

An Overview of Akhlak and Moral Concepts and Their Relevance to Moral Education in Malaysia

Noor Zulina S De Asildo

Department of Language and Humanities Education, Faculty of Educational Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia

43400 Serdang, Selangor

Maizura Yasin

Department of Language and Humanities Education, Faculty of Educational Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia

43400 Serdang, Selangor

Nur Surayyah Madhubala Abdullah

Department of Language and Humanities Education, Faculty of Educational Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia

43400 Serdang, Selangor

Marzni Mohamed Mokhtar

Department of Language and Humanities Education, Faculty of Educational Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia

43400 Serdang, Selangor

Received: Oct. 23, 2022 Accepted: Dec. 6, 2022 Online published: Dec. 19, 2022

doi:10.5296/jpag.v12i4S.20574

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/jpag.v12i4S.20574>

Abstract

Moral Education (ME) in Malaysian context is closely related to “akhlak” and moral concept. The use of the terms “akhlak” and moral in achieving the goal of forming people with noble character through the subject of ME has been influenced by Islam as the official religion of

Malaysia and the diversity of religious beliefs in the Malaysian community. Moral Education is a complex subject in Malaysia, not only because it is studied by non-Muslim students of various religious beliefs, but also because it may probably be taught by Muslim teachers. Based on a review of theories and previous researches, this paper will discuss the basic principles of "akhlak" and moral and their relationship with the formation of people with noble characters through the ME subject in Malaysia. This paper contributes to the possibility of aligning "akhlak" and moral concepts in order to achieve the goal of forming people with noble characters through the ME subject. Hence, this paper expands on existing literature to better understand the complexities underlying ME subject due to the diversity of religious beliefs among ME teachers and students.

Keywords: Akhlak, Islamic, Morality, Moral Education, Moral Values

1. Introduction

1.1 An Overview of Educating Human Character

In previous studies, most American, European, Australian, and Asian countries used synonymous and interchangeable terms (Bourke et al., 2020; Haydon, 2004; Splitter, 2011; Thornberg & Oğuz, 2016) such as moral or character education, ethics education, religious education, values education, and civic and citizenship education (Agbaria & Pinson, 2018; Berkowitz, 2011; Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). Those subjects aimed at instilling or forming desired character traits through psychosocial development in order to become functional and competent individuals who contribute to the well-being and unity of society and nation (Cheung & Lee, 2010; Cohen, 2019; Jeynes, 2017; McPhail et al., 1972; Pandya, 2017; Sherblom et al., 2006). Furthermore, it aims to promote moral development and moral judgement, allowing students to reason and consider their actions morally (Bourke et al., 2020; Lunn Brownlee et al., 2016; Splitter, 2011; Wilson, 1996; Wringe, 2006), as well as to form a people with noble character in accordance with current societal norms and beliefs.

However, the process of educating for morality in order to form people of noble character is complicated since morality is about the standard of good and right adopted by an individual or group where the concept of moral and morality is still debated. The process is complicated because moral standards vary from one individual or group to another, such as family and peers (Cross, 2017), depending on what they consider to be a measure of good and right behaviour. The theoretical foundation for this paper is based on literature arguing that ME in Malaysia has been shaped in an Islamic setting and is permeated by fundamental Islamic values (Balakrishnan, 2017) where they used the terms "akhlak" to describe a noble people (Ministry of Education, 2015, 2016, 2018). With the idea that ME should go beyond the indoctrination of prescribed values (Bleazby, 2019; Jang, 2021; Noor Zulina & Maizura, 2021; Orchard, 2020), some alternative strategies are required to merge the concept of akhlak and moral in the challenging setting of an openly Islamic nation with a multi-ethnic population.

Besides, ME teachers face a dilemma in dealing with different moral standards that inform students' moral stances in discussion and debates on moral dilemma in the ME classroom.

This perspectives draws on nature of plural societies in multiculturalism, the focus of multicultural education, the development of a morally educated person in moral education and the nature of moral theories in moral philosophy (Halstead, 2011; Lapsley & Woodbury, 2016). Understanding the concept of “*akhlak*” and moral in depth may help ME teachers who are confronted with opposing moral stances arising from the various moral standards they have adopted (Halstead, 2007; Nur Surayyah Madhubala, 2009; Rissanen et al., 2018; Wringer, 2006) in the pluralistic ME classroom. Hence, this paper will discuss the fundamental differences as well as the similarities between “*akhlak*” and moral, which can be used as an alternative to bridge the gap between those concepts in understanding human beings with noble character formation. The discussion will then provide an overview of the implications for the T&L of ME, particularly in Malaysia, an Islamic country with a plural society.

1.2 A Brief History of ME in Malaysia

Moral Education (ME) was first introduced in Malaysia in 1983 as part of an effort to alleviate the social problems that were prevalent at the time. It is a particular subject for non-Muslim students since Muslim students have to study Islamic Education (IE) in school. Until now, both ME and IE subjects have been core subjects in schools, serving as important platforms in the formation of people with the noble character following the National Education Philosophy (NEP), which is the main core of Malaysia's education system, that is:

Education in Malaysia is a continuous effort to develop the potential in a comprehensive and integrated manner to produce a balanced and harmonious human being in terms of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical development, based on faith and obedience to God. This effort aims to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable, skilled, virtuous, responsible, and capable of achieving personal well-being while also contributing to the harmony and prosperity of the family, community, and country.

(National Education Policy, Vol. 4; page 17)

Although these two subjects were introduced to different target groups, the specific goal of ME and IE was to focus on the same effort. The difference is that the content of IE subjects is more focused on religious topics, such as *Tilawah al-Qur'an* and Hadith, *Ulum Syar'iah*, and *Adab* based on Islamic Morals, as opposed to the content of the ME's curriculum, which is more general with an emphasis on self-development, family and society (Kamarudin & Yang Marya, 2016) as well as religiously independent (Balakrishnan, 2017). Thus, in the context of Islamic Education, the justification for the formation of human beings with noble character is guided by permanent and absolute rules and laws in the Qur'an and Hadith, as compared to the ME, which is based on various moral standards in moral ethics theory as well as basic moral concepts.

Furthermore, the goal of human beings with noble characters' formation is explicitly stated in

the ME's Secondary School Standard Curriculum (SSSC) and Curriculum and Assessment Standards Document (CASD), which is:

The Moral Education curriculum seeks to develop human beings of noble character and integrity who adhere to universal values based on moral principles and contribute to the unity and well-being of the nation and the global community.

(CASD SSSC Moral Education, 2018; page 2)

Malaysia's background as an Islamic country contributes indirectly to the choice of the Arabic word "*akhlak*" to represent the meaning of "moral human being" in the context of the ME's curriculum (Balakrishnan, 2017). The relationship between "*akhlak*" and "moral human being" is explicitly addressed in the ME curriculum, notably:

The Moral Education curriculum can produce moral and virtuous human beings among students as human beings who can contribute on various levels productively to themselves, family, society, country and internationally.

(CASD SSSC Moral Education, 2018; page 1)

Therefore, it is necessary to refine ME teachers' understanding of the human beings with noble character concept, which represents the meaning of both the words "*akhlak*" and "moral", as this will be translated into teaching and learning practices (T&L) in the classroom. This is based on previous research, which claims that only truly competent teachers can understand and appreciate the philosophy and concepts underlying a subject's implementation (Gao & Wang, 2020; Nurul Asiah Fasehah & Noornajihan, 2021). Therefore, the diversity of moral and ethical conceptions associated with morality (Alexander, 2016; Haydon, 1992; Orchard, 2020) should be considered, as it might be one of the contributors to understand the effectiveness of achieving ME subject goals in Malaysia.

2. Akhlak Basis According to the Islamic Viewpoint

The term "*akhlak*" is derived from the Arabic word "*Khuluk*," which means "personality, character, behaviour, and habits" (Akilah, 2020; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Norazly et al., 2021; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020; Roslina, 2021; Zaharah, 2005). It can also be interpreted as behaviour, belief, tenet, or religion, as well as noble values (Asmawati, 1999; Noor Zulina & Maizura, 2021; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020). The formation of *akhlak* is significant in the context of Islam since one of the reasons Rasulullah S.A.W was sent to mankind was to make perfect *akhlak*, as Rasulullah S.A.W stated: "Indeed, I was sent to make perfect *akhlak*." (H.R. Bukhari). *Akhlak* perfection is also a measure of one's faith in

monotheism and obtaining Allah S.W.T's pleasure (Akilah, 2020; Bafadhol, 2017; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Roslina, 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015; Umayah, 2017). The Prophet S.A.W. also made the connection between *akhlak* and faith, saying: "The most perfect believer in faith has the best *akhlak*." (HR. Ab û D âw ûd dan Tirmidz). The relationship between faith and *akhlak* also emphasises the significance of maintaining the *Rabbaniyah* relationship, which is the relationship between oneself and its creator, Allah S.W.T. (Ab Halim, 2007; Asmawati et al., 2019; Rubini, 2019; Yaqin, 2020).

The main pillar of *akhlak* formation in Islam is based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as the hadith of the Prophet S.A.W which provides guidance towards achieving happiness in this world and the hereafter (*Ma'rifatullah*) (Akilah, 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015). Adherence to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as the hadith of the Prophet SAW, demonstrates that *akhlak* also includes adherence to Islamic law, which is ultimately determined by the retribution of sins and rewards for every deed and action in life (Akilah, 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020). Every deed and action reflect a person's *akhlak*, which are determined by good *akhlak*, that is, *akhlak karimah* or *mahmudah*, and bad *akhlak*, that is, *mazmumah* (Bafadhol, 2017; Irvan Fuadi et al., 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015; Umayah, 2017). As a result, humans with *akhlak* should be able to differentiate between good and bad things (Akilah, 2020; Bafadhol, 2017; Irvan Fuadi et al., 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015), so that their every behaviour and action reflects noble *akhlak*.

2.1 *Akhlak in the Context of Human Psychology Development*

Akhlak is also a combination of revelation and intellect (Akilah, 2020; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015), since any act or action based on common sense judgement should be based on Islamic law and Syariah (Halstead, 2007) revealed from Allah S.W.T. In this context, common sense is an expression of one's knowledge and understanding of Islamic law and Syariah. However, knowledge and understanding of Islamic law and Syariah are insufficient to motivate a person to engage in noble behaviour and actions. Spiritual and emotional strength is also required for a person with noble *akhlak* because it can produce a tendency to act spontaneously without the need for consideration and thought, instead only referring to the absolute rules set by Islamic law and Syariah (Bafadhol, 2017; Irvan Fuadi et al., 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Muhammad Alqadri et al., 2019; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020; Roslina, 2021; Rubini, 2019; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015; Umayah, 2017). In other words, the concept of *akhlak* in Islam also takes into account that human psychological development comprising cognitive aspects or thoughts, emotions and actions, does not happen separately, even intertwined and connected.

In addition, the relationship between the three aspects of cognitive, emotional and behaviour can be seen through the four processes involved in the formation of *akhlak*, which are memorization, understanding, believing, and finally allowing Islamic law and Syariah to be practised in daily life. (Akilah, 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Suryadarma & Haq,

2015). The cognitive aspect of memorization and comprehension is the first process that must be achieved in these four processes as it describes the knowledge of Islamic law and Syariah as set out in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The believing process includes the appreciation of Islamic law and Syariah, which reveals a strong tendency of the soul and emotions to act as a person of noble character as a result of the process of knowing and understanding the truth of the law and Syariah. Finally, the Islamic view holds that consistent good behaviour (Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Roslina, 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015) can be produced as a manifestation of virtuous human beings.

2.2 *Akhlak in the Context of Human Socialization*

Akhlak encompasses not only the *Rabbaniyah* relationship, but also the *Insaniyah*, *Syumuliyah* and the concept of *Wasathiyyah* (Akilah, 2020; Bafadhol, 2017; Irvan Fuadi et al., 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020; Roslina, 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015). *Insaniyah* is a human relationship, *syumuliyah* is a human relationship with nature (animals and plants), and *wasathiyyah* is a concept related to balancing or middle paths in terms of maintaining *Rabbaniyah*, *insaniyah*, and *syumuliyah* relationships. Every act that fulfils the concept of *wasathiyyah* should not be excessive or diminished by granting the appropriate right in its place (Bafadhol, 2017). Mohd Saiful Akmal et al. (2021) also stated that admirable *akhlak* should occur in balance, for example, the nature of patience and anger should be balanced because too much patience will cause a person to be *dayus* and coward, while too much anger will cause a person to act wild like an animal. Hence, the *akhlak* of balance, or *wasathiyyah*, teaches humans to always consider their own and others' welfare and interests in a fair, moderate, and balanced manner.

Meanwhile, the meaning of *akhlak* in Islam is *syumul*, or universal (Mohamad Khairi et al., 2015; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015), as it includes representations of *akhlak* in oneself, *akhlak* toward God, and *akhlak* toward human relationships. Furthermore, the role of *akhlak* in maintaining human relationships is critical to societal well-being (Akilah, 2020; Irvan Fuadi et al., 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021). Thus, the primary role in providing a moral society is, to begin with family education to produce individuals who are aware of their responsibilities in human relationships (Muhammad Alqadri et al., 2019). In conclusion, *akhlak* or moral education is important in Islam and should begin at home.

3. Morality From a Western Ethical Perspective

Moral is derived from the Latin word *moralis*, which means customs and manners. In general, morality can be defined as noble etiquette or politeness (Abdul Rahman, 1999; Noor Zulina, 2015). Thereby, both *akhlak* and morality refer to a description of an individual's behaviour (Maizura, 2015; Maizura et al., 2021; Noor Zulina & Maizura, 2021). The concept of morality in the context of ME in Malaysia is based on the basic concepts of morality, notably the domain of morality and ethics, moral development, moral principles, universal values, and moral judgement (Chang, 2005; Gibbs et al., 2007; Purzycki et al., 2018). These fundamental moral concepts are based on the basic philosophy of moral ethics, which is used as one of the learning syllabi for prospective ME teachers in Malaysia (Abd. Rahman, 1984;

Abdul Rahman, 2018; Syahrwan Azan & Zuraini, 2017), as well as being determinant to the achievement of the goals of virtuous human being formation in the context of ME in Malaysia, which has diverse social backgrounds of students and teachers (MOE, 2018; Vishalache, 2016).

Thus, when discussing the understanding of the concept of morality that underpins a virtuous human being's goal in ME, the foundations of Western moral-ethical philosophy must be taken into account. This can assist teachers in being more open to a wide range of moral standards, particularly when conducting T&L sessions in the classroom. The following sub-heading will summarise the basic principles that serve as a guide for determining moral action, as expressed by the four major streams of Western moral-ethical theory.

3.1 Social Morality and Virtue Ethics

The idea of social morality is based on the views of Weber (1966) and Emile Durkheim (1961) who have the support of moral sociologists. The Theory of Social Morality has the view that moral action should be per the duties and responsibilities of individuals in a group of society. Weber states that the norms, values, and rules of society can shape a person's behaviour and character as a result of obedience to legitimate authority. In this regard, the theory of social morality describes that the social environment, especially the authorities in society, such as parents, teachers, schools or local authorities (Bronfenbrenner, 1975) are more powerful in determining the moral rules of their subordinates (Abbott, 2019; Abdul Rahman, 1999). Berns (2010) for example states that some countries such as Germany, France, and China stipulate that their citizens must adhere to one purpose of life which is to serve the country and they must adhere to the values and attitudes that leaders want to inculcate into the children.

In the Malaysian context, the basic principles of ethics and social morality can also be seen through the introduction to the 5 principles of Rukun Negara. The principles in Rukun Negara should be held by every Malaysian regardless of their religions and beliefs.

However, Durkheim also emphasizes the element of autonomy which means that an individual needs to understand the defined social rules and obey them voluntarily. Understanding the defined social rules allows the individual to think about the appropriateness of his actions based on the situation he is experiencing (Gunawan et al., 2017) while at the same time avoiding compliance with the rules blindly. Although each action is subject to the situation, the action must be based on the rules set (Abdul Rahman, 1999; Yao & Enright, 2018). In conclusion, the ethical theory of social morality places great emphasis on the role of social rules and regulations as a guide in determining moral action.

Meanwhile, the Theory of Virtue Ethics founded by Aristotle (1979) states that virtue is a tendency for a purpose (Abdul Rahman, 1999). Aristotle's view of virtue is also based on the assumption that goodness does not come naturally but rather needs to be trained and educated to become habitual, fun and enjoyable (Chen, 2019; Darnell & Kristjánsson, 2019; Nucci, 2006). This view is similar to the view of Al-Ghazali who emphasizes the formation of virtues character and personality through education to be practised in daily life while

benefiting individuals and society (Aminatun Habibah, 2019; Attaran, 2015; Chowdhury, 2016; Croitoru & Munteanu, 2014; Jeynes, 2017). Also, virtue ethics emphasizes the concept of the "middle path" or simplicity as a determination of moral action (Abdul Rahman, 1999) that is by balancing extreme actions (Alexander, 2016). Hence, individuals who are trained with virtue ethics need to ensure that their actions are not excessive in any situation including in doing good deeds such as donating and helping others.

3.2 Teleology

In discussing ethics and morality, there are two related teleological theories namely the theory of utilitarianism and egoism. Both theories have agreed that the criteria in determining a good, right, or wrong behaviour are based on the consequences of actions. Thus, the action performed depends on the desired result or outcome regardless of whether the result is good or otherwise (Abdul Rahman, 1999, 2018).

The theory of utilitarianism was founded by Jeremy Bentham (1776) and John Stuart Mill (1803) who had view good behaviour and actions are when the effects of action bring more happiness or pleasure than pain (Abdul Rahman, 2018; Fleischmann et al., 2017). This theory also views morality as an effort to find happiness that is a pleasure and it is not a moral value (Rossilah et al., 2018). Based on that analysis, the basic principles of utilitarianism can be inferred as a theory that emphasizes the effects of an action that brings pleasure over pain (Wringe, 2006) to an individual or a large number of people. However, pleasure is a feeling that is subjective and relative, and difficult to measure (Abdul Rahman, 2018). Therefore, it is difficult to determine moral conduct based on the amount of pleasure of action.

Moreover, another view of teleological theory that needs to be taken into account in understanding the basis of determining moral conduct is the theory of egoism founded by Nietzsche. This theory is being criticized due to the conflicting philosophy of prioritizing welfare and self-interest with the concept of social morality theory and virtue ethics which always takes into account the welfare and interests of others in every action taken (Abdul Rahman, 1999; Rossilah et al., 2018; Rubini, 2019). Moreover, in the moral context, good and bad actions taken for self-interest show an immature level of moral judgment (Appalanaidu, 2018; Garrigan et al., 2018) despite the fact that humans are inherently dependent on their survival needs (Aleinikov & Ndulu, 2022). Therefore, actions based on the principle of egoism are difficult to be accepted as moral conduct because prioritizing self-interest is contrary to the principle of altruism which is one of the principles of morality.

3.3 Deontology

The deontology theory includes the principles of duty and existentialism. The principle of duty was pioneered by Immanuel Kant who stated that the principle of morality is duty while the philosophy of existentialism was introduced and debated by Sartre and several other philosophers (Abdul Rahman, 1999, 2018). Both of these deontological theories focus on the principles of duty and obligation. For Kant, man is responsible for every action, and the criteria for determining good and bad lies in the good intentions that cause him to act on duty (Ferooshani et al., 2012). Besides, an individual must also act per the rules they hold as the

principle of duty and the rules must be mutually agreed upon and can be made as to the universal law (Abdul Rahman, 1999; LePage et al., 2011). This principle made Kant reject any absolute and holy rule that was used as a guide to determine good and bad actions because one should act based on his duty alone, and not on the command of anyone including God (Attaran, 2015). However, actions taken on one's principles are difficult to be accepted as moral conduct if they should be made as to the universal principles for each individual grows up in a different environment.

In addition to Kant's philosophy, the deontological theory also involves existentialism pioneered by Satre. Existentialism has the perspective that man has the freedom to determine the value and purpose of life himself. (Abdul Rahman, 1999). Moreover, a person's identity is determined based on the desired action in his life independently, not determined by the creator (Lobo, 2019; Pankova, 2019). In this context, the existence of existentialism denies the importance of moral rules whether they exist absolutely in religion and belief or are created by authorities for the welfare of society. Besides, "other objects" do exist for themselves, need not be proven and should influence the existence of an individual to act based on the current situation (Wringe, 2006) regardless of his past or future (Pankova, 2019). Thus, moral action is relative and subjective, subject to the current situation faced, and not based on specific rules.

4. Conclusion

Morality and *akhlak* are two intertwined words, particularly when discussing virtuous human being's role in its formation. In the context of Islam, for example, morality is defined as universal, which includes both the relationship with the Creator, that is Allah SWT, and the relationship between humans and nature. (Akilah, 2020; Bafadhol, 2017; Irvan Fuadi et al., 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Nur Najwa Hanani et al., 2020; Roslina, 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015). Morality, in the context of the Western view of moral ethics, only covers human relations without reference to any religious doctrine, instead guided by the rules and laws of authority and societal norms (Akilah, 2020; Kamarul Mutminah et al., 2021; Mohd Saiful Akmal et al., 2021; Suryadarma & Haq, 2015). However, adhering to the principles of *Rukun Negara*, which form the foundation of Malaysia's education system, necessitates a more comprehensive understanding of morals and ethics, particularly in the context of the implementation of ME subject. The principle of belief in God, which is the first principle in the *Rukun Negara*, has also been made one of the universal values in Malaysia's ME's curriculum (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2018). The principle of belief in God, which is the first principle in the *Rukun Negara*, is also made one of the universal values in Malaysia's ME's curriculum, causing moral action to be determined by factors other than Western moral ethical views. These principles and values also represent that every Malaysian should adhere to their respective religions and beliefs as it is the main thrust in the formation of a society with virtuous *akhlak* and morals in accordance with Malaysia's mould as a multi-religious, multi-racial, and multi-faith nation.

5. Implication

In the context of the ME, Islamic moral principles can be integrated with basic principles of

Western moral ethics as well as spiritual values in various religions practiced by Malaysian non-Muslims. The integration of Islamic morality's foundations with the basic principles of Western moral ethics, as well as diverse religious values and beliefs, can help ME achieve its desired goal. This is because virtuous human beings will be formed holistically on a balance of knowledge, attitude, and skills (Nathpukdee et al., 2022) by taking into account various principles and points of view, rather than based on a single understanding, in order to avoid the assumption that the implementation of ME is a process of indoctrination based on certain religious beliefs.

Although Western moral ethics theory does not directly emphasize the psychological aspect of the principles of determining moral behaviour, it is highlighted in the concept of Islamic morality. Therefore, the subject of ME must be complemented with an understanding of the theory of individual moral development to form virtuous people. This situation demonstrates how the Islamic concept of *akhlak* can be used to develop virtuous people through the subject of ME. Hence, ME's role is not limited to producing students with moral knowledge, but also to allowing students to develop comprehensively in all three aspects of psychology known as the moral domain, namely reasoning, emotions, and behaviour.

References

- Ab Halim, T. (2007). Islamic Education teachers' perceptions of the teaching of akhlāq in Malaysian secondary schools. *Journal of Moral Education*, 36(3), 371–386. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240701553347>
- Abbott, A. (2019). Living One's Theories: Moral Consistency in the Life of Émile Durkheim. *Sociological Theory*, 37(1), 1–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275119830444>
- Abd. Rahman, M. A. (1984). Objectives of Moral Education: An Evaluation of the Objectives of the Moral Education Project in Malaysia. *Educators And Education*, 6, 52–60.
- Abdul Rahman, M. A. (1999). *Moral Education: Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*. UPM Publisher.
- Abdul Rahman, M. A. (2018). *Ethical Teaching*. UPM Publisher.
- Agbaria, A. K., & Pinson, H. (2018). Navigating Israeli citizenship: how do Arab-Palestinian teachers civicize their pupils? *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 22(3), 391–409. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2018.1511527>
- Akilah, M. (2020). Islamic Morals According to Ibn Miskawaih. *Journal of Aqidah-Ta*, VI(1), 84–98. journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/aqidah-ta/article/view/15566
- Aleinikov, A., & Ndulu, A. M. (2022). 100 % Success in Motivation : Ideal Education or Just Creative Pedagogy? *Journal of Educational Issues*, 8(2), 466–494. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jei.v8i2.20159>
- Alexander, H. A. (2016). Assessing Virtue: Measurement in Moral Education at Home and Abroad. *Ethics and Education*, 11(3), 310–325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2016.1240385>

- Aminatun Habibah. (2019). Morality in Fiqh Thought. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 17(1), 15–30.
- Appalanaidu, S. R. (2018). Moral Judgement and Student Motivation in Moral Education. *Journal of Research, Policy & Practice of Teachers & Teacher Education*, 8(2), 53–70.
- Asmawati, S. (1999). Islamic Akhlak. In M. A. Abdul Rahman (Ed.), *Moral Education: Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* (p. 76). UPM Publisher.
- Asmawati, S., Fathiyah, M. F., Lukman, A. M., & Abd. Muhsin, A. (2019). Juvenile Delinquent Pupils' Perceptions on the Teaching of Islamic Education: A Preliminary Study. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 8(4), 340–354. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarped/v8-i4/6534>
- Attaran, M. (2015). Moral Education, Habituation, and Divine Assistance in View of Ghazali. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 24(1), 37–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2015.1008083>
- Bafadhhol, I. (2017). Moral Education in Islamic Perspective. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 06(12), 45–61.
- Balakrishnan, V. (2016). Urban Youth Try Drama: A Pedagogy of the Real? *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 2016(March), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2016.1161039>
- Balakrishnan, V. (2017). Making Moral Education Work in a Multicultural Society with Islamic Hegemony. *Journal of Moral Education*, 46(1), 79–87. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2016.1268111>
- Berkowitz, M. W. (2011). What Works in Values Education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 50(3), 153–158. <http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0883035511000553>
- Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier, M. C. (2007). What Works in Character Education. *Journal of Research in Character Education*, 5(1), 29–48.
- Berns, R. M. (2010). *Child, Family, School, Community: Socialization and Support* (8th Editio). Wardsworth.
- Bleazby, J. (2019). Fostering Moral Understanding, Moral Inquiry & Moral Habits Through Philosophy in Schools: A Deweyian Analysis of Australia's Ethical Understanding Curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2019.1650116>
- Bourke, M., Kinsella, W., & Prendeville, P. (2020). The Implementation of an Ethical Education Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Ireland. *Education Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10010014>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1975). Reality and Research in the Ecology of Human Development. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 119(6), 439–469.

- Chang, L. H. (2005). *Basic Concepts in Moral Education* (pp. 1–15). Universiti Malaya.
- Chen, S. (2019). The Stages of Moral Education in Aristotle’s Ethics and Politics Aspects and Stages : Several Clarifications. *Rhizomata*, 7(1), 97–118.
- Cheung, C., & Lee, T. (2010). Improving Social Competence Through Character Education. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 33(3), 255–263. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2009.08.006>
- Chowdhury, M. (2016). Emphasizing Morals, Values, Ethics, and Character Education in Science Education and Science Teaching. *The Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Science*, 4(2), 1–16.
- Cohen, A. (2019). Israel’s Civic Education Wars: A Review of the Literature and Theoretical Implications. *Educational Review*, 71(3), 287–305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1407295>
- Croitoru, I., & Munteanu, H. (2014). The Moral-Religious Education—A Support of Self-Conscience Training. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 2155–2163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.536>
- Cross, W. E. (2017). Ecological Factors in Human Development. *Child Development*, 88(3), 767–769. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12784>
- Darnell, C., & Kristjánsson, K. (2019). Phronesis and the Knowledge-Action Gap in Moral Psychology and Moral Education : A New Synthesis? *Human Development*, 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000496136>
- Fleischmann, A., Lammers, J., Conway, P., & Galinsky, A. D. (2017). Paradoxical Effects of Power on Moral Thinking : Why Power Both Increases and Decreases Deontological and Utilitarian Moral Decisions. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 10(1), 110–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617744022>
- Foroushani, Z. J.-A., Mahini, F., & Yousefy, A. R. (2012). Moral Education as Learner’s Need in 21 Century: Kant Ideas on Education. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 47, 244–249. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.646>
- Gao, D., & Wang, D. (2020). Rethinking “Basic Issues” in Moral Education. *ECNU Review of Education*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531120950322>
- Garrigan, B., Adlam, A. L. R., & Langdon, P. E. (2018). Moral Decision-Making and Moral Development: Toward an Integrative Framework. *Developmental Review*, 49(June), 80–100. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2018.06.001>
- Gibbs, J. C., Basinger, K. S., Grime, R. L., & Snarey, J. R. (2007). Moral Judgment Development Across Cultures: Revisiting Kohlberg’s Universality Claims. *Developmental Review*, 27(4), 443–500. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2007.04.001>
- Gunawan, D., Utanto, Y., & Maretta, Y. A. (2017). An Analysis on Indonesian Teachers’ Reasoning in Resolving Moral Dilemmas. *Man in India*, 97(2), 829–841.

- Halstead, J. M. (2007). Islamic values: A distinctive framework for moral education? *Journal of Moral Education*, 36(3), 283–296. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240701643056>
- Halstead, J. M. (2011). Is Moral Education Working? Extracts From the Diary of a Twenty-First Century Moral Educator. *Journal of Moral Education*, 40(3), 339–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2011.596335>
- Haydon, G. (1992). How To Think About Moral Education? John Wilson Revisited. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 26(1), 127–131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9752.1992.tb00273.x>
- Haydon, G. (2004). Values Education: Sustaining the Ethical Environment. *Journal of Moral Education*, 33(2), 115–129. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724042000215186>
- Irvan Fuadi, S., Antika, R., & Rofiudin, N. (2020). The Values of Moral Education in the Family: A QS Study. al-Taghabun verses 14-15. MATAN: *Journal of Islam and Muslim Society*, 2(1), 74–86.
- Jang, S. Bin. (2021). Discursive Construction of Social Selfhood: An Analysis of North Korean Elementary Moral Education Textbooks. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 0(0), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2021.1896991>
- Jeynes, W. H. (2017). A Meta-Analysis on the Relationship Between Character Education and Student Achievement and Behavioral Outcomes. *Education and Urban Society*, 00(0), 1–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124517747681>
- Kamarudin, S., & Yang Marya, A. K. (2016). Elements of Understanding between Religions in the Islamic and Moral Education Curriculum. *Islamiyyat*, 38(2), 111–120. <https://doi.org/10.17576/islamiyyat-2016-3802-03>
- Kamarul Mutminah, Y., Zuliza, M. K., & Zainuddin, L. (2021). Improvement of Moral Education in Islamic Education Towards Creating Trustworthy Entrepreneurs. *International Journal of Islamic Economics, Bussiness and Entrepreneurship*, 1(2), 34–47.
- Lapsley, D., & Woodbury, R. (2016). Moral-Character Development for Teacher Education. *Action in Teacher Education*, 38(3), 194–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2016.1194785>
- LePage, P., Akar, H., Temli, Y., Şen, D., Hasser, N., & Ivins, I. (2011). Comparing Teachers' Views on Morality and Moral Education, a Comparative Study in Turkey and The United States. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(2), 366–375. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.09.005>
- Lobo, L. (2019). Existentialism, Ontology, and Mysticism in Clarice Lispector's A Descoberta Do Mundo. *Journal of Lusophone Studies*, 4(2), 42–60. <https://doi.org/10.21471/jls.v4i2.335>
- Lunn Brownlee, J., Scholes, L., Walker, S., & Johansson, E. (2016). Critical Values Education in the Early Years: Alignment of Teachers' Personal Epistemologies and Practices for Active

Citizenship. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 59, 261–273.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.06.009>

Maizura, Y. (2015). *Understanding Moral Behavior Practices Among Form Four Malay Students in Putrajaya, Malaysia*. Doctor of Philosophy Thesis. Unpublished Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Maizura, Y., Nur Surayyah Madhubala, A., Samsilah, R., Nor Wahiza, A. W., & Norzihani, S. (2021). Values Related to Moral Behavioral Practice in Malay Students Context. *Asian Social Science*, 17(11), 170. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v17n11p170>

McPhail, P., Ungood-Thomas, J., & Chapman, H. (1972). *Moral Education in The Secondary School*. Longman Group Limited.

Ministry of Education. (2015). *Curriculum Standard Document and Assessment of Moral Education*. Curriculum Development Division.

Ministry of Education. (2016). *Curriculum Standard Document and Assessment of Moral Education Form 2*. Curriculum Development Division.

Ministry of Education. (2018). *Curriculum Standard Document and Assessment of Moral Education Form 4 and 5*. Curriculum Development Division.

Mohamad Khairi, O., Asmawati, S., & Samsilah, R. (2015). Appreciation of Pure Values Among Today's High School Students. *Journal of Social Development*, 18(Jun), 1–20.

Mohd Saiful Akmal, K., Ahmad Sunawari, L., & Faudzinain, B. (2021). The Concept of Moral Education and its Special Characteristics in Islam. *BITARA International Journal of Civilizational Studies and Human Sciences*, 4(1), 22–32.

Muhammad Alqadri, B., Andi, M., & Rosdiana. (2019). Relevance With Formal Education Learning. *PALAPA: Journal of Islamic Studies and Education*, 7(2), 202–233.

Nathpukdee, R., Siritwathanathakun, N., Kietjarungphan, B., Chachikul, P., Uthaphan, P., Promsri, P., & Kongsumruay, K. (2022). The Development of the Integrated Curriculum of the Buddhist Morals for Strengthening Social Adaptation of Vulnerable Youth. *Journal of Educational Issues*, 8(1), 546. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jei.v8i1.19839>

Noor Zulina, S. D. A. (2015). *Acceptance of Moral Values Among Moral Education Students in a Secondary School in Sabah*. Master of Science Thesis. Unpublished. Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Noor Zulina, S. D. A., & Maizura, Y. (2021). ‘Noble character’ as a Focus in Moral Education in Malaysia. In *Social Studies Education in South and South East Asian Contexts* (pp. 174–187). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003057598-16>

Norazly, N., Muhammad, D., & Uzzairah Nabila, A. T. (2021). Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Pendidikan Awal Kanak-kanak: Satu Sorotan. *Selangor Humaniora Review*, 4(1), 188–199.

Nucci, L. (2006). Education For Moral Development. In M. Killen & J. G. Smetana (Eds.),

Handbook of Moral Development. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Nur Najwa Hanani, A. R., Akmaliza, A., Mohammad Naqib, H., & Aimi Wafa, A. (2020). Emotional and Moral Relations in the Family of New Siblings After Embracing Islam. *International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies*, 6(03–2), 55–66.

Nur Surayyah Madhubala, A. (2009). Human Capital as a Normative Account of Education for Morality and Citizenship. In A. R. Fadzilah, P. Faradillah, & E. Habibah (Eds.), *Teacher's Learning Curriculum Innovations and Knowledge Applications* (pp. 63–72). Universiti Putra Malaysia Press.

Nurul Asiah Fasehah, M., & Noornajihan, J. (2021). Teacher Character Across Levels of Study: Application of the 5 M Concept. *Sains Humanika*, 13(2), 45–53.

Orchard, J. (2020). Moral Education and the Challenge of Pre-Service Professional Formation for Teachers. *Journal of Moral Education*, 00(00), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2020.1763932>

Pandya, S. P. (2017). Spirituality and Values Education in Elementary School: Understanding Views of Teachers. *Children and Schools*, 39(1), 33–41. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdw042>

Pankova, E. S. (2019). The Problem of the Other”: Where is the Real I”? *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology*, 9(1), 7472–7475. <https://doi.org/10.35940/ijeat.A3119.109119>

Purzycki, B. G., Pisor, A. C., Apicella, C., Atkinson, Q., Cohen, E., Henrich, J., McElreath, R., McNamara, R. A., Norenzayan, A., Willard, A. K., & Xygalatas, D. (2018). The Cognitive and Cultural Foundations of Moral Behavior. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 39(5), 490–501. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2018.04.004>

Rissanen, I., Kuusisto, E., Hanhimäki, E., & Tirri, K. (2018). The Implications of Teachers' Implicit Theories for Moral Education: A Case Study from Finland. *Journal of Moral Education*, 47(1), 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2017.1374244>

Roslina. (2021). The Application of Moral Beliefs Towards the Formation of Student Character in MTs State 4 West Aceh. *Al-Ilmu: Journal of Religion and Social Sciences*, 6(1), 119–138. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1751-8113/44/8/085201>

Rossilah, J., Jihad, M., & Ramu, M. (2018). Antecedents of Unethical Behaviour Intention: Empirical Study in Public Universities in Malaysian Context. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 17(1), 95–110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-018-9312-7>

Rubini. (2019). Moral Education in Islamic Perspective. *Journal of Islamic Communication and Education*, 8(1), 225–271.

Sherblom, S. A., Marshall, J. C., & Sherblom, J. C. (2006). The Relationship Between School Climate and Math and Reading Achievement. *Journal of Research in Character Education*, 4(1&2), 19–31.

Splitter, L. (2011). Identity, Citizenship and Moral Education. *Educational Philosophy and*

Theory, 43(5), 484–505. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2009.00626.x>

Suryadarma, Y., & Haq, A. H. (2015). Pendidikan Akhlak Menurut Imam Al-Ghazali. *At-Ta'dib*, 10(2), 362–381.

Syahruan Azan, N., & Zuraini, J. (2017). The Role of the Moral Education Program of the Sultan Idris University of Education in Producing Trained Teachers of Moral Education. In Y. Norazlan Hadi, N. Syahruan Azan, J. Zuraini, & M. N. Noor Banu (Eds.), *Moral Education Literacy: A Contributory Essay for Prof. Dr. Chang Lee Hoon* (pp. 113–129). UPSI Publisher.

Thornberg, R., & Oğuz, E. (2016). Moral and Citizenship Educational Goals in Values Education: A Cross-Cultural Study of Swedish and Turkish Student Teachers' Preferences. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 55, 110–121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.01.002>

Umayah, O. (2017). Implementation of Affective Education in the Formation of Noble Morals. *Elementary: Scientific Journal of Elementary Education*, 3(2), 158–172.

Wilson, J. (1996). First Steps in Moral Education. *Journal of Moral Education*, 25(1), 85–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724960250109>

Wringe, C. (2006). *Moral Education: Beyond the Teaching of Right and Wrong*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>

Yao, Z., & Enright, R. (2018). The Role of Consequences of Moral Action in Maximizing Moral Elevation. *Journal of Moral Education*, 47(4), 451–465. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2018.1428540>

Yaqin, A. (2020). *Moral Education Based on Cognitive Theory*. PT Rajagrafindo Persada. <https://books.google.com.my/books?id=9EwaEAAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Zaharah, H. (2005). Educating a Noble Generation: Focus on the Role of Islamic Education Teachers. *Journal of Educational Problems 2005, Universiti Malaya, November*, 79–95.

Copyright Disclaimer

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).