



Buya Hamka's Moral Framework in Tafsir Al-Azhar: Strengthening Muslim Students' Religious Character in the Digital Era

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze Buya Hamka's concept of morality in Tafsir Al-Azhar on Surah Luqman (31:13–19) and its relevance to strengthening students' religious character in the digital era. Contemporary students face moral degradation, identity confusion, and social vulnerability caused by uncontrolled digital information flows. These conditions highlight the urgency of developing character education grounded in transcendent religious values and ethical awareness. This research employed a qualitative library-based approach by examining Hamka's interpretation through the *Adabi Ijtima'i* perspective. Data were analyzed descriptively to identify the educational values and their contextual application in modern learning environments. The findings reveal that Hamka constructs character through vertical morality based on *tawhid* and *hisbah*, which foster spiritual awareness, self-control, and moral integrity in digital interactions. Horizontal morality is reflected in *ihsan* and gratitude toward parents, moral leadership through *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* and patience, and social ethics emphasizing humility and respect. These values support responsible communication, critical information filtering, and ethical digital citizenship. This study contributes a moderate and contextual framework for Islamic character education and recommends integrating reflective digital practices into school curricula.

Key Words: *Buya Hamka, Morality, Religious Character, Digital Era, Tafsir Al-Azhar*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep moralitas Buya Hamka dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar tentang Surah Luqman (31:13–19) dan relevansinya dengan penguatan karakter religius mahasiswa di era digital. Mahasiswa kontemporer menghadapi degradasi moral, kebingungan identitas, dan kerentanan sosial yang disebabkan oleh aliran informasi digital yang tidak terkendali. Kondisi ini menyoroti urgensi untuk mengembangkan pendidikan karakter yang didasarkan pada nilai-nilai agama transenden dan kesadaran etis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan berbasis perpustakaan kualitatif dengan meneliti interpretasi Hamka melalui perspektif *Adabi Ijtima'i*. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif untuk mengidentifikasi nilai-nilai pendidikan dan penerapan kontekstualnya dalam lingkungan belajar modern. Temuan tersebut

mengungkapkan bahwa Hamka membangun karakter melalui moralitas vertikal berdasarkan *tauhid* dan *hisbah*, yang menumbuhkan kesadaran spiritual, pengendalian diri, dan integritas moral dalam interaksi digital. Moralitas horizontal tercermin dalam ihsan dan rasa syukur kepada orang tua, kepemimpinan moral melalui *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* dan kesabaran, dan etika sosial yang menekankan kerendahan hati dan rasa hormat. Nilai-nilai ini mendukung komunikasi yang bertanggung jawab, penyaringan informasi penting, dan kewarganegaraan digital yang etis. Studi ini menyumbangkan kerangka kerja moderat dan kontekstual untuk pendidikan karakter Islam dan merekomendasikan untuk mengintegrasikan praktik digital reflektif ke dalam kurikulum sekolah.

Kata Kunci: *Buya Hamka, Moralitas, Karakter Religius, Era Digital, Tafsir Al-Azhar*

INTRODUCTION

Generation Z, living in the digital age, faces increasingly complex moral and spiritual challenges due to technological disruption and the flow of global information. Empirical studies show that technological acceleration and openness blur the boundaries between noble religious values and popular culture dominated by pragmatism and hedonism, so that digital media becomes a primary reference in shaping students' lifestyle and worldview (Medzhidova, 2024; Ramzaevich, 2025). The viral spread of social media content that normalizes consumptive behaviour, hate speech, and a culture of showing off is reflected in students' tendency to seek validation through likes and followers and to legitimize aggressive communication patterns (Dhingra & Parashar, 2022; Kentmen-Cin, 2025). Survey-based research also reports an increase in deviant behaviour in educational environments and a declining frequency of participation in religious activities, such as congregational worship and mentoring programs, among young people (Al Fathir, 2026; Guo et al., 2024). These findings confirm that the moral and identity crisis is not merely theoretical, but manifests in concrete changes in students' attitudes, interests, and digital practices. In this context, the present study specifically focuses on Muslim Generation Z students in educational institutions and examines the strengthening of religious character as a strategic effort to restore their spiritual orientation and moral compass within an increasingly plural and competitive social life.

Literature reviews show that religious character education has long been a concern among Islamic education experts, but much of it remains normative and lacking contextualization with digital challenges. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of *akhlaqul karimah* (good moral values) in shaping Muslim personalities (Fitriani & Wulandari, 2024; Pohan, 2025), but rarely relate it to the social and psychological dynamics of the generation (Ameen et al., 2023; Lyngdoh et al., 2023). Several previous studies focused on the theological and individual moral dimensions, while the contextual interpretation approach that combines Qur'anic ethics with social reality is still limited (Calis, 2022; Nurhuda et al., 2025). This gap opens up space for a deeper exploration of Buya Hamka's

interpretation of *Adabi Ijtima'i* in Tafsir Al-Azhar, which is relevant to religious character education in the era of moral and technological disruption.

This article aims to complement the shortcomings of previous studies by examining Buya Hamka's concept of morality in the Tafsir Al-Azhar Surah Luqman (31:13–19) as a basis for strengthening religious character for students. Buya Hamka combines a literary-social approach (*Adabi Ijtima'i*) that interprets verses not only linguistically, but also in the social and moral context of modern society (Khodijah & Kholid, 2025; Sahiron & Hanif, 2025). Through a literature review of the Al-Azhar Interpretation, it was found that Hamka emphasized two main dimensions in character formation: vertical morals (*tauhid* and *hisbah*) and horizontal morals (*ihsan*, *sabr*, and *tawadhu'*) which are applicable to social life (Hanum & Saifullah, 2026). Thus, this research seeks to strengthen the understanding that Hamka's interpretation can be used as a conceptual and pedagogical reference in designing moderate and contextual character education.

The main argument of this article is that Buya Hamka's concept of morality in the Al-Azhar Tafsir of Surah Luqman can serve as a conceptual model for strengthening a holistic religious character that is directly relevant to the moral challenges of the digital generation (Ciptadi & Syarif, 2025). In the context of students' intensive use of digital technology, these challenges include exposure to disinformation, normalization of hate speech and online aggression, digital show-off culture and consumerism, as well as the weakening of honesty, responsibility, and adab in virtual interactions. Hamka's interpretation is important because it does not only formulate morality at a theoretical level, but also translates Qur'anic values into concrete social behaviour that nurtures spiritual awareness and social responsibility in everyday life, including in digital spaces. The verses of Surah Luqman (13–19) teach a balance between the vertical dimension (relationship with Allah) and the horizontal dimension (relationships with other human beings), which Hamka articulates into the values of honesty, responsibility, submission, and humility (Alhamuddin et al., 2025). This study specifically examines how these values can be operationalized in educational settings to guide students' use of gadgets and social media, shape their ethical decision-making online, and support their moral and spiritual development. Based on this argument, the hypothesis proposed is that applying Buya Hamka's moral concept in the education system can strengthen students' moral resilience against the flow of disinformation and the decadence of values in the digital era.

The novelty of this study lies in its contextual reinterpretation of Buya Hamka's moral thought in Tafsir Al-Azhar Surah Luqman (31:13–19) as a conceptual framework for strengthening the religious character of Muslim Generation Z in the digital era. Unlike previous studies that primarily discuss Hamka's interpretation from theological or general moral perspectives, this research specifically integrates the dimensions of vertical and horizontal morality with contemporary digital challenges such as disinformation, online aggression, consumerism, and the weakening of ethical communication among students.

Furthermore, this study offers a pedagogical model that operationalizes Hamka's moral values into digital-based character education through curriculum integration, reflective digital practices, and value-oriented mentoring, thereby providing a more applicable and contextual contribution to Islamic education in contemporary society.

This study contributes to enriching the literature on Islamic education through a contextual and applicable interpretive approach. Using Buya Hamka's interpretation as a theoretical reference, this article bridges the gap between the religious values of sacred texts and the social realities of the modern generation. At the empirical level, phenomena such as students sharing insulting or provocative content about peers and teachers, normalizing cheating through online platforms, and prioritizing viral trends over academic and religious commitments demonstrate how digital culture directly erodes respect, responsibility, and empathy in educational settings. These concrete cases show that moral degradation among students is an urgent issue that demands serious academic and pedagogical attention. The research findings indicate that Hamka's concept of morality can be integrated into the curriculum and school culture as a strategy for strengthening religious character that balances spirituality, morality, and rationality. Thus, this study is not only theoretical, but also offers practical recommendations for educators, curriculum developers, and policy makers to systematically internalize religious values in students' character education amidst the pressures of the digital era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using the library research method (Candra Susanto et al., 2024; Lim, 2025). This design was chosen because the study aims to explore, analyze, and synthesize concepts of morality in Buya Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar on Surah Luqman verses 13–19 without involving direct field observation or physical data collection. Through this approach, the research focuses on understanding the meaning, values, and contextual relevance of Hamka's interpretation in strengthening students' religious character in the digital era. The descriptive qualitative method also enables an in-depth interpretation of moral concepts through textual and contextual analysis.

The primary data source of this research is Buya Hamka's Tafsir Al-Azhar, particularly the interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 13–19. Secondary data sources consist of books, scientific articles, proceedings, and SINTA- and Scopus-indexed journals discussing Islamic character education, digital ethics, contextual tafsir, and Generation Z morality. Literature data were collected from digital databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Sinta, as well as university library collections. The literature selection criteria included: (1) publications from the last 5–10 years relevant to religious character education and digital morality; (2)

authoritative classical and contemporary tafsir references; and (3) official academic publications with clear methodological credibility.

Data collection was conducted through documentation and literature study techniques. The process began with searching relevant literature using keywords such as “Buya Hamka morality,” “Tafsir Al-Azhar,” “religious character education,” “digital ethics,” and “Generation Z.” The next stage was screening, where the collected literature was filtered based on relevance, credibility, and thematic suitability with the research objectives. Finally, the organizing stage was conducted by classifying the collected data into thematic categories, including vertical morality (*tawhid* and *hisbah*), horizontal morality (*ihsan*, *sabr*, and *tawadhu'*), and their relevance to students' character development in the digital era (Chand, 2025; Mbanaso et al., 2023).

The data were analyzed using descriptive-analytical techniques combined with thematic analysis and contextual hermeneutics. The analysis process included data reduction by selecting and simplifying relevant information from the collected literature (Lester et al., 2020). Furthermore, the researcher synthesized theories and findings from various tafsir and character education studies to identify patterns and relationships among moral concepts. Thematic coding was applied to classify Hamka's moral values into major themes related to students' spiritual awareness, digital ethics, social responsibility, and moral resilience. The findings were then mapped systematically through conceptual charts and thematic patterns to draw theoretical conclusions regarding the application of Hamka's moral concepts in contemporary education. Contextual hermeneutics was used to reinterpret Qur'anic moral messages within the realities of digital-era social life.

Data validity was maintained through external and internal criticism techniques. External criticism was conducted by evaluating the credibility of authors, publishers, journal indexation, and academic reputation of the literature used. Internal criticism involved examining the consistency of arguments, coherence of interpretations, and relevance of concepts within each text. In addition, source triangulation was applied by comparing findings from various tafsir literature, Islamic education studies, and contemporary discussions on digital morality to ensure the reliability and validity of the research conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the meaning of the text of Surah Luqman in Tafsir Al-Azhar

Buya Hamka, in Tafsir Al-Azhar, provides an in-depth explanation of Surah Luqman verses 13–19 in the *Adabi Ijtima'i* (literary-social) style, which emphasizes the integration of spiritual values and social ethics. This surah presents Luqman's series of counsels to his son, rich in moral educational content. The first verse in this sequence stresses the primary foundation for developing religious character. Hamka interprets this verse as a call for humans to uphold monotheism as the core of their personality; shirk, in his view, is not

only a theological deviation but also a moral injustice against oneself. In the context of contemporary Islamic education, this principle implies that character formation must begin with strengthening students' consciousness of *tawhid* as the axis of all attitudes and choices, including in their digital lives (Idhar, 2025; Munawarsyah, 2023). Practically, this can be implemented through learning activities that invite students to relate belief in Allah to responsible use of technology such as reflective discussions on sincerity and accountability in online behaviour, integrating *tawhid*-based values into school rules for social media use, and mentoring that guides students to see worship, study, and ethical interaction as a unified manifestation of faith.

Tawhid education is the basis for the formation of religious character which gives rise to honesty, responsibility and self-awareness as a servant of Allah (Idhar, 2025; Munawarsyah, 2023). The importance of gratitude and devotion to parents as a foundation of social ethics:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهُنَا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٌ وَفِصْلَةٌ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ ١٤

Hamka explained that the phrase “وَهُنَا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٌ” depicts a mother's struggle which is the basis for education in empathy and gratitude. Meanwhile, the next verse reminds us that love for parents should not exceed obedience to God. Hamka emphasized that obedience to God is the primary principle, but Islam still demands love and respect for parents, regardless of their beliefs. This value of balance indicates a moderate religious character firm in principle, gentle in social interactions (Firdaus & Suwendi, 2025; Nasrin et al., 2025).

Strengthening religious character is a necessity in national development. Its primary function is to provide moral immunity and an ethical foundation against the threat of value degradation, as well as a basis for social cohesion in an increasingly digital society. Al-Azhar's interpretation is an ideal pedagogical resource because it has unique transformative capabilities: (1) it is able to translate normative religious teachings into real behaviour through narratives, stories of the prophets, and role models (*uswah hasanah*) that can be used to counter online trends of ostentation, hostility, and dishonesty; (2) it consistently promotes religious moderation and inclusivity, which is crucial for countering radicalism, echo chambers, and polarizing discourse in social media, while fostering a sense of love for the homeland; and (3) it is practically oriented, with a strong focus on *muamalah* (social interaction) and public ethics, so that religious character becomes applicable to everyday life, including digital interaction (responsibility in sharing information, justice in treating others online, and social sensitivity toward vulnerable groups). Buya Hamka's thought is therefore highly significant for integrating Islamic moral values into the modern education system, which is often trapped in a cognitive and materialistic orientation (Arianto & Syafrizal, 2025; Fajria & Fahmi, 2026). The relevance of Hamka's moral concepts to contemporary digital challenges can be summarized in the following framework.

Table 1. Relevance of Buya Hamka's Moral Concepts to Generation Z Digital Challenges

Digital Challenges among Generation Z	Hamka's Moral Concepts	Character Reinforcement Strategies
Hate speech and hostile online communication	<i>Tawadhu'</i> (humility)	Developing respectful and ethical digital communication
Digital consumerism and hedonistic lifestyle	<i>Tawhid</i> (monotheistic consciousness)	Strengthening self-control, simplicity, and spiritual awareness
Cyberbullying and lack of social empathy	<i>Ihsan</i> (benevolence)	Cultivating empathy, compassion, and social responsibility
Hoaxes, disinformation, and irresponsible information sharing	<i>Hisbah</i> (self-supervision and accountability)	Encouraging critical verification and ethical information literacy
Excessive social validation and online recognition seeking	<i>Sabr</i> (patience and emotional restraint)	Building emotional resilience and moral self-discipline

Table 1 shows that Buya Hamka's moral concepts in Tafsir Al-Azhar are highly relevant to addressing the moral challenges of Generation Z in the digital era. Digital issues such as hate speech, cyberbullying, consumerism, and disinformation reflect weakened spiritual awareness and ethical self-control. Hamka's values of *tawhid*, *hisbah*, *ihsan*, *sabr*, and *tawadhu'* provide a moral framework that promotes responsibility, empathy, humility, and ethical digital behavior. These findings indicate that Hamka's interpretation can serve as a practical foundation for strengthening students' religious character and digital citizenship.

Modern education tends to emphasise knowledge and skills, while moral and spiritual dimensions particularly in relation to digital citizenship are frequently marginalised. In Tafsir Al-Azhar, Hamka stresses that true education is a process of forming a person with a balance between reason, heart, and behaviour; knowledge detached from morals easily becomes destructive. Thus, applying Hamka's moral concept can balance the intellectual and moral dimensions of students and offer concrete guidelines for ethical social media use, making Islamic education responsive to the spiritual and social needs of the digital age (Setiawan et al., 2025; Sugianto, 2024).

Tawhid is the core of the religious character taught by Hamka as a source of moral integrity and self-control. In Hamka's view, people who believe in the oneness of God will behave honestly because they feel they are always being watched by Him. *Tawhid* fosters intrinsic moral awareness without the need for external oversight. This is in line with the verse "إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ" (QS. Luqman [31]: 16) which affirms that Allah is All-Knowing of all deeds, no matter how small. In the context of education, this value of monotheism can shape responsible students who are not easily influenced by the currents of digital hedonism (Anwar et al., 2024; Sangwa, 2025). Thus, strengthening monotheism in the educational curriculum is not only dogmatic learning, but also a mechanism for forming ethical awareness and spiritual integrity.

The Dimension of Religious Character Education from Buya Hamka's Perspective

Islamic moral framework that includes worship, preaching, and spiritual steadfastness:

يَبْنِيْ اَقِيْمِ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَاَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاَصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا اَصَابَكَ ۗ اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْاُمُوْر ۙ ۱۷

Meaning: O my son, uphold prayer and command (humans) to do what is right and prevent (them) from doing evil and be patient with what befalls you. In fact, this is a matter that (must) take priority (Q.S; Lukman, 17)

According to Hamka, prayer cultivates spiritual discipline and builds a vertical relationship with Allah SWT, while enjoining good and forbidding evil is a social responsibility in upholding good values. Patience is a moral resilience in facing life's trials. These values reflect a balance between individual piety and social contribution (Akhtar, 2024; Waldner, 2023). Furthermore, the last two verses of Luqman's advice contain teachings on social ethics:

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْاَرْضِ مَرْحًا ۗ اِنَّ اِلٰهًا لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُوْرٍ ۙ ۱۸

Meaning: And do not turn your face away from people (out of arrogance) and do not walk haughtily on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are arrogant and boastful (Lukman; 18)

Hamka interpreted that the prohibition 'لَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ' Demonstrating an anti-arrogance attitude, both outwardly and inwardly. He linked it to modern social phenomena such as showing off and digital ostentation on social media. As for orders 'وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ' teaching self-balance and gentle speech as symbols of Islamic manners. Buya Hamka defined morals as far beyond mere politeness. For Hamka, morality is a tangible manifestation (*amaliah*) of a person's faith and worship. Worship, such as prayer, will not be complete without good morality, because worship must essentially have a social impact, namely preventing evil and wrongdoing (Conklin & Hassoun, 2025; Latifah & Nurhikmah, 2024).

The essence of this religious character can be traced systematically based on Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 13-19, which offers a comprehensive ethical blueprint: The Main Foundation (Verse 13): Tawhid. Character must be built on the foundation of the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid). This fosters a character that is independent, has integrity, and is free from the bondage of creation (*zulmun 'azīm*). This must begin with the purification of faith, conveyed through example and compassion (*wa'izh*). Gratitude and Responsibility (Verse 14): Emphasizes gratitude to Allah and parents (*birrul walidain*), and do good (*ihsan*). It instills empathy, responsibility, appreciation, and spiritual accountability (*Ilayyal Mashir*).

Firmness and Tolerance (Verse 15): Forming a character that is firm in belief (priority of monotheism) while remaining polite and ethical (social

Integrity) in interactions, while also teaching the importance of choosing the right role models (*uswah hasanah*). Intrinsic Integrity (Verse 16): Cultivating awareness of Allah's omniscience (*Al-Latif, Al-Khabir*), which gives birth to sincerity of intention (*Ikhlas*) and intrinsic honesty (*Hisbah*). Good behavior becomes autonomous, independent of human supervision (Sawatsky et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). The dimensions of religious character education derived from Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman verses 13–19 can be systematically summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Dimensions of Religious Character Education in Buya Hamka's Interpretation of Surah Luqman

Surah Luqman Verses	Core Moral Values	Hamka's Interpretation	Educational Implications in the Digital Era
Verse 13	<i>Tawhid</i>	Monotheism as the foundation of integrity and moral consciousness	Strengthening ethical awareness and responsible digital behavior
Verses 14–15	Gratitude, filial piety, moderation	Respect for parents balanced with obedience to Allah	Developing empathy, tolerance, and respectful communication
Verse 16	Hisbah, sincerity, intrinsic honesty	Awareness that Allah knows all actions	Encouraging self-control and ethical online conduct
Verse 17	Prayer, <i>amar ma'ruf nahi munkar</i> , patience	Balance between worship and social responsibility	Building moral resilience and positive digital participation
Verses 18–19	<i>Tawadhu'</i> , humility, gentle speech	Rejection of arrogance and harsh behavior	Promoting digital etiquette and anti-cyberbullying attitudes

Table 2 demonstrates that Buya Hamka's interpretation of Surah Luqman presents a comprehensive framework for religious character education that integrates spiritual devotion, moral integrity, and social ethics. The values of *tawhid*, gratitude, patience, humility, and self-awareness are contextualized into educational principles relevant to the digital era. These dimensions encourage responsible digital behavior, ethical communication, emotional resilience, and social tolerance, showing that Hamka's moral thought remains highly applicable for shaping morally grounded and spiritually responsible students.

One of the important relevances of Hamka's thinking is the strengthening of the value of moderation (*wasathiyah*) in social interactions and religious life. Hamka rejected religious extremism because it contradicts the spirit of *rahmatan lil 'alamīn*. Islam, he believes, is a religion of balance that guides people to act justly and tolerantly. This is reflected in his interpretation of the verse “*وَصَاحِبُهُمَا* “ *قِي الدُّنْيَا مَغْرُوفًا* (QS. Luqman [31]: 15) who teaches compassion even to parents of different beliefs. This moderate attitude is very relevant in the context of a pluralistic society like Indonesia (Nurman et al., 2022). The application of the principle of moderation in religious character education can foster students who

respect differences, are not easily provoked, and have an inclusive spirit in accordance with the spirit of *Islam Nusantara*.

Hamka's concept of morality also has great relevance in shaping digital ethics and moral literacy for generation Z. Amidst the phenomenon of cyber culture which often normalizes hate speech, showing off, and consumer behavior, morality-based education is the main bulwark of character. The value of *tawadhu'* and patience taught in the verse “وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا” (QS. Luqman [31]: 18) dan “وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ” (QS. Luqman [31]: 19) can be translated as digital communication ethics: being humble, not provocative, and being mindful of one's words in online spaces (Rahmawati & Wahyuningsih, 2025). By actualizing these values, students can become intelligent, ethical, and spiritually responsible users of technology.

The Relevance of Hamka's Concept of Morals to Contemporary Islamic Education

The concept of morality developed by Buya Hamka in his Tafsir Al-Azhar holds significant relevance for strengthening the religious character of students in the digital age. Through the Adabi Ijtima'i approach, Hamka's interpretation teaches that Qur'anic values must be actualized within the social and cultural context of society. The values of monotheism foster honesty and spiritual integrity, while *ihsan*, *sabr*, and *tawadhu'* foster social sensitivity and human solidarity. Hamka's approach also aligns with the spirit of *Islam Nusantara*, which emphasizes moderation (*wasathiyah*) and a balance between faith, nationality, and humanity (Susanti et al., 2022). Thus, Buya Hamka's concept of morality is not only a legacy of classical interpretation, but rather a dynamic and contextual model of character education.

Buya Hamka's thoughts in the Al-Azhar Interpretation have great relevance to the formation of a contemporary Islamic education paradigm that is oriented towards strengthening the religious character of students (Muqoddas & Dartim, 2025). Hamka sees education not only as a process of transferring knowledge, but also as moral and spiritual development to form a complete human being (*insan kamil*). He emphasized that education that loses its moral dimension will produce a generation that is intellectually intelligent but morally fragile (Firmansyah, 2025). Therefore, in the context of Islamic education today, the moral values developed by Hamka are very important to balance the rapid flow of information and technology which often dulls the ethical sensitivity of students.

Hamka's concept of morality, derived from the Qur'an, emphasizes the balance between vertical (*tawhid* and *hisbah*) and horizontal aspects (*ihsan*, *sabr*, and *tawadhu'*). The vertical dimension nurtures spiritual awareness and self-control, while the horizontal dimension fosters empathy, social responsibility, and tolerance. In modern Islamic education, this balance is highly relevant for developing students who are both faithful and civilized (Qodim, 2022). In practice, this framework can be implemented, for example, through classroom

discussions and projects that relate tawhid and hisbah to honesty in exams, academic integrity, and responsible use of social media; through mentoring programs that train students to practice *ihsan* and *sabr* in resolving conflicts with peers; and through school culture initiatives that encourage *tawadhu'* in leadership roles, such as student council and community service activities. Some Islamic schools also develop character-based curricula that explicitly link verses of Surah Luqman to daily routines such as digital fasting, reflective journaling, and collaborative service learning to strengthen students' moral consistency online and offline (Susanti et al., 2022). Thus, Hamka's interpretation can function as a practical and conceptual guideline for contextual and universal character education in contemporary educational settings. The integration of Hamka's vertical and horizontal moral dimensions in strengthening students' religious character can be conceptually illustrated in the following model.

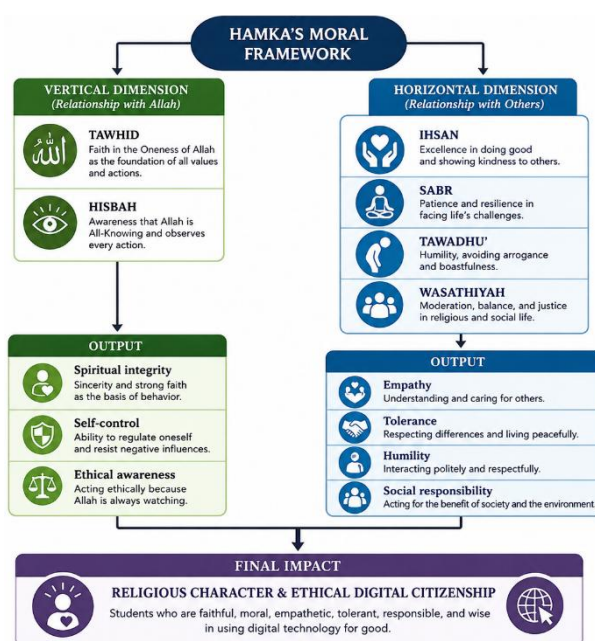


Figure 1. Hamka's Moral Education Model Based on Tafsir Al-Azhar

The figure 1 illustrates Hamka's Moral Education Model derived from Tafsir Al-Azhar on Surah Luqman verses 13-19, which emphasizes the integration of spiritual and social dimensions in strengthening students' religious character. The model is divided into two main dimensions: the vertical dimension, consisting of tawhid and hisbah, and the horizontal dimension, including ihsan, sabr, tawadhu', and wasathiyah. The vertical dimension develops spiritual integrity, self-control, and ethical awareness through the consciousness of Allah's presence in every action. Meanwhile, the horizontal dimension cultivates empathy, tolerance, humility, and social responsibility in human interactions. The integration of these dimensions produces students who possess strong religious character and ethical digital citizenship. This model demonstrates that Hamka's moral framework is not only theological, but also contextual and applicable in addressing the moral and social challenges of the

digital era, particularly in shaping responsible, tolerant, and spiritually aware Generation Z students.

Furthermore, the relevance of Hamka's concept of morality is also evident in the idea of *wasathiyah*, or religious moderation. Hamka rejected extreme religious attitudes, both in the form of narrow fanaticism and excessive liberalism. He interpreted the verse “*وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا*” (QS. Luqman [31]: 15) as a principle of social etiquette towards parents even though they have different beliefs, which illustrates universal tolerance and humanity (Firmansyah, 2025). This value of moderation can be applied in contemporary Islamic education as a strategy to prevent radicalism among students. By using Hamka's interpretation as a curricular reference, schools and madrasas can instill values of moderation that foster an inclusive attitude, a love of peace, and respect for differences.

Another relevance of Hamka's concept of morality is its application in building digital ethics and moral literacy of generation Z. In the era of social media which is full of a culture of showing off and hate speech, the values of humility and patience as explained in the verse “*وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا*” and “*وَأَعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ*” (QS. Luqman [31]: 18–19) become an important basis for the formation of digital politeness (Hamka, 2015). Students need to be guided to use technology responsibly and with spiritual awareness. Hamka's moral approach helps make digital ethics not just a matter of social etiquette, but also a form of worship and the practice of Quranic values in cyberspace.

Furthermore, the relevance of Hamka's concept is also evident in the Islamic education curriculum. His ideas on moral education rooted in monotheism and noble morals can be integrated into the development of the *Pancasila Student Profile* and *Religious Moderation*, which are now the policy direction of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Nurhasanah et al., 2023; Zahroh & Furqon, 2025). For example, project-based learning can be modified to instill religious values, such as the “*Luqman Reflection*” project which invites students to understand verses 13–19 as a guide to behavior. Thus, Hamka's interpretation can be used as a source of curricular values that strengthen the integration between faith, knowledge, and charity in modern educational practices.

Finally, Hamka's concept of morality teaches that Islamic education should not stop at the mastery of knowledge, but must form people of character and faith who actively play a constructive social role. Through his interpretation, Hamka emphasizes that every good deed must be grounded in the awareness of hisbah, namely the conviction that all actions are continuously observed and evaluated by Allah Swt (QS. Luqman [31]: 16). In the context of modern social media behaviour, this awareness becomes a spiritual-ethical filter when students decide what to post, like, or share whether to forward disinformation, participate in cyberbullying, or spread humiliating content about friends and teachers (Kailani et al., 2025; Wahyudin et al., 2023). In several contemporary school-based programs, for example, discussions on hisbah are integrated into digital citizenship training, where students who were previously involved in spreading hateful or mocking content are guided to reflect on their online traces as part of their accountability before Allah, then encouraged to apologise, delete harmful

posts, and replace them with positive content. In this way, religious character education does not only make students know what is good, but also motivates them to choose ethical behaviour in digital spaces with sincere intentions (Ningsih et al., 2025; Wahyudin et al., 2023). Thus, the relevance of Hamka's concept of morality is not only theoretical but also highly practical, offering a model of character education that can directly address the moral and spiritual challenges faced by Muslims in the 21st-century digital era, especially in the sphere of social media.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Buya Hamka's concept of morality in Tafsir Al-Azhar Surah Luqman verses 13–19 provides a relevant and contextual framework for strengthening the religious character of Muslim Generation Z in the digital era. The main finding of this research is that Hamka's moral framework integrates vertical dimensions, namely *tawhid* and *hisbah*, with horizontal dimensions such as *ihsan*, *sabr*, *tawadhu'*, and *wasathiyah* to form students who possess spiritual integrity, ethical awareness, social responsibility, humility, and emotional resilience. These values are highly applicable in responding to contemporary digital challenges, including hate speech, cyberbullying, disinformation, consumerism, and the weakening of moral sensitivity in online interactions. The study also shows that Hamka's interpretation is not merely theological, but transformative and pedagogical, because it translates Qur'anic teachings into practical educational values that can guide students' behavior both offline and online. Thus, the research highlights the importance of integrating Qur'anic moral values into Islamic education as a strategy for developing ethical digital citizenship and holistic religious character in contemporary society.

The strength of this article lies in its contribution to the development of Islamic education studies through a contextual reinterpretation of Buya Hamka's moral thought in relation to the moral and technological challenges faced by Generation Z. This study contributes theoretically by offering a conceptual model of religious character education that balances spirituality, morality, and social ethics, while practically providing implications for curriculum development, digital ethics education, mentoring programs, and school culture. Nevertheless, this research has several limitations because it relies solely on qualitative library research without empirical field verification regarding the implementation of Hamka's moral framework in educational institutions. In addition, the study focuses specifically on Surah Luqman verses 13–19, so broader exploration of Hamka's interpretation in other Qur'anic passages remains limited. Therefore, future studies are recommended to conduct empirical and mixed-method research involving schools, madrasas, or universities to examine the effectiveness of Hamka-based character education models in strengthening students' digital ethics, religious moderation, and moral resilience in real educational settings.

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