

Character Education Values in Qur'an Surah Luqman Verse 18: An Analysis of Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah's *Tafsir Al-Azhar* and Its Relevance to Islamic Education in Indonesia

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Abstract

Character education is a fundamental component of Islamic education that plays a vital role in shaping students' personalities and moral character. One of the primary sources of character values that merits scholarly examination is Qur'an Surah Luqman verse 18, as interpreted by Hamka in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. This study aims to analyze the character education values embedded in Hamka's interpretation of Qur'an Surah Luqman verse 18 and to examine their relevance to the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative approach using library research as its methodological design. Primary data were obtained from *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, while secondary data were collected from books, scholarly journal articles, and other relevant literature. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing using the content analysis technique. The findings indicate that Hamka interprets Qur'an Surah Luqman verse 18 as encompassing essential character values, including humility, the avoidance of arrogance, politeness in social interactions, and the cultivation of harmonious social relationships. These values are highly relevant to the objectives of Islamic education in Indonesia, as they support the development of learners who possess noble character, strong moral integrity, and the ability to embody Islamic values in their social lives.

Keywords: character education; Tafsir Al-Azhar; Hamka; Qur'an Surah Luqman verse 18; Islamic education.



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Introduction

Social changes driven by the rapid development of information technology, globalization, and cultural transformation have introduced new challenges to the field of education, particularly in fostering students' character development. While easier access to information provides significant opportunities

for enhancing learning processes, it simultaneously increases the risk of declining moral values, including diminished mutual respect, reduced social concern, and the growing prevalence of intolerance and bullying within educational settings. These conditions indicate that education should not merely emphasize academic achievement but must also prioritize character formation as an essential foundation for students' participation in society.

Data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) indicate that educational quality should not only be evaluated based on academic performance but also on the creation of safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments that promote students' social development. In Indonesia, approximately 25% of female students and 30% of male students reported experiencing bullying at least several times each month. Furthermore, 17% of students stated that they did not feel safe in certain areas of their schools (PISA, 2023). These findings suggest that strengthening character education and moral development remains a significant challenge that requires greater attention within the implementation of education.

In this context, Islamic education plays a strategic role because it emphasizes not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the cultivation of noble character (*akhlāq al-karimah*) as the primary objective of education. Character values in Islam are derived from the Qur'an and the Hadith, which serve as fundamental guidelines for fostering the relationship between human beings and Allah (*ḥabl min Allāh*) as well as relationships among fellow human beings (*ḥabl min al-nās*). Therefore, character education from an Islamic perspective is understood not merely as a process of knowledge transmission but also as a process of internalizing values that are manifested through attitudes, behaviors, and habitual practices in daily life.

Strengthening character education is realized not only through the delivery of instructional content but also through the habituation of moral values, educators' exemplary conduct, and the establishment of a supportive school culture. Character education becomes more effective when it is integrated into all educational activities, enabling the values taught to be internalized in students' behavior. The findings of (Romyzal, 2022) demonstrate that the successful implementation of character education in schools requires the support of a positive school culture, teachers' role modeling, and continuous habituation to cultivate students' *akhlāq al-karimah*.

One of the Qur'anic verses that contains a profound message concerning character education is Surah Luqman, verse 18. This verse records Luqman's advice to his son to avoid arrogance, refrain from turning away from others with pride, and uphold proper etiquette in social interactions. These values reflect the importance of humility, respect for others, and social awareness as integral components of a Muslim's character formation. Although this verse is frequently cited in studies on character education, its comprehensive interpretation is essential to ensure that its moral messages can be effectively implemented within the context of contemporary education.

One of the prominent Indonesian Qur'anic exegetes who devoted considerable attention to the social and educational dimensions of Qur'anic interpretation was (Buya Hamka, 2024) through his *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. This exegetical work not only explains the linguistic meanings of Qur'anic verses but also relates their messages to the realities of Indonesian society. Hamka's contextual approach has established *Tafsir Al-Azhar* as one of the most influential references in the development of Islamic educational thought, as it successfully contextualizes Qur'anic values within the social, cultural, and educational realities of Indonesian life.

Numerous previous studies have examined character education from the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hamka's educational thought. However, most of these studies have primarily focused on identifying general character values or discussing the conceptual foundations of character education in Islam. Research specifically analyzing the values of character education embedded in Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman, verse 18, and examining their relevance to the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia remains relatively limited. Nevertheless, Hamka's interpretation possesses distinctive contextual characteristics that make it highly relevant for addressing contemporary challenges in character formation.

Previous studies have predominantly examined character education from a broader perspective by analyzing Luqman's advice as a whole (Qur'an Surah Luqman verses 12–19), exploring Hamka's educational philosophy, or discussing Islamic character education conceptually. However, limited scholarly attention has been devoted to reconstructing Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 as a comprehensive framework of social character education. Moreover, few studies have systematically connected Hamka's contextual interpretation through the *adabi ijtimā'i* approach with contemporary issues in Islamic education, such as digital ethics, multicultural education, and students' moral development. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by providing an in-depth analysis of Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 and demonstrating its relevance as a conceptual foundation for strengthening Islamic character education in Indonesia.

Unlike previous studies that primarily identify character values descriptively, this study reconstructs Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 into an integrated framework of Islamic social character education. This framework not only explains the moral messages contained in the verse but also demonstrates their relevance as a conceptual basis for addressing contemporary challenges in Islamic education in Indonesia.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the character education values embedded in Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman, verse 18, and to examine their relevance to the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia. The findings are expected to enrich scholarly discourse in the fields of Qur'anic exegesis and Islamic education while providing a conceptual foundation for educators and educational institutions to integrate Qur'anic character values into the learning process in order to develop students who possess noble character, integrity, and social responsibility.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design. This approach was selected because the study focuses on examining textual sources and scholarly literature to explore the character education values embedded in Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman, verse 18, and to analyze their relevance to Islamic education in Indonesia. The research was conducted through the systematic identification, collection, and analysis of various literature sources related to the research topic.

The data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Hamka, particularly his interpretation of Surah Luqman, verse 18. The secondary data were derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, books, scholarly journal articles, previous research findings, and other relevant literature concerning character education, Qur'anic exegesis, Hamka's educational thought, and Islamic education.

Data were collected through a documentation study by reviewing a wide range of relevant literature. All documents were systematically classified according to the research focus and selected based on their relevance to the character education values reflected in Hamka's interpretation. This stage was

conducted systematically to obtain comprehensive data regarding the concept of character education embodied in Surah Luqman, verse 18.

The data were analyzed using content analysis. The qualitative content analysis was conducted through four stages. First, all statements in Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 related to character education were identified and extracted. Second, similar concepts were coded into preliminary categories representing moral values. Third, these categories were synthesized into broader themes of character education. Finally, each theme was interpreted by relating Hamka's interpretation to contemporary theories of character education and the context of Islamic education in Indonesia.

The analytical process began with identifying data related to the character education values found in Hamka's interpretation, followed by categorizing the data into emerging thematic groups. Subsequently, the data were interpreted in depth to reveal the meanings of character education embedded in the verse and to examine their relevance to the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, theoretical triangulation was employed by comparing various scholarly perspectives and relevant literature related to the research topic, thereby providing a strong academic foundation for the resulting interpretations.

Results and Discussion

The analysis revealed that Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 extends beyond explaining the linguistic meaning of the Qur'anic text by reconstructing a comprehensive framework of Islamic character education. The findings were organized into three major themes: (1) the character values embedded in Hamka's interpretation, (2) the educational meaning of these values within *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, and (3) their relevance to the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia.

1. Character Education Values in Surah Luqman Verse 18 from Hamka's Perspective in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*

The findings indicate that Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 positions character education as a process of moral formation grounded in faith. Unlike approaches that regard character merely as the habituation of desirable behaviors, Hamka emphasizes that character should be developed through the integration of spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. Consequently, morality (*akhlāq*) is understood not simply as a set of ethical norms governing interpersonal relationships but as a manifestation of a Muslim's faith. This perspective suggests that the success of Islamic education should not be measured solely by the acquisition of knowledge or the performance of religious rituals but also by an individual's ability to translate these values into social behavior characterized by humility, respect for others, and awareness of one's position as a servant of Allah. These findings are consistent with (Akwam dkk., 2024), who argue that character education in *Tafsir Al-Azhar* is comprehensively constructed through the integration of '*aqidah*, worship, and morality, thereby fostering holistic character development. Likewise, (Maharani dkk., 2025) emphasize that integrating Islamic moral values provides the foundation for developing personal, moral, and social competencies that are reflected in everyday behavior.

Hamka interprets Surah Luqman verse 18 through the *adabi ijtima'i* (socio-literary) approach, which contextualizes Qur'anic teachings within Indonesia's social, cultural, educational, and religious realities. Consequently, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* functions not only as a work of Qur'anic exegesis but also as an important reference for the development of Islamic educational thought and character education. Hamka contextualizes the prohibition of arrogance by extending its meaning beyond literal behavior to include

feelings of superiority based on wealth, knowledge, social status, or authority. This interpretation demonstrates the continuing relevance of Qur'anic values in addressing contemporary social issues.

Hamka's interpretation shares common ground with, yet also differs from, several classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegetes. (Bakri dkk., 2022) explains the prohibition of *wa lā tuṣa'ir kbaddaka li al-nās* primarily as a command not to turn one's face away out of arrogance, while *wa lā tamshi fī al-arḍi maraḥā* is interpreted as a prohibition against walking proudly and boastfully. (Kathīr, 2011) similarly emphasizes humility and respect for others, whereas Wahbah al-Zuhailī broadens the meaning of the verse by presenting it as guidance for Islamic social ethics. (Shihab, 2000) further argues that the verse addresses not only outward behavior but also the inner attitude of superiority. Compared with these exegetes, Hamka maintains the normative meaning of the verse while contextualizing it within Indonesia's socio-cultural realities through the *adabi ijtima'i* approach. Consequently, his interpretation extends beyond individual moral guidance to become a conceptual foundation for Islamic character education.

Hamka interprets the phrase *wa lā tuṣa'ir kbaddaka li al-nās* ("do not turn your face away from people") as an educational message emphasizing respect for human dignity. According to Hamka, facing someone while speaking symbolizes attention, empathy, and sincerity in social interaction, whereas turning one's face away represents arrogance and contempt toward others. Accordingly, the verse promotes *tawāḍu'* (humility) as the ethical foundation of social relationships. Humility is understood not as self-degradation but as the ability to recognize one's proper place without considering oneself superior to others. This value is reflected through courteous communication, attentive listening, and respectful interaction, making it highly relevant to both face-to-face and digital communication. These findings support previous studies highlighting humility and mutual respect as essential components of Islamic character education (Akwam dkk., 2024; Rafki Parifia dkk., 2024).

Hamka also interprets the phrase *wa lā tamshi fī al-arḍi maraḥā* as a prohibition against all forms of arrogance, including superiority expressed through wealth, knowledge, authority, or social status. He regards arrogance as a spiritual disease that undermines moral integrity and may affect anyone, including educated and religious individuals. Therefore, Islamic education should balance intellectual achievement with moral and spiritual development so that knowledge is accompanied by humility, self-control, and respect for others. These findings are consistent with (Ahamad, 2025), who concludes that the character values contained in Surah Luqman verses 12–19 remain highly relevant to modern education because they strengthen responsibility, discipline, social concern, and ethical interaction within society.

Within the context of contemporary Islamic education, Hamka presents character education as a process of spiritual purification (*taẓkiyat al-nafs*) manifested through humility, simplicity, self-control, and respect for others regardless of social status. Accordingly, the ultimate goal of Islamic education is not merely to produce intellectually capable students but also individuals who are morally and spiritually mature and able to use knowledge, authority, and technology responsibly for the benefit of society.

Hamka further emphasizes the values of simplicity and self-restraint by encouraging individuals to avoid excessive praise and recognition. Simplicity is understood not as poverty but as the ability to use Allah's blessings proportionately without elevating oneself above others. Within Islamic education, these values cultivate integrity, sincerity, and moral responsibility while strengthening students' capacity to respond ethically to contemporary social challenges (Rafki Parifia dkk., 2024).

In the concluding part of the verse, Hamka interprets Allah's statement, *inna Allāha lā yuḥibbu kulla mukhtālin fakḥūr*, as emphasizing that arrogance is fundamentally a spiritual problem. Awareness that all blessings originate from Allah nurtures gratitude and encourages moral behaviour rooted in sincere

devotion rather than the pursuit of social recognition. Thus, spiritual awareness becomes the foundation of sustainable character education (Akwaam dkk., 2024).

Based on Hamka's interpretation, this study identifies six principal values of character education: *tawāḍu'* (humility), courtesy, respect for others, simplicity, self-control, and social ethics. These values are interconnected and collectively form a holistic framework of Islamic character education. Unlike previous studies that examined character values across Surah Luqman verses 12–19, the present study demonstrates that verse 18 specifically provides a model of social character education centered on ego control as the foundation of *akhlāq al-karimah* (noble character). These findings enrich the discourse on Islamic character education while reaffirming that educational success should be evaluated not only through intellectual achievement but also through students' ability to establish relationships characterized by courtesy, justice, and respect for others (Akwaam dkk., 2024).

The findings also contribute conceptually to Islamic character education. While most contemporary character education studies emphasize the cultivation of virtues through social experiences and school culture (Berkowitz, 2022; Kristjánsson, 2020), Hamka places *tawhīd* and *tazkiyat al-nafs* as the foundation of sustainable moral development. Consequently, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* offers a distinctive contribution by integrating spiritual, moral, and social dimensions into a unified framework of Islamic character education.

The findings regarding the character education values derived from Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 are summarized in Table 1. The table presents the linkage between the Qur'anic expressions, Hamka's interpretations, identified character values, and their implications for Islamic education.

Table 1. Synthesis of Character Education Values in Hamka's Interpretation of Surah Luqman Verse 18

Qur'anic Expression	Hamka's Interpretation	Character Value	Educational Implication
<i>Wa lā tuṣa'ir khabdaka linnās</i>	Prohibition against arrogance and looking down on others	Humility	Encouraging students to respect others and avoid superiority
<i>Wa lā tamshi fī al-arḍi maraḥā</i>	Avoiding pride and boastful behavior	Simplicity	Developing modest attitudes in social interaction
Overall interpretation	Social ethics grounded in faith	Respect	Promoting tolerance and appreciation of diversity
Overall interpretation	Moral discipline	Courtesy	Building polite communication and ethical behaviour
Overall interpretation	Emotional regulation	Self-control	Preventing impulsive behaviour in digital and real-life interaction
Overall interpretation	Integration of values	Islamic Character	Strengthening holistic character education

As presented in Table 1, Hamka's interpretation demonstrates that the moral messages contained in Surah Luqman verse 18 are interconnected rather than independent. Each character value contributes to the formation of a comprehensive Islamic personality in which humility serves as the ethical foundation, respect and courtesy regulate social interaction, while simplicity and self-control strengthen moral consistency in everyday life. This synthesis confirms that Hamka's interpretation offers an integrated framework of character education rather than merely a collection of individual moral teachings.

Based on the synthesis presented in Table 1, the conceptual relationship among the identified character values can be illustrated more systematically. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework

reconstructed from Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 and its implications for Islamic character education.

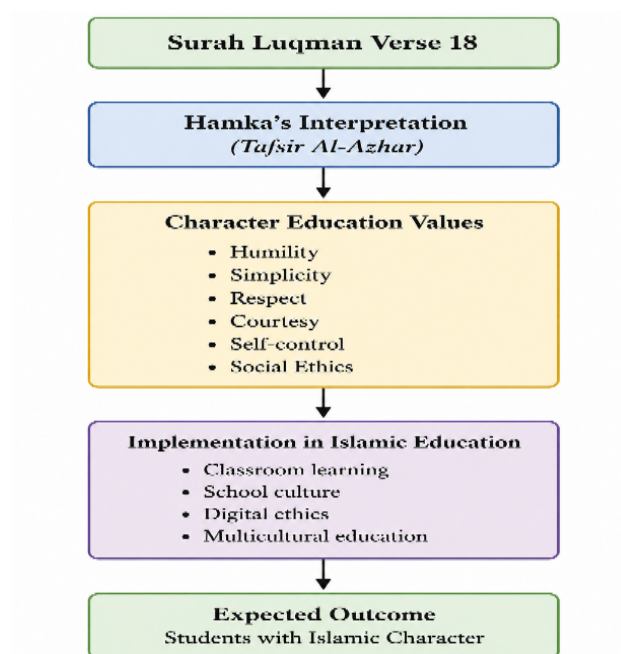


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Character Education Based on Hamka's Interpretation of Surah Luqman Verse 18

Figure 1 illustrates that Hamka's interpretation forms a sequential process of character development beginning with spiritual awareness, followed by the cultivation of humility and social ethics, which are subsequently reflected in respectful behaviour, courtesy, simplicity, and self-control. These interconnected values ultimately contribute to the development of individuals who possess strong Islamic character and are capable of responding wisely to contemporary social challenges.

2. Hamka's Interpretation of the Content of Q.S. Luqman Verse 18 in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*

Q.S. Luqman verse 18 is one of the Qur'anic verses that explicitly discusses character formation through the cultivation of social morality. The verse prohibits arrogance, self-glorification, and pride while encouraging individuals to establish respectful and courteous relationships with others. From the perspective of Islamic education, this verse demonstrates that educational success is measured not only by the mastery of knowledge but also by the quality of moral character reflected in everyday behavior. In *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, (Buya Hamka, 2024) interprets this verse as an essential component of character education, beginning with the development of faith (*iman*), followed by the habituation of worship (*ibadah*), and ultimately manifested in noble social conduct.

This interpretation is consistent with contemporary character education scholarship, which positions moral, social, and spiritual dimensions as core competencies for the twenty-first century. Numerous studies indicate that effective character education cannot rely solely on the transmission of knowledge but must be developed through exemplary conduct, habituation, authentic experiences, and positive social interactions. Consequently, the moral messages contained in Q.S. Luqman verse 18 remain highly relevant to contemporary character education paradigms.

The Prohibition of Arrogance as the Foundation of Character Education

The first part of the verse,

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ

prohibits individuals from turning their faces away from others out of arrogance.

According to Hamka, this prohibition extends beyond a mere physical gesture; it symbolizes the prohibition against degrading human dignity. Turning one's face away during interaction represents a feeling of superiority over others, whereas facing someone while speaking demonstrates respect, attentiveness, and appreciation.

Hamka further explains that proper communication etiquette constitutes an integral aspect of moral education. Individuals who genuinely respect others listen attentively, maintain appropriate eye contact, and display friendliness in their interactions. In his view, moral education begins with simple behaviors consistently practiced in everyday life.

This interpretation is consistent with (Kristjánsson, 2020), who conceptualizes character education as the cultivation of virtues through moral habituation, reflection, and social practice in daily life. This perspective is further reinforced by (Berkowitz, 2022), who argues that effective character education cannot be achieved solely through cognitive instruction of values but must also be embodied through teachers' role modeling, positive school culture, healthy interpersonal relationships, and consistent behavioral habituation. Furthermore, (Johnson dkk., 2022), through a meta-analysis of character education research, demonstrate that programs integrating moral values into the entire school culture produce stronger character development than incidental moral instruction.

From an international perspective, Hamka's interpretation enriches contemporary character education theories by introducing a distinctive theological foundation. While many modern approaches emphasize virtue formation through moral reasoning, social interaction, and school culture, Hamka argues that genuine character originates from an individual's awareness of Allah. Consequently, moral behavior is understood not merely as social responsibility but also as an expression of faith (*iman*) and devotion (*ibadah*), thereby integrating the spiritual, moral, and social dimensions of education.

These findings indicate that Hamka's educational thought does not merely complement contemporary character education theories but also provides a distinctive Islamic epistemological perspective. By integrating spiritual consciousness with social ethics, Hamka offers a more holistic understanding of character formation that extends beyond behavioural competence toward moral and spiritual integrity.

Within the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, the prohibition against turning one's face away from others embodies the value of respecting every individual regardless of social status, economic background, or cultural identity. This principle provides the foundation for creating inclusive, humane, and diversity-respecting learning environments.

The Prohibition of Walking Arrogantly as Education in Humility

The second part of the verse,

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا

prohibits people from walking upon the earth with arrogance.

Hamka explains that this prohibition carries a much broader meaning than one's manner of walking. Arrogance may manifest through behavior, speech, lifestyle, or the way individuals treat others. According to Hamka, arrogance may arise from wealth, social position, lineage, intellectual ability, or even religious knowledge.

His interpretation suggests that the fundamental root of arrogance lies in humanity's failure to recognize its true nature as a creation whose every blessing originates from Allah. Therefore, Islamic education should aim to cultivate individuals who embody humility (*tawadhu'*) rather than those who perceive themselves as superior or more righteous than others.

These findings correspond with contemporary character education research, which identifies humility as a fundamental virtue in establishing healthy social relationships. (McGrath, 2022) explains that character development requires the internalization of virtues so that learners are able to manage their ego, accept criticism, and appreciate others as part of their moral growth. In the context of leadership, the meta-analysis conducted by (Luo dkk., 2022) demonstrates that humility is positively associated with trust, cooperation, relationship satisfaction, and prosocial behavior. Although this study was conducted within organizational settings, its findings reinforce Hamka's view that humility serves as a fundamental basis for harmonious social relationships.

Within modern educational settings, Hamka's message becomes increasingly relevant because students live in an era characterized by intense academic competition and social media environments that frequently encourage excessive self-promotion. Consequently, character education should not merely develop intellectual competence but should also guide learners in managing their ego, expressing gratitude for their achievements, and appreciating the accomplishments of others.

Allah Does Not Love the Arrogant

The concluding part of the verse,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

emphasizes that Allah does not love those who are arrogant and boastful.

According to Hamka, this statement demonstrates that arrogance is not merely a matter of social ethics but also a spiritual issue. Arrogance constitutes a disease of the heart that prevents individuals from accepting the truth, acknowledging their shortcomings, and expressing gratitude to Allah. Hamka further explains that many individuals display arrogance as a form of compensation for their personal insecurities. Therefore, the primary solution to eliminating arrogance is not simply to improve outward behavior but to strengthen one's faith so that individuals recognize that every blessing they possess is merely a trust bestowed by Allah SWT.

This interpretation aligns with contemporary character education approaches that regard moral development as the integration of cognitive, affective, social, and spiritual dimensions. (Narvaez, 2021) demonstrates that sustainable character formation requires the internalization of values so that virtuous behavior emerges from personal conviction rather than external pressure.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the spiritual dimension distinguishes Islamic character education from secular approaches. Good character is intended not only to establish harmonious interpersonal relationships but also to represent an act of devotion to Allah SWT. Therefore, character education should integrate moral instruction with faith development so that learners possess intrinsic motivation to practice virtuous behavior.

Character Education Values in Hamka's Perspective

Based on the analysis of Hamka's interpretation, Q.S. Luqman verse 18 contains several character education values that remain highly relevant to the contemporary needs of Islamic education.

The first value is *tawadhu'* (humility), namely the recognition that all human beings are equal before Allah, leaving no justification for feelings of superiority over others.

The second value is courtesy in social interaction, reflected in respecting conversation partners, listening attentively, and using polite language. This value forms an essential foundation for establishing healthy communication within schools and society.

The third value is respect for fellow human beings, emphasizing that every individual deserves fair treatment regardless of social status, economic condition, or cultural background. This principle contributes significantly to the development of inclusive education that values diversity.

Another important value is simplicity, referring to the ability to avoid extravagance, ostentation, and the pursuit of social recognition. In the digital era, this value has become increasingly important because social media often encourages excessive self-presentation and self-promotion.

Furthermore, the verse also emphasizes self-control, namely the ability to regulate one's ego, emotions, and desire for praise. Self-control represents one of the essential social-emotional competencies required to address the challenges of modern life.

Finally, Hamka positions spiritual consciousness as the foundation of all these character values. Humility, courtesy, respect for others, and self-control are not intended merely to foster harmonious social relationships but also to express obedience and devotion to Allah SWT. Accordingly, character education, according to Hamka, constitutes a holistic process of human development that seeks to achieve a balance between intellectual competence, emotional maturity, moral excellence, and spiritual depth.

3. Relevance of Character Education Values in Q.S. Luqman Verse 18 from the Perspective of *Tafsir Al-Azhar* to Islamic Education in Indonesia

The rapid development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the patterns of students' social interactions. The ease of access to information, the widespread use of social media, and the increasing prevalence of virtual communication provide both opportunities and challenges for the character development of younger generations. Research by (Tjg dkk., 2024) indicates that the use of technology and social media has fostered a growing tendency toward individualism, resulting in declining social solidarity and community participation. Meanwhile, (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023) argue that the advancement of the digital era has also generated various ethical issues, including the misuse of digital media, thereby highlighting the necessity of strengthening digital literacy integrated with character education so that students are able to utilize technology wisely and responsibly. Therefore, character education remains an urgent necessity within the modern educational system.

Within this context, the character education values embedded in Q.S. Luqman verse 18, as interpreted by Hamka, possess strong relevance to the strengthening of Islamic education in Indonesia. Hamka argues that educational success should not merely be measured by academic achievement but also by the formation of individuals who demonstrate humility, courtesy, respect for others, and strong spiritual awareness. This perspective is consistent with the objectives of Indonesia's national education as stipulated in (*UU No. 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*, 2003), which positions character formation as an integral component of the educational process.

The Relevance of *Tawadhu'* (Humility) in Islamic Education

The first highly relevant value is *tawadhu'*, or humility. Hamka explains that arrogance is a spiritual disease capable of damaging one's relationship with Allah as well as with fellow human beings. Therefore, education should be directed toward cultivating students who recognize that all their abilities, knowledge, and achievements are trusts (*amanah*) bestowed by Allah SWT.

This value has become increasingly important amid the competitive culture that characterizes today's educational environment. Academic assessment systems frequently encourage students to focus primarily on achieving high grades, thereby creating a tendency to compare themselves with others. In such circumstances, character education grounded in the value of *tawadhu'* functions to maintain a balance between academic achievement and moral maturity.

Numerous recent studies demonstrate that humility contributes to enhanced cooperation, empathy, openness to feedback, and the quality of interpersonal relationships. A meta-analysis by (Luo dkk., 2022) found that humble leadership is positively associated with trust, prosocial behavior, and collaboration. These findings reinforce the relevance of Hamka's concept of *tawadhu'* as a fundamental foundation for character formation among learners in the twenty-first century.

The Relevance of Courtesy in Digital Communication

The rapid growth of social media has transformed students' communication patterns from face-to-face interactions to digital communication. This transformation has often been accompanied by a decline in communication ethics, an increase in hate speech, the dissemination of unverified information, and the tendency to demean others through various digital platforms.

Hamka's explanation of the prohibition against turning one's face away from others should not be understood solely as an ethical principle governing face-to-face communication but can also be contextualized within the ethics of digital communication. Respecting one's interlocutors, using courteous language, listening to others' opinions, and refraining from insulting others represent manifestations of moral values (*akhlak*) that remain highly relevant in the digital sphere. Numerous studies indicate that strengthening digital literacy should be integrated with character education so that students not only acquire the ability to utilize technology effectively but also communicate ethically, responsibly, and uphold moral values in digital environments. Such integration is essential for cultivating responsible digital citizens who are capable of using digital media wisely while respecting the rights and dignity of others (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023).

These findings indicate that Hamka's interpretation possesses a dynamic educational orientation that extends beyond traditional moral instruction. The values contained in Surah Luqman verse 18 may be contextualized to address contemporary educational challenges, particularly those associated with digital communication, social interaction, multicultural coexistence, and the ethical use of technology. This demonstrates the continuing relevance of Tafsir Al-Azhar as a source of educational thought capable of responding to changing societal contexts.

The Relevance of Self-Control in the Era of Social Media Culture

Hamka explains that arrogance often manifests as the desire to gain recognition and admiration from others. This explanation is highly relevant to contemporary social media culture, which encourages individuals to present idealized versions of themselves through various online posts.

The phenomenon of excessive self-presentation frequently gives rise to a culture of ostentation (*flexing*), the pursuit of social validation, and status competition, all of which may adversely affect students' mental well-being. Research has demonstrated that excessive social media use is associated with increased anxiety, lower psychological well-being, a greater tendency toward social comparison, and diminished self-regulation among students (Keles dkk., 2020; Valkenburg dkk., 2022).

From Hamka's perspective, the solution to this phenomenon is not merely limiting the use of technology but fostering self-control through the strengthening of faith, gratitude, and spiritual

awareness. Therefore, Islamic education should integrate digital literacy with moral education so that students can utilize technology wisely without compromising their moral values.

The Relevance of Respect for Others in Multicultural Education

Indonesia is a nation characterized by remarkable diversity in religion, culture, ethnicity, and language. Consequently, Islamic education aims not only to develop students who are individually pious but also to prepare them to live harmoniously within a pluralistic society. The prohibition against belittling others in Q.S. Luqman verse 18 conveys a universal message regarding respect for human dignity. Hamka emphasizes that a person's honor is determined not by wealth, social status, or lineage, but by their piety (*taqwa*) before Allah SWT.

This value is highly relevant to multicultural Islamic education, which emphasizes respect for diversity, tolerance, empathy, and cooperation among individuals. Research by (Rahmawati dkk., 2026) demonstrates that the implementation of multicultural Islamic education in Muslim minority schools in Lampung has fostered greater tolerance, respect for cultural diversity, and collaborative social interaction among students. A total of 81% of respondents reported that multicultural-based learning activities enhanced their interreligious understanding, although challenges remained, including limited multicultural teaching materials and differing parental perspectives regarding religious diversity. Therefore, the value of respecting others, as taught in Q.S. Luqman verse 18, possesses substantial relevance as a foundation for character formation within Indonesia's multicultural society.

The Relevance of Spiritual Awareness in Strengthening the *Pancasila Student Profile*

One of the distinctive strengths of Hamka's thought is his emphasis on the spiritual dimension as the foundation of all human behavior. According to Hamka, good character is not merely intended to gain social recognition but is fundamentally an expression of obedience to Allah SWT.

This perspective is consistent with Indonesia's national education policy through the implementation of the *Pancasila Student Profile*, which identifies faith in God Almighty, piety, and noble character as the core competencies of learners. The values of *tawadhu'* (humility), modesty, self-control, and respect for others constitute integral components of this educational framework.

Furthermore, empirical studies demonstrate that education integrating the spiritual dimensions of Islam contributes not only to the development of religious character but also to students' mental well-being, emotional regulation, and emotional intelligence. (Hanif & Kusumadinata, 2025) explain that the internalization of Islamic values such as patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), trust in Allah (*tawakku'*), and the concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) serves as a fundamental basis for cultivating holistic character through the balanced development of cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Similarly, (Sasmita dkk., 2025) found that integrating spiritual and psychological approaches through the habituation of religious practices, including congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation (*tadarus*), *dhikr*, collective supplication, and counseling services, significantly enhances students' inner peace, emotional resilience, and religious character. These findings reinforce Hamka's view that character education must be rooted in spiritual awareness so that moral development produces not only intellectual competence but also individuals who are emotionally, socially, and spiritually mature.

Based on the foregoing analysis, it can be concluded that the character education values embedded in Q.S. Luqman verse 18, as interpreted in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, possess substantial relevance to the contemporary needs of Islamic education in Indonesia in the digital era. The values of *tawadhu'*, courtesy, respect for others, self-control, modesty, and spiritual awareness constitute essential foundations for

developing learners who excel not only academically but also demonstrate moral integrity and personal maturity.

Hamka's thought further illustrates that character education cannot be separated from faith-based education. Sound social morality represents the manifestation of a person's relationship with Allah SWT. Therefore, the implementation of character education in Islamic educational institutions should extend beyond the theoretical transmission of values and be realized through teachers' exemplary conduct, habitual practices, school culture, collaboration with families, and the responsible use of technology grounded in Islamic values.

Accordingly, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* possesses not only historical significance as one of Indonesia's monumental Qur'anic commentaries but also offers a conceptual framework that remains highly relevant for addressing the challenges of character education in the twenty-first century. The integration of the Qur'anic values articulated by Hamka with contemporary educational approaches provides a strategic alternative for strengthening the development of Muslim generations who possess noble character, are adaptive to societal change, and are capable of making meaningful contributions to society, the nation, and the state.

Practically, the findings of this study may serve as a reference for curriculum developers, Islamic education teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in integrating Qur'anic character values into classroom instruction, school culture, extracurricular activities, and digital citizenship education. Such integration is expected to strengthen students' moral resilience while enabling them to respond wisely to the ethical challenges of contemporary society.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic character education literature by reconstructing Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 into a coherent framework of social character education. The study also demonstrates that classical Qur'anic exegesis remains highly relevant for addressing contemporary educational issues, thereby strengthening the dialogue between Islamic educational thought and modern character education theories.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Hamka's interpretation of Q.S. Luqman verse 18 in *Tafsir Al-Azhar* conceptualizes character education as an integral component of Islamic education, developed through an *adabi ijtimā'i* interpretive approach that integrates spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. The analysis identified six principal character education values, namely *tawadhu'* (humility), courtesy, respect for others, modesty, self-control, and spiritual awareness.

These values demonstrate strong relevance to the implementation of Islamic education in Indonesia, as they contribute to the development of learners who possess noble character, communicate respectfully, appreciate diversity, exercise self-control in the digital era, and uphold faith as the foundation of their conduct. Consequently, Hamka's interpretation of Q.S. Luqman verse 18 offers a comprehensive conceptual framework for strengthening character education within contemporary Islamic education, particularly in responding to the moral and social challenges posed by rapid technological and cultural change.

This study also contributes to the growing body of scholarship on Qur'anic interpretation and Islamic education by demonstrating that *Tafsir Al-Azhar* is not merely an exegetical work but also a valuable source of educational thought capable of informing character education policies and practices in Indonesia. Nevertheless, as this research is based on a library study, future studies are recommended

to examine the empirical implementation of these character values in Islamic educational institutions and evaluate their effectiveness in fostering students' character development.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verse 18 represents not merely an exegetical explanation of Qur'anic teachings but also a comprehensive educational philosophy that integrates spirituality, morality, and social responsibility. Consequently, Tafsir Al-Azhar continues to offer a relevant conceptual framework for strengthening Islamic character education capable of addressing contemporary educational challenges while preserving the fundamental values of the Qur'an.

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