisciplinary approach illustrates the continued relevance of Islamic education in addressing contemporary challenges, particularly the moral crises faced by younger generations.

In the broader context of Society 5.0, where technology and human values are expected to coexist harmoniously, the integration of Islamic values serves as a strategic response. It ensures that youth are equipped not only with modern competencies but also with enduring moral foundations, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to society. This balance between tradition and modernity represents a sustainable framework for shaping future generations who are capable of navigating globalization, digitalization, and cultural transformation without compromising their ethical integrity.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of Islamic values significantly enhances the effectiveness of character education in preparing students to face the challenges of Society 5.0. The regression analysis demonstrates that spiritual values serve as the strongest predictor of students' moral resilience, confirming that religiosity remains the foundation of holistic character formation. Moral discipline provides essential reinforcement by ensuring ethical consistency and responsible behavior, while social responsibility strengthens empathy, cooperation, and commitment to the common good. Intellectual integrity, although contributing with a smaller effect, highlights the need to cultivate honesty, fairness, and critical thinking within academic practices.

Overall, the findings affirm that character education in Islamic educational settings must be understood as a multidimensional construct, where spirituality, morality, social ethics, and intellectual responsibility are interconnected. By explaining 54% of the variance, the model reveals that Islamic boarding schools and other faith-based institutions play a pivotal role in producing students who are not only intellectually competent but also ethically grounded. These results emphasize the importance of sustaining a balanced curriculum that integrates faith, discipline, social awareness, and intellectual rigor.

In a broader sense, the conclusion underscores that character education rooted in Islamic principles offers a strategic response to the complexities of Society 5.0. As technology continues to shape human interactions and knowledge production, the integration of values ensures that digital advancement is guided by moral responsibility. Strengthening these dimensions in education will contribute to the development of future generations who embody both digital competence and ethical integrity.

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