

QUR'ANIC ETHICS AND EDUCATIONAL PRAXIS: INTEGRATING AL-FATIHAH INTO ISLAMIC CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study addresses the need for a spiritually grounded basis for cultivating honesty and trustworthiness in Islamic character education by examining how the tawhidic theology of Surah Al-Fatihah can be translated into an educational framework. The research aims to identify tawhid-based ethical values in QS. Al-Fatihah (1):1–7 and explain their relevance for forming integrity-oriented character outcomes. Employing qualitative library research, the study analyzes the Qur'anic text as primary data and tafsir literature, tawhid studies, and character education scholarship as secondary data, using structured thematic analysis through verse-based coding, categorization of ethical themes, and mapping procedures to connect theological values with character constructs. The analysis yields six core values rububiyah (divine lordship), rahmah (compassion), eschatological accountability (hisab), ikhlas (sincerity), isti'anah (reliance on God), and hidayah (divine guidance)—which correspond to four character outcomes: moral responsibility, integrity, spiritual resilience, and ethical orientation. These findings indicate that internalizing tawhidic values strengthens internal self-regulation (muraqabah), empathetic truthfulness, and consistent trustworthiness rooted in divine accountability rather than social conformity. Educationally, the model supports reflective pedagogy, moral habituation through ritual practice, and the cultivation of an integrity-based school culture, positioning Surah Al-Fatihah as a compact ethical curriculum for curriculum design and teacher formation across diverse educational settings

Keywords: *Surah Al-Fatihah; tawhid-based education; integrity education*

Abstrak

Studi ini menyoroti kebutuhan akan landasan spiritual yang kokoh untuk menumbuhkan kejujuran dan sifat dapat dipercaya dalam pendidikan karakter Islam, dengan menelaah bagaimana teologi tauhid dalam Surah Al-Fatihah dapat diterjemahkan ke dalam kerangka pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengidentifikasi nilai-nilai etis berbasis tauhid dalam QS. Al-Fatihah (1):1–7 serta menjelaskan relevansinya bagi pembentukan luaran karakter yang berorientasi pada integritas. Dengan menggunakan penelitian kepustakaan kualitatif, studi ini menganalisis teks Al-Qur'an sebagai data primer serta literatur tafsir, kajian tauhid, dan kepustakaan pendidikan karakter sebagai data sekunder, melalui analisis tematik terstruktur yang mencakup pengodean berbasis ayat, kategorisasi tema-tema etis, dan prosedur pemetaan untuk menghubungkan nilai-nilai teologis dengan konstruk

karakter. Hasil analisis menemukan enam nilai inti rububiyah (ketuhanan/keberkuasaan Allah sebagai Rabb), rahmah (kasih sayang), akuntabilitas eskatologis (hisab), ikhlas (ketulusan), isti'anah (bergantung/bersandar kepada Allah), dan hidayah (petunjuk ilahi) yang berkorelasi dengan empat luaran karakter: tanggung jawab moral, integritas, resiliensi spiritual, dan orientasi etis. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa internalisasi nilai-nilai tauhid memperkuat regulasi diri internal (muraqabah), kejujuran yang empatik, serta konsistensi sikap dapat dipercaya yang berakar pada akuntabilitas kepada Allah, bukan semata-mata pada konformitas sosial. Secara edukatif, model ini mendukung penerapan pedagogi reflektif, pembiasaan moral melalui praktik ritual, dan pengembangan budaya sekolah berbasis integritas, dengan memosisikan Surah Al-Fatihah bukan hanya sebagai bacaan liturgis, melainkan juga sebagai kurikulum etika ringkas untuk desain kurikulum dan pembentukan guru di berbagai konteks lingkungan pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: *Surah Al-Fatihah; pendidikan berbasis tauhid; pendidikan integritas*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, character education has gained global momentum, largely in response to widespread moral decline and a rising number of incidents involving corruption, dishonesty, and breaches of trust across many sectors of society. While these challenges are global in scope, they often manifest acutely in various national and local contexts. This reality underscores a critical need for educational systems to integrate values-based education into their curricula and pedagogy. Islamic education with its holistic emphasis on moral, spiritual, and intellectual development has been recognized as a powerful avenue for addressing these ethical crises. (Fitri et al., 2024; Kamaluddin et al., 2024) At the heart of this approach are the core values of honesty (sidq) and trustworthiness (amanah), which serve as the ethical backbone of both individual character and societal integrity. In Islamic tradition, these values are not merely social expectations but are deeply rooted obligations derived from theological doctrines, particularly the doctrine of tawhid (oneness of God).

Growing concern over moral values in education has prompted scholars and practitioners to return to foundational Islamic sources in order to reconstruct models of character formation. In this context, the Qur'an is regarded not only as a source of law and spirituality but also as a comprehensive guide for ethical living. Surah Al-Fatihah, the opening chapter of the Qur'an, holds a unique position in this discourse. Recited daily in Muslim prayers, it encapsulates key elements of Islamic belief and ethics, functioning simultaneously as a theological declaration and a moral compass. Contemporary scholarship increasingly examines how the thematic structure of Surah Al-Fatihah encompassing affirmations of God's lordship (rububiyah), mercy (rahmah), justice (māliki yawm al-dīn), servitude (iyyāka na'budu), and the plea for guidance (ihdinā ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm) can inform value-based educational practices (Bahagia et al., 2022; Sukma, 2025). This study is motivated by the problem of a fragmented integration of Islamic theology into character education, especially concerning the lived values of honesty and

trustworthiness. Although these values are routinely taught and emphasized in Islamic educational institutions, they are often imparted in moralistic or behavioristic ways that are disconnected from the spiritual and theological foundations which give these values their transformative power. This disconnect raises critical pedagogical questions: How can Islamic education move beyond normative instruction toward the meaningful internalization of values? More specifically, how can tawhid, as embodied in Surah Al-Fatihah, serve as a dynamic source for shaping moral behavior?

To date, general solutions proposed for this pedagogical challenge have included adopting integrated curricula, using moral exemplars, and promoting reflective practices among learners. While these approaches are valuable, they often lack a clearly articulated theological foundation that situates values like honesty and trustworthiness within Islam's broader metaphysical and eschatological worldview. As a result, value acquisition remains superficial and is easily compromised under social or personal pressure, pointing to the need for a deeper methodological alignment between theological content and character education strategies (Umar et al., 2021).

Several scholars have begun to address this issue by proposing tawhid-centered educational paradigms. (Hamdi, 2023), for example, outlines how a curriculum grounded in tawhid fosters coherence between knowledge, worship, and ethical conduct. Similarly, (Hufron et al., 2025) discuss the contributions of classical thinkers such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Sina in constructing moral philosophies rooted in tawhid. These efforts underscore the importance of positioning tawhid not as a doctrinal abstraction but as a lived principle that informs daily behavior. In particular, the belief in God's oneness is seen to entail recognition of His ultimate authority, justice, and mercy, which in turn cultivates accountability, sincerity, and responsibility among believers.

Within this framework, Surah Al-Fatihah emerges as a central text because of its seamless integration of belief, worship, and moral supplication. (Sukma, 2025) notes that each verse of Al-Fatihah encapsulates a distinct yet interconnected moral message ranging from the acknowledgment of divine mercy to the quest for ethical guidance. Similarly, (Jabłońska-Karczmarczyk, 2024) explores how prayer practices centered on Surah Al-Fatihah influence ethical consumption and personal accountability. These studies support the view that regular engagement with Al-Fatihah shapes an individual's ethical consciousness, especially when its verses are internalized through reflective prayer and spiritual discipline. Despite these insights, there remains a significant gap in the literature: few studies explicitly link the theological structure of Surah Al-Fatihah to specific character traits like honesty and amanah within educational settings. Most existing works either treat Al-Fatihah in abstract spiritual terms or focus broadly on Islamic values without detailing how these values can be operationalized pedagogically. Moreover, little attention has

been paid to the mechanisms by which repeated exposure to and reflection on Al-Fatihah's verses might foster the internalization of character traits aligned with its core themes.

This study seeks to fill that gap by providing a detailed analysis of how the tawhid-based values in Surah Al-Fatihah can be translated into actionable educational strategies for nurturing honesty and trustworthiness. The novelty of this research lies in its integration of theological exegesis, character education theory, and pedagogical application. By drawing on both classical tafsir literature and contemporary educational research, the study develops a comprehensive model for internalizing ethical values grounded in tawhid. The scope of this work includes a thematic analysis of the seven verses of Al-Fatihah, mapping their theological content onto character traits, and discussing the pedagogical implications for Islamic educational settings such as madrasahs and pesantren. Ultimately, the study aims to advance a model of character education that is both spiritually grounded and practically effective, addressing the moral challenges of contemporary society through the lens of Qur'anic guidance.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative methodology with a library research design, which is widely considered rigorous for Islamic studies—particularly for research grounded in Qur'anic textual analysis and authoritative scholarly literature (Shonhaji & Helmi, 2024; Sukma, 2025). The primary data consist of the Qur'anic text of Surah Al-Fatihah (Q. 1:1–7) as the central unit of analysis, examined in its original Arabic and supported by established English translations as well as classical and contemporary tafsir to ensure semantic accuracy and interpretive depth. Secondary data include classical and modern tafsir, works on Islamic theology (akidah and tawhid), and peer-reviewed studies on Islamic character education, especially those addressing moral integrity, accountability, sincerity (ikhlas), and moral habituation in educational settings (Fitri et al., 2024; Kamaluddin et al., 2024). Data were collected through document analysis and intensive textual reading by systematically compiling Qur'anic sources, tafsir works, journal articles, and academic books relevant to tawhid, Surah Al-Fatihah, and character education; subsequently, Surah Al-Fatihah was read iteratively to uncover layered meanings through comparison across interpretive traditions (Alle et al., 2025; Nurjannah et al., 2024).

For data analysis, the study applies structured thematic analysis to code and interpret recurring patterns of meaning in the text (Rozy et al., 2023). First, the seven verses of Surah Al-Fatihah were segmented according to their dominant theological emphases to generate thematic clusters (e.g., rububiyyah, rahmah, accountability/hisab, worship, isti'anah, hidayah, and al-sirat al-mustaqim), consistent with tafsir perspectives that treat Al-Fatihah as a coherent theological-ethical structure (Sukma, 2025). Second, these themes were coded as core tawhid-based values and their moral implications were articulated (e.g., rububiyyah as responsibility and submission; maliki yawm al-din as accountability and self-monitoring/muraqabah). Third, the identified values were mapped onto character education constructs honesty (jujur) and trustworthiness (amanah) using

conceptual indicators (inner disposition/intention, verbal conduct, observable actions, and responsibility toward others).

Finally, findings were synthesized into propositional statements and pedagogical implications for Islamic learning environments, including reflective learning, moral habituation, role modeling, and integrity-based institutional culture in line with value-based education discourse (Hamdi, 2023; Luthfiyyah et al., 2025). To strengthen rigor, the study employed reference triangulation by comparing interpretations across multiple tafsir and scholarly viewpoints and maintained logical consistency between theological concepts and character indicators.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Rububiyyah and the Formation of Moral Responsibility

The analysis of the first verse of Surah Al-Fatihah, "*Al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabbil 'ālamīn*" ("*All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds*"), highlights the core value of rububiyyah, or divine lordship. This theological construct centers on God as the Sustainer, Nurturer, and Regulator of all existence. In the context of Islamic education, rububiyyah is closely tied to the concept of moral responsibility, as it calls believers to emulate divine order and purpose in their conduct. (Masruroh & Syathori, 2025) note that embodying rububiyyah in Islamic educational narratives promotes discipline, honesty, and a strong sense of duty among students, as exemplified by historical figures such as *Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'*. This theme also extends to the ethical principle of amanah (trustworthiness). (Yusof et al., 2020) links rububiyyah to environmental and social responsibility, highlighting that awareness of God's universal lordship instills a sense of stewardship in learners. (Pranoto & Haryanto, 2024) further reinforce this connection by demonstrating how Islamic education informed by rububiyyah encourages ethical digital citizenship and disciplined character formation. Consequently, students who internalize this value are likely to view responsibility as a divinely mandated trust, not merely a social expectation.

Rahmah as the Foundation of Relational Ethics

The next verse, "*Ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm*" ("*The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*"), introduces the concept of rahmah (mercy), which has a significant influence on relational ethics in Islamic pedagogy. According to Setiawan et al. (2021), mercy is not only a divine attribute but also a model for human behavior especially in interpersonal interactions within educational settings. Emphasizing rahmah nurtures empathy, compassion, and truthfulness, all of which are essential components of both honesty and amanah. (Solehah, 2025) argues that emphasizing rahmah in pedagogy enhances students' moral sensitivity and reduces aggressive or deceitful tendencies. This relational ethic is also linked to broader ecological and communal awareness. (Andalan et al., 2024) demonstrate that rahmah is foundational to Islamic environmental ethics, connecting personal virtue with

broader social responsibilities. The ethical implications of rahmah encourage students to be truthful not out of mere obligation, but as a natural expression of empathy and care creating an environment in which both honesty and trustworthiness can flourish.

Eschatological Accountability and the Development of Muraqabah

The phrase “*Māliki yawmid-dīn*” (“*Master of the Day of Judgment*”) introduces the eschatological dimension of accountability, which is vital for developing muraqabah (self-monitoring). (KANCA, 2022) emphasizes that belief in divine judgment fosters ethical vigilance and personal accountability. In an educational context, this belief instills a constant awareness that one’s actions are observed and will be judged by Allah, thereby promoting integrity. (Azimi & Tok, 2025) elaborate that integrating eschatological themes into pedagogy adds moral depth by linking students’ conduct to divine justice. This theological perspective is instrumental in combating ethical relativism, as it encourages students to remain honest and trustworthy regardless of external surveillance. (Siahaan & Ali, 2023) observe that such an approach enhances moral behavior in modern Islamic education by bridging traditional exegesis with contemporary ethical standards. (Ichwan & Salisu, 2024) further analyze how muraqabah serves as a mechanism for continuous ethical self-regulation. This inner vigilance is especially pertinent in digital and peer-influenced environments where external monitoring is absent. Thus, “*Māliki yawmid-dīn*” provides a profound theological foundation for honesty and trustworthiness that transcends institutional control, enabling learners to internalize ethical conduct.

Sincerity and Integrity in Worship: The Implications of *Iyyāka Na’budu*

The fourth verse, “*Iyyāka na’budu*” (“*You alone we worship*”), encapsulates the values of ikhlas (sincerity) and integrity, both of which are central to moral character. (Rofi’i et al., 2024) stress that sincerity in worship shapes interpersonal ethics by encouraging mutual respect and authentic moral expression. (Ahmad et al., 2023) similarly argue that ikhlas plays a vital role in aligning intention with behavior, a prerequisite for honest and trustworthy conduct. (Rustandi & Aufa, 2025) explore classical and modern interpretations of this verse and conclude that exclusive devotion to Allah fosters internal moral coherence. When acts of worship are purified of ulterior motives, individuals are more likely to act ethically even when unobserved. In educational terms, this finding highlights the necessity of cultivating internal motivation and religious intentionality as drivers of character development. This relationship between sincerity and moral integrity is not confined to ritual practice but extends to everyday behavior. Students educated under this paradigm learn to act honestly out of a commitment to divine approval, not merely for social validation. This approach reinforces a stable form of trustworthiness in which ethical behavior is grounded in theological conviction rather than in the pursuit of external rewards.

Spiritual Reliance and Moral Resilience in *Wa Iyyāka Nasta'īn*

The fifth verse, "*Wa iyyāka nasta'īn*" ("*You alone we ask for help*"), emphasizes tawakkul (reliance on God) and introduces the ethical dimension of istiḳāmah (moral steadfastness). Nasrin (Umar et al., 2021) asserts that such reliance fosters resilience, patience, and ethical persistence in students facing modern challenges. (Kamaluddin et al., 2024) Fathurrahman et al. (Umar et al., 2021) show that understanding this verse through a hermeneutical lens equips individuals to handle ethical dilemmas with integrity. This form of spiritual reliance acts as a coping mechanism against moral fatigue and social pressure. Ubaidillah emphasizes that tawakkul enhances moral decision-making by linking personal effort with divine support. Within Islamic education, this reliance reinforces character traits such as perseverance in honesty and the steadfast fulfillment of entrusted duties, even under adversity. By linking moral resilience to divine reliance, "*Wa iyyāka nasta'īn*" enables learners to develop a sense of strength rooted in faith. This linkage is particularly valuable in situations where ethical behavior is difficult or unpopular, as it reinforces the inner resolve necessary for sustaining honesty and amanah.

Moral Orientation and Communal Integrity in *Ih dinā al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*
The final section of Surah Al-Fatihah, beginning with "*Ih dinā al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*" ("*Guide us on the Straight Path*"), underscores the necessity of ethical orientation and consistency. (Hussain et al., 2021) explain that this supplication reflects a desire for divine guidance in adhering to moral frameworks. Such guidance, referred to as hidayah, is instrumental in cultivating ethical decision-making and social responsibility. (Siregar et al., 2024) highlight that integrating Qur'anic teachings such as the concept of *al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* into education enhances character formation by aligning students' behavior with Islamic ethical standards. (Amiruddin et al., 2025) further emphasize the significance of school culture in reinforcing these values, noting that institutional support and role modeling are crucial for students to internalize honesty and trustworthiness. The phrase also delineates the contrast between morally upright paths and those marked by deviation, prompting critical reflection and ongoing self-evaluation. Such reflection enables learners to assess their ethical trajectory and make adjustments as needed. Thus, "*Ih dinā al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*" contributes to a sustainable moral orientation rooted in divine guidance, community values, and personal reflection.

Synthesis: Mapping Tawhid Values to Character Outcomes

Synthesizing the above findings, the tawhidic values embedded in Surah Al-Fatihah correspond to four major character outcomes related to honesty and amanah. First, rububiyah and eschatological awareness cultivate moral responsibility and self-monitoring. Second, rahmah and ikhlas enhance integrity and empathetic honesty. Third, *isti'ānah* fosters moral resilience and accountability. Fourth, hidayah provides ethical orientation and continuity. Together, these

dimensions form a comprehensive framework in which belief, practice, and behavior converge to produce ethically grounded individuals.

Consequently, integrity is cultivated not through fear of punishment or desire for reward, but through a consistent internal disposition aimed at pleasing Allah. The role of teachers, therefore, must evolve from that of disciplinarians to that of moral exemplars and facilitators of reflective inquiry into divine purpose. *Wa iyyāka nastaʿīn* introduces a realistic and compassionate view of moral growth. It acknowledges human frailty and underscores the necessity of divine assistance in maintaining ethical consistency. Nasrin (Ramadani & Sofa, 2024) and Fathurrahman et al. (Umar et al., 2021) both affirm that tawakkul (reliance on God) supports the development of moral perseverance (*istiqāmah*). In practice, this means incorporating spiritual coping strategies into education—such as teaching students to seek divine aid through supplication when faced with ethical dilemmas. Ubaidillah (Kamaluddin et al., 2024) argues that such strategies enhance students' moral clarity and fortitude. For instance, when students are tempted to engage in academic dishonesty, they can be guided to pause, reflect, and seek divine help, thereby transforming potential moments of failure into opportunities for spiritual and ethical growth.

These practices are not merely devotional acts; they form part of a larger ethical training system aimed at fostering resilience. The verse *Ihdinā al-Ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* provides a concluding synthesis by linking divine guidance with moral orientation. (Hussain et al., 2021) argue that the concept of the “straight path” represents both a theological and an ethical ideal. Invoking this path in prayer reorients believers toward continual self-improvement, ethical clarity, and alignment with divine norms. In educational terms, this implies that character education must be a dynamic and sustained process. Students should be trained to critically evaluate their choices, seek ethical exemplars, and commit to communities that uphold moral standards. (Siregar et al., 2024) point out that this orientation can be strengthened by creating school environments that prize honesty and integrity as shared values.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that Surah Al-Fatihah provides a concise yet profound theological-ethical framework for developing the character traits of honesty (*jujur*) and trustworthiness (*amanah*) within Islamic education. Each verse of Al-Fatihah, rooted in the core tenets of tawhid, reflects a corresponding moral principle that contributes to comprehensive character formation. The findings highlight that *rububiyyah* cultivates moral responsibility; *rahmah* fosters empathy and ethical relationality; *eschatological accountability* (*hisab*) instills self-regulation through *muraqabah*; and *ikhlas*, *istiʿānah*, and *hidayah* promote sincerity, resilience, and moral orientation, respectively. These theological themes translate into educational strategies such as reflective practice, moral habituation, and the creation of an integrity-centered institutional culture.

The implication of this research is that character education must move beyond normative instruction or mere behavioral compliance toward internalized, spiritually driven ethical formation. Embedding the theological dimensions of tawhid into the curriculum not only deepens students' moral understanding, but also stabilizes their ethical conduct across different contexts. Integrating Surah Al-Fatihah in this manner supports the propositions of that tawhid-based education is transformative, enabling students to align their faith with their behavior. This study contributes to the growing body of scholarship that explores Qur'anic ethics as a foundation for character education, by offering a structured model that bridges theology and pedagogy. Future research could examine the application of this model in classroom practices, teacher training programs, and the development of Islamic school culture across diverse sociocultural settings. Additionally, the potential to expand this model to include other character values (e.g., justice, humility, responsibility) presents fertile ground for further inquiry in the field of Islamic educational thought.

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