



Oemar Bakry's Tafsir Madrasi: Moral Education Themes in Surah Al-Baqarah and Contemporary Relevance

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Abstract: This study analyzes the concept of moral education in Tafsir Madrasi by Oemar Bakry, focusing on Surah al-Baqarah verses 1-63 and 142-249. This study aims to uncover the moral values articulated by Bakry in the Qur'an and their relevance to the contemporary Islamic education paradigm. This study uses a qualitative-descriptive method with a thematic interpretation (*maudu'i*) approach, supported by an analysis of Islamic education theory. The findings indicate that Oemar Bakry views moral education as a holistic personality formation process that instills the values of faith (*iman*), trust (*amanah*), patience (*ṣabr*), justice (*ʿadl*), and piety (*taqwa*). These values serve as a conceptual foundation for curriculum design, humanistic teaching methods, and the development of moral leadership in modern education. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of an integrative Islamic education paradigm that combines spiritual, rational, and social dimensions, consistent with contemporary value-based education theory. Therefore, the Madrasi Interpretation is not just a classical Indonesian interpretation, but also a conceptual reference for the development of Islamic education that is value-oriented and civilized.

Keywords: contemporary Islamic education; moral education; Oemar Bakry; Surah al-Baqarah; Tafsir Madrasi

Introduction

Moral education holds a crucial position in the Islamic education system because it serves as the primary foundation for developing a faithful, civilized, and cultured human personality. Morality serves not only as a complementary aspect of the educational process but also as the core of Islamic education's true goals. Moral education emphasizes a balance between intellectual, spiritual, and emotional intelligence so that students can internalize divine values in their daily lives (Azra, 1999). In the modern context, the emergence of moral degradation among schoolchildren, university students, and even among the social elite indicates a weakening internalization of the values of the Quran and Hadith in education. Various behaviors such as hedonism, intolerance, and a crisis of integrity indicate a gap between religious knowledge and moral practice (Shihab, 1996). Therefore, moral education must be directed toward developing a character based on revelation that fosters ethical awareness and social responsibility.

One important effort to strengthen Islamic moral values is to explore the treasures of classical and modern exegesis, particularly the works of Indonesian scholars who display a moderate and contextual approach. Local exegesis, such as Tafsir Madrasi by Oemar Bakry (1916–1998), is highly relevant in the context of moral education because it presents an interpretation of Quranic

verses in a rational, communicative, and easily understood style for the general public. In his commentary on Surah al-Baqarah (verses 1–63 and 142–249), Bakry emphasizes the importance of noble morals as a concrete manifestation of faith and as a foundation for human civilization (Hidayat, 2022).

Oemar Bakry is a prominent scholar, commentator, and educator who has significantly influenced the development of Islamic education in Indonesia. His contributions extend beyond the realm of Islamic exegesis (tafsir) to educational practice and national character building. As an academic and Islamic cultural figure, Bakry deeply cares about the importance of Quranic moral values in social life. He believes that a nation's progress is determined not only by intellectual ability but also by the moral and spiritual integrity of its people (Rusmana et al., 2021).

Through his monumental work, *Tafsir Madrasi*, Oemar Bakry presents an educative and contextual interpretation. He links the meaning of Quranic verses to social, educational, national, and moral issues of modern humanity. This interpretation illustrates a local effort to integrate the Quran's moral message with the educational needs of a newly independent nation, where character building and social ethics are top development priorities (Hasanudin, 2024). Bakry's approach aligns with the spirit of social-community interpretation (tafsir al-ijtima'i), which seeks to make the Quranic text relevant to the realities of the Indonesian people.

The study of *Tafsir Madrasi* is significant because it demonstrates how Indonesian scholars combined Islamic teachings with a spirit of nationalism and moral education. This is evident in Bakry's interpretation of several verses in Surah al-Baqarah, particularly verses 1–63 and 142–249, which discuss the values of faith, patience, social solidarity, and just leadership. This surah serves as a foundation for Bakry to emphasize the importance of moral education in shaping both faithful and responsible citizens (Khobir et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Bakry's approach also represents a postcolonial interpretation, in which Quranic values are actualized to build a free and dignified society. His thinking emphasizes that Islamic education should not stop at the ritual level, but must produce individuals who are knowledgeable, ethical, and socially minded.

This study applies the *maudhū'i* (thematic) interpretation approach, a method that focuses on thematically examining Quranic verses based on a specific topic. In this context, the study aims to explore verses related to the theme of morality as interpreted by H. Oemar Bakry in his *Tafsir Madrasi*. This approach was chosen because it allows for a systematic analysis of the moral and Islamic educational values contained in the Quranic text, while simultaneously exploring their relevance to the realities of modern education. Therefore, this study is not only descriptive of Bakry's interpretation but also interpretative, attempting to connect the values contained therein with the socio-religious context of contemporary Indonesian society (Hidayat, 2022).

The primary objective of this research is to identify and examine the moral education values enshrined in the *Tafsir Madrasi* and to analyze how these ideas can be integrated into contemporary Islamic education systems. By exploring Bakry's thinking, this research is expected to contribute to enriching the study of Nusantara tafsir, which focuses on Qur'anic character and morality. This thematic approach is also important because it supports the strengthening of the ethical dimension in Islamic education, in line with the spirit of moral and spiritual reform of the community (Daiyan, 2021).

Many studies have been conducted on moral education in Qur'anic interpretation, both by Indonesian scholars and scholars from the Islamic world. However, specific research discussing Oemar Bakry's *Tafsir Madrasi* remains rare, particularly within the thematic context that highlights Surah al-Baqarah verses 1–63 and 142–249. Therefore, this study serves to fill a gap in the literature in the field of Islamic interpretation and education studies. Hidayat (2022) emphasizes that *Tafsir Madrasi* is a local modification of *Tafsir al-Manar*, embracing an educational and postcolonial approach, while Daiyan (2021) suggests that Bakry's work reflects a contextual and rational moral spirit.

The study of interpretation in Indonesia has shown dynamic development since the 20th century. Islah Gusmian notes that modern Indonesian interpretation is characterized by contextual, communicative, and educational aspects (Gusmian, 2013). Works such as Hamka's *Tafsir al-Azhar* and M. Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir al-Mishbah* serve as examples of how Qur'anic interpretation is linked to social values and moral education (Shihab, 1996).

In the Indonesian tafsir landscape, Oemar Bakry holds a prominent position as a scholar

developing educational-based tafsir. Tafsir Madrasi is a monumental work written for the purpose of teaching the Quran in madrasas, combining linguistic, moral, and pedagogical aspects (Hidayat, 2022). This work examines parts of Surah al-Baqarah (verses 1–63 and 142–249) in a simple, concise, and accessible style for students, while maintaining theological and moral values.

Most previous research has focused on the linguistic and methodological aspects of Bakry's interpretation, rather than its moral education dimension. For example, Syamsuddin's research highlights the contextual style of interpretation in Indonesia, but has not yet examined in depth the moral values integrated into the educational system (Syafi'i, 2024). Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by focusing on moral education in the Tafsir Madrasah as a model for learning Quranic morals.

Moral education is a central topic in both classical and modern Islamic educational studies. Al-Ghazali, in his work *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, emphasized that the primary goal of education is *tahdzib al-nafs* (purification of the soul), which produces cultured and devout individuals. This idea was reinforced by Ibn Miskawaih in *Tahdzib al-Akhlāq*, which views morality as a balance between reason (*aql*) and desire (*syahwat*) (Nasihuddin, 2018).

In the context of modern education, Abuddin Nata emphasized that moral education must be the primary foundation of the national education system because morality is an essential instrument for shaping the nation's character. According to him, an ideal education system is not only oriented towards mastering cognitive aspects or technical skills alone, but must also instill moral and spiritual values rooted in Islamic teachings. In Nata's view, moral education serves as a philosophical and ethical foundation that guides the development of students to become faithful, responsible individuals who actively participate in social life in a positive manner (Hidayatullah & Rahman, 2025).

Nata believes that the moral degradation and character crisis occurring among the younger generation indicate a gap between intellectual progress and moral development. Therefore, he advocates the need for a reorientation of national education that places morality at the core of the entire educational process. Education is not merely a process of transferring knowledge, but also a transformation of values and character formation. Within this framework, teachers or educators serve not only as instructors but also as moral role models (*uswah hasanah*) for students. Therefore, educational success must be measured by the extent to which educational institutions are able to foster ethical awareness, social responsibility, and Islamic-based personalities in students.

In Abuddin Nata's view, morality is the element that connects knowledge and behavior, between cognition and action. Morally oriented education will produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess moral and spiritual sensitivity. He asserted that education that lacks its moral dimension will produce a generation that is knowledgeable but uncivilized, which ultimately has the potential to undermine social order and human values. Therefore, Nata emphasized the importance of building an integrative education system, where the development of modern science goes hand in hand with the development of religious morality.

Nata's thinking aligns with that of Yunahar Ilyas, an Indonesian Muslim thinker and academic who places great emphasis on moral education from the perspective of the Qur'an and Sunnah. In his work *Kuliah Akhlak* (1993), Ilyas explains that morality is a reflection of the living and real faith within a Muslim. He emphasizes that morality cannot be separated from the aspects of faith (*iman*) and worship, because the three form an integral, mutually reinforcing unity. According to Ilyas, the formation of morality is not only about theoretical moral knowledge, but also about internalizing Qur'anic values in everyday behavior (Ilyas, 1993).

Yunahar Ilyas also emphasized that moral development in education must be carried out through a holistic approach. This means that moral education should not be a separate subject but should be integrated into all learning activities. Every discipline must be directed towards strengthening moral values, so that students not only understand knowledge rationally but also internalize its ethical and spiritual dimensions. In his view, education based on morality will create religious individuals with a balance between intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence.

Ilyas further explained that morality in Islam functions as a value system that regulates human relationships with God, fellow human beings, and the universe. Therefore, moral education plays a central role in shaping a personality that harmonizes spiritual and social dimensions. He emphasized that good education not only produces individuals who are ritually obedient but also

those who contribute positively to society. This emphasizes that moral education has broad implications for national development, as a society with noble morals will give birth to a just, civilized, and peaceful social system.

These two figures, Abuddin Nata and Yunahar Ilyas, share the view that Islamic education must be directed toward character formation based on moral and spiritual values. Nata emphasizes the institutional and systemic dimensions of moral education within the framework of national education policy, while Ilyas highlights its personal and spiritual dimensions as part of the practice of faith and worship. Both emphasize the importance of synergy between intellectual, moral, and social aspects in the educational process to produce well-rounded individuals with Qur'anic personalities.

In Indonesia's current social context, the ideas of these two thinkers are increasingly relevant. As technological advances and globalization accelerate social change, moral education serves as a moral bulwark that maintains the ethical stability of society. Education rooted in Islamic values, as proposed by Nata and Ilyas, can be a strategic solution to address the moral crisis, intolerance, and disorientation affecting the younger generation. Thus, moral education is not merely a complementary component, but rather the core of a national education system oriented toward the development of holistic human beings who are knowledgeable, faithful, and virtuous.

A number of thematic studies of the Qur'an also discuss the concept of morality from various aspects. Quraish Shihab, in his *Insight into the Qur'an*, categorizes morality into three dimensions: relationship with God (*hablun min Allah*), relationship with fellow human beings (*hablun min al-nās*), and relationship with the natural environment (*hablun min al-'ālam*) (Shihab, 1996). This division is in line with the thematic approach used by Oemar Bakry in his *Tafsir Madrasi*, where the values of faith, trust, patience, and justice form the basis for character development.

The development of contemporary Islamic educational theory demonstrates a shift from the traditional normative model to a humanistic-integrative paradigm. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi introduced the idea of the Islamization of Knowledge, a process of integrating science and monotheistic values to prevent Islamic education from becoming trapped in the dichotomy between religion and science (Al-Faruqi, 1987).

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is one of the great thinkers in Islamic educational philosophy who made profound contributions to the development of epistemology and educational objectives from an Islamic perspective. In his work *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education* (1991), Al-Attas emphasized that the essence of Islamic education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but the formation of civilized human beings through the concept of *ta'dīb*. The concept of *ta'dīb* is derived from the word *adab*, which means the cultivation of ethical behavior, spiritual discipline, and an introduction to the correct order of knowledge. Thus, education, in Al-Attas's view, must integrate the elements of *'ilm* (knowledge), *'amal* (practice), and *akhlak* (morality) thoroughly in students. According to him, the success of Islamic education is not only measured by intellectual ability alone, but by the formation of a human being who is noble, cultured, and aware of his responsibility to God, society, and the universe (Al-Attas, 1991).

Furthermore, Al-Attas views the crisis in modern education as arising from the loss of the meaning of *adab* (tradition) within the education system. When knowledge is no longer linked to moral and spiritual values, it loses its ethical orientation. Therefore, Al-Attas emphasizes the importance of reconstructing Islamic education based on *ta'dīb* (religious guidance), where every learning process must be directed toward developing self-awareness and true knowledge (*haqq al-yaqīn*). This type of education is expected to produce individuals who not only master knowledge but also understand the ethical responsibilities in its use.

Al-Attas's ideas are closely relevant to contemporary thinking in Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly that developed by M. Amin Abdullah. In his work, *"Islamic Studies in Higher Education: An Integrative-Interconnective Approach"* (2006), Amin Abdullah offers a new paradigm in Islamic education through an interconnective-integrative approach. This approach is an attempt to bridge revelation (religious texts), socio-cultural contexts, and modern science within a complementary epistemological framework. According to him, the paradigm of Islamic education must move beyond the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge, by harmoniously connecting the spiritual, social, and rational dimensions (Abdullah, 2006).

This integrative-interconnective model is highly relevant when linked to Oemar Bakry's interpretation method in *Tafsir Madrasi*. Bakry is known as an interpreter and educator who strives to integrate the moral teachings of the Quran with the social context of post-independence Indonesian education. In interpreting Quranic verses, he prioritizes not only theological aspects but also social and pedagogical dimensions that suit the needs of the Indonesian Muslim community. This aligns with the spirit of interconnection proposed by Amin Abdullah, namely making the text of revelation a source of moral and spiritual values that must be implemented in social reality in a practical manner.

The correlation between the thoughts of Al-Attas and Amin Abdullah demonstrates a continuity of paradigms in Islamic education. Both emphasize the importance of integrating knowledge and morality, as well as revelation and social reality. The difference lies in their epistemological focus: Al-Attas places greater emphasis on metaphysical aspects and the formation of individual morality, while Amin Abdullah emphasizes socio-dialogical aspects and the integration of knowledge within an academic context. However, both provide a strong philosophical foundation for the reconstruction of an Islamic education system that is humanistic, scientific, and character-based.

Several previous studies support the relevance of this idea. Islah Gusmian's research on Indonesian exegesis highlights the socio-cultural dimensions of the works of local commentators, but has not explicitly linked this to moral education. This study focuses more on the construction of language and religious narratives in the Indonesian context (Gusmian, 2013). Meanwhile, research (Abdullah, 2006) emphasizes the importance of integrating moral values into the Islamic education curriculum, but has not examined in depth the relationship between Qur'anic interpretation and character education in the context of local exegesis, as has Oemar Bakry's work.

Thus, the synthesis of Al-Attas's *ta'dīb* concept and Amin Abdullah's interconnected-integrative approach can serve as a theoretical framework for understanding Oemar Bakry's interpretation of *Tafsir Madrasi*. Both view education as a means of developing the whole person, not only intellectually but also morally, spiritually, and socially. This approach strengthens the relevance of moral interpretation in building a civilized and cultured national character, in accordance with the goals of Islamic education, which balance knowledge, practice, and morals.

This study differs in that it places the *Tafsir Madrasi* as the primary object of educational interpretation studies, focusing on the moral values in Surah al-Baqarah verses 1-63 and 142-249. The thematic approach used combines classical tafsir analysis with modern Islamic educational theory, resulting in a new interpretation of Oemar Bakry's work as an interpretation oriented toward moral transformation. Thus, this study not only enriches the treasury of Indonesian tafsir studies but also broadens the horizons of Islamic educational research through the integration of tafsir and contemporary pedagogical theory.

Method

This study employs a qualitative, literature-based method (library research), an approach focused on the study of texts and scientific literature to gain a deeper understanding of the ideas, concepts, and contexts contained in written sources (Zed, 2008). This approach is used because it is relevant to the research objective of exploring Oemar Bakry's thoughts as contained in *Tafsir al-Madrasi*. In this context, library research does not stop at collecting textual data, but also involves a critical analysis of tafsir works and various supporting literature related to Islamic education and morality.

The main object of this research is the work of *Tafsir al-Madrasi* by H. Oemar Bakry, which is used as a primary source because it contains direct interpretations of the verses of the Qur'an that reflect the author's views on moral education. The search for this text is carried out systematically, including the identification of the interpretative structure, theological context, and ethical values contained therein. The analytical approach used in the discovery of moral education values, such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and social piety, which are explicitly and implicitly integrated in Oemar Bakry's interpretation.

The library method was consciously chosen because the object of study is conceptual and interpretive, not empirical. This means that the data studied does not come from field observations or social surveys, but rather from thoughts recorded in scientific texts and documents. Therefore,

this research emphasizes a deep understanding of the ideas and meanings contained in the text rather than quantitative measurements. In line with the view (Sugiyono, 2017), a qualitative approach is used when researchers want to understand phenomena holistically in their natural context, with an emphasis on the interpretation process rather than numerical results.

Through this approach, the researcher seeks to construct a comprehensive understanding of how moral values are articulated in Oemar Bakry's interpretations and their relevance to contemporary Islamic educational concepts. In addition to primary texts, this research also utilizes various secondary sources in the form of scholarly works, journals, and books relevant to the themes of interpretation, Islamic education, and religious ethics. This secondary literature analysis serves to strengthen the theoretical framework and provide a broader understanding of Oemar Bakry's thinking among other Nusantara exegetes.

In formulating the methodology, this research adopted a library research framework. (Zed, 2008) explains that library research utilizes library materials such as books, articles, journals, documents, and other written literature as its primary data. Meanwhile (Sugiyono, 2017) states that qualitative research utilizing library research is appropriate if the study focuses on theories, ideas, or interpretive texts, rather than data collected directly in the field.

In the focus of the tafsir research, Tafsir al-Madrasi is the core of the analysis. The strengths of this work include its characteristics as a concise commentary (*ijmālī*), the use of reason (*'uql*) in interpretation, and its orientation towards the analysis of language, literature, and social context/*adab wa al-ijtimā'ī*. This work is written in Arabic and is arranged in two volumes covering the first and second juz of the Qur'an. Al-Madrasi's interpretation is influenced by contemporary commentaries such as the works of Muhammad Abduh and Rasyid Ridha, especially Tafsir al-Mannar. The use of this interpretation is also implemented in the madrasah curriculum, for example at KMI Pondok Modern Gontor Putri, as teaching materials that support the improvement of Arabic language skills and literacy in modern tafsir studies.

This study will map the moral values of education that appear in the Tafsir al-Madrasi, such as honesty, sense of responsibility, justice, patience, simplicity, empathy, self-control, respect for others, and other moral aspects identified from the interpretation of the tafsir text. Due to the conceptual and interpretive nature of this tafsir, the analysis is conducted through a qualitative-descriptive approach: reading the tafsir work in depth, noting the moral content, comparing it with other tafsir literature and moral education theories. This approach allows researchers to explore the hidden meanings in the text and the relationship of these moral values to the context of religious education.

The approach used in this research is the *maudhū'ī* tafsir approach (thematic interpretation). This approach is a method of interpreting the Qur'an that is carried out by collecting all verses that have a similar theme, then analyzing them comprehensively through their linguistic, historical, and theological context (Farmawi, 1977). From Al-Farmawi's perspective, this method allows the interpreter to obtain a comprehensive picture of a Qur'anic concept without getting caught up in the fragmentation of the verses. Thus, the *maudhū'ī* tafsir not only highlights the textual aspect, but also pays attention to the unity of meaning (*tanasuq al-ma'na*) and its relevance to socio-religious dynamics.

In the context of this research, the *maudhū'ī* tafsir approach is applied to explore the theme of *akhlak* (moral character) in Surah al-Baqarah as outlined in Oemar Bakry's Tafsir al-Madrasi. Although the work only interprets verses 1–63 and 142–249, these passages contain strong moral themes, including the values of faith, obedience, social responsibility, and leadership (Hidayat, 2022). These four values reflect the Qur'anic moral orientation that forms the basis for the formation of individual and societal character from an Islamic perspective.

The *maudhū'ī* approach was chosen because it aligns with the nature of the text being studied, namely conceptual and interpretive interpretation. In this study, the researcher did not conduct empirical observations, but rather examined the text in depth to discover the construction of moral values implied within it. With this method, the interpretation process is carried out through systematic thematic analysis, starting from collecting verses with similar themes, tracing the context in which the verses were revealed, interpreting them based on the principle of interconnectedness of meaning (*munāsabah*), and compiling a thematic synthesis. These steps are in line with the formulation of the *maudhū'ī* interpretation methodology as proposed by Al-Farmawi (1977).

The data sources in this study consist of two categories: primary and secondary sources. The primary source is Oemar Bakry's *Tafsir al-Madrasi*, published by Bulan Bintang in 1973, which serves as the main focus of the thematic analysis. Secondary sources include various literature supporting an understanding of the methods and contexts of interpretation. These include Farmawi's *Al-Bidayah fi al-Tafsir al-Maudhu'i* (Farmawi, 1977), (Gusmian, 2013) writing on Indonesian tafsir styles that emphasize local characteristics in interpretation, and Shihab's (Shihab, 1996) work outlining the moral approach in the interpretation of *Al-Mishbah*. Furthermore (Hidayatullah & Rahman, 2025) and (Abdullah, 2006) views on Islamic education are also used as theoretical references in understanding the correlation between Qur'anic moral values and character education in the modern context.

The data collection technique in this study was carried out through a documentary study of the text of *Tafsir Madrasi* by Oemar Bakry and various literature related to thematic interpretation and moral education. This process includes an inventory of relevant primary and secondary sources, critical reading (close reading) of the interpretation text to mark parts that contain moral values (both towards God and fellow human beings), recording and grouping the results based on moral themes such as faith, responsibility, leadership, and patience, and thematic coding to identify emerging patterns of moral education (Moleong, 2013).

The data obtained in this study were analyzed using a descriptive-analytical and contextual-thematic approach (Miles, 1994). The descriptive approach was used to systematically describe the content, structure, and style of Oemar Bakry's interpretation in *Tafsir al-Madrasi*, thus providing an objective picture of the work's methodological and thematic characteristics. Meanwhile, a contextual-thematic analysis was applied to explore the moral educational values contained in the verses of *Surah al-Baqarah*, by placing the interpretation within its social, theological, and pedagogical context.

The analysis process was conducted inductively, beginning with observations of textual data and then directed toward formulating conceptual conclusions regarding moral education from an interpretive perspective. This approach allows researchers to understand the meaning that emerges naturally from the text without rigid theoretical constraints (Moleong, 2017). With this method, the research results are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of *Tafsir al-Madrasi* to the development of an Islamic education paradigm based on the moral values of the Qur'an, particularly in efforts to shape the character and spiritual integrity of students.

This study applies source and theory triangulation techniques to ensure the validity of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Source triangulation was conducted by comparing Oemar Bakry's interpretation in *Tafsir Madrasi* with other exegetical works such as M. Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir al-Mishbah* and Hamka's *Tafsir al-Azhar*. This approach aims to assess methodological consistency and the epistemological uniqueness of Bakry's interpretation in the context of Nusantara interpretation. Meanwhile, theoretical triangulation is carried out through the utilization of al-Ghazali's ideas on moral education, Ibn Miskawaih and Abuddin Nata, who emphasized the formation of morals through the integration of reason, heart, and action. With this combination, the research analysis does not stop at the descriptive level but develops into a critical interpretation of the moral education values in the Quran, as reflected by Oemar Bakry. The results of this approach are expected to contribute to the development of a paradigm for interpreting Islamic education that is based on moral values and relevant to the Indonesian context.

Results and Discussion

Characteristics and Style of Oemar Bakry's Interpretation in Madrasi Interpretation

Oemar Bakry (1908-1985) was known as a Nusantara scholar who played a role as an educator. He was also a commentator with a unique approach to interpretation, combining rationality and didactic functions. One of his important works, *Al-Tafsir al-Madrasi*, was compiled in response to the needs of the madrasa curriculum, especially in modern Islamic boarding schools such as Gontor, so that the interpretation of the Qur'an taught was not only theological, but also educational in language and structure that students could understand.

In the study of the Characteristics of the Madrasi Interpretation by Dadan Rusmana, Nida Amalia Kamal, and Maulana Yusuf Alamsyah (2021), it is stated that *Al-Tafsir al-Madrasi* has several

distinctive characteristics: first, it is concise or *ijmāli*, meaning it does not delve too deeply into everything, but simply contains the core and main meaning. Second, this interpretation uses reason (*bi al-ma'qūl*) predominantly in constructing its interpretation. Third, its orientation touches on linguistic, literary, and social aspects, such as norms of etiquette and social relations in society (“*adab wa al-ijtimā'ī*”). The Madrasa Interpretation was written in Arabic, consists of two volumes for the first and second juz of the Qur'an, and is strongly influenced by the method of Tafsir Al-Manār by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridha. Therefore, this interpretation is considered a kind of small summary of Al-Manār adapted to the context of madrasas in Indonesia (Rusmana et al., 2021).

Oemar Bakry's work was written in the post-independence era of Indonesia, when there was a fundamental need for more accessible and understandable interpretations of the Quran for the wider public. This was especially important because at that time, religious literacy and Islamic education were being rebuilt after colonialism, and the general public was not necessarily able to understand the original Arabic text or highly academic interpretations. Al-Tafsir al-Madrasi and other works such as Tafsir Rahmat emerged in this context, as attempts at a more popular and functional approach.

The interpretive style developed by Oemar Bakry in Tafsir Madrasa displays a distinctive characteristic that emphasizes the educational dimension (*ta'limī*) in understanding the Qur'an. This approach makes revelation not merely a spiritual text, but also a primary source for the formation of students' morals and character. In this context, the Qur'an is positioned as a guide to ethics and morals that shape the personality of a knowledgeable and civilized Muslim. Bakry's interpretation seeks to present an applicable understanding of Qur'anic values so they can be internalized in social life and education (Shihab, 1996).

The distinctive *ta'limī* style that emerges in Oemar Bakry's work is evident in its orientation toward the moral learning process. He interprets Quranic verses with a communicative and educational approach, using simple Indonesian that is easily understood by the general public. The goal is to ensure that divine messages can be absorbed without linguistic barriers or excessive classical Arabic terminology. This style allows Tafsir Madrasa to be an effective means of *da'wah* and moral education in Indonesia's culturally and linguistically diverse society.

In addition to being educational, Oemar Bakry's interpretation also demonstrates a tendency towards *adabī ijtimā'ī* (socio-literary), a style of interpretation that connects the meaning of verses to the social realities of society. This approach aligns with the spirit of modern interpretation renewal, which positions the Qur'an as a contextual guide to life that is relevant to the challenges of the times (Hidayatullah & Rahman, 2025). In interpreting the story of the Children of Israel, for example, Bakry does not stop at historical descriptions, but rather draws moral lessons for Muslims in Indonesia. He emphasizes the importance of avoiding attitudes of ungratefulness, group fanaticism, and intellectual laziness that can hinder the progress of the community.

This approach demonstrates that Tafsir Madrasa is not only informative but also transformative. It goes beyond explaining the meaning of the text, but also invites readers to reflect and engage in moral change. Through this style, Bakry affirms the Quran's function as a source of values that shape social awareness, strengthen moral responsibility, and foster a spirit of lifelong learning. The Quranic moral values it emphasizes serve as a foundation for building a religious and integrated national character.

Moral Education Values in Surah al-Baqarah Verses 1-63 and 142-249

Based on an examination of the Tafsir Madrasa text, several core moral themes (*akhlak*) are found, grouped into three dimensions: morality toward God, morality toward fellow human beings, and morality toward oneself. These three dimensions form an integral moral framework, as manifested in Surah al-Baqarah.

1. Morality towards God (Morality towards God): Faith, Obedience, and Sincerity

In his interpretation of the opening verses of Surah al-Baqarah (verses 1-5), Oemar Bakry asserted that the core of morals towards God starts from true, consistent, and productive faith. He rejects a form of faith that is static or simply a verbal confession without proof through righteous deeds. For Bakry, true faith should give birth to real deeds in social life, so that it is reflected in honesty, justice, and obedience to God's commands. In his interpretation, he interpreted the phrase

hudā lil-muttaqīn (guidance for pious people) not just as spiritual guidance, but as a system of ethical values that directs people to live in truth and avoid all forms of tyranny (Hidayat, 2022).

Furthermore, Oemar Bakry highlighted the dangers of hypocrisy as depicted in Surah al-Baqarah verses 8–20. He considered hypocrisy to be the "greatest moral disease" that erodes human personality. According to him, hypocrisy is not only a theological issue, but also an ethical one that erodes personal integrity. In the context of education, Bakry warned that hypocritical behavior, a discrepancy between words and actions, is the root of the moral crisis of the younger generation. Therefore, he argued that Islamic education must instill the values of honesty and steadfastness of faith as a bulwark against this moral disease (Sudarto et al., 2024).

Furthermore, in interpreting verses 21–22 of Surah al-Baqarah, Bakry explains that the command to worship Allah encompasses a broad meaning, namely spiritual education based on the awareness of monotheism. Worship is not only interpreted ritually, but also as a form of total devotion ('ubūdiyyah) by humans to the Creator in all their activities. This awareness fosters gratitude and complete dependence on Allah, preventing humans from falling into the trap of intellectual arrogance or materialism (Hidayat, 2022).

Thoughts Oemar Bakry has strong relevance to the views of contemporary Islamic education scholars who emphasize the importance of the spiritual dimension as the foundation of educational ethics. In this context, (Sudarto et al., 2024) through the *Cendekia Journal: J-CEKI*, it is emphasized that the values of faith in the Qur'an serve as the primary foundation for the formation of students' morals and character. Faith is not seen merely as a theological aspect, but also as an epistemological principle that directs all educational activities toward ethical and transcendental goals. Without a strong faith, the education system will lose its moral orientation, so that the learning process becomes merely a cognitive activity devoid of value. This view is in line with Oemar Bakry's ideas in *Tafsir Madrasi*, which combines faith (aqidah), knowledge (ilm), and action (amal) as an integral unit in Qur'anic moral education. Through a rational-didactic approach, Oemar Bakry emphasizes that Islamic education must develop faithful individuals who think critically, behave ethically, and contribute positively to society. Thus, Bakry's thinking strengthens the direction of Islamic educational development that is both focused on spirituality and responsive to the challenges of modernity.

2. *Morality towards Fellow Humans: Responsibility, Justice, and Solidarity*

In interpreting the story of the Children of Israel as contained in Surah al-Baqarah verses 40–63, Oemar Bakry prioritizes a moralistic approach that emphasizes the importance of integrity, honesty, and responsibility for trust. According to Bakry, the moral downfall of the Children of Israel was caused by their attitude of breaking promises and ignoring the covenant with God. He wrote that betrayal of the divine covenant is the root of spiritual and social decadence. Therefore, Oemar Bakry interprets the story not merely as a historical record, but as a relevant moral lesson for Muslims today, namely the need to keep promises, maintain honesty, and avoid arrogance.

Oemar Bakry's interpretation aligns with the thinking of Hasan (Hasan, 2020) in his work, *Majalis and Dakwah Digital*, which explains that the verses in the story of the Children of Israel in the Qur'an serve as a mirror for ethical education to prevent the moral collapse of the community. According to Hasan, any violation of the mandate in a modern social context can be interpreted as a form of moral betrayal of divine values. Thus, Bakry's interpretation has strong pedagogical relevance in shaping the character of individuals with integrity amidst the moral crisis of modern society.

Furthermore, in his interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah verses 142–163 concerning the change in direction of the Qibla, Bakry interprets this event as a symbol of obedience and loyalty to the truth, not just a physical change in direction. He explains that this event represents a test of spiritual obedience for Muslims: whether they will follow the truth that comes from Allah or simply maintain traditions and group interests. In the context of moral education, Bakry emphasizes that every major change in human life must be based on divine values, not because of social pressure or group ego. This view is in line with the study (Marsan, 2013), which assesses that the orientation of obedience to the truth in the Qur'an is the main foundation in Islamic character education.

Bakry further highlights the verses on infaq and jihad (verses 190-195 and 244-249) as lessons on social solidarity and moral responsibility towards society. He writes that jihad, broadly defined, is not merely a physical struggle but also encompasses moral and material sacrifice to uphold social

justice. Infaq is understood as an expression of compassion and empathy, which are at the heart of social moral education. In Bakry's view, true Islamic morality is reflected in the willingness to sacrifice for the public good, as emphasized by (Hasan, 2020) who views jihad as a total struggle to uphold humanitarian values and social balance.

3. *Morality towards oneself: Patience, Discipline, and Determination*

In his interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah verses 155-157, Oemar Bakry highlights the crucial personal moral value of patience (*ṣabr*) as the foundation of spiritual and moral maturity. According to Oemar Bakry, patience is not a form of passivity or merely the ability to refrain from complaining, but rather an active process of controlling emotions and cultivating the heart based on faith in God's wisdom. In his view, patience trains humans to accept life's trials with fortitude, while simultaneously fostering complete trust in God's will. He wrote that, "Patience is the highest lesson in life, because it teaches humans to be morally mature and not easily shaken by life's trials."

Bakry's thinking shares similarities with al-Ghazali's view in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, which calls patience half of faith, as it fosters inner peace and good self-control (Al-Gazzali, 1982). Similarly, Islamic Education and the Challenges of Modernity explains that patience in the context of education is a means of developing resilient character and self-discipline. Thus, Oemar Bakry's interpretation emphasizes the importance of the psychological dimension in individual moral development through education based on Qur'anic values.

Furthermore, in interpreting Surah al-Baqarah verses 247–249, Bakry examines the story of Thalut (Saul) as a model for an ideal leader. He rejects the view that links leadership to lineage or wealth. He believes that true leadership must be based on intelligence, courage, and high morality. Oemar Bakry writes that a leader must possess "moral courage to uphold the truth even when it goes against the grain of society." This value reflects his idea that character education must produce leaders with integrity, justice, and a focus on social welfare.

Bakry's view is supported by various modern Islamic education literature. For example, (Rouf, 2022) in the *Journal of Islamic Education* asserts that moral leadership is the core of character education in Islam, as it integrates spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects within students. Similarly, (Shihab, 2007) in his book "Grounding the Qur'an" asserts that the stories of prophets and Qur'anic figures, such as Thalut, contain leadership principles based on faith and moral responsibility, not merely political legitimacy or lineage.

Thus, in *Tafsir Madrasi*, Oemar Bakry presents a comprehensive and applicable system of moral education. He combines spiritual piety, social honesty, and personal moral fortitude as the foundation for character formation. This system emphasizes not only the theoretical dimension but also teaches the application of Quranic values in real life, both in individual and social contexts. Bakry's emphasis on patience and moral leadership demonstrates that, for him, moral education is a humanitarian project aimed at developing people of faith, knowledge, and noble character.

The Concept of Moral Education in Madrasi Interpretation

An analysis of Oemar Bakry's tafsir, particularly *Tafsir Madrasi* (1973), shows that his concept of moral education is integrative and applicable. Bakry understands morality as the result of the unity of three main elements in Islamic teachings: faith (belief), knowledge (*ilm*), and charity (practice of life). He rejects the view that separates the theoretical and practical dimensions in moral formation, because according to him, morality cannot develop without a foundation of faith and true knowledge. Thus, moral education in his tafsir is not merely the teaching of norms, but a process of holistic personality formation.

In interpreting Surah al-Baqarah, Oemar Bakry strives to present contextual and social moral values. He emphasizes that the ethical messages in the Quran are not abstract ideas, but rather guidelines for life that direct humans to act justly, honestly, and responsibly in social life. He believes that true faith must be reflected in social behavior that upholds justice and rejects all forms of oppression. These values reflect the view that Islam is a religion that fosters harmony between the spiritual and social dimensions (Hidayat, 2022).

Bakry's approach shares similarities with the view expressed by (Gusmian, 2013) in his work, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia* (The Indonesian Interpretation Treasure). Gusmian explains that several Indonesian commentators, including Oemar Bakry, tend to develop pedagogically oriented

interpretations, namely positioning the Qur'an as a text for moral and social education. This type of interpretation does not stop at linguistic or theological explanations, but seeks to transform Qur'anic values into the real lives of the people. Through this approach, the Qur'an functions as a source for the formation of national character and a foundation for social ethics.

Furthermore, Bakry's thinking also shows relevance to modern Islamic educational theory. According to (Hidayatullah & Rahman, 2025) intellectual intelligence but also forms moral and social awareness. The ultimate goal of Islamic education is to produce people who are faithful, knowledgeable, and do good deeds, an integration of values that is also at the core of Oemar Bakry's ideas. Similarly, (Azra, 1999) in *Islamic Education: Tradition and Modernization Towards the New Millennium* emphasizes that moral education based on the Qur'an must be able to address contemporary social challenges by strengthening faith and morals.

In his interpretive structure, Oemar Bakry often connects the meaning of these verses to the context of the lives of Indonesian Muslims, such as the importance of upholding social justice, civic responsibility, and spiritual strengthening in facing modernity. For example, when interpreting verse 177 (*laysa al-birra an tuwallū wujūhakum...*), Bakry explains that true righteousness is not merely a formality of worship, but rather "helping the poor and the needy, maintaining trust, and upholding honesty in life." This interpretation demonstrates a unique social moral paradigm in Indonesia, where morality is not only a private matter but also forms the basis of public ethics.

Furthermore, Bakry positions moral education as a gradual process of character formation (*tadarruj*), which begins with the development of faith, continues with the development of good deeds (*amal saleh*), and culminates in social service. According to him, true faith will give birth to true actions, and true actions will shape noble character. This process is clearly visible in his interpretation of the story of the Prophet Abraham (verses 124-141), where Abraham's obedience is tested repeatedly, resulting in the formation of a strong and highly moral individual. For Bakry, moral education cannot be instantaneous; it requires continuity, exemplary behavior, and a deep spiritual process.

In the context of contemporary Islamic education, Bakry's approach is highly relevant because it contains elements of character education grounded in transcendental and humanitarian values. He asserts that education must produce individuals with "strong faith and firm morals," not merely intellectual intelligence (Hidayatullah & Rahman, 2025). This principle can be applied in modern learning systems through an integrative approach between spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and moral intelligence (Abdullah, 2006). Thus, *Tafsir Madrasi* provides a normative foundation for character education that is not solely academically oriented, but also ethically and spiritually oriented.

Furthermore, Bakry views moral education as a means of social reconstruction, not merely individual perfection. In his interpretation of the verses on jihad and social solidarity (verses 190-195 and 244-249), he emphasizes that a moral society can only be realized if every individual possesses a collective consciousness to uphold justice and reject oppression. According to him, true Islamic education is one that fosters a spirit of moral leadership, not merely formal obedience to rules. Therefore, *Tafsir Madrasi* presents a holistic paradigm of moral education that encompasses spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects, oriented toward the formation of a Qur'anic civilization.

Relevance for Contemporary Islamic Education

The moral education values put forward by Oemar Bakry in his *Tafsir Madrasi* are highly relevant to the current challenges of Islamic education. In the context of globalization and the moral crisis affecting the younger generation, Bakry's thinking can serve as a conceptual foundation for developing Islamic education that emphasizes the integration of spirituality, intellect, and morality. The relevance of Bakry's thinking can be seen in three main dimensions: curricular, pedagogical, and socio-moral.

1. Curricular Relevance: Integrating Moral Values into the Islamic Education Curriculum

Oemar Bakry's thinking aligns with the paradigm of integrating science and values developed by contemporary Islamic educational thinkers such as Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas (Al-Faruqi, 1987). Al-Faruqi emphasized the importance of the Islamization of Science as a process of unifying science and monotheistic values to prevent the educational

curriculum from becoming secular. Meanwhile, al-Attas proposed the concept of ta'dīb, namely education that instills adab (good behavior) and the integrity of the personality, not merely the transfer of knowledge (Al-Attas, 1991).

In this context, the values of honesty (*ṣidq*), responsibility (*amānah*), and patience (*ṣabr*) interpreted by Oemar Bakry can serve as a curricular framework. These values can be internalized through the development of Qur'anic character-based learning outcomes in madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic universities. This model is consistent with the values-based educational approach adopted in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, where spiritual and moral dimensions must be present in every core learning competency (Nata, 2015). Thus, the Madrasa Interpretation provides a normative and pedagogical foundation for designing a curriculum that emphasizes the formation of insan kamil (perfect human beings) who are knowledgeable, faithful, and have noble character.

2. Pedagogical Relevance: Humanistic and Transformative Learning Models

In the context of modern educational theory, Bakry's communicative and contextual interpretive style reflects a humanistic-transformative approach. This approach is rooted in the view that education is a process of building awareness, not simply transferring knowledge. Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, asserts that education must liberate students from ignorance and oppression through critical awareness (Freire, 2020). This principle closely aligns with Bakry's spirit, as his interpretation encourages readers to think reflectively and not passively in understanding the moral verses of the Quran.

In the context of Islamic education, this approach aligns with the idea of integrative education proposed by M. Amin Abdullah, an approach that connects the text of revelation, social reality, and human experience into a unified epistemology (Abdullah, 2006). Oemar Bakry's use of simple, contextual, and educational language makes his interpretation a communicative medium for value learning between teachers and students. Therefore, the Madrasa Interpretation can be a model for humanistic, reflective, and participatory pedagogy of the Qur'an, which is consistent with the principles of student-centered learning in modern educational theory.

3. Socio-Moral Relevance: Moral Education as the Foundation of Civilization and Moral Leadership

At the social level, Oemar Bakry's thinking shows a strong connection with the theory of civilization education as put forward by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Abuddin Nata. According to (Al-Attas, 1991), Islamic education does not only function to cultivate intelligence, but must also foster social etiquette, namely the moral awareness that humans have an ethical responsibility towards society and their environment. Education, in this view, is a means to instill the values of justice, equality, and social responsibility as a form of devotion to God. Meanwhile, Abuddin Nata emphasized that moral education is the foundation for the formation of a Qur'anic society with character, not just pious individuals. He views collective moral development as the foundation for the formation of a civilized and just Islamic civilization.

In his interpretation of the story of Saul (Thalut) in Surah al-Baqarah verses 247–249, Bakry emphasizes that the ideal leader is someone who possesses moral integrity, spiritual intelligence, and the courage to uphold the truth. This view is relevant to the goal of modern Islamic education, which is to develop moral leadership amidst society's ethical crisis. Thus, Bakry's ideas align with the vision of Islamic education as a means of building a moral civilization, which not only produces knowledgeable individuals but also creates a just, peaceful, and just social order.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of Oemar Bakry's Tafsir Madrasa, it can be concluded that this work is one of the interpretations that has made an important contribution to the development of moral education in Indonesia. Bakry successfully integrates the depth of the interpretation of the Qur'an with an applicable pedagogical approach, making this interpretation not only theologically valuable, but also functional in shaping the character of students. Moral values such as honesty, trustworthiness, patience, justice, and responsibility are understood as concrete expressions of faith that aim to form people with noble character (*insan kamil*). The contextual and communicative approach used by Bakry shows that the moral education of the Qur'an must be based on real life experiences so that

religious values can be internalized deeply and sustainably. Within the framework of contemporary Islamic education, Bakry's ideas align with the integrative educational theories developed by Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and M. Amin Abdullah. All three emphasize that the goal of Islamic education is ta'dīb, namely the formation of human moral integrity and ethics. Therefore, the concept of moral education in Tafsir Madrasi can be implemented through three main aspects: the integration of Qur'anic values into the curriculum, the application of humanistic-reflective learning methods, and the formation of civilized leadership in society. Thus, Bakry's work not only reflects contextual tafsir thinking but also provides a concrete contribution to the development of an Islamic educational paradigm based on Qur'anic morals that is relevant to the moral challenges of the modern era.

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