

THE CONCEPT OF NOBLE CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF USTADZ ADI HIDAYAT: ITS RELEVANCE TO THE FORMATION OF MUSLIM CHARACTER IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

This article aims to examine in depth the concept of noble character education from the perspective of Ustadz Adi Hidayat and its relevance to the formation of Muslim character in the digital era. The background of this study stems from the growing moral crisis among younger generations, which demands a renewed approach to moral education based on Islamic values. This research employs a library research method by analyzing classical and contemporary literature, including Ustadz Adi Hidayat's digital da'wah content. The findings reveal that noble character is a direct manifestation of strong Islamic creed (aqidah) and is inseparable from the formation of a Muslim's personality. Ustadz Adi Hidayat emphasizes the importance of emulating the Prophet Muhammad's morals—siddiq (truthfulness), amanah (trustworthiness), fathanah (intelligence), and tabligh (conveying the message)—as an integrative model of character education. These findings highlight that moral education rooted in correct faith, combined with the strategic use of digital media, offers a relevant solution for developing spiritually, morally, and socially strong Muslim generations. This study contributes conceptually to the development of an Islamic character education model that is responsive to contemporary challenges.

Keywords: *aqidah, noble character, Islamic education, Ustadz Adi Hidayat, Muslim character, digital era*

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara mendalam konsep pendidikan akhlak mulia dalam perspektif Ustadz Adi Hidayat serta relevansinya dalam pembentukan karakter Muslim di era digital. Latar belakang penelitian ini didasarkan pada meningkatnya krisis moral generasi muda yang menuntut pembaruan pendekatan pendidikan akhlak berbasis nilai-nilai Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi pustaka (library research) dengan menganalisis literatur klasik dan kontemporer, termasuk konten dakwah digital Ustadz Adi Hidayat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa akhlak mulia merupakan manifestasi langsung dari akidah yang kokoh dan tidak dapat dipisahkan dalam pembentukan kepribadian Muslim. Ustadz Adi Hidayat menekankan pentingnya meneladani akhlak Rasulullah SAW—siddiq, amanah, fathanah, dan tabligh—sebagai model pendidikan karakter yang integratif. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa pendidikan akhlak yang ditopang oleh pemahaman akidah yang benar, ditambah dengan optimalisasi media digital, dapat menjadi solusi strategis dalam membentuk generasi Muslim yang unggul secara spiritual, moral, dan sosial. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi konseptual terhadap pengembangan model pendidikan karakter Islam yang relevan dengan tantangan zaman.

Kata Kunci : akidah, akhlak mulia, pendidikan Islam, Ustadz Adi Hidayat, karakter Muslim, era digital

Introduction

Amid the rapid currents of globalization and modernity that give rise to complex moral, ethical, and spiritual challenges, Muslims face significant difficulties in maintaining the integrity of faith and character. The phenomenon of moral crisis affecting various levels of society, especially the younger generation, demands an Islamic educational approach that not only emphasizes cognitive and ritual aspects but also prioritizes the development of morality rooted in the values of *tawhid*.

In Islamic thought, *aqidah* (creed) and *akhlaq* (ethics) are two essential and inseparable components. *Aqidah* serves as the theological foundation that shapes spiritual orientation, while *akhlaq* is the practical manifestation of these values in social and personal behavior. The relationship between the two is dynamic and contextual, adapting to the challenges of time and societal developments. Noble character is not merely an indicator of the quality of faith but also a crucial instrument in shaping a resilient Islamic civilization (Romlah & Rusdi, 2023). From the Islamic perspective, ethics is not simply a set of social norms or personal morals but a concrete expression of internalized *aqidah* in daily life (Mahmud, 2020).

Several previous studies have addressed the urgency of moral education in Islam. Sobihah (2021) emphasized the importance of character education in tackling the nation's moral crisis, highlighting the role of educators and educational

environments. Adri et al. (2022) explored the effects of religious programs on shaping student behavior. However, these studies tend to be general and have yet to thoroughly explore the specific role of contemporary Islamic figures, especially in terms of integrating *aqidah* and *akhlaq* through digital platforms. Likewise, Marzuki (2021) discussed the concept of noble character in a normative sense, but did not address the contextual approach through modern media-based *da'wah*.

This research aims to fill that gap by focusing on the approach of Ustadz Adi Hidayat, a contemporary Islamic scholar actively integrating the values of *tawhid* and ethics through digital media. His approach is distinctive in that he does not merely convey Islamic values normatively but contextualizes them with contemporary issues, including the moral education challenges of the social media era. The digitalization of *da'wah*, the philosophical perspective on *aqidah-akhlaq*, and their integration in shaping modern Muslim character have not been widely and comprehensively explored in Islamic education scholarship.

One of the unique aspects of Ustadz Adi Hidayat's approach is his consistent emphasis that noble character is the result of correct *aqidah*. A firm belief will lead to social behavior that aligns with Islamic values, while weak character indicates a lack of understanding in creed (Andini, 2023). Thus, *aqidah* serves not only as a theological foundation but also as a moral compass that guides human behavior.

In the digital era, Ustadz Adi Hidayat utilizes social media, particularly YouTube, as a platform for *da'wah* and moral education. Recent research shows that his *da'wah* content has positively impacted Islamic awareness and moral quality among young people (Latifah, 2024). This suggests that moral education cannot be separated from the dynamics of media and information technology that shape the behavior of today's Muslim generation.

Therefore, this article aims to explore in depth the concept of noble character education from the perspective of Ustadz Adi Hidayat and examine its relevance to Muslim character formation in the digital era. The focus lies on integrating the values of *aqidah* and *akhlaq* as the foundation of character development and optimizing digital media as a vehicle for moral transmission. This study is expected to enrich the discourse of contemporary Islamic education by offering a contextual, applicable, and relevant approach to address current and future challenges.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method, aiming to explore in depth the concept of noble character education from the perspective of Ustadz Adi Hidayat. Data were collected from various relevant sources, both classical and contemporary, including Islamic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and digital *da'wah* content officially published through the YouTube channel *Ustadz Adi Hidayat Official*. The operational steps of data collection involved identifying primary and secondary sources relevant to the themes of *aqidah* (creed), *akhlaq* (ethics), and Islamic character education; selecting digital sermons (from 2020 to 2024) that explicitly address the themes of noble character, creed, and moral education methods; and documenting and transcribing sermon content for thematic analysis.

The data analysis technique used was descriptive-qualitative through content analysis. This process included three main stages: data reduction to categorize information into thematic clusters such as the concept of ethics, the relationship between *aqidah* and *akhlaq*, the prophetic attributes of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and digital *da'wah* media; data presentation through narrative synthesis and mapping of interrelated ideas; and conclusion drawing that highlights Ustadz Adi Hidayat's patterns of thought, educational approach, and character values.

This study also compares its findings with several previous works, such as Marzuki (2021), who emphasized the importance of ethics in social relations based on *aqidah* and *sharia*; Adri et al. (2022), who examined the influence of religious programs on student behavior; Sobihah (2021), who highlighted character education in the context of a national moral crisis; and Hawa et al. (2022), who analyzed the central role of ethics in Islamic education. Compared to these studies, this research offers novelty in several aspects: a deeper and philosophical emphasis on the *aqidah-akhlaq* relationship; an exploration of the Prophet Muhammad's four core traits (*siddiq, amanah, tabligh, fathanah*) as a model for contemporary Islamic character education; integration of spiritual and pedagogical approaches within the context of digitalization; and the use of social media-based *da'wah* as a relevant and adaptive source for character education in the era of globalization. Therefore, this study not only provides a synthesis of literature but also offers a conceptual contribution in formulating a contextual and applicable model of Islamic character education for the formation of Muslim character in the digital age.

Findings and Discussion

The Relationship Between Aqidah and Akhlaq in Islam

The findings of this study reaffirm that *aqidah* (creed) and *akhlaq* (ethics) are two interdependent elements that form the spiritual and behavioral core of a Muslim's identity. *Aqidah* functions as the theological and philosophical foundation that shapes one's worldview, inner convictions, and intentions, while *akhlaq* serves as the observable manifestation of those beliefs through daily behavior, social interactions, and ethical choices. Ustadz Adi Hidayat consistently asserts that sound *aqidah* leads to upright moral conduct, and conversely, moral deviations are indicators of theological deficiencies. This reinforces the claim of Bukhari (2022) and Sandres et al. (2023) that the purification and strengthening of *aqidah* is the first step in establishing a stable and consistent Islamic character.

Philosophically, the connection between *aqidah* and *akhlaq* can be explained as a form of spiritual causality. Strong *aqidah* generates inner consistency, moral awareness, and ethical resilience in the face of external influences. In contrast, weak theological foundations tend to result in fragmented, reactive, and unstable behavior. Abdullah & Darnoto (2024) emphasize this in the context of education, where *aqidah* serves as the internal compass for integrating moral values, allowing learners to critically engage with globalized values without losing their ethical identity.

Ustadz Adi Hidayat offers an integrated approach that synthesizes theological depth with educational praxis. His educational model emphasizes cognitive clarity (understanding *aqidah* intellectually), affective internalization (emotional engagement with faith), and behavioral transformation (embodying ethics through action). This multidimensional approach aligns with contemporary Islamic educational frameworks that advocate for the integration of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in character development.

Emulating the Akhlaq of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in Character Education

A second significant theme in this research is the strategic use of the Prophet Muhammad's noble character as the ideal model for Muslim education. Ustadz Adi Hidayat regularly emphasizes the relevance of the Prophet's four core traits—*siddiq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *fathanah* (wisdom/intelligence), and *tabligh* (ability to communicate the truth)—not only in religious observance but also in everyday social engagement and leadership.

In the digital age, these values take on renewed importance. *Siddiq* requires Muslims to speak truthfully and avoid spreading misinformation, especially on social media. *Amanah* implies digital responsibility, privacy protection, and ethical content sharing. *Fathanah* demands digital literacy, critical thinking, and the capacity to distinguish between truth and manipulation in online discourse. *Tabligh* encourages the constructive communication of Islamic teachings and values, adapting language and methods to contemporary audiences. These interpretations align with Wisnu Widya Asmara (2022) and Muhammad Tisna Nugraha (2020), who argue that moral education must be flexible and responsive to technological and cultural transformations.

Uniquely, Ustadz Adi Hidayat does not rely solely on classical *sirah* (biographical) narratives, but re-contextualizes the Prophet's traits within the challenges of the 21st century. His *da'wah* model employs digital platforms such as YouTube to explain how these prophetic traits can be practiced in personal branding, leadership, family relationships, and online behavior. This constitutes the novelty of this study, distinguishing it from prior research which tends to present the Prophet's ethics in a static, decontextualized manner.

Practicing Noble Character in Daily Life

This study identifies four primary domains where *akhlaq* should be applied daily: (1) toward Allah SWT, (2) toward oneself, (3) toward family, and (4) toward society. Ustadz Adi Hidayat's teachings emphasize that ethical behavior in these domains is not merely an act of social conformity but a form of *'ibadah* (worship), deeply tied to the internalization of *aqidah*.

Toward Allah SWT, *akhlaq* includes maintaining pure monotheism (*tawhid*), sincere repentance (*taubah*), and trust in God's decree (*husnuzhan*) (Syukur, 2020). Toward oneself, ethical responsibility manifests in hygiene, self-discipline, physical and mental health, and modesty (Suryani & Sakban, 2022). Toward family, values such as filial piety, kindness, dialogue, and shared responsibility become fundamental (Suryani et al., 2021). In relation to society, values such as tolerance, mutual assistance, courteous speech, and respect for diversity are highlighted (Awaliya et al., 2023).

The integrated application of these values illustrates that ethical formation must be holistic. It cannot be fragmented into ritual piety or abstract theory but must emerge as a lifestyle cultivated through daily practices, guided by a deep understanding of *aqidah*. Ustadz Adi Hidayat's effective use of social media platforms

demonstrates how Islamic moral principles can be contextualized and popularized among digital-native audiences, particularly the youth.

The Societal Impact of Noble Character

This study also highlights the macro impact of *akhlaq* on social cohesion and civic life. When noble character becomes a cultural norm, social harmony, justice, and mutual trust can flourish. Ethical values such as honesty, justice, patience, and empathy reduce corruption, prevent conflict, and strengthen collective well-being (Ramadhan & Qamariyah, 2024; Sukmawati & Tabroni, 2023).

Moreover, Ustadz Adi Hidayat's digital *da'wah* contributes to shaping public moral discourse by promoting reflective engagement with ethical dilemmas in contemporary society. Safiramu'ti & Nasir (2024) found that his digital sermons positively influence the attitudes and behaviors of Muslim youth, encouraging them to internalize Islamic values in both virtual and real-life settings.

In sum, the findings of this study underscore that a character education model grounded in *aqidah*, inspired by the ethics of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and optimized through digital engagement is both effective and contextually relevant. This approach offers a comprehensive, adaptive, and integrative framework for Islamic education in the 21st century. Unlike previous studies that primarily take a normative or text-based view, this research contributes an original conceptual model that bridges traditional values with modern tools for moral formation.

Conclusion

Noble character (*akhlaq al-karimah*) is a tangible reflection of strong *aqidah* (Islamic creed) within a Muslim, as emphasized by Ustadz Adi Hidayat. A sound creed will naturally give rise to behavior aligned with Islamic values and manifest in daily conduct. Emulating the character of the Prophet Muhammad SAW—such as *siddiq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *fathanah* (wisdom), and *tabligh* (effective communication)—is stressed as a key to character development, particularly in facing the challenges of the modern and digital age.

The application of noble character encompasses not only one's relationship with Allah SWT but also with oneself, family, and the wider community. *Akhlaq* plays a crucial role in building a harmonious, just, and peaceful society, as well as in preventing social conflict. The digital *da'wah* of Ustadz Adi Hidayat, especially through platforms like YouTube, has contributed significantly to raising moral awareness among the public.

Therefore, a solid foundation of *aqidah* combined with the habitual practice of good character serves as the core basis for shaping morally excellent individuals and a civilized society.

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