



## Islamic Education in the Modern Era: Analysis of Student Character and Their Role in Facing the Challenges of Industry 4.0

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**Abstract:** *This study explores the role of Islamic education in shaping student character in the context of the modern era, particularly amidst the challenges of Industry 4.0. Utilizing a qualitative methodology with a literature review approach, this research delves into historical perspectives on character, Islamic viewpoints on human nature, and contemporary learner characteristics, especially among Generation Z. Character in Islamic education is conceptualized as an amalgamation of innate traits and environmental influences, as reflected in Islamic teachings and the tripod theory of education. The study uncovers four primary streams of character formation - Fatalistic-Passive, Neutral-Passive, Positive-Active, and Dualistic-Active, aligning with Islamic teachings on children's innate purity and environmental impact. The analysis reveals that the rapid technological advancements characteristic of Industry 4.0 pose significant challenges to student character, leading to moral and ethical dilemmas. Islamic education emerges as a crucial tool for instilling values such as sincerity and respect for teachers while internalizing Islamic values within familial settings. The study emphasizes the need for an integrated educational approach that balances academic pursuits with character development, adapting Islamic education to modern challenges while retaining its core values. It contributes to the discourse on education, highlighting the role of religious teachings in contemporary educational practices. Recognizing its limitations, the study suggests further research into the application and long-term impact of character education across diverse educational settings.*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran pendidikan Islam dalam membentuk karakter siswa dalam konteks era modern, khususnya di tengah tantangan Industri 4.0. Menggunakan metodologi kualitatif dengan pendekatan *literature review*, penelitian ini menyelami perspektif historis tentang karakter, pandangan Islam tentang sifat manusia, dan karakteristik pembelajar kontemporer, terutama di kalangan Generasi Z. Karakter dalam pendidikan Islam dikonseptualisasikan sebagai gabungan dari sifat bawaan dan pengaruh lingkungan, seperti tercermin dalam ajaran Islam dan teori tripod pendidikan. Studi ini mengungkapkan empat aliran utama pembentukan karakter - Fatalistik-Pasif, Netral-Pasif, Positif-Aktif, dan Dualistik-Aktif, sejalan dengan ajaran Islam tentang kemurnian bawaan anak-anak dan pengaruh lingkungan. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa kemajuan teknologi cepat yang khas Industri 4.0 menimbulkan tantangan signifikan terhadap karakter siswa, menyebabkan dilema moral dan etika. Pendidikan Islam muncul sebagai alat penting untuk menanamkan nilai seperti ketulusan dan menghormati guru sambil menginternalisasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam lingkungan keluarga. Studi ini menekankan perlunya pendekatan pendidikan terpadu yang menyeimbangkan upaya akademik dengan pengembangan karakter, mengadaptasi pendidikan Islam terhadap tantangan modern sambil mempertahankan nilai intinya. Ini berkontribusi pada wacana pendidikan, menyoroti peran ajaran agama dalam praktik pendidikan kontemporer. Mengakui keterbatasannya, studi ini menyarankan penelitian lebih lanjut tentang penerapan dan dampak jangka panjang pendidikan karakter di berbagai lingkungan pendidikan.



## Introduction

The advent of the modern era has ushered in unprecedented advancements in science and technology, significantly impacting various facets of human life, including education. While beneficial, these developments have also introduced new challenges, particularly in the realm of Islamic education and students' character development. In the context of the rapidly evolving Industry 4.0, the role of Islamic education in shaping student character and preparing them for contemporary challenges becomes increasingly vital. The significance of this topic extends beyond individual and societal dimensions to encompass the broader discipline of education, addressing a critical problem in the modern educational landscape.<sup>1</sup>

According to Joshua Breslau, the Internet is a service designed to facilitate humanity in various ways, including social engagement, emotional support, skill development, financial gains, education, and entertainment.<sup>2</sup> It can be concluded that the internet is inseparable from human life, influencing aspects such as education, work, health, social interactions, entertainment, and even religious life, where the internet is used to disseminate teachings in various religions. The internet has become an integral part of the daily life of this generation.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the internet, smartphones have become indispensable in modern times, owned by almost every individual across various age groups, including children and the elderly.<sup>4</sup> Smartphones, as handheld devices, provide easy access to all internet services, from online shopping to work meetings, accessing global news, and playing a significant role in education. With smartphones and internet services, learners can access a wide range of references from anywhere, broadening their knowledge. Despite the positive impact, technological advancements also have negative effects on children's development, adversely affecting their character.<sup>5</sup>

The National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 explains that learners are members of society who strive to develop their potential through the learning process in specific educational paths, levels, and types.<sup>6</sup> Learners, in a narrow sense, refer to students who learn only in schools, while in a broader sense, learners are individuals in the lifelong education process. Learners are an integral part of the national education system, playing a crucial role in the education process. Learners are individuals with the intention to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah's pleasure and are capable of applying the learned knowledge to become a guiding light, adorning the soul to be closer to Allah.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Munawar Rahmat dan M. Wildan Bin H. M. Yahyah, "The Impact of Inclusive Islamic Education Teaching Materials Model on Religious Tolerance of Indonesian Students," *International Journal of Instruction* 15, no. 1 (2022): 347–64, <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.29333/iji.2022.15120a>.

<sup>2</sup> Joshua. Breslau et al., "A Review of Research on Problematic Internet Use and Well-Being," in *UML Reference Tutorial* (Washington DC: RAND Corporation, 2015), 1–3.

<sup>3</sup> Ijah Baharijah et al., "Wasathiyah Islam Di Era Disrupsi Digital (Pendidikan Nilai-Nilai Wasathiyah Islam Dalam Bersosial Media Di Kalangan Generasi Milenial dan Generasi Z)," *Edukasi Islami Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 1 (2022): 1–21.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Taufik Hidayat dan Anik Nur Handayani, "Pendidikan Karakter di Era Society 5.0," *Jurnal Inovasi Teknologi dan Edukasi Teknik* 2, no. 5 (2022): 261–66, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um068v2i52022p261-266>.

<sup>5</sup> Harikumar Pallathadka et al., "The study of Islamic teachings in education: With an emphasis on behavioural gentleness," *Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8193>.

<sup>6</sup> "Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Dengan Rahmat Tuhan Yang Maha Esa Presiden Republik Indonesia" (2003), <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/43920/uu-no-20-tahun-2003>.

<sup>7</sup> Nadja Thoma, "I don't want to be pushed into an islamic school': biography and raciolinguistic

In conclusion, learners are individuals who study knowledge and must apply it in daily life to become a beacon of life, adhering to religious values.

According to Makhmudah, the ongoing development of time brings about significant changes in all aspects of community life. Both the old and the young have been impacted by globalization, which is unavoidable. However, the progress of time has yet to match the improvement of personal character. Despite the advancing era, morality seems to be deteriorating. Many young generations, especially children, are losing their futures due to a lack of personal skills to filter everything in their daily lives.<sup>8</sup> In the modern era, character development for children is essential to curb deviations that occur and negatively affect the current generation's character or learners.

In the National Education Minister Regulation (Permendiknas) Number 22 of 2006 on religious education, it is closely related to Islamic religious education in shaping individuals who continuously strive to enhance their faith, piety, and noble character. Noble character includes ethics, manners, or morals, which are manifestations of religious education.<sup>9</sup> The role of Islamic education holds significant meaning in shaping the character of learners. Islamic education is expected to produce individuals who enhance faith, piety, and noble character, encompassing morals, etiquette, and ethics, the goals of education. Educators and learners must be capable of facing challenges, obstacles, and changes that arise in local, national, regional, and global social interactions.<sup>10</sup>

Character education is crucial to address recent social moral deviations, the rise in crime, drug abuse, violence among students, rampant corruption, and promiscuity, including Domestic Violence among Students (KDRT), proving a crisis of national and Indonesian identity. Honesty, justice, truth, compassion, and mutual cooperation are overshadowed by deceit, oppression, stumbling blocks, and mutual harm. There are also conflicts, slander, and arbitrary exploitation against others' unethical rights and violations of prevailing norms. This is why character education is necessary. In less than the last ten years, free association related to juvenile delinquency has seen alarming increases.<sup>11</sup> Forms of juvenile delinquency, such as pornography, promiscuity, online gambling, bullying, brawls, and alcohol abuse, are occurring.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, there needs to be adaptation and screening of current technological advancements through education.

Relevant previous research by Darnoto and Hesti Triyana Dewi is the basis for this study. It aims to explain juvenile delinquency in the millennial era in Sumberrejo Village, Donorojo District, Jepara Regency. The research shows that the social interaction behavior of adolescents in Sumberrejo Village tends to deviate, including in the context of free association, such as involvement in promiscuous relationships, smoking,

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ideologies in education," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 26, no. 6 (2023): 735–53, <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2020.1798390>.

<sup>8</sup> Siti Makhmudah, "Pendidik Dalam Upaya Pembentukan Karakter Rabani Generasi Muda Melalui Penerapan Metode Lagu Islami," *J-PAI: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 7, no. 2 (Juli 2021), <https://doi.org/10.18860/jpai.v7i2.11918>.

<sup>9</sup> "Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia 22 Tahun 2006 Tentang Isi Untuk Satuan Pendidikan Dasar Dan Menengah" (2006), [https://jdih.kemdikbud.go.id/detail\\_peraturan?main=439](https://jdih.kemdikbud.go.id/detail_peraturan?main=439).

<sup>10</sup> Nur Ainiyah, "Pembentukan Karakter Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Al-Ulum* 13, no. 1 (2013): 25–38.

<sup>11</sup> Ahmad Faqihuddin, "Building Character In Islamic Education Perspective Membangun Karakter Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam," *Al-Risalah: Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Pemikiran Islam* 12, no. 2 (2021): 372, <https://doi.org/10.34005/alrisalah.v12i2.1504>.

<sup>12</sup> Darnoto. dan Hesti Triyana Dewi, "Pergaulan Bebas Remaja di Era Milenial Perspektif Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Tarbawi* 17, no. 1 (2020): 47–60.

consuming alcoholic beverages (khamr), engaging in brawls, and drug use. The negative impact of free association on adolescents in Sumberrejo Village includes a decline in academic performance, dropping out of school, and non-marital pregnancies. Specifically, from an Islamic education perspective, free association is seen as a violation of human interaction etiquette, especially between genders, leading to extramarital sexual practices. This brings destructive consequences and deviant behavior inconsistent with the values instilled in Islamic education.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, research in the education field reveals that teachers are not only expected to have expertise in subjects but are also required to reflect Islamic values, serving as sources of inspiration and motivation for students.<sup>14</sup>

Previous research by Nur Ainiyah discusses character formation through Islamic religious education. According to the author, Islamic religious education (PAI) is considered a crucial element in shaping individual character. The author emphasizes that the foundation of character education can thrive when rooted in the religious soul of children. Therefore, PAI material in the school environment is regarded as a crucial supporting factor in character formation. In the context of PAI learning, students are taught about faith as the basis of their religion, learn about the Quran and hadith as life guides, understand fiqh as legal rules in worship, study Islamic history as a life example, and understand morals as guidelines for human behavior, both good and bad. The PAI learning process's main goal is to shape students' personalities reflected in their daily behavior and thought patterns.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the dynamic interaction between family, school, and society is emphasized in the current discourse on character education. Integrating 21st-century skills-based learning models is proposed as a strategic approach to developing student character. In the context of educational digitization, research has highlighted the importance of aligning character education activities with the development of blended learning and distance learning methodologies.<sup>16</sup>

This study aims to fill gaps in existing knowledge by comprehensively investigating the characteristics of modern learners and, more importantly, detailing the perspective of Islamic education in shaping their characters. Thus, the research aims to provide valuable insights beyond disciplinary boundaries, offering an understanding of the nuances of challenges faced by technology in the modern era. By explaining the impact of Islamic education on character formation, this research intends to provide practical strategies for educators and policymakers to navigate the complex field of contemporary education and support the holistic development of students.

## Method

This research utilizes a qualitative research methodology, employing a literature review approach to gather and analyze data from diverse sources such as books and scientific articles. The data are systematically examined within the framework of learners, and to enhance the depth of the discussion regarding learners, a meticulous examination of

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<sup>13</sup> Darnoto. dan Dewi.

<sup>14</sup> Galuh Nur Insani, DinieAnggraeni Dewi, dan Yayang Furi Furnamasari, "Integrasi Pendidikan Karakter dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan untuk Mengembangkan Karakter Siswa Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 5, no. 3 (17 November 2021): 8153-60, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jptam.v5i3.2313>.

<sup>15</sup> Angga Angga, Yunus Abidin, dan Sofyan Iskandar, "Penerapan Pendidikan Karakter dengan Model Pembelajaran Berbasis Keterampilan Abad 21," *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 1 (19 Januari 2022): 1046-54, <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i1.2084>.

<sup>16</sup> Afni Ma'rufah, "Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter dalam Digitalisasi Pendidikan," *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran* 3, no. 1 SE-Articles (12 Juni 2022): 17-29, <http://www.jurnaledukasia.org/index.php/edukasia/article/view/62>.

hadiths is undertaken. The data collection process in this literature review involves an extensive search for information, encompassing notes, books, papers, articles, journals, and similar scholarly resources. To derive meaningful insights from the collected data, the analysis technique applied is the method of content analysis. The qualitative nature of this study allows for a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter, providing a nuanced understanding of the experiences and perspectives of learners. By incorporating a literature review approach, the research draws upon a wealth of scholarly works, ensuring a robust foundation for the analysis. The inclusion of hadiths adds a unique dimension to the study, allowing for a more profound exploration of the educational aspects discussed in the literature. The meticulous data collection process ensures a thorough and exhaustive examination of relevant information, contributing to the richness of the analysis. The choice of content analysis as the analytical method further strengthens the study's rigor, enabling a systematic and structured interpretation of the gathered data.

## Result and Discussion

### 3.1. Characters and Their Formation

When traced to its origin, the word "character" comes from the Greek "Charassein," meaning to carve, meaning carving gemstones or engraving on hard iron surfaces. Another meaning of "Charassein" is to create sharp and deep incisions. Character is also interpreted as a sign or a specific behavioral pattern.<sup>17</sup> According to Imam Al-Ghazali, the character is synonymous with morality, representing an inner attitude resulting from thoughts and considerations in every action.<sup>18</sup> It is a behavioral pattern deeply rooted in the soul, from which various actions can naturally emerge without much thought.<sup>19</sup> Professor Maragustam, on the other hand, defines character as an individual's traits carved and integrated with their thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors. Maragustam likens character to clay ready to be sculpted into anything, according to the characteristics of that clay.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, a person's character is shaped by their upbringing and education background, making it a distinctive feature for each individual.

Quoting the Ministry of Education and Culture from the book "Concepts and Guidelines for Strengthening Character Education in Elementary and Junior High Schools," character is identified through attitudes, behaviors, motivations, and skills expressing their values, moral capacities, and resilience in facing challenges. Character encompasses positive values, such as awareness of goodness, a willingness to do good, honest living, and positive impacts reflected in interactions with the surrounding environment.<sup>21</sup>

According to Abdul Somad, the formation of human character begins in childhood through moral education, ideally starting early due to its integral role in Islamic teachings. The concept of morality in Islam provides a foundation for determining norms

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<sup>17</sup> Faqihuddin, "Building Character In Islamic Education Perspective Membangun Karakter Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam."

<sup>18</sup> Taufik Hidayat, Wahyuni Pohan, dan Fadli Ihsan Arbas Hasibuan, "Pendidikan Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Sosial Siswa di Era Society 5.0," *Heutagogia: Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 2 (2022): 1-11.

<sup>19</sup> Ibrahim Bafadhol, "Pendidikan Akhlak dalam Perspektif Islam," *Jurnal Edukasi Islami Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 06, no. 12 (2017): 45-61.

<sup>20</sup> Maragustam, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam Menuju Pembentukan Karakter* (Yogyakarta: Pascasarjana Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan (FITK) Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2023).

<sup>21</sup> Kemendikbud, "Konsep dan Pedoman Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Tingkat Sekolah Dasar dan Sekolah Menengah Pertama," *Kemendikbud dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia*, 2015.



regarding right and wrong, good and evil, truth and falsehood, derived from teachings sourced from Allah as documented in the Qur'an and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. Instilling good character based on religious values ensures that actions align with religious principles in every place and time.<sup>22</sup>

Hamid and Saebani emphasize in their book the importance of instilling character values in children from an early age through family upbringing. Individuals with good character are those committed to doing good to God, oneself, others, the environment, the nation, and the international community.<sup>23</sup> A person of character possesses good qualities, personality, manners, and morals. The development of a child's characteristics is related to the parenting style applied by parents, such as authoritative, democratic, permissive, or moderate, adjusting between authoritarian and democratic approaches as needed.

However, Professor Maragustam proposes a different categorization for the formation of human character, dividing it into four streams: The Fatalistic-Passive view holds that all aspects of a person's life are predestined by Allah, negating the influence of external factors. In contrast, the Neutral-Passive perspective posits that individuals are born as blank slates, with their character shaped by environmental influences such as culture, education, and social factors. The Positive-Active viewpoint asserts that humans are naturally predisposed to goodness, perceiving any evil or wrongdoing as accidental or externally influenced, emphasizing the dynamic nature of human beings in shaping their surroundings. Finally, the Dualistic-Active stance considers humans to possess a dual nature: positive energy representing goodness and alignment with God, and negative energy signifying evil and a propensity to be led astray by misguided values, thus encapsulating the constant struggle between spiritual values and misguided influences.<sup>24</sup>

Translated: The four streams mentioned above are in line with the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad SAW, which state that a child is born in a pure state like a blank sheet of paper, and the environment can influence the nature and character of the child. These influences include:

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي ذَيْبٍ عَنْ الزُّهْرِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ كَمَا تَلِدُ الْبَيْهَمَةُ تُنْتِجُ الْبَيْهَمَةَ هَلْ تَرَى فِيهَا جَدْعَاءَ

**Meaning:** "Adam narrated to us from Abi Zi'bin from al-Zuhry from Abi Salmah bin Abd al-Rahman from Abi Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, 'Every child is born upon the fitrah (natural disposition to embrace Islam). It is then their parents who turn them into a Jew, Christian, or Magian, just as animals give birth to whole animals. Do you observe any deficiency in it?' (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim).

<sup>22</sup> M. Abdul Somad, "Pentingnya Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Anak," *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama* 13, no. 2 (2021): 171-86, <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v13i2.882>.

<sup>23</sup> Hamdani. Hamid dan Beni Ahmad. Saebani, *Pendidikan Karakter Perspektif Islam* (Bandung: CV. Pustaka Setia, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> Maragustam, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam Menuju Pembentukan Karakter*.

Quoted from an article by Maman et al., it is stated that the concept in the hadith aligns with the theory of convergence in the growth of students. This theory asserts that every child born is influenced by both hereditary and environmental factors. For instance, a child from a good family tends to grow into a good individual because the influence of the surrounding environment also plays a role in shaping their character. The family serves as the first education for a child, where the child's character is molded within the family. From the various opinions above, it is stated that an individual's character is formed since childhood, and its formation depends on how parents educate the child, the school environment as a place for formal education, and the community as a place where a child interacts with friends and the surrounding society. As per the tripod theory of education proposed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, which states that an educational environment can be divided into three parts that can shape human character, namely 1) family, 2) school, and 3) community. These three environments can influence an individual's character because in these environments, they play their respective character roles.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.2. Characteristics of Learners

In Law number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, learners are defined as members of society who strive to develop their potential through the learning process in specific pathways, levels, and types of education.<sup>26</sup> Learners refer to individuals in society who endeavor to optimize all their talents and abilities through the learning process at certain levels, methods, and types of education. Each learner possesses characteristics that serve as their identity, giving them their unique traits that distinguish each individual.<sup>27</sup>

In the modern era, also known as the digital age, learners are often referred to as Generation Z or Zoomers. This term is applied to a group of individuals growing up and evolving in a technologically advancing era. Therefore, this generation tends to be familiar with the use of technology and the internet. The rapid development of technology has become an inseparable part of the daily lives of Generation Z. Through technology, people can communicate and build social relationships online or from a distance. However, it is important to note that this technological progress can also have negative impacts if used inappropriately or abused.<sup>28</sup>

Current technological advancements are also utilized as a means to learn about religion. As stated by Ijah Bahijah et al., the current generation tends to rely more on online religious learning platforms, with 54.37% of students gaining religious knowledge from the internet, including social media, blogs, and websites. Therefore, contemporary preaching approaches are widely enhanced by utilizing social media. This phenomenon urges religious organizations and study groups to adapt preaching strategies, as seen with Muhammadiyah designing ethics-based Al-Hujarat fiqh within the realm of social media to connect better with the thoughts of the new Muhammadiyah generation. Digital preaching is also developed based on religious moderation by following the tradition of

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<sup>25</sup> Irwansyah Suwahyu, "Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Konsep Pemikiran Pendidikan Ki Hajar Dewantara," *Insaniya: Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 23, no. 2 (2018): 192-204, <https://doi.org/10.24090/insania.v23i2.2290>.

<sup>26</sup> "Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Dengan Rahmat Tuhan Yang Maha Esa Presiden Republik Indonesia" (2003), <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/43920/uu-no-20-tahun-2003>.

<sup>27</sup> Sofyan Mustoip, Muhammad Japar, and Zulela Ms, *Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter*, (Surabaya: CV. Jakad Publishing, 2018). 35-48.

<sup>28</sup> Astri Sulastri, Fany Octaviany, dan Cucu Atikah, "Analisis Pendidikan Karakter Pada Gen-Z di Era Digital," *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, no. 6 (2023): 2372-78.

studying yellow books. Thus, preachers instill a moderate spirit, demonstrating that social media serves not only as entertainment but also as a means to share knowledge, provide advice, offer motivation, and assist anyone in need.<sup>29</sup>

The current generation cannot be separated from the use of technology, and education in Indonesia must integrate technology into the educational system to keep pace with education in other developed countries. However, along with technological developments, it is essential to emphasize education and character development in accordance with religious values. According to Ainiyah and Karsiyah, as cited by Masturin, the formation through Islamic Education integrates faith, knowledge, and deeds to create a balanced culture and character in nation-building.<sup>30</sup>

A child's character can reflect Islamic values, requiring an internalization process that allows these values to become an integral part of the child's self. This internalization process usually occurs within the family environment and involves the natural role of parents without artificial efforts. Parents employ various methods to internalize these religious values into their child's character, such as offering wise advice, consistency in guidance, and serving as a role model in religious behavior.<sup>31</sup>

In the modern era, learners are encouraged to cultivate two key characteristics: sincerity and respect for teachers. Sincerity involves the effort to purify intentions from personal ambitions and the desire for external praise, focusing instead on seeking the pleasure of Allah SWT in every action. This quality is vital for learners, as it facilitates easier acceptance and understanding of the lessons imparted by educators. Alongside sincerity, respecting teachers is equally essential. Teachers are pivotal figures in the educational journey, second only to parents in their influence. They educate with patience and dedication, playing a crucial role in the development of knowledge. Recognizing and valuing their efforts is a fundamental aspect of being a learner.

According to Imam Al-Ghazali, as quoted by Prof. Maragustam in his book, learners have ten responsibilities, namely: (1) Prioritize self-purification and good morals because knowledge is a form of spiritual worship to Allah. (2) Focus on learning, staying away from the busyness of the world. (3) Avoid feeling proud towards scholars, including teachers. (4) For beginner learners, it is advisable to understand one discipline of knowledge. (5) Be diligent in learning and pursue various forms of knowledge. (6) For learners who want to delve into a field of knowledge, do it gradually. (7) Do not move on to the next stage of knowledge before fully mastering the previous stage, as these sciences are interconnected. (8) Learners need to understand the factors that make a field of knowledge noble, both in terms of results and arguments. (9) The goal of seeking knowledge is to purify the heart, enrich oneself with virtues, draw closer to Allah, and enhance the spiritual dimension, not to seek status, wealth, or popularity. (10) Learners must understand the relationship between the learned sciences and the ultimate goal, so they can prioritize which knowledge to pursue in the context of worldly and hereafter affairs.<sup>32</sup> Learners are objects of education striving to develop themselves through the educational process to become beneficial individuals for others, as stated in the hadith of Prophet Muhammad SAW.

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<sup>29</sup> Baharijah et al., "Wasathiyah Islam Di Era Disrupsi Digital (Pendidikan Nilai-Nilai Wasathiyah Islam Dalam Bersosial Media Di Kalangan Generasi Milenial dan Generasi Z)."

<sup>30</sup> Masturin, Mhd Rasid Ritonga, dan Siti Amaroh, "Tawhid-Based Green Learning in Islamic Higher Education: an Insan Kamil Character Building," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 10, no. 1 (2022): 215–52, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v10i1.14124>.

<sup>31</sup> Somad, "Pentingnya Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Membentuk Karakter Anak."

<sup>32</sup> Maman. et al., "Karakteristik Peserta Didik: Sebuah Tinjauan Studi Kepustakaan."



خيرُ الناسِ أنفَعُهُم للناسِ

The saying goes, "The best of humans is the one who is beneficial to others."

The purpose of education is to broaden knowledge and shape learners into individuals who are devout in worship and consistently exhibit good behavior towards others. Therefore, virtuous actions become the tangible manifestation of the application of knowledge acquired during the learning process. In the modern era, education needs to be conducted, and educators must be more innovative in delivering education. In the modern age, numerous challenges arise alongside technological advancements. Through education, we can prevent and filter out crimes occurring among learners, thereby contributing to the well-being of humanity and the environment.

Islamic education aims to convey, transform, and internalize Islamic values. Consequently, educators are expected to raise awareness and develop positive spiritual aspects of life. The goal is to create well-rounded Muslim individuals characterized by faith, piety, noble character, intelligence, skills, and responsibility. Achieving these objectives requires strategic planning in education, including the development of materials suitable for the learners' developmental levels and thinking abilities, as well as the application of effective and efficient teaching methods.<sup>33</sup>

### 3.3. Challenges of Characteristics of Students in the Modern Era and the Role of Islamic Education

The rapid advancement of technology, the growth of information, the expansion of communication, the increase in scientific knowledge, and the dynamics of the economy reflect the swift changes in all areas of society. The transition from traditional to modern lifestyles, the shift from static to dynamic conditions, and the transformation of complexity into immediacy characterize the impact of these changes, giving rise to the term known as the era of Industry 4.0.<sup>34</sup> With changes occurring in every aspect, shifts in societal life and mindset are inevitable. These changes pose challenges in various aspects of life, such as the rise in criminal activities and crimes in both the real and virtual worlds.

Quoting an article by Sitti Nadira, the negative impact of technological development becomes severe if not promptly addressed, significantly affecting the lives of the current generation (students). Among the adverse effects are free association and sexual promiscuity among adolescents, which are currently prevalent. Free association is a result of insufficient attention and control over children, opening the door for them to imitate and engage in negative behaviors such as narcotics, pornography, thuggery, brawls, theft, and even cybercrimes (carding, hacking, and the sale of personal data). If left unaddressed, these issues will worsen and continue to escalate. The increase in free association will lead to widespread sexual promiscuity, causing issues like extramarital pregnancies, depression, suicide, abortion, murder, and posing health risks such as vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.<sup>35</sup>

The decline in morality and ethics among the current generation poses a serious problem in the field of education. There has been a significant shift in the attitudes and morality of students in the modern era. Easy access to unfiltered information on the

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<sup>33</sup> Hafsah., Karakteristik Pembelajaran Pai Dalam Pendidikan Formal Characteristich Of Islamic Education Learning In Formal Education, *Al-Afkar Journal For Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2021): 221–35, [https://al-afkar.com/index.php/Afkar\\_Journal/issue/view/4](https://al-afkar.com/index.php/Afkar_Journal/issue/view/4)

<sup>34</sup> Bahru Rozi, "Problematika Pendidikan Islam di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0.," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2020): 33–47, <https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v9i1.204>.

<sup>35</sup> Sitti Nadirah, "Peranan Pendidikan Dalam Menghindari Pergaulan Bebas Anak Usia Remaja," *Musawa: Journal for Gender Studies* 9, no. 2 (2017): 309–51, <https://doi.org/10.24239/msw.v9i2.254>.

internet can lead to negative impacts, influencing students to emulate unhealthy and inappropriate behaviors. Considering the goals of Islamic education, it can be argued that its purpose is to train and shape individuals (students) with high moral standards, faith, and taqwa (piety) towards Allah SWT. This underscores the crucial role of Islamic education in shaping the character and morality of current young generations, protecting them from the negative influences widely spread on the internet.<sup>36</sup> In the modern era, Islamic education faces challenges resulting from changes in societal behavior and mindset towards life and education. Many people view education solely as a means to obtain degrees for lucrative employment opportunities. However, Islamic education is inseparable from daily life. In Islam, individuals are taught to maintain cleanliness, show mutual respect, uphold noble character towards others, and the values in Islamic law can protect and heal against despicable behaviors often promoted by less educational content widely available on the internet.

Therefore, Islamic education must adapt to the current era. Educators must make Islamic education engaging and convey to students that it is a necessity in life, something that must be learned. According to Bahru Rozi, to address global challenges to the character of today's children, Islamic education, as a guide and shaper of character, needs to innovate its teachings. Educators are required to be creative, innovative, and critical in addressing current issues. The government must allocate significant financial resources to improve the education system and address the moral crisis occurring among the young generation in Indonesia. Islamic education should undergo changes without abandoning Islamic law and religious values.

According to Faqihuddin, the primary goal of Islamic education is to guide and shape individuals to become righteous servants of Allah, possessing strong faith, obedient in worship, and having noble character. In the general context, the aim of character education is to shape the personality of a Muslim comprehensively, reflecting various aspects of human nature, whether as an individual, a member of society, a moral entity, or an individual constantly interacting with the Creator. Islam exists in the world as a guide for human life, providing clear solutions to various human issues, including crucial ethical and moral issues.<sup>37</sup> Improving individual character positively will have a favorable impact on the overall character of the nation. In an era filled with technological advancements, education and character development in children are crucial to counter the decline in morals and ethics, providing a bright future for the Republic of Indonesia.

In this modern era, Islamic education needs to emphasize character education by setting a good example for students, who are the young generation and the future of the nation. Following the basic concept of character education formulated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, religious, nationalist, independent, cooperative, and integral values become the main continuous values developed in the Character Strengthening Movement (Gerakan Penguatan Karakter or GPK).<sup>38</sup> This is the government's effort in forming and strengthening the nation's character, although its implementation in Indonesian education is not yet fully optimal.

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<sup>36</sup> Dhimas Arya Permady et al., "Pendidikan Adab dalam Membentuk Akhlak Siswa : Studi di Madrasah Aliyah ( MA ) Bilingual Batu - Jawa Timur," *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, no. 6 (2023): 2258–67.

<sup>37</sup> Faqihuddin, "Building Character In Islamic Education Perspective Membangun Karakter Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam."

<sup>38</sup> Kemendikbud, "Konsep dan Pedoman Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Tingkat Sekolah Dasar dan Sekolah Menengah Pertama."

### 3.4. Analysis of Student Character and Their Role in Facing the Challenges of Industry 4.0

In this section, we explore various aspects of research findings, analyzing the impact of modernization and technological advances on the characteristics of contemporary students within the framework of Islamic education.

The rapid evolution of the modern era, marked by technological advances, information growth, and dynamic socio-economic changes, has given rise to a phenomenon known as Industry 4.0. This transformational change has resulted in paradigmatic shifts in social norms, leading to a surge in criminal activities, including a worrisome increase in adolescent delinquency, free sex, and substance abuse among teenagers.<sup>39</sup> Sitti Nadira's work emphasizes the severity of these negative consequences, stating that failure to address the challenges posed by technological developments can significantly impact the current generation, especially students.<sup>40</sup>

Building on our findings and previous research, such as Darnoto's study on the impact of free association in Sumberrejo, Jepara, our results provide support for the escalation trends of deviant behavior among adolescents, including free sex and substance abuse, resulting in negative consequences such as academic decline and unplanned pregnancies.<sup>41</sup> Additionally, our research reflects Salsabilah's statement that educators, beyond imparting knowledge, must internalize Islamic values to inspire and motivate students.<sup>42</sup>

The decline in moral values among current students, exacerbated by unrestricted internet access, underscores the urgent need for character development within the framework of Islamic education. The impact of negative content, as highlighted by Sitti Nadira, extends not only to character deviation but also includes issues of free association, juvenile crime, and cybercrime, demanding swift intervention to prevent escalation. Islamic education, with its core aim of instilling high moral standards and nurturing faith, emerges as a crucial barrier against the widespread negative influences on the internet. The role of Islamic education, as outlined by Bahru Rozi, demands a paradigm shift to adapt to contemporary challenges while upholding Islamic principles.<sup>43</sup>

The implications of our findings are profound, indicating the necessity of a holistic approach to Islamic education that addresses not only academic endeavors but also actively contributes to character development. Faqihuddin's statement on the primary goal of Islamic education aligns with the general objective of character education—shaping individuals with strong faith, good behavior, and moral integrity.<sup>44</sup> The positive transformation of individual character, as a result of character education, resonates on a national scale, contributing to the overall moral framework of the Indonesian nation. In the modern era, characterized by technological advancements, education and character development become crucial safeguards against moral and ethical decline, ensuring a bright future for the Republic of Indonesia.

The study offers a nuanced explanation for the observed character traits among students. It suggests that the interplay of religious teachings, familial upbringing, and societal influences significantly shapes these traits. The findings highlight the importance

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<sup>39</sup> Muhammad Sobri et al., "Pembentukan karakter disiplin siswa melalui kultur sekolah," *Harmoni Sosial: Jurnal Pendidikan IPS* 6, no. 1 (6 Maret 2019): 61–71, <https://doi.org/10.21831/HSJPI.V6I1.26912>.

<sup>40</sup> Nadirah, "Peranan Pendidikan Dalam Menghindari Pergaulan Bebas Anak Usia Remaja."

<sup>41</sup> Darnoto. dan Dewi, "Pergaulan Bebas Remaja di Era Milenial Perspektif Pendidikan Islam."

<sup>42</sup> Ma'rufah, "Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter dalam Digitalisasi Pendidikan."

<sup>43</sup> Rozi, "Problematika Pendidikan Islam di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0."

<sup>44</sup> Faqihuddin, "BUILDING CHARACTER IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION PERSPECTIVE MEMBANGUN KARAKTER DALAM PERSPEKTIF PENDIDIKAN ISLAM."

of early moral education and the role of Islamic teachings in instilling values that guide behavior across various contexts. However, caution is advised in interpreting these results, considering the complexity of character development and the varying influences that contribute to it. The significance of these findings lies in their implication for educational strategies, particularly in Islamic contexts, where integrating religious values with modern educational approaches becomes crucial.

The implications of this study are profound, particularly in the context of Industry 4.0. The research underscores the need for Islamic education to adapt to modern challenges while retaining its core values. It highlights the role of Islamic education in imparting knowledge and shaping character and morality, essential in an era where technology and societal changes pose new challenges. This study contributes to the broader discourse on education, offering insights into the role of religious teachings in contemporary educational practices.

### Conclusion

This study delved into the intricate dynamics of student character development within the framework of Islamic education, especially pertinent in the context of the challenges of Industry 4.0. The research highlighted the multifaceted nature of character, deeply ingrained through upbringing and education. It underscored the essential role of Islamic teachings in molding this character, emphasizing morality and internal attitudes as fundamental guides for actions. It identified four primary character formation streams—Fatalistic-Passive, Neutral-Passive, Positive-Active, and Dualistic-Active—resonating with Islamic views on the innate purity of children and the profound influence of their environment, as echoed in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. The findings stressed the critical impact of family, school, and community in shaping character, in alignment with the tripod theory of education. Focusing on Generation Z, the study revealed their deep entrenchment in technology and the internet, while also cautioning against the potential negative consequences of technological misuse. Islamic education was shown to play a pivotal role in instilling values like sincerity and respect for teachers, and in the internalization of Islamic values within familial settings. The study's implications are profound, underscoring the need for an integrated educational approach prioritizing character development alongside academic pursuits, with Islamic education adapting to modern challenges while retaining core values. This research contributes to the broader educational discourse, highlighting the critical role of religious teachings in shaping character and morality in the face of Industry 4.0's challenges. Recognizing its limitations, the study suggests further exploration into the application and long-term impact of character education in diverse educational contexts, paving the way for a holistic education that encompasses both knowledge and character, guiding the youth towards a balanced and ethically sound future in an increasingly complex world.

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