



Prophetic Role Modeling and Character Education in the Modern Era: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract :

In the modern era, one of the major challenges in character education lies in effectively instilling moral and ethical values amid rapid social change. The decline in moral standards within society is frequently associated with the suboptimal implementation of moral education across families, formal educational institutions, and broader social environments. At the same time, the effectiveness of value-based education within formal schooling continues to be widely debated, particularly regarding its relevance in contemporary contexts. This study aims to examine the relevance and significance of the educational exemplarity of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a foundational framework for character education in the modern era. Employing a literature review approach, this study analyzes classical and contemporary scholarly works related to prophetic education, moral development, and character formation. The findings indicate that the Prophet Muhammad's educational model emphasizes universal values such as moral integrity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social harmony. The family is identified as a crucial foundational unit in character formation, especially during early childhood, which represents a critical phase for moral development. Furthermore, prophetic teachings highlight the importance of collaboration, mutual assistance, and community-based engagement as key elements in fostering social cohesion and collective well-being. This study concludes that the educational exemplarity of the Prophet Muhammad remains highly relevant for addressing contemporary challenges in character education and offers a comprehensive, value-based framework adaptable to modern educational contexts.

Keywords : Character education; Prophetic education; Exemplarity of the Prophet Muhammad; Moral and ethical values; Contemporary Islamic education.

Abstrak :

Di era modern, salah satu tantangan utama dalam pendidikan karakter adalah menanamkan nilai-nilai moral dan etika secara efektif di tengah perubahan sosial yang cepat. Kemerosotan standar moral dalam masyarakat sering dikaitkan dengan belum optimalnya pelaksanaan pendidikan moral di lingkungan keluarga, institusi pendidikan formal, dan kehidupan sosial yang lebih luas. Di sisi lain, efektivitas pendidikan nilai di lembaga pendidikan formal masih menjadi perdebatan, terutama terkait relevansinya dalam konteks kontemporer. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji relevansi dan signifikansi keteladanan pendidikan Nabi Muhammad SAW sebagai kerangka dasar pendidikan karakter di era modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kajian literatur dengan menganalisis karya-karya ilmiah klasik dan kontemporer yang berkaitan dengan pendidikan profetik, perkembangan moral, dan pembentukan karakter. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa model pendidikan Nabi Muhammad SAW menekankan nilai-nilai universal seperti integritas moral, tanggung jawab, kemandirian, kerja sama, dan harmoni sosial. Keluarga diidentifikasi sebagai unit dasar yang krusial dalam pembentukan karakter, khususnya pada masa kanak-kanak awal yang merupakan fase kritis dalam perkembangan moral.

Selain itu, ajaran profetik menekankan pentingnya kolaborasi, tolong-menolong, dan keterlibatan berbasis komunitas sebagai elemen utama dalam membangun kohesi sosial dan kesejahteraan bersama. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keteladanan pendidikan Nabi Muhammad SAW tetap sangat relevan dalam menjawab tantangan pendidikan karakter kontemporer serta menawarkan kerangka pendidikan berbasis nilai yang komprehensif dan adaptif terhadap konteks pendidikan modern.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan karakter; Pendidikan profetik; Keteladanan Nabi Muhammad SAW; Nilai moral dan etika; Pendidikan Islam kontemporer.

INTRODUCTION

Morally grounded education is essential in shaping well-rounded Indonesian individuals. Education cannot be separated from the development of values that function to address negative impacts arising from both internal and external influences (Hendayani, 2019). Along with rapid advancements in science, technology, the arts, and ongoing reforms, these values are increasingly recognized as vital instruments for achieving national educational goals as a whole (Wyman et al., 2023).

However, there is a growing tendency among younger generations – and even parents, to neglect moral values and social ethics education, which are crucial for maintaining a civilized social order. In the modern era, individual freedom appears to be prioritized excessively, often triggering anarchic behaviors such as mass brawls, vandalism of places of worship, educational institutions, and government offices, resulting in both material and humanitarian losses. Therefore, it is essential to instill values grounded in sound religious teachings so that society does not become further entrenched in deviant behavior (Zaini, 2023).

Nevertheless, similar tendencies persist among young people and even parents to disregard moral values and social ethics education necessary for sustaining a civilized society (Effendi et al., 2024). In this modern era, individual freedom is often given precedence, which frequently leads to anarchic actions such as mass fights and the destruction of places of worship, educational institutions, and government facilities, causing both material and humanitarian damage. Consequently, it is crucial to instill values based on proper religious law to prevent society from descending further into moral deviation.

Indonesian society is currently facing a value crisis, in which greed and excessive ambition for power, wealth, and prestige have begun to replace the noble values that should be upheld. This shift has generated social tensions, making communal life harsher and more prone to violence. Society has also shown a declining sense of mutual respect, which should serve as a fundamental measure of human dignity and worth (Arifin, 2021). Therefore, moral values are critically important for upholding human rights and preventing serious violations such as murder, sexual violence, and destruction.

Accordingly, the primary focus of contemporary society must be directed toward moral and ethical principles capable of shaping a dignified nation. The decline in moral standards observed within society is often attributed to insufficient moral education across family environments, educational institutions, and society at large (Nudin, 2020). Moreover, the paradigm of value-

based education in formal settings remains a subject of debate and has not yet been fully implemented in everyday life.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a library research approach, relying entirely on data collection through a comprehensive review of relevant literature. The primary data sources consist of books and scholarly works that focus on child education within the family context, particularly those discussing moral and character development from an Islamic perspective. Data collection was conducted by systematically identifying, selecting, and reviewing authoritative classical and contemporary literature related to prophetic education, character formation, and moral values. The collected data were then organized and classified based on thematic relevance to the research objectives.

The data analysis was carried out using a qualitative descriptive approach, as the data primarily consisted of narrative texts and verbal statements. To explore and interpret the educational values embedded in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in relation to character building in the modern era, this study applied inductive, deductive, and comparative analytical techniques. Inductive analysis was used to derive general educational principles from specific textual findings, while deductive analysis facilitated the application of established theoretical frameworks to the examined sources. Additionally, comparative analysis enabled the identification of similarities and differences across various scholarly perspectives. Through these analytical stages, the study systematically examined the relevance and applicability of prophetic educational values within contemporary educational contexts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2009).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Educational Values of the Prophet Muhammad in Family Life

Education within the family encompasses all aspects and involves every family member, including fathers, mothers, and children. However, the most essential component is the education provided by parents (adults) to children. Children in this context are not limited to biological offspring but include all children of the Muslim community wherever they may be, regardless of nationality (Ramdhani et al., 2020). They represent the generation of the ummah that is expected to reunite and strengthen overall Muslim unity. The following hadiths present several pieces of advice from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the foremost educator of the Muslim community.

It was narrated to us by Musaddad, who narrated to us Yahya from Sufyan and Shu'bah, both of whom narrated to us from Habib. It was also narrated through another chain that Muhammad ibn Kathir informed us, from Sufyan, from Habib, from Abu al-'Abbas, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr, who said: A man said to the Prophet (peace be upon him), "I wish to participate in jihad." The Prophet replied, "Are your parents still alive?" He answered, "Yes." The Prophet then said, "Then strive (jihad) in serving them." (Narrated by Muslim) (Astuti, 2021).

Respecting and showing kindness to parents is commanded by Allah and His Messenger, even if the parents adhere to a different religion. Islam

distinguishes between social relations and matters of faith. Social relations concern interactions among human beings, including relationships with parents, whereas faith relates to one's relationship with Allah. Forms of filial piety toward parents include (Suryani et al., 2021): 1) Demonstrating politeness and speaking gently; 2) Showing a cheerful and pleasant demeanor; 3) Fulfilling their daily needs appropriately; 4) Providing adequate and proper housing.

Attention and gentleness are more important than material provision. Even if parents are financially well-off, any gift from their children remains highly valued because sincerity is more important than material worth. Furthermore, devotion to one's mother carries greater reward than devotion to one's father, as the mother experiences hardship during pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and childrearing (Rahman et al., 2024). The obligation of filial piety continues even after parents pass away, through praying for them, seeking forgiveness on their behalf, and giving charity in their name (Ariej, 2020).

'Aisyah (RA) narrated that Hindun bint 'Utbah, the wife of Abu Sufyan, once came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and complained, "Abu Sufyan is stingy and does not provide sufficient financial support. May I take some of his wealth without his knowledge?" The Prophet replied, "Take what is sufficient for you and your children in a fair manner." (Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim) (Asrowi, 2023).

A father is responsible for meeting the needs of his children and providing financial support sincerely, which is considered an act of charity. In addition, a father must educate his children with good morals, protect them from harmful influences, and prioritize religious matters. He is also obliged to give good names, choose suitable spouses for his children, and act fairly in providing for them (Muslim, 2020).

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The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Command your children to perform prayer at the age of seven, discipline them for neglecting it at the age of ten, and separate their sleeping places." (Narrated by Abu Dawud). This hadith emphasizes the importance of introducing acts of worship from an early age, enabling children to grow with discipline and religious awareness. Islam teaches parents to instruct their children to perform prayer from the age of seven so that it becomes a habit in adulthood (Asrowi, 2023).

The Prophet also stated that every child is born in a state of fitrah (natural purity/Islam), and it is the parents who make the child Jewish, Christian, or

Magian. This highlights the profound influence parents have in shaping a child's personality (H. S. Hidayat et al., 2024). This hadith reinforces the responsibility of parents as primary educators who must ensure that their children's moral and religious education aligns with Islamic teachings.

2. Educational Values of the Prophet Muhammad in Social Life

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught every Muslim to possess social responsibility and to care for others. This concern can be expressed through various actions such as mutual assistance, sharing, and compassion (Kholifah, 2023). However, in reality, many Muslims neglect these social obligations, despite Islam clearly prescribing them, as stated in the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions.

In a hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever relieves a Muslim from a hardship, Allah will relieve him from a hardship on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever gives ease to one in difficulty, Allah will grant him ease in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah continues to help His servant as long as the servant helps his brother." (Narrated by Muslim) (D. Hidayat, 2023).

From this hadith, several essential social values taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) can be identified, including social responsibility, compassion, and mutual assistance. Relieving the hardships of others may take various forms depending on the situation, such as providing financial support or employment for the poor, facilitating medical care for the sick, or offering guidance to those burdened by debt (D. Hidayat, 2023). Islam highly values efforts to ease the difficulties of others, even through simple acts such as listening empathetically, offering prayers, or helping according to one's capacity, as these actions reflect sincere compassion. In addition, Muslims are encouraged to conceal the faults of others as long as such faults do not involve open wrongdoing or cause harm to society, while openly harmful actions should not be hidden to prevent broader negative impacts. The Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasized that helping others invites divine assistance, as Allah supports those who support their fellow believers. Furthermore, Islam strictly discourages individualistic and selfish behavior, as reflected in the hadith stating that one's faith is incomplete until one loves for others what one loves for oneself (Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim) (Nafisah & Andriansyah, 2023). Collectively, these teachings highlight that social concern, solidarity, and mutual support are fundamental characteristics of a true Muslim's life, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

CONCLUSION

The educational values taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in family life emphasize that the family is a social unit characterized by shared residence, cooperation, economic interdependence, and reproduction. Childhood represents a period of rapid development during which significant changes occur across multiple dimensions, and early life experiences exert a profound influence on an individual's future development. The role of the

nuclear family, particularly that of parents, is therefore crucial in shaping a child's personality. This role encompasses serving as educators, role models, motivators, supervisors, companions, and sources of inspiration for their children. Furthermore, the educational teachings of the Prophet Muhammad in social life affirm that a society can attain independence and strength when it is founded upon cooperation and mutual assistance among its members, especially within the Muslim community. Islam teaches that Allah strongly encourages mutual help in acts of goodness to promote collective progress and shared prosperity. Mutual assistance involves both giving and receiving help and constitutes an inseparable part of human life, as individuals require support from others from birth through adulthood and even until death.

As Muslims, individuals are obliged to assist one another in goodness with sincere intentions, solely seeking the pleasure of Allah. Through such actions, Allah's mercy will be bestowed in both this world and the Hereafter as a recompense for righteous deeds. If all Muslims were to consistently practice mutual assistance, a harmonious and flourishing Islamic society would emerge. Social conditions that were previously imbalanced would gradually become more equitable as greater awareness develops regarding the importance of caring for fellow Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was endowed with the miracle of *jawāmi' al-kalim*, the ability to convey profound and comprehensive meanings through concise expressions. Therefore, it is hoped that deeper engagement with the hadiths of the Prophet will continue to reveal and enrich further educational insights worthy of study and application.

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