INTERNALIZATION OF ISLAMIC VALUES AS THE FOUNDATION OF STUDENTS' DIGITAL ETHICS: A CASE STUDY OF CHARACTER EDUCATION AT AL FAJAR ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract: *Although there is a lot of research on digital ethics, there is still a gap regarding the internalization of Islamic spiritual values that function as students' internal moral compass in cyberspace. This qualitative research, with the subject of six students at Al Fajar High School, aims to fill the gap. The results of the study show that Islamic character education plays a significant role in shaping students' digital ethical awareness. Values such as amanah (responsibility), shidq (honesty), and awareness of muraqabah (divine supervision) and hisab (accountability in the hereafter) became the foundation of their behavior on social media. The support of the Islamic school environment (biah shalihah), parents, and spiritual habituation programs also contribute to character building. This research makes a scholarly contribution by showing how the internalization of transcendent values such as muraqabah offers a robust faith-based ethical framework for the digital age, beyond secular digital citizenship models. These findings present a holistic model for developing spiritual intelligence alongside digital literacy, which is critical to shaping ethical individuals in a complex technological landscape.*

Keywords*: Islamic character education, Islamic morals, digital era, Muslim students, Islamic digital ethics, muraqabah.*

INTRODUCTION

The digital era has brought about significant changes in human life, marked by technologies that accelerate the speed and volume of knowledge circulation[1]. This transformation has not only altered the way people interact but also shifted educational paradigms. However, for the Muslim community, the digital age presents unique challenges—not only in general ethical and moral terms but also with the potential to affect Muslim students' *aqidah* (faith) and *akhlaq* (morality) [2]. Exposure to conflicting values, harmful content such as hoaxes and cyberbullying, and massive digital distractions can threaten their Islamic identity.

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[1] Asghar Afshar Jahanshahi, Zafer Adiguzel, and Fatma Sonmez Cakir, "Knowledge Management Strategy as the Key Factor for Turkish Firms' Innovation in the Digital Era," *IEEE Engineering Management Review* 51, no. 2 (2023): 166–81, https://doi.org/10.1109/EMR.2023.3265570.

[2] Oluwagbemiga Paul Agboola and Mustafa Tunay, "Urban Resilience in the Digital Age: The Influence of Information-Communication Technology for Sustainability," *Journal of Cleaner Production* 428, no. October (2023), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2023.139304.

In a society increasingly immersed in the digital era, technological transformation has significantly altered the educational paradigm. Education, as an integral part of character and personality formation, is not exempt from the impact of the digital revolution[3]. Character education can be broadly defined as the process of developing cultural and national character values within students so that they embody values and characteristics that reflect their true selves[4]. The application of these values can be realized in life as religious, nationalist, productive, and creative members of society and citizens [5].

The actualization of character is manifested in behavior that results from the combination of biological character and environmental interaction. Character can be shaped through education, as education is the most effective means of awakening individuals to their human identity [6]. Education produces human beings with refined minds and souls, sharp intellect, physical agility, and a deep awareness of their own creation [7]. Compared to other factors, education has two to three times greater influence in shaping human quality[8]. Essentially, character education aims to foster positive values, integrity, and individual morality, and is now faced with unprecedented dynamics. One of the main challenges in character education during the digital era is the influence of social media and online content. Children and adolescents are often exposed to various types of information, including those that are not always positive or supportive of good character development. Damaging content, hoaxes, and cyberbullying behaviors can affect the moral and social development of younger generations [9]. The presence of the internet, including social media, has opened gateways between countries and made everything seemingly accessible[10].

In responding to these dynamics, Islamic character education becomes a necessity. It is defined as a conscious and systematic effort to instill Islamic values sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah as behavioral guidelines in all aspects of life, including in digital interactions. Its main focus is the development of Islamic morality (*akhlaq*), which is the core of Islamic teachings and a manifestation of genuine faith (*iman*) and piety (*taqwa*). The Prophet

[3] Hasbiyallah, Muhammad Munadi, and Dadan Nurulhaq, "Character Education Model for High School Students during the Pandemic in Terms of Pedagogic Competence and Teacher Personality," *International Journal of Instruction* 16, no. 2 (2023): 1077–94, https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2023.16257a.

[4] Akbar Al Masjid et al., "Exploring Wisdom in Children's Literature: Studies on the Values of Character Education in Poetry," *International Journal of Society, Culture and Language* 11, no. 3 (2023): 299–311, https://doi.org/10.22034/ijscl.2023.2007293.3101.

[5] Muhammad Ridwan Hakiki and Alif Santosa, "International Journal of Students Education THE APPLICATION OF PANCASILA VALUES IN DAILY LIFE AND AS CHARACTER EDUCATION," *International Journal of Students Education* 2, no. 2 (2023): 64–70.

[6] Roihatul Jannah, "Islamic Education Character Education Concepts," *DIROSAT: Journal of Education, Social Sciences & Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2023): 7–12, https://doi.org/10.58355/dirosat.v1i1.2.

[7] Sholihul Anwar et al., "Development of the Concept of Islamic Education to Build and Improve the Personality of School-Age Children," *Multidisciplinary Reviews* 7, no. 8 (2024), https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2024139.

[8] Ahmet Demir et al., "The Role of E-Service Quality in Shaping Online Meeting Platforms: A Case Study from Higher Education Sector," *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education* 13, no. 5 (2020): 1436–63, https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-08-2020-0253.

[9] Rajesh Yadav, "Social Deception in Online Platform:Concept,Attacks and Ethical Issues," *IT in Industry* 9, no. 3 (2021): 321–26.

[10] Alhamzah F. Abbas et al., "Bibliometrix Analysis of Information Sharing in Social Media," *Cogent Business and Management* 9, no. 1 (2022), https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2021.2016556.

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent to perfect noble character, indicating its centrality in the message of Islam[11].

Islamic guidance, as articulated in the Qur'an and Sunnah, provides a comprehensive ethical framework for interacting with technology. This includes the importance of *adab* (Islamic manners or etiquette) in communication and behavior in cyberspace. More than just outward rules of conduct, Islam emphasizes the importance of internal spiritual foundations. This is where the concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) becomes fundamental. As emphasized by Imam Al-Ghazali, education is not merely about sharpening the intellect but also about cleansing the soul and shaping good moral character (*khuluq*). This process equips individuals with a spiritual shield against negative digital content and the temptations of the lower self (*nafs*) that often emerge in cyberspace [12].

Character education in the digital era refers to efforts to instill values, attitudes, and positive behaviors in individuals—especially children and adolescents—within the context of technological advancement and rapid access to information [13]. One important aspect is reinforcing moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy through relevant content in the digital world [14]. Moreover, digital awareness is crucial, encompassing ethical use of technology, respect for others' privacy, and understanding the impact of online actions [15]. Developing critical thinking skills is also needed to help students assess the accuracy and credibility of information circulating on the internet[16]. Additionally, character education encourages positive social interaction by promoting the use of social media to build healthy and supportive relationships. It provides resources for mental health support, addressing challenges that may arise from technology use [17]. Integrating technology into learning can enhance the teaching of character values through educational apps and online learning platforms[18]. Character education in the digital era is vital in shaping individuals who are not only

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[11] Firman Muhammad Abdurrohman Akbar, Erika Amelia, and Ahmad Rodoni, "ANALISIS KEBIJAKAN EKONOMI SYARIAH ZAMAN RASULULLAH SAW BERDASARKAN PERSPEKTIF HUKUM EKONOMI ISLAM," *Ar Rasyiid Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023): 1–12.

[12] Rachmat Kriyantono, *Pengantar Lengkap Ilmu Komunikasi Filsafat Dan Etika Ilmunya Serta Perspekfif Islam* (Prenada Media, 2019).

[13] Matthew Dennis and Tom Harrison, "Unique Ethical Challenges for the 21st Century: Online Technology and Virtue Education," *Journal of Moral Education* 44, no. January (2020): 1–16, https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2020.1781071.

[14] Ekaterina Zvereva, "Digital Ethics in Higher Education: Modernizing Moral Values for Effective Communication in Cyberspace," *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies* 13, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.30935/ojcmt/13033.

[15] Laura Hakimi, Rebecca Eynon, and Victoria A. Murphy, *The Ethics of Using Digital Trace Data in Education: A Thematic Review of the Research Landscape*, *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 91, 2021, https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543211020116.

[16] Daniel R. Pimentel, "Learning to Evaluate Sources of Science (Mis)Information on the Internet: Assessing Students' Scientific Online Reasoning," *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, no. April (2024), https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21974.

[17] Masoud Gholamali Lavasani and Farah Khandan, "Transformation Model for Character Education of Students," *Cypriot Journal of Education* 2, no. 5 (2020): 61–74.

[18] Huma Akram et al., "Teachers' Perceptions of Technology Integration in Teaching-Learning Practices: A Systematic Review," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13, no. June (2022): 1–9, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.920317.

academically intelligent but also possess integrity and empathy in interacting with others in the virtual world.

Strong character education is an essential element in shaping young generations who are not only intellectually bright but also emotionally and spiritually mature. In the rapidly advancing age of globalization and digitalization, challenges to individual integrity and morality have become more complex [19]. Digital technology has become an inseparable part of adolescents' lives, offering unlimited access to information, virtual social interactions, and various forms of entertainment. On the one hand, these advancements present great opportunities for self-development [20]. On the other hand, without a strong foundation of character—particularly religious character—students are vulnerable to being swept away by destructive content, foreign values that contradict religious norms, and deviant behaviors that distance them from their identity and sense of self.

In Islamic-based schools, religious character education is not just supplementary but must be the main foundation of the entire learning and personality development process. Religious character encompasses deep faith, consistent piety, and firmly rooted spiritual awareness. These values influence not only how students worship or fulfill religious obligations but also shape their way of thinking, behaving, and acting in daily life—including in digital environments. Religious character gives students a guide in filtering and sorting information, maintaining ethical communication online, and avoiding content that contradicts Islamic faith and morals [21].

The context of this study is Al Fajar Islamic Senior High School, an Islamic-based school where Islamic character education serves as the main foundation in the entire learning process and student personality development. The goal is not merely to produce technologically competent graduates, but to cultivate a generation of Muslims with a strong spiritual foundation. Therefore, this study is driven by the urgency to explore in depth how Islamic character education, with emphasis on Islamic morals (*akhlaq*), can serve as a shield (*wiqayah*) and moral compass for students in facing a fast-paced, open, and challenging digital era. This study aims to present a comprehensive picture of the relevance of Islamic character education in shaping students who are not only skilled in interacting and using technology, but who also steadfastly uphold faith values and remain accountable to Allah SWT in every aspect of their lives.

In responding to these dynamics, character education is widely acknowledged as a necessity. However, a merely secular or universal approach to character may lack the transcendent spiritual foundation required to counteract the profound moral and faith-based

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[19] Bambang Dwi Hartono, Hupron Fadilah, and Firman Muhammad Abdurrohman Akbar, "Teacher Performance of Cikeas Nature School: An Analysis of Learning Agility and Work Culture During Work From Home," *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCE (IJEMBIS)* 3, no. 3 (2023): 440–54.

[20] Bambang Dwi Hartono and Firman Muhammad Abdurrohman Akbar, "The Advantages of Muvon Ecosystem For The Quality of Practicum of SMK Students in Distance Learning: Case Study of Muhammadiyah SMK in Jakarta," *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCE (IJEMBIS)* 3, no. 3 (2023): 753–62.

[21] Faisal Faisal et al., "ANALYSIS OF THE SCIENTIFIC LEARNING APPROACH IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO ENHANCE STUDENTS CRITICAL THINKING," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 04 (2024): 815–36.

challenges Muslim youth face online. While the general principles of digital citizenship—such as responsibility, empathy, and critical thinking—are essential, they often operate within a temporal framework. **A significant gap exists in the literature, as few studies have empirically investigated the internalization of specifically *Islamic* digital ethics, such as *muraqabah* (divine supervision) and the application of *adab* (Islamic etiquette), among high school students.** Most research on digital ethics either adopts a generic moral perspective or discusses Islamic concepts theoretically without grounding them in qualitative data from school environments.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how Islamic character education, with emphasis on Islamic morals (*akhlaq*), serves as a shield (*wiqayah*) and moral compass for students at Al Fajar Islamic Senior High School. It seeks to present a comprehensive picture of the relevance of Islamic character education in shaping students who are not only skilled in using technology but who also steadfastly uphold faith values and remain accountable to Allah SWT in every digital action.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Character Education

Character education in the digital era is often framed by secular pedagogical and psychological theories. Thomas Lickona's model, for instance, provides a robust tripartite framework for character development, encompassing moral knowing (cognitive understanding of right and wrong), moral feeling (the emotional and empathetic dimension, including conscience and self-respect), and moral behavior (the consistent application of virtues in action) [22]. In Indonesia, character education has become a key focus of the education system, particularly since the Reform era [23]. Its aim is to foster national identity and noble character in accordance with Pancasila as the foundation of the state. Moreover, the involvement of parents and the broader community in character education is crucial in creating a supportive environment [24].

The goals of character education are to develop students' potential to become individuals who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, and to cultivate noble character, health, knowledge, skills, creativity, independence, and responsibility as democratic citizens. It also aims to instill mutual respect and appreciation, as well as to shape good character in daily life[25]. Students with good character strive to do their best for God, themselves, others, and the

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[22] Jakub saddam Akbar et al., *Landasan Pendidikan* (PT Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2023).

[23] Muhammad Japar, "Educational Administration : Theory and Practice Analysis of Character Character in Indonesia Education Values :," *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice* 30, no. 1 (2024): 334–47.

[24] Iksal, Ratu Amalia Hayani, and Aslan, "Strengthening Character Education as a Response to the Challenges of the Times," *Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE)* 4, no. 3 (2024): 761–74.

[25] Lisia Miranda, "Pentingnya Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Pada Anak Sekolah Dasar Di Era Digital," *Atmosfer: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Budaya, Dan Sosial Humaniora* 2, no. 2 (2024): 228–34, https://doi.org/10.59024/atmosfer.v2i2.805.

environment by maximizing their potential and possessing high emotional awareness and motivation[26].

Character education also emphasizes the importance of independence, which includes creativity, discipline, and the courage to make decisions. Cooperation and integrity are other key values in character education. Additionally, integrity—which encompasses honesty and mutual respect—forms the foundation for shaping good character. Character education also plays a role in forming national identity and understanding the values of Pancasila. Strong character education in individuals will contribute to building a harmonious and civilized society.

While these frameworks are valuable, they operate primarily within a socio-psychological realm. For Muslim educators, these dimensions find their profound and ultimate meaning when integrated with the Islamic worldview. The secular concept of "moral feeling" is deepened by the Islamic concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), which aims to cultivate a sound heart (*qalbun salim*) that naturally inclines toward good and rejects evil. Bandura's "modeling" is powerfully actualized in the Islamic principle of *qudwah hasanah* (exemplary conduct), where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the ultimate model, and teachers/parents are its contemporary representatives.

The following table provides a systematic conceptual mapping that synthesizes these secular theories with specific Islamic concepts, illustrating a holistic framework for Islamic digital character education.

Table 1: Theoretical Synthesis for Islamic Digital Character Education

Secular Theory / Concept	Corresponding Islamic Concept	Synthesis and Application in the Digital Context
Lickona: Moral Knowing (Understanding values)	**`Aql (Intellect) & Ilm (Knowledge)** Use of intellect to understand divine guidelines.	Moves beyond relative ethics to knowledge grounded in Qur'an and Sunnah. Students are taught that honesty online is not just a social norm but a command of Allah (*shidq*), and spreading misinformation is a form of *kadzib* (lying) which is sinful.
Lickona: Moral Feeling (Conscience,	**Tazkiyatun Nafs** (Purification of the Soul) Purifying the heart	Cultivates an internal spiritual state where the soul feels peace in good deeds and unease in sin. This creates an intrinsic motivation to avoid cyberbullying (a form

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Secular Theory / Concept	Corresponding Islamic Concept	Synthesis and Application in the Digital Context
empathy, self-respect)	from spiritual diseases like envy (*hasad*) and arrogance (*kibr*).	of *dhulm*, oppression) and to feel empathy for others online, as they are believers.
Lickona: Moral Behavior (Acting on values)	**`Amal Salih** (Righteous Deeds) & **Adab** (Etiquette) Manifesting inner faith and purity through outward action in accordance with Islamic law and etiquette.	Guides specific digital behaviors: practicing *tabayyun* (verification) before sharing news, using *qaulan layyina* (gentle speech) in comments, and avoiding *ghibah* (backbiting) in group chats.
Bandura: Social Learning / Modeling	**Qudwah Hasanah** (Exemplary Conduct) Emulation of noble examples.	Positions teachers and parents as key models whose own digital behavior—how they use phones, communicate online, and integrate technology with worship—is observed and internalized by students.
General Accountability	**Muraqabah** & **Hisab** Awareness of Allah's constant supervision and ultimate accountability in the Hereafter.	Provides a transcendent motivator that surpasses fear of social sanction. The internalized feeling that "Allah is watching" (*muraqabah*) becomes the most powerful filter for online behavior, leading to self-regulation even in anonymous digital spaces.
Moral Compass / Filter	**Taqwa** (God-Consciousness) A spiritual and ethical shield derived from strong *iman* (faith).	Functions as the overarching internal filter (*wiqayah*). A student with *taqwa* is not merely avoiding hoaxes because they are "fake news," but because they are a form of *fasad* (corruption) and contradict the Islamic obligation to be truthful.

The Digital Era

The digital era is a period of transformation marked by the rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT)[27]. The digital era refers to the use of electronic devices and the internet to access, process, and disseminate information efficiently. This transformation affects not only how people interact and communicate but also reshapes dynamics in various sectors, including education, the economy, and culture. The digital era has become a significant milestone in human history, where information can be accessed instantly and communication transcends geographical boundaries[28]. A deep understanding of the digital era is essential to anticipate both its positive and negative impacts.

Key features of the digital era include easy access to information and instant communication [29]. Through the internet, individuals can obtain various types of information within seconds, enhancing public awareness and understanding of global issues. However, this convenience also brings challenges, such as the risk of spreading inaccurate information or hoaxes. Therefore, digital literacy is an essential skill that individuals must possess to filter the information they receive and make informed decisions [30]. With this skill, people can use information more effectively and responsibly. Communication transformation in the digital era is also very significant. Social media and instant messaging apps allow individuals to interact in real-time, creating closer connections among people from diverse backgrounds.

The digital era is characterized by rapid advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), enabling instant access to information and communication across geographical boundaries. While this ease offers significant benefits, it also presents ethical and spiritual challenges from an Islamic perspective. For instance, the ease of information dissemination increases the risk of spreading *fitnah* (slander), *ghibah* (backbiting), and false news (*kadzib*). Exposure to content that contradicts Islamic values—such as materialism, violence, and pornography—as well as the potential for wasted time that disrupts worship, is a serious concern. Hence, digital literacy that is not only technical but also ethical and spiritual is crucial[31].

Religious Character in Character Education

Unlike the more general notion of "religious character," Islamic character or *akhlaq Islami* refers to attitudes and behaviors that reflect obedience to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah in all aspects of life. This is not limited to ritual aspects, but also serves as a guide for

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[27] Jie Zhang and Zhisheng Chen, "Exploring Human Resource Management Digital Transformation in the Digital Age," *Journal of the Knowledge Economy* 15, no. 1 (2024): 1482–98, https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01214-y.

[28] Haura Nurshakilah, "International Journal of Students Education," *The Cultivation of Morality and Discipline Character in the World of Education* 1, no. 2 (2022): 29–34.

[29] Mamdouh Alenezi, Saja Wardat, and Mohammed Akour, "The Need of Integrating Digital Education in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 15, no. 6 (2023): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.3390/su15064782.

[30] Burhanuddin Arafah and Muhammad Hasyim, "Digital Literacy on Current Issues in Social Media: Social Media As a Source of Information," *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology* 101, no. 10 (2023): 3943–51.

[31] Muhammad Adam Syawaluddin, "Dekadensi Moral Remaja Muslim Pengguna Media Sosial Dalam Tinjauan Etika Ibnu Miskawaih" (FU, n.d.).

social interaction—including in digital spaces. Lickona's framework of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior can be understood through the lens of Islam. Moral knowing in Islam means understanding values such as *shidq* (honesty), *amanah* (responsibility), and *taqwa* (awareness of Allah). Moral feeling involves *mahabbah* (love for Allah and His commands) and *khashyah* (fear of His displeasure). Moral behavior is the real-life manifestation (*amal*) of this knowledge and emotion, guided by *shari'ah* (Islamic law). Without integration of these divine values, moral education risks becoming shallow [32].

Classical and contemporary Islamic educational thinkers have laid strong foundations for this concept. Imam Al-Ghazali, through his concept of *tazkiyatun nafs*, emphasized that purification of the soul from spiritual diseases (*amrad al-qulub*) such as arrogance (*kibr*), envy (*hasad*), and showing off (*riya*) is a prerequisite for forming good character. This process of soul purification becomes an essential spiritual defense against the temptations of negative digital content and distractions that can erode spirituality [33].

Hasan Langgulung elaborated on three dimensions of relationships that must be cultivated [34]:

1. *Habl min Allah* **(Relationship with Allah)**

   This vertical dimension includes faith, piety, and performing worship. In the digital context, it is relevant in using technology for positive purposes such as seeking religious knowledge, accessing digital Qur'an apps, making remembrance (*dhikr*) online, avoiding forbidden content, and maintaining prayer times despite digital busyness. The core is to uphold *taqwa* in every digital activity.

2. *Habl min al-Nas (Relationship with Others)*

   This horizontal dimension governs social interactions. In the digital era, *adab* (etiquette) in *habl min al-nas* is critical. It includes the obligation to avoid disgraceful actions such as *ghibah* (backbiting), *fitnah* (spreading slander or false accusations), *namimah* (gossiping or inciting division), spreading *fasad* (corruption or chaos), and *kadzib* (lying or spreading hoaxes). Islam proactively commands *tabayyun* (verification of information) before sharing, as emphasized in Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 6. Conversely, digital communication should be adorned with *qaulan sadida* (truthful and straightforward speech) and *qaulan layyina* (gentle and polite speech), as exemplified in the prophetic communication principles.

3. **Relationship with the Environment/Nature**

   Although not explicitly discussed in the digital context here, this principle includes the responsibility to maintain sustainability, which may relate to issues like digital carbon footprints or electronic waste.

Other key concepts that reinforce Islamic character in the digital era include *adab* (Islamic etiquette in all aspects, including technology use), *ihsan* (doing good and being

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[32] Anggit Fajar Nugrobo, "Pembentukan Karakter Religius Dan Sikap Peduli Sosial Peserta Didik Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Negeri Jawa Tengah Di Purbalingga" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri Purwokerto (Indonesia), 2021).

[33] Lailatul Maskhuroh Wahid Annisa, "TASAWUF DALAM ERA DIGITAL (Menjaga Kesadaran Spiritual Di Tengah Arus Teknologi)," *ILJ: Islamic Learning Journal (Jurnal Pendidikan Islam) Prodi* 5, no. 1 (2016): 55–73, https://revistas.ufrj.br/index.php/rce/article/download/1659/1508%0Ahttp://hipatiapress.com/hpjournals/index.php/qre/article/view/1348%5Cnhttp://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09500799708666915%5Cnhttps://mckinseyonsociety.com/downloads/reports/Educa.

[34] Hasan Langgulung, "Asas-Asa Pendidikan Islam (Jakarta: Al-Husna Zikra)," *Remaja Rosdakarya*, 2000.

conscious of Allah's supervision, closely related to *muraqabah*), and *taqwa* (deep awareness of Allah that guides actions). *Taqwa* and *iman* function as strong shields against the negative impacts of the internet.

Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes the role of models, aligns with Islam's concept of *qudwah hasanah* (good role models). Teachers and parents are the primary *qudwah* for students. Their digital behavior, the way they integrate technology with Islamic values—or their neglect thereof—will be observed and potentially imitated by students. This modeling becomes an important method of value transmission and character formation. The thoughts of Islamic education figures such as Ibn Rushd, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, Al-Zarnuji, and Ibn Khaldun also provide valuable insights on ethics, integration of knowledge, and educational methodologies that are highly relevant in the contemporary digital context [35].

METHOD

The study employed a purposive sampling technique to select the six student participants. This non-probability sampling method was chosen to ensure the researchers could identify and select individuals who were especially knowledgeable about and had experienced the phenomenon of interest namely, the internalization of Islamic values in their digital lives.

The selection criteria for the participants were as follows:

- Active Engagement in Digital Platforms: Students who are regular users of social media (e.g., Instagram, WhatsApp) and digital tools for learning, as observed by their teachers and evidenced through school projects.
- Involvement in School's Islamic Programs: Students who actively participate in the school's character-building programs, such as congregational prayers (shalat berjamaah), Qur'an recitation sessions, and regular Islamic studies.
- Willingness and Ability to Articulate Experiences: Students deemed by their homeroom or Islamic education teachers as reflective and capable of providing rich, detailed insights into their perceptions and experiences during in-depth interviews.

This study adhered to standard ethical protocols for qualitative research involving human subjects: Informed Consent: Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from both the participants and their parents or guardians. They were provided with a detailed information sheet explaining the research purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Anonymity and Confidentiality: To protect the participants' identities, all identifying information was removed. Pseudonyms are used throughout the research report and in any subsequent publications. All data (interview transcripts, notes) are stored securely and accessed only by the research team. Ethical Approval: The research protocol received ethical approval from the school's internal research committee or a relevant institutional review board before commencement.

The data collected from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed using an interactive model of qualitative data analysis as proposed by Miles and Huberman. This model consists of three concurrent flows of activity: Data Reduction: The process of

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[35] Aep Saepurrohman and Mohamad Erihadiana, "The Concept of Qudwah and Its Implications for Teacher Personality Competence in Islamic Education," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14 (August 30, 2024): 90–102, https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v14i2.1806.

selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data. This involved transcribing interviews, summarizing field notes, and coding the data to identify key themes and patterns related to the internalization of Islamic values. Data Display: Organizing the reduced data into a structured format, such as thematic matrices, tables, and networks, to allow for clear conclusions to be drawn and verified. Table 1 in the paper, comparing general and Islamic concepts, is an example of a data display. Conclusion Drawing and Verification: Systematically interpreting the displayed data to identify meaningful patterns, relationships, and explanations. Initial conclusions were continuously verified by checking against the raw data and through peer discussion to ensure they were well-grounded in the evidence.

To ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings, this study employed Lincoln and Guba's framework for establishing validity in qualitative research, which includes four key criteria: Credibility (internal validity): Was established through triangulation of data sources (observation, interviews, documentation) and methods. Additionally, peer debriefing was conducted, where fellow researchers reviewed the findings and analytical process, and member checking was performed, where preliminary findings were presented to participants to confirm the accuracy of their accounts. Transferability (external validity): Instead of statistical generalizability, this study provides thick, rich descriptions of the context (Al Fajar Islamic Senior High School), the participants, and the research process. This allows readers to assess the extent to which the findings may be transferable to other similar settings. Dependability (reliability): To ensure the research process is logical, traceable, and documented, a dependability audit was maintained. This involved keeping a detailed record of all research decisions, data collection steps, and analytical processes, allowing an external auditor to follow the research trail. Confirmability (objectivity): Confirmability was achieved by maintaining an audit trail that links the findings directly to the raw data (interview transcripts, field notes, documents). This demonstrates that the findings arise from the data itself and not from the researchers' predispositions, ensuring the study's findings are shaped by the participants and not by researcher.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data collected through observations, documentation, and in-depth interviews with students at Al Fajar Islamic Senior High School yielded several key findings regarding the internalization of Islamic values in their digital lives.

1. **Student Perceptions on the Importance of Islamic Character Education**

    The students unanimously acknowledged the crucial role of character education in navigating the digital world. They viewed it as essential guidance for distinguishing between good (*ma'ruf*) and bad (*munkar*) behavior online. Statements such as, "Character education helps me understand what is right and wrong, especially when using social media," were common. Students also reported that this education fostered positive attitudes, with one noting, "Through character education, I've learned to be more patient and control my emotions when interacting online." Furthermore, they demonstrated the ability to identify and avoid unethical online behaviors like cyberbullying and spreading false information.

2. **Patterns of Gadget Usage and Digital Skills**

The use of gadgets and information technology is deeply integrated into the students' academic lives. They rely on devices for completing assignments, searching for information, and participating in online learning activities, with an average usage of around three hours per day after school. Platforms like YouTube and Canva are utilized to support learning and boost creativity, while WhatsApp and Instagram serve as primary tools for communication and social interaction. Instagram, in particular, is used as a medium for self-expression and sharing creative work.

3. **The Role of Parental Guidance**

Students reported appreciating and receiving advice from their parents on using technology responsibly and maintaining online ethics. While they felt a degree of independence, parental guidance remained a significant influence. One student stated, "My parents give me freedom, but always remind me not to lose track of time and to maintain politeness online." Some parents enforced time limits, such as one hour of gadget use per day, to ensure a balance between digital and real-life activities.

4. **Internalization of Islamic Values in Digital Behavior**

The key findings reveal the concrete internalization of specific Islamic values that shape students' digital conduct:

- **Divine Accountability (*Muraqabah* and *Hisab*):** Students exhibited a strong awareness that their online actions are accountable before Allah. Statements like, "I don't want to spread hoaxes or hate comments because it's a sin," demonstrate that the concepts of divine supervision and afterlife accountability are actively internalized.

- **Avoiding Hoaxes and Hate Speech:** Students showed a clear tendency to avoid spreading unverified information and hate speech, aligning with Islamic prohibitions against *kadzib* (lying), *fitnah* (slander), and *ghibah* (backbiting). The practice of *tabayyun* (verification) before sharing information was recognized as an important principle.

- **Priority of Worship (*Taqwa* and *Mujahadah*):** Students made conscious efforts not to let digital activities interfere with their religious obligations, such as prayer and Qur'an recitation. This reflects a struggle (*mujahadah*) to maintain piety (*taqwa*) amidst digital distractions.

- **Value of *Amanah* and Communication Etiquette:** The value of trustworthiness (*amanah*) was manifested in academic honesty, such as avoiding digital plagiarism. In communication, students reported striving to maintain courtesy (*adab*), avoiding harsh language, and applying principles of truthful (*qaulan sadida*) and gentle speech (*qaulan layyina*).

- **Influence of the Islamic School Environment:** The Islamic environment at Al Fajar, characterized by programs like congregational prayer and Qur'an recitation, creates a *biah shalihah* (conducive environment for righteousness). Teachers are seen as *qudwah hasanah* (good role models), whose behavior in integrating technology with Islamic values provides a practical example for students.

RESULT

The students interviewed acknowledged the importance of character education in facing the challenges of the digital world. They viewed this education as guidance for distinguishing

between good (*ma'ruf*) and bad (*munkar*) behavior within the Islamic context, particularly when interacting online. Statements such as, "Character education helps me understand what is right and wrong, especially when using social media," indicate an awareness of the need for Islamic moral guidance. Islamic character education is expected to provide a solid foundation of faith (*aqidah*) and morality (*akhlaq*) for decision-making.

Islamic character education is also seen as a means of developing positive attitudes. Students feel that possessing good character, such as *sabr* (patience) and *hilm* (emotional self-control), helps them adapt in online interactions. One student stated, "Through character education, I've learned to be more patient and control my emotions when interacting online." This shows that the educational focus is not only on cognitive aspects but also on the holistic development of Islamic personality.

Furthermore, students demonstrated the ability to recognize unethical behaviors such as cyberbullying or spreading false information (*kadzib*, *fitnah*), which are prohibited in Islam.[14] They reported choosing not to engage in negative comments, reflecting the internalization of the values taught. Their confidence in making decisions on social media also increased—they tend to think twice before posting or commenting, realizing the worldly and afterlife consequences (*hisab*). This aligns with the view of Adiyono et al. on the exposure to content that contradicts Islamic values in the digital era and the need for an analytical framework based on character education [36].

Gadget Usage and Digital Skills

The use of gadgets and information technology has become an inseparable part of students' learning lives. They use gadgets to complete assignments, search for information, and participate in online learning activities such as quizzes through platforms like Quizizz. The statement, "I often use my gadget to do assignments and search for information online," reflects a strong reliance on technology. An average usage of around three hours per day after school indicates the intensity of this habit. Platforms such as YouTube and Canva are used to support learning, enhance understanding of material, and boost creativity in presentations.
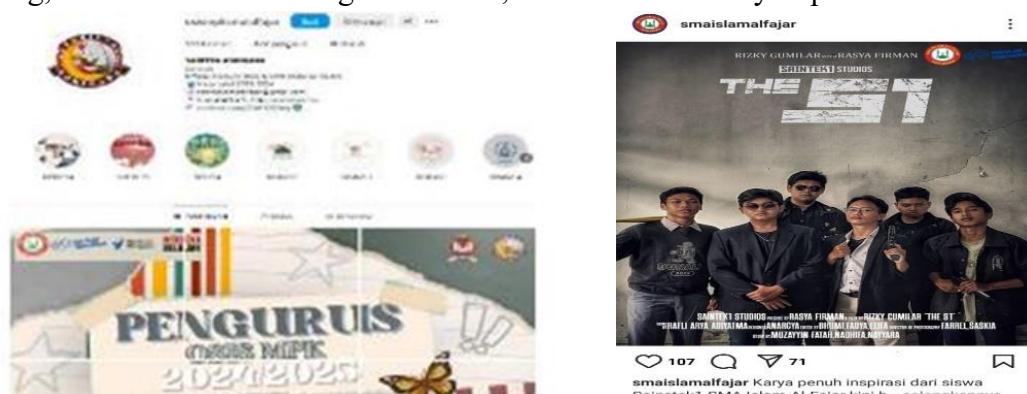

Figure 1. Students' Creative Work on Social Media at SMA Al Fajar

[36] Adiyono Adiyono, Syamsun Ni'am, and Ahmad Muhtadi Anshor, "Islamic Character Education in the Era of Industry 5.0: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Opportunities," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 8, no. 1 (2024): 287, https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i1.493.

Social media platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram serve as the main tools for communication and social interaction. WhatsApp is used for task collaboration and information sharing among peers, while Instagram (as illustrated in Figure 1) is a medium for self-expression and the development of digital skills through sharing artwork and engaging with a wider audience.

Although the use of this technology is functional, it should be viewed as a space where Islamic ethics must be applied. Is the technology used to seek beneficial knowledge (*'ilman naafi'an*)? Is the collaboration conducted with *amanah* (honesty)? Does self-expression on Instagram remain within the boundaries of Islamic *adab*? The thoughts of figures like K.H. Ahmad Dahlan on the integration of religious and secular sciences, as well as Ibn Rushd on the importance of critical thinking, are relevant in evaluating and utilizing technology in an Islamic manner

The Role of Parents

Students appreciate parental advice in using technology and maintaining online ethics. Although they feel more independent, parental guidance remains important to ensure responsible gadget use. "My parents give me freedom, but always remind me not to lose track of time and to maintain politeness online," said one student. Some parents limit gadget usage to one hour per day, demonstrating concern for balancing digital activities with real life and instilling positive time-management habits.

This parental role can be framed within the concept of *tarbiyah Islamiyah* (Islamic education in the family). Prophetic parenting methods such as providing *qudwah hasanah* (good example), *mau'izah hasanah* (gentle advice), and *mulahadzah* (attentive supervision) are highly relevant for parents guiding their children in the digital era, especially in matters related to gadget use and online interaction

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Integration of Islamic Character in Students' Digital Lives

The key findings of this study reveal the significant role of Islamic values in shaping students' digital behavior.

1. **Divine Accountability (Muraqabah and Hisab)**
   The awareness that every action will be held accountable before Allah becomes a strong ethical foundation. Statements like, "I don't want to spread hoaxes or hate comments because it's a sin," are clear evidence of the internalization of *hisab* (accountability for deeds). This goes deeper than merely "fear of sin"; it is a manifestation of *muraqabah*—a constant awareness that Allah is always watching and knowing every activity, including every click and upload in cyberspace. The concept of *muraqabah* fosters mindfulness and caution, rooted in the feeling of always being under Allah's watch [37].

2. **Avoiding Hoaxes and Hate Speech (Tabayyun and Prohibition of Ghibah, Fitnah, Kadzib)**
   Avoidance of hoax dissemination and hate speech is directly tied to Islamic prohibitions against *kadzib* (lying), *fitnah* (false accusations), *ghibah* (backbiting), and spreading *fasad* (corruption).

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[37] Mohammad Hazmi Fauzan, Undang Ahmad Darsa, and Elis Suryani Nani Sumarlina, "Konsep Muraqabah: Wacana Keilmuan Tasawuf Berdasarkan Naskah Fathul 'Arifin," *Kabuyutan* 2, no. 1 (2023): 76–79, https://doi.org/10.61296/kabuyutan.v2i1.145.

The principle of *tabayyun* (information verification), as commanded in Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat:6, serves as an Islamic solution to counter misinformation. Students with strong Islamic character tend to be more cautious and refrain from sharing news before confirming its truth[38].

3. **Priority of Worship (Taqwa and Mujahadah)**

   Students' efforts not to neglect religious obligations such as prayer, reading the Qur'an, or *dhikr* amid digital busyness reflect *taqwa* (awareness of Allah) and *mujahadah* (struggle against the self and distractions). These spiritual activities serve as nourishment for the soul and spiritual defenses (*benteng*) against the temptations and negative effects of cyberspace, stemming from the process of *tazkiyatun nafs*. Faith and piety are the ultimate shields [39].

4. **Value of Amanah and Communication Etiquette**

   The value of *amanah* (responsibility, trustworthiness) is manifested in academic honesty (avoiding digital plagiarism) and communication ethics. Students with strong Islamic character tend to be more responsible and maintain *adab* (courtesy) in digital interactions. They avoid harsh language, do not provoke easily, and apply Islamic communication principles such as *qaulan sadida* (truthful speech) and *qaulan layyina* (gentle speech) [40].

5. **Role of Islamic School Environment (Biah Shalihah and Qudwah Hasanah)**

   The environment at SMA Al Fajar, which is Islamic-based, actively shapes students' character. Programs such as congregational prayer, regular Islamic study sessions, and Qur'an recitation habituation create a *biah shalihah* (a conducive environment for righteousness). This environment directly fosters noble character that carries over into students' digital behavior. Teachers play a vital role as *qudwah hasanah* (good role models). The way teachers integrate Islamic values into the use of technology and daily interactions serves as a practical example for students. *Biah shalihah* and *qudwah hasanah* provide essential external support for students' internal *mujahadah* (struggles) in maintaining digital ethics [41].

6. **Values as Moral Filters (Wiqayah)**

   Islamic values such as honesty (*shidq*), responsibility (*mas'uliyyah*), *amanah*, patience (*sabr*), and humility (*tawadhu'*) act as internal moral filters or shields (*wiqayah*) that protect students from the negative impacts of the digital world. The effectiveness of these filters is rooted in the strength of one's faith and piety. The stronger the student's connection with Allah, the greater their motivation and ability to consistently apply these values in digital spaces. This reinforces the importance of the *tazkiyatun nafs* foundation, as a purified soul is better equipped to wisely filter external influences [42].

[38] Waqi'atul Hasanah and Hartono Hartono, "Analisis Larangan Ghibah Dalam Surah Al-Hujurat Ayat 12 Pendekatan Fenomologi Sosial," *As-Syifa: Journal of Islamic Studies and History* 3, no. 1 (2024): 43–54, https://doi.org/10.35132/assyifa.v3i1.719.

[39] Wahid Annisa, "TASAWUF DALAM ERA DIGITAL (Menjaga Kesadaran Spiritual Di Tengah Arus Teknologi)."

[40] Najhan Dzulhusna, Nunung Nurhasanah, and Yuda Nur Suherman, "Qaulan Sadida, Qaulan Ma'rufa, Qaulan Baligha, Qaulan Maysura, Qaulan Layyina Dan Qaulan Karima Itu Sebagai Landasan Etika Komunikasi Dalam Dakwah," *Jurnal of Islamic Social Science and Communication* 1, no. 2 (2022): 76–84.

[41] Saepurrohman and Erihadiana, "The Concept of Qudwah and Its Implications for Teacher Personality Competence in Islamic Education."

[42] Alfiana Syifa and Auliya Ridwan, "Social Studies in Education Pendidikan Karakter Islami Di Era Digital : Tantangan Dan Solusi Berdasarkan Pemikiran Sosial Imam Al-Ghazali A . Introduction Dalam Era Digital Yang Terus Berkembang Pesat , Pendidikan Karakter Menjadi Salah Satu Prioritas" 02, no. 02 (2024): 107–22.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study affirm the fundamental role of Islamic character education in equipping students with moral and ethical guidance in the complex digital era. These findings align with the research of Adiyono, which highlights the challenges posed by digital content that contradicts Islamic values. Islamic character education not only provides a framework for distinguishing right from wrong according to *shari'ah* but also instills a profound sense of spiritual awareness.

Students' use of technology for learning and social interaction at Al Fajar Islamic Senior High School reflects their adaptation to the demands of the times. However, the integration of Islamic character ensures that this adaptation does not compromise fundamental values. Students' ability to apply *sabr* (patience) and manage their emotions online, as well as to recognize and avoid disgraceful behavior such as *ghibah* (backbiting) and *fitnah* (slander), indicates that Islamic character education focuses on personality development—not merely academic achievement.

The most significant finding is the internalization of the concept of divine accountability (*muraqabah* and *hisab*), which is specifically realized through the awareness that all actions will be accounted for before Allah. Student statements connecting their online behavior with consequences of sin and afterlife accountability show that Islamic values are not only cognitively known (*moral knowing* in Lickona's terms) but also emotionally felt (*moral feeling*) and practically implemented (*moral behavior*). This transcends the scope of secular digital ethics, linking every digital action to a transcendent dimension. The students' commitment to prioritizing worship amidst digital temptations reflects an understanding of the importance of maintaining *habl min Allah* (relationship with Allah) as a source of spiritual strength. This is consistent with Al-Ghazali's perspective on the importance of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) and the formation of *khuluq* (noble character) through worship and inner refinement. These spiritual activities serve as active defenses.

The application of *adab* in online communication—such as avoiding hoaxes through *tabayyun* and speaking with *qaulan sadida* and *qaulan layyina*—represents the realization of *habl min al-nas* (relationships with others) in the digital context. This affirms that Islamic teachings offer relevant and applicable ethical communication guidance for virtual interactions. The value of *amanah* in academic digital tasks also reflects the integrity instilled by character education.

The role of the school environment as *biah shalihah* and of teachers as *qudwah hasanah* cannot be overstated. A supportive environment and good role models provide real assistance for the internalization of values. This supports Bandura's social learning theory within the context of Islamic education, in which observation and imitation of behavioral models (teachers and peers) play a key role.

Islamic values function as moral filters rooted in *iman* and *taqwa*. These filters are not passive but are actively formed through *tazkiyatun nafs* and reinforced by worship, *biah shalihah*, and *qudwah hasanah*. As emphasized by Tilaar, Islamic character education becomes a vital strategy to maintain moral identity amidst globalization and digitalization. To clarify the shift from general terminology to specific Islamic terminology, the following table is presented:

Table 1: Comparison of General Religious Character Concepts and Specific Islamic Character Terminologies in the Digital Context

General Concept	Specific Islamic Terminology	Reference Basis	Application in Digital Context
Accountability to God	*Muraqabah*, *Hisab*	Qur'an Surah Qaf:18, Hadith, Sufi Scholars	Awareness that all online actions (clicks, uploads, comments) are recorded and accountable in the hereafter
Avoiding fake news/hate speech	*Tabayyun*, prohibition of *Kadzib*, *Fitnah*, *Ghibah*	Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat:6, Hadith	Obligation to verify information before sharing; avoid spreading lies, slander, and online gossip
Online etiquette/politeness	*Adab*, *Qaulan Sadida*, *Qaulan Layyina*	Hadith, Islamic communication principles	Use correct, honest, gentle, and constructive language; avoid harsh words or insults
Spiritual resilience	*Tazkiyatun Nafs*, *Taqwa*, *Iman*	Al-Ghazali, Qur'an Surah Al-Hadid:22, Sufi Scholars	Soul purification and faith as internal shields against negative content and digital distractions
Good Role Models	*Qudwah Hasanah*	Qur'an Surah Al-Ahzab:21, Hadith	Teachers, parents, and authority figures consistently demonstrating Islamic digital ethics
Supportive environment	*Biah Shalihah*	Islamic Education Concepts	School/home environments that actively nurture Islamic values and ethical online behavior

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that Islamic character education—particularly with a focus on instilling Islamic morals (*akhlaq*)—plays an essential role in shaping the behavior of students at Al Fajar Islamic Senior High School in the digital era. The students are not only capable of using technology for learning and social interaction but also demonstrate the internalization of Islamic moral and spiritual values in their digital lives. Values such as *amanah* (trust and responsibility), *shidq* (honesty), and especially the awareness of *muraqabah* (divine supervision) and *hisab* (accountability in the hereafter), serve as primary ethical guides in their behavior on social media and other digital platforms.The synergistic support from the Islamic school environment that implements the principles of *biah shalihah*, the involvement of parents through *tarbiyah Islamiyah* (Islamic parenting), and spiritual habituation programs has proven effective in building students' awareness of Islamic digital ethics that are both responsible and ethical. These elements work together to strengthen the character development process, enabling students to make wise decisions and uphold integrity amidst the intense flow of information and digital stimuli. Therefore, the integration of Islamic character education into the broader digital learning curriculum and ecosystem becomes highly crucial. This aims to form a generation of Muslims who are not only technologically competent but also possess unwavering faith (*iman*), deep piety (*taqwa*), and noble character (*akhlaq al-karimah*). It is this very generation that is expected to navigate the digital world with ethical awareness and a strong moral foundation, as a manifestation of *Islam kaffah* (comprehensive and holistic Islam) in contemporary life

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