

Integrating Prophetic Exegesis for Character Building of Teachers and Students in Islamic Education

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara komprehensif ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan relasi antara guru dan murid melalui pendekatan tafsir tarbawi dan tafsir nabawi, serta menganalisis peran krusial pendekatan tersebut dalam pembinaan karakter di institusi pendidikan Islam. Dalam tradisi Islam, hubungan antara pendidik dan peserta didik memiliki dimensi yang sangat fundamental, karena tidak hanya berkaitan dengan proses transmisi pengetahuan (kognitif), tetapi juga bermuara pada pembentukan akhlak mulia (afektif). Melalui metode kualitatif berbasis studi pustaka (library research), penelitian ini menelaah sejumlah ayat Al-Qur'an dan hadis yang berbicara tentang peran pendidik, tanggung jawab murid, serta nilai-nilai esensial yang terkandung di dalamnya—seperti keikhlasan, keteladanan (uswah hasanah), adab, kesabaran, dan sikap saling menghormati. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tafsir nabawi mampu menjadi instrumen yang sangat efektif dalam internalisasi nilai-nilai karakter melalui penafsiran ayat-ayat pendidikan secara kontekstual dan praktis. Nilai-nilai tersebut terbukti sangat relevan untuk diintegrasikan dalam sistem pendidikan Islam modern sebagai upaya strategis menumbuhkan generasi yang berilmu, beradab, dan berkarakter Qur'ani di tengah tantangan globalisasi. Dengan demikian, pendekatan ini tidak hanya memfungsikan Al-Qur'an sebagai sumber dogma, tetapi juga sebagai pedoman hidup holistik bagi pembinaan karakter guru dan murid.

Kata Kunci: Tafsir Nabawi, Pembinaan Karakter, Pendidikan Islam.

Abstract: This study aims to comprehensively examine Qur'anic verses related to the relationship between teachers and students through the approaches of tafsir tarbawi (educational exegesis) and tafsir nabawi (prophetic exegesis), and to analyze their crucial role in character formation within Islamic educational institutions. In the Islamic tradition, the dynamic between educators and learners holds a fundamentally profound dimension, as it involves not merely the cognitive transmission of knowledge but deeply roots itself in the cultivation of noble character (akhlaq). Utilizing a qualitative method based on library research, this study rigorously explores selected Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions that highlight the roles of educators, the responsibilities of students, and the essential educational values embedded within them—such as sincerity, exemplary behavior (uswah hasanah), profound etiquette (adab), patience, and mutual respect. The findings reveal that prophetic exegesis serves as a highly effective instrument for internalizing character values through the contextual and practical interpretation of educational verses. These values are proven to be highly relevant for integration into modern Islamic education systems as a strategic effort to nurture a generation that is knowledgeable, well-mannered, and Qur'anic-minded amidst the challenges of globalization. Thus, this approach functions not only as a means of understanding the Qur'an intellectually but as a holistic guide.

Keywords: Prophetic Exegesis, Character Building, Islamic Education.

A. Introduction

The fundamental objective of Islamic education transcends the mere cognitive transfer of academic information; it is inherently designed to cultivate a holistic human personality encompassing affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains in strict alignment with the divine teachings of the Qur'an and the traditions (Sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. In the contemporary era, often characterized by rapid globalization, technological disruption, and profound moral ambiguity, the cultivation of robust character has emerged as the most critical issue determining the quality and resilience of future generations. A strong, morally grounded character serves as the indispensable foundation for individuals and societies aiming to be responsible, just, and ethically sound. However, modern educational paradigms frequently exhibit a systemic imbalance, heavily prioritizing measurable cognitive achievements and standardized test scores while inadvertently marginalizing the cultivation of *akhlak al-karimah* (noble character). This paradigm inevitably leads to an educational crisis where graduates may possess advanced technical competencies but lack the fundamental ethical grounding required to navigate complex societal challenges. To rectify this, Islamic education must firmly reorient itself toward character building, a process in which the application of *Tafsir Nabawi* (Prophetic Exegesis) and *Tafsir Tarbawi* (Educational Exegesis) plays a central, transformative role.

The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic epistemology and worldview, provides the ultimate guidance for human conduct. However, its universal principles, comprehensive directives, and profound moral imperatives often necessitate detailed interpretation, contextualization, and practical demonstration to be fully

comprehended and implemented by the masses. This is precisely where the vital role of *Tafsir Nabawi* becomes evident. Prophetic exegesis refers to the encompassing explanations, practical applications, and living examples provided by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ regarding the Qur'anic verses. The Prophet did not merely serve as a passive conduit for divine revelation; he was the primary interpreter, the living embodiment, and the supreme educator who translated abstract theological and moral concepts into tangible daily practices, earning him the description of a "walking Qur'an." Therefore, understanding the educational injunctions of the Qur'an without the lens of Prophetic exegesis is fundamentally incomplete.

This article argues that *Tafsir Nabawi* holds an irreplaceable and central position in the character-building processes within Islamic education, particularly in shaping the sacred dynamic between teachers and students. By studying and emulating the Prophetic exegesis, learners are not merely exposed to theoretical Islamic ethics; they witness how these profound values are actualized in real-world scenarios. This practical exposure facilitates the seamless internalization of values, making the formation of true Islamic character a natural outcome rather than a forced academic exercise. The pedagogical relevance of this approach is captured within the framework of *Tafsir Tarbawi*, an exegetical method specifically oriented toward extracting educational values from the Qur'an. This approach effectively bridges the historical gap between the text of the revelation and the complex realities of modern education by emphasizing character building, the internalization of virtues, and the pedagogical relevance of Qur'anic narratives.

Furthermore, the relationship between a teacher and a student in

Islam is not transactional; it is deeply spiritual and moral. The teacher is viewed not just as a facilitator of knowledge but as a *murabbi* (nurturer) and a *mu'addib* (instiller of adab or profound respect and discipline). The student, in turn, is expected to approach learning as an act of worship, requiring humility, patience, and absolute respect for the educator. In the current educational landscape, this sacred bond is often eroded by commercialized educational models. Therefore, it is imperative to deeply investigate how the Qur'an, elucidated through the Prophet's traditions, constructs the ideal roles of teachers and students.

This research is driven by the urgent need to address the contemporary crisis in character education by returning to the foundational texts of Islam. The specific objectives of this paper are to explore the conceptual framework of *Tafsir Nabawi* in an educational context, analyze its profound role in cultivating the moral character of both educators and learners, and delineate practical strategies for implementing these prophetic educational methods within modern Islamic institutions. By addressing these dimensions, this study hopes to provide substantial theoretical and practical contributions to the ongoing discourse on educational reform, advocating for an Islamic educational praxis that is deeply rooted in divine revelation and prophetic tradition, thereby producing graduates who are not only intellectually adept but also morally unshakeable.

B. Literature Review

The discourse surrounding Islamic education, character formation, and the exegetical approaches of the Qur'an has been extensively explored by various scholars, revealing a continuous effort to align classical paradigms with contemporary demands. A central theme in recent

literature is the critique of the secularization and commercialization of modern education, which has led to a crisis in moral and ethical development. Anwar and Umam (2025) articulate this phenomenon by examining the epistemological response to globalization, arguing that the crisis in Islamic education stems from a deviation from *adab*-based pedagogy. They emphasize that the reconstruction of an educational system must be deeply rooted in the instilled discipline of mind, body, and soul, a concept central to the teachings of classical scholars like Al-Ghazali (2000), who positioned spiritual purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) as the prerequisite for acquiring true knowledge.

The concept of transformative education in the 21st century necessitates a delicate balance between acquiring modern competencies and retaining core religious values. Anwar and Umam (2020) highlight the importance of emphasizing 21st-century skills—such as critical thinking and collaboration—within independent learning curricula, yet stress that these skills must be anchored in an Islamic worldview to prevent moral drift. This aligns with Muhaimin's (2009) assertion regarding the need to reconstruct Islamic education from mere theoretical paradigms into applicable, holistic models that address both worldly and spiritual needs. Furthermore, the effectiveness of this educational transformation heavily relies on the quality and moral standing of the educators. Jalaluddin and Usman (2018) explore the concept of the ideal teacher through the lens of *Tafsir Tarbawi*, positing that the educator must embody the prophetic attributes of patience, sincerity, and compassion to effectively transmit not just information, but transformative wisdom. Institutional leadership and management also play a critical role in

facilitating character education. Bakar et al. (2025) demonstrate that a leader's strategy, particularly through a kindness-based approach (Suherman et al., 2025), is fundamental in improving educator competence and creating an environment conducive to moral growth. Additionally, the transformation of student management to increase active participation in non-academic, character-building activities has been shown to significantly enhance holistic student development (Riyanti et al., 2026). The integration of specific ethical values, such as ecopedagogy and environmental awareness (Anwar et al., 2025), further illustrates how deep, thematic Qur'anic teachings can be localized and applied to solve contemporary global issues.

Despite the wealth of literature on Islamic educational philosophy and character building, there remains a noticeable gap in studies that specifically operationalize *Tafsir Nabawi* as a direct, practical pedagogical tool for modern classrooms. While previous works heavily discuss the theoretical importance of the Prophet's example (Qardhawi, 1996; Badawi, 2011), few systematically analyze how specific categories of prophetic traditions (*Qauliyah*, *Fi'liyah*, *Taqririyah*) can be translated into actionable strategies for managing the teacher-student dynamic today. This paper seeks to bridge that gap by synthesizing the broad philosophical mandates of *adab*-based education with the specific, practical exegetical methods of *Tafsir Nabawi*, offering a concrete framework for modern Islamic educational institutions.

C. Methods

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology predicated on an in-depth library research approach (*library research*). This method was deliberately selected as it allows for a comprehensive, text-based exploration

of theological, exegetical, and pedagogical concepts that are foundational to Islamic education. The primary objective of this methodological design is to systematically gather, analyze, and synthesize existing literature to construct a robust argument regarding the efficacy of *Tafsir Nabawi* and *Tafsir Tarbawi* in character building.

The data sources for this study are divided into primary and secondary categories. The primary sources constitute the foundational texts of Islam: the Holy Qur'an, specifically verses pertaining to education, knowledge, and interpersonal ethics (such as those found in Surah Al-Kahf, Luqman, and Al-Ahzab), and the canonical collections of Hadith (prophetic traditions) that explicitly interpret these verses or demonstrate the Prophet's pedagogical methods. Secondary sources include authoritative classical exegeses (such as *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim* by Ibn Kathir), contemporary works on *Tafsir Tarbawi* (e.g., Hasan, 2015), and recent peer-reviewed academic journals focusing on Islamic educational management, character education, and pedagogical transformation.

Data collection was executed through a rigorous thematic literature review, wherein texts were categorized based on their relevance to the keywords: teacher-student relations, prophetic exegesis, and character formation. The analytical procedure employed is the descriptive-analytical method. This involves not only describing the content of the texts and the interpretations of the *mufassir* (exegetes) but critically analyzing these interpretations to extract underlying pedagogical philosophies. According to the foundational premise of this research, Islamic education aims to empower humans to unearth knowledge and apply it beneficially in this world and the hereafter. Therefore,

the data analysis continuously cross-references theological ideals with the practical realities and structural necessities of modern educational environments, ensuring that the theoretical findings are both academically rigorous and practically applicable.

D. Result and Discussion

1. The Conceptual Framework and Epistemological Position of Prophetic Exegesis (Tafsir Nabawi) in Islamic Education

To fully comprehend the transformative potential of *Tafsir Nabawi* within the realm of character education, it is imperative to first establish its profound conceptual framework and its epistemological supremacy within Islamic scholarship. Etymologically, the term "tafsir" is derived from the Arabic root word *fassara*, which means to elucidate, to uncover, to clarify, or to provide an interpretation of something that is obscured or complex. The word "Nabawi" is an attributive adjective tracing back to the Prophet (Nabi). Consequently, *Tafsir Nabawi* is academically defined as the exegesis, interpretation, or clarification of the Holy Qur'an that emanates directly from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Epistemologically, this represents the most authentic, pristine, and authoritative form of interpretation conceivable within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Since the Prophet was the direct recipient of the divine revelation (*wahy*), he possessed the absolute and unparalleled understanding of the intended meanings, nuances, and legislative purposes behind the words of Allah SWT.

Unlike later scholarly exegeses compiled into voluminous books by classical scholars (such as At-Tabari or Ibn Kathir), *Tafsir Nabawi* was not formally codified as a distinct written commentary during the Prophet's

lifetime. Instead, it is organically woven into the vast tapestry of the Prophetic Sunnah. This exegesis manifests in three primary, dynamic forms that continuously inform educational methodologies. The first is *Sunnah Qauliyah* (Verbal Traditions), which encompasses the direct sayings, dictations, and verbal explanations of the Prophet regarding specific Qur'anic verses. For instance, when the Qur'an speaks of profound theological concepts or outlines broad legal frameworks, the Prophet's verbal instructions provided the necessary granularity for human comprehension. The second form is *Sunnah Fi'liyah* (Practical/Action-based Traditions). This is arguably the most potent educational tool, representing the Prophet's physical implementation of the Qur'an. When the Qur'an commands the establishment of prayer, it is the *Sunnah Fi'liyah* that visually and kinesthetically teaches the exact postures, timings, and spiritual focal points of the prayer. In an educational context, this embodies the ultimate form of experiential learning. The third form is *Sunnah Taqririyah* (Tacit Approvals), wherein the Prophet observed the actions or heard the statements of his companions and responded with silence or explicit approval, thereby validating those actions within the framework of Islamic law and ethics.

The epistemological standing of *Tafsir Nabawi* is secondary only to the Qur'an itself and is, in fact, mandated by the Qur'an. Allah SWT explicitly decrees this relationship in Surah An-Nahl, verse 44: "And We have revealed to you the message [the Qur'an] that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them..." This verse unequivocally establishes the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the ultimate *mubayyin* (clarifier and expounder) of the divine text. Without the pedagogical and hermeneutical intervention of the Prophet, the universal

injunctions of the Qur'an would remain abstract principles, susceptible to misinterpretation or subjective distortion. The integration of this prophetic clarification is essential in modern pedagogical models. For example, recent developments in educational technology advocate for deep learning-based planning models (Sulastri et al., 2024); however, the "depth" in an Islamic context must not only be cognitive but deeply rooted in the original intent of the text as clarified by the Prophet. Therefore, *Tafsir Nabawi* functions as the indispensable bridge between divine theory and human practice, forming the absolute bedrock for any authentic Islamic educational endeavor.

2. The Role of Prophetic Exegesis in Cultivating the Moral Character of Teachers and Students

The core mechanism of Islamic education revolves around the dynamic, interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the student. Within this dynamic, the cultivation of character (*tarbiyat al-akhlak*) is not a secondary byproduct but the primary objective. *Tafsir Nabawi* serves as the critical operational engine for this cultivation by translating abstract moral virtues into observable, imitable behaviors. The Qur'an frequently employs broad moral imperatives—commanding justice, patience, honesty, and humility—while prohibiting tyranny, arrogance, and deceit. While these concepts are intellectually graspable, their internalization requires a living model. *Tafsir Nabawi* provides this through concrete, contextualized demonstrations.

Consider the virtue of honesty (*Sidq*). While the Qur'an commands believers to be with those who are true, the prophetic exegesis provides the pedagogical motivation and the psychological reinforcement for this trait. Through his sayings, the Prophet

linked honesty directly to spiritual tranquility and ultimate salvation, famously stating that honesty leads to righteousness, which in turn leads to paradise. More importantly, his life as *Al-Amin* (The Trustworthy) before and after prophethood served as the ultimate empirical evidence for his students (the Companions). Similarly, regarding the virtue of patience (*sabr*), the Qur'an extensively praises the patient. The Prophet's life—enduring persecution in Mecca, navigating social boycotts, and facing personal tragedies—provided a masterclass in psychological resilience and spiritual fortitude. When modern students study these narratives, they are not merely learning history; they are engaging in a sophisticated form of character modeling.

This concept of modeling is enshrined in Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 21: "*There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern [uswah hasanah]...*" The *uswah hasanah* is the most powerful pedagogical tool available to educators. In the context of the teacher-student relationship, educators are compelled by the prophetic model to embody the virtues they preach. A teacher cannot effectively demand punctuality, respect, or intellectual rigor if they themselves display negligence or arrogance. The Prophet's interactions with his followers were characterized by profound empathy, justice, and tailored communication. He recognized the individual psychological dispositions of his companions, answering the exact same question differently based on who was asking, thereby demonstrating the principle of differentiated instruction long before it became a modern educational buzzword.

Furthermore, *Tafsir Nabawi* meticulously constructs the micro-ethics of daily life, which are essential for creating an environment of profound respect (*adab*). The prophetic traditions detail the etiquette of speaking, the

manners of seeking permission, the protocols of disagreement, and the profound respect owed to scholars and elders. When an educational institution integrates these micro-ethics into its daily routines, it shifts the institutional culture. Students learn to navigate conflicts with grace, treat their peers with equity, and approach their teachers with deep reverence, acknowledging that the transmission of knowledge is a sacred trust. This comprehensive moral framework ensures that learners develop a balanced character, seamlessly integrating their obligations towards the Creator (*hablum minallah*) with their ethical responsibilities towards society (*hablum minannas*). This approach ensures that the output of the educational system is not an arrogant intellectual, but a humble servant-leader.

3. Implementation Strategies, Challenges, and Solutions in Modern Islamic Education

Translating the profound paradigms of *Tafsir Nabawi* into the practical realities of contemporary Islamic educational institutions requires deliberate, strategic integration across both curriculum design and pedagogical methodologies. The implementation must be systemic rather than merely superficial. Firstly, curriculum integration demands that Prophetic Exegesis is not isolated to a specific subject, such as "Hadith Studies," but serves as the underlying ethos for the entire academic program. In subjects like *Akidah* and *Akhlak* (Theology and Ethics), the prophetic narratives must be the primary instructional material. Even in secular subjects, the ethics derived from the Prophet's life—such as the pursuit of empirical truth in science or absolute integrity in mathematics and commerce—must be explicitly highlighted. This cross-disciplinary integration aligns with the concept of

holistic, *adab*-based education, ensuring that the student's worldview is consistently framed by divine parameters.

Methodologically, educators must shift from traditional, rote-memorization lectures to dynamic, experiential learning models inspired by the Prophet. "Modeling" becomes paramount; the teacher must consciously act as a modern *uswah hasanah*. If the Prophet led by example, demonstrating immense patience and kindness, modern educators must employ a kindness-based leadership strategy within the classroom (Suherman et al., 2025). Furthermore, storytelling (*kisah*)—recounting the emotional and intellectually stimulating events of the Prophet's life—should be utilized to engage students' affective domains, making moral lessons memorable and impactful. Incorporating character-based projects, such as community service or environmental conservation efforts, allows students to physically practice the prophetic virtues of generosity and stewardship (*khalifah*). For instance, integrating ecopedagogy to strengthen environmental care character (Anwar et al., 2025) directly applies the prophetic teachings regarding the sacredness of nature to modern ecological crises.

However, this implementation faces significant contemporary challenges. A primary obstacle is the severe limitation in teacher competence; not all educators possess the deep hermeneutical understanding of *Tafsir Nabawi* required to extract its pedagogical nuances, nor the psychological training to apply it effectively. Additionally, the prevailing global educational culture remains overwhelmingly fixated on cognitive, standardized outcomes, pushing character education to the periphery. Furthermore, the pervasive influence of the digital era and unfiltered social media often presents counter-narratives

that actively dismantle the moral frameworks schools attempt to build.

To overcome these hurdles, institutions must enact comprehensive solutions. There must be rigorous, continuous professional development for teachers, focusing not just on subject matter expertise, but on Islamic pedagogical psychology and the mastery of *Tafsir Tarbawi*. Curriculum development must actively resist the hyper-cognitive trend by formally assessing and rewarding character development alongside academic achievement. Crucially, addressing the negative impacts of the digital environment requires the utilization of innovative, digital-friendly instructional media to present prophetic narratives in formats that resonate with Generation Z. Finally, schools cannot operate in isolation; establishing robust partnerships with parents and the broader community is essential to create a cohesive, insulated ecosystem where the values of the Prophet are consistently reinforced both inside and outside the classroom.

E. Conclusion

Tafsir Nabawi (Prophetic Exegesis) holds a central, irreplaceable, and profoundly transformative role in the character-building processes of Islamic education. As the living, practical manifestation of Qur'anic injunctions, the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ explanations and actions provide the most authoritative and accessible blueprint for moral and ethical development. By systematically studying the Prophet's *Qauliyah* (sayings), *Fi'liyah* (actions), and *Taqriyah* (approvals), the abstract principles of the Qur'an are vividly translated into actionable behaviors. This exegetical approach is particularly crucial in defining the sacred dynamic between teachers and students, dictating that educators must serve as an *uswah hasanah* (excellent

exemplar) while students must approach learning with profound *adab* (respect and etiquette).

The successful implementation of this paradigm requires deliberate integration into modern educational curricula and methodologies, moving beyond rote learning to experiential, modeling-based pedagogy. While contemporary institutions face significant challenges—ranging from the hyper-focus on cognitive testing to the moral disruptions of the digital age and deficits in teacher training—these can be mitigated through sustained professional development, holistic curriculum redesign, and strong community-school partnerships. Ultimately, revitalizing the application of *Tafsir Nabawi* within the classroom is not a regression to antiquity, but a necessary epistemological correction. It ensures that Islamic education fulfills its highest mandate: producing a generation of individuals who are not only intellectually formidable and globally competitive but are also anchored in unshakeable Islamic character, capable of contributing justice, wisdom, and compassion to the modern world.

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