Embedding Qur'anic Values into Student-Centered Learning: A Framework for Character Education in Contemporary Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Background. Contemporary education often emphasizes cognitive achievement and 21st-century skills, while character formation and spiritual values receive limited attention, particularly within Muslim educational contexts. This imbalance highlights the need for pedagogical frameworks that integrate academic learning with moral and spiritual development rooted in Islamic values.

Purpose. This research aimed to formulate and examine a character education framework that internalizes Qur'anic values within student-centered learning practices in modern classrooms.

Method. The study employed a qualitative approach through literature review and conceptual analysis. Data sources included curriculum documents, theoretical studies on character education, principles of student-centered learning, and Qur'anic verses emphasizing values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and critical thinking.

Results. The findings suggest that Qur'anic values can be effectively internalized through active learning strategies, including reflective discussions, project-based learning, contextual problem-solving, and authentic assessment. These strategies promote active student engagement, independence, and the practical application of character values in daily life.

Conclusion. The study concludes that integrating Qur'anic values into student-centered learning offers a relevant and sustainable framework for holistic character education. This approach not only enhances academic participation but also strengthens moral and spiritual development, making it a contextual pedagogical model for modern classrooms.

KEYWORDS

Character Education, Qur'anic Values, Student-Centered Learning

INTRODUCTION

Education in the contemporary era faces increasingly complex challenges in line with the accelerating development of science, technology, and globalization. Educational institutions are required to produce students who possess critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, and the ability to collaborate, representing 21st-century skills. The direction of educational delivery is increasingly focused on academic achievement, cognitive mastery, and readiness to enter the workforce. However, the dominant emphasis on these aspects often diverts

attention from the essence of education itself, namely the formation of the whole person ("14th International Conference on Pacific Association for Computational Linguistics, PACLING 2015," 2016; Khalaf, 2025). This condition results in the underdevelopment of students' affective, moral, and spiritual domains. This situation also contributes to the emergence of various social problems and moral degradation among the younger generation. Thus, modern education demands an approach that balances intellectual development with character building.

In Muslim societies, the challenges of modern education are even more complex because education is not solely aimed at transmitting knowledge but also serves as a means of forming and passing on Islamic values. The Quran, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, contains universal principles that contribute to character development, including honesty, responsibility, justice, empathy, discipline, and cooperation. These values are essentially aligned with national education goals and the demands of 21st-century competencies. However, in learning practices, Quranic values are often conveyed normatively and separately from classroom learning activities. This situation results in less than optimal internalization of spiritual values in students' behavior. Therefore, planned and systematic efforts are needed to integrate Quranic values into contextual and meaningful learning processes (Rohmana, 2015; Zekiye, 2023).

A student-centered learning approach is considered relevant in responding to these challenges. In this approach, students are positioned as the primary actors in the learning process, while teachers serve as facilitators who guide and assist. Learning focuses not only on final outcomes but also on the process, learning experiences, reflection, and development of individual potential. Through this approach, students have the opportunity to build knowledge, values, and attitudes through direct experience and social interaction. Thus, student-centered learning has great potential as a means of internalizing character and spiritual values. The integration of Quranic values in this approach is expected to create a holistic learning process (Mohamed, 2021; Omer, 2024).

The discourse on character education has become a strategic issue in both global and national educational contexts. Various policies and curricula emphasize the urgency of strengthening students' character as a foundation for national development. However, the implementation of character education is often formalistic and not yet fully integrated into the learning process. Character education is often positioned as an additional subject or a temporary activity, rather than an integral part of the overall educational process. Consequently, the character values taught are not deeply ingrained in students. In this context, integrating Quranic values into student-centered learning can be a more substantive alternative approach, as these values are not simply taught but internalized through active and reflective learning experiences.

Furthermore, the characteristics of modern classrooms are marked by diverse student backgrounds, developments in educational technology, and changes in interaction patterns in learning. These conditions require teachers to design adaptive, innovative, and meaningful learning. The integration of Qur'anic values into modern learning is not intended to negate technological advances or contemporary learning methods, but rather to utilize them proportionally and wisely for the purpose of character building. Thus, Islamic education does not face a dichotomy with modernity, but rather has the opportunity to synergize with it. Therefore, the formulation of a Qur'an-based character education framework implemented through student-centered learning is important, both conceptually and practically, as a guideline for educators in managing learning in modern classrooms (Mohamed, 2021; Touati-Hamad, 2022a).

Based on this reality, this research is based on the finding that contemporary education tends to emphasize cognitive achievement and mastery of 21st-century skills, while the dimensions of character formation and students' spiritual values often receive less attention, especially in the

context of Muslim societies. Therefore, the integration of Qur'anic values into student-oriented learning is seen as a strategy to bridge these needs by aligning academic, character, and spiritual aspects. This research aims to formulate and examine a character education framework that internalizes Qur'anic values in student-centered learning practices in modern classrooms. This framework is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of Islamic education that is responsive to the challenges of the times (Alrajhi, 2019; Khair, 2025).

Several previous studies have examined themes related to this research. First, studies on Islamic values-based character education emphasize the importance of moral development through religious subjects, but have not explicitly linked this to a student-centered learning approach. Second, research on the implementation of student-centered learning generally focuses on improving learning outcomes and developing critical thinking skills, without making the spiritual values of the Quran the foundation of learning (Alshammeri, 2021a; "COLING 2025 - 31st International Conference on Computational Linguistics, Proceedings of the New Horizons in Computational Linguistics for Religious Texts, Coling-Rel 2025," 2025). Third, studies on the integration of Quranic values in education tend to be normative and conceptual in nature and have not been formulated in an applicable framework appropriate to the context of the modern classroom. Different from these studies, this study specifically combines Quranic values with student-centered learning principles within a holistic, contextual, and aligns character education framework with the demands of 21st-century education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach with a focus on literature review and conceptual analysis. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the research is not to test hypotheses or statistically measure variable relationships, but rather to understand, interpret, and formulate a comprehensive framework for integrating Quranic values into student-centered learning. Through a qualitative approach, this research seeks to explore the meaning, concept, and relevance of Quranic-based character education values in the context of modern classrooms (Inda, 2024; Touati-Hamad, 2022b).

The data sources for this research are secondary, obtained through a review of various scientific literature and official documents. These include educational curriculum documents, policies related to character education, academic textbooks, and journal articles discussing character education, student-centered learning, and Islamic education. Furthermore, this study examines Quranic verses embodying the values of honesty, responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and critical thinking as a normative basis for formulating a character education framework (Abdelkarim, 2025; Alargrami, 2020).

Data collection techniques were conducted through documentation studies by identifying, classifying, and selecting literature sources relevant to the research focus. Each document was analyzed in depth to identify concepts, principles, and key findings related to character education and student-centered learning. Analysis of the Quranic verses was conducted using a thematic approach, grouping verses based on their character values and then linking them to modern learning principles oriented toward student engagement (Choudhury, 2020; "Intelligent Systems Conference, IntelliSys 2020," 2021).

Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and interpretive conclusion drawing. In the reduction stage, researchers filtered information relevant to the research objectives. Next, the selected data was presented in a systematic conceptual narrative to facilitate understanding of the relationships between concepts. The final stage involved formulating

a character education framework that integrates Qur'anic values with student-centered learning principles. This framework is expected to serve as a conceptual and applicable foundation for developing character learning practices in modern classrooms (Lawrence, 2021; Noor, 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research results indicate that the internalization of Quranic values becomes more effective when it is implemented through active learning strategies that place students as the central agents of the learning process. By positioning learners as active participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge, student-centered learning enables deeper engagement with both cognitive content and moral values. Strategies such as reflective discussions, project-based learning, contextual problem-solving, and authentic assessment create meaningful learning environments in which students are encouraged to explore, interpret, and apply Quranic values in real situations. Through these approaches, spiritual values are not only understood at a conceptual level but are also experienced directly through learning activities that are relevant to students' lives. As a result, the learning process becomes a medium for value formation that integrates knowledge, attitudes, and behavior in a coherent and sustainable manner.

The discussion of the research findings further reveals that reflective discussions play a pivotal role in helping students connect Quranic values with their personal experiences and the social realities they encounter. Guided reflection allows students to critically examine Quranic teachings and relate them to everyday situations, enabling a contextual understanding of moral principles. Through structured dialogue and reflective questioning, values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy are not merely memorized but internalized as part of students' moral reasoning. This reflective process fosters self-awareness and ethical sensitivity, encouraging students to evaluate their actions and decisions in light of Quranic guidance. Consequently, reflective discussions contribute significantly to the transformation of abstract values into lived moral awareness that influences students' attitudes and behavior both inside and outside the classroom.

Moreover, the implementation of project-based learning demonstrates a substantial contribution to the integration of Quranic values with essential 21st-century skills. Project-based activities require students to collaborate, communicate effectively, solve problems, and think critically, while simultaneously embedding moral and spiritual dimensions within these processes. In carrying out projects, students are challenged to practice values such as perseverance, trustworthiness, fairness, and mutual respect, which are deeply rooted in Quranic teachings. Research findings show that these collaborative learning experiences strengthen character development by requiring students to take responsibility for both individual tasks and group outcomes. Through sustained engagement in meaningful projects, students learn that ethical conduct and academic competence are inseparable components of successful learning and social interaction.

The study also reveals that contextual problem-solving serves as an effective approach for linking Quranic values to real-life challenges faced by students. When learners are presented with authentic problems drawn from their social, cultural, or community environments, they are encouraged to apply spiritual principles in practical decision-making processes (Aghahadi, 2018; Fathah, 2021). Values such as social responsibility, deliberation (shura), justice, and compassion become directly relevant as students analyze problems and propose solutions. This approach enables students to recognize that Quranic teachings are not detached from modern realities but offer ethical guidance applicable to contemporary issues. As a result, students develop a deeper

appreciation of the practical relevance of Quranic values and their role in shaping responsible and ethical responses to real-world situations.

In addition to instructional strategies, the use of authentic assessment is shown to play a crucial role in supporting the continuous internalization of Quranic values. Authentic assessment shifts the focus from solely measuring academic achievement to evaluating students' learning processes, attitudes, and observable behaviors. Through tools such as observation checklists, reflective journals, self-assessments, and portfolios, teachers can gain a comprehensive understanding of how far students have integrated spiritual values into their daily practices. These assessment methods allow students to reflect on their moral growth and take ownership of their character development. The findings suggest that authentic assessment functions not only as an evaluation mechanism but also as an integral component of character education that reinforces the internalization of values throughout the learning process (Alkhafaji, 2021; Laber, 2024).

Further analysis indicates that the implementation of student-centered learning integrated with Quranic values has a positive impact on student participation, engagement, and learning autonomy. Students become more actively involved in classroom activities, demonstrate greater responsibility for their learning, and develop intrinsic motivation rooted in moral awareness. This participatory approach encourages students to view learning as a meaningful and purposeful activity rather than a compulsory task. The internalization of spiritual values through active involvement fosters self-discipline, independence, and a sense of accountability. These findings suggest that character formation and academic development can be mutually reinforcing when learning environments are designed to empower students and nurture their moral consciousness (Alshammeri, 2021b; Hermawan, 2025).

Overall, the results and discussion of this study confirm that integrating Quranic values into student-centered learning can effectively promote holistic character education in modern classrooms. Rather than being transmitted in a purely normative or doctrinal manner, Quranic values are internalized through active, reflective, and contextual learning experiences that engage students intellectually, emotionally, and morally. This integrative approach supports the development of balanced individuals who possess academic competence, social responsibility, and spiritual integrity (Mohamed, 2022; Saeed, 2020). Therefore, the framework proposed in this study holds strong potential as a model for character education that is responsive to the academic, social, and spiritual demands of contemporary education, while remaining grounded in Quranic ethical principles.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and discussion, this research confirms that the integration of Qur'anic values into student-centered learning is an approach that has conceptual relevance and implementation feasibility in the context of modern education. This framework allows Qur'anic spiritual and character values, such as honesty, responsibility, justice, and empathy, not only to be understood normatively, but also internalized through active, reflective, and meaningful learning experiences. By placing students as the main subjects of learning, the educational process is not limited to cognitive achievement alone, but includes the development of character and spirituality in an integrated manner. Therefore, the integration of Qur'anic values in student-centered learning can be seen as a holistic pedagogical foundation in shaping students' personalities who are knowledgeable, moral, and competitive.

Furthermore, a Quran-based character education framework implemented through student-centered learning has the potential to become a contextual, adaptive, and sustainable pedagogical

model in modern classrooms. This framework aligns with the demands of 21st-century education, which emphasizes a balance between mastery of knowledge, skills, and character values. Furthermore, this approach creates a space for synergy between Islamic values and the development of contemporary learning methods and technologies without creating a dichotomy between religion and modernity. Thus, the integration of Quranic values in student-centered learning can serve as a strategic reference for educators and policymakers in developing relevant, applicable, and long-term character education practices.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION
Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

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