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Islamic Character Education: A Conceptual Linguistic Approach to Ittibāʿ and Mulḥaq Based on Surah At-Ṭūr 21

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Abstract
Islamic character education holds a vital role in shaping a morally upright generation. This study explores the values of character education in Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21 through a conceptual linguistic approach, particularly focusing on the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* in Arabic morphology (*ʿilm al-ṣarf*). The objective of this research is to analyze how these concepts can be applied in Islamic education to cultivate students' character. This study employs a qualitative library research method, analyzing Qurʾanic texts and supporting literature. The findings reveal that the values of character education in Surah At-Ṭūr 21 can be interpreted through linguistic analysis, serving as a framework for education grounded in exemplarity and the transmission of Islamic values. The discussion emphasizes the relevance of *ittibāʿ* in shaping role models and *mulḥaq* in continuing and enriching educational principles. The conclusion underscores that a linguistic approach to this verse offers a more applicable perspective for Islamic character education. This study contributes to the development of a Qurʾan-based curriculum that is both effective and applicable.

Keywords: Islamic character education; Surah At-Ṭūr 21; *ittibāʿ*; *mulḥaq*; linguistic analysis

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping individual character and personality, especially within the context of Islamic education, which not only emphasizes intellectual development but also moral, spiritual, and social dimensions (Aini et al., 2024). Islamic character education aims to cultivate individuals with noble character in accordance with the teachings of the Qurʾan and Sunnah (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022; Yunita & Mujib, 2021). Achieving this goal requires a comprehensive approach that ensures Islamic values are deeply rooted within learners. One viable approach is through linguistic studies of Qurʾanic concepts related to character formation (Nasir, 2022).

One verse that encompasses the values of Islamic character education is Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21. This verse underscores the strong connection between one's faith and that of their descendants, as well as the importance of exemplarity in transmitting faith

values to the next generation. In this verse, the key term *wa-ittaba ʿat ʾhum* (وَٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ, *ittibāʿ*) and the concept of *mulḥaq* in Arabic morphology serve as the foundation for understanding how character education can be continuously applied in everyday life. By comprehending these linguistic concepts, Islamic education can more systematically internalize Islamic values in learners.

In linguistic terms, *ittibāʿ* means to follow or emulate. Within the educational context, this concept refers to learning based on role modeling, in which students learn from exemplary figures such as parents, teachers, or religious scholars. Such exemplarity becomes a key element in building strong Islamic character. Meanwhile, in Arabic morphology, *mulḥaq* refers to additions or inclusions within linguistic structures, which in the context of education can be interpreted as the process of regenerating Islamic values that continue to evolve in response to contemporary challenges.

Character education based on the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* serves to maintain the continuity of Islamic values within social life. Preceding generations with strong Islamic character are expected to become role models for future generations, thus ensuring the transmission of moral and spiritual values. In morphological studies, this concept can be understood as the continuity of knowledge passed down from one generation to another, just as Islamic knowledge is transmitted through a clear and structured chain of scholarly authority (*sanad*).

Furthermore, a linguistic approach to Islamic character education can offer a deeper understanding of Islamic concepts as expressed in the Qurʾan. Through linguistic analysis, the meaning of a verse can be more systematically explained, thereby making its application in education more effective. This approach also broadens understanding of how the Qurʾan teaches character education and how Arabic linguistic concepts can support the implementation of these values in learning environments.

This study provides an in-depth linguistic analysis of Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21 to identify how the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* can serve as the foundation for Islamic character education. This analysis aims not only to understand these concepts theoretically, but also to explore their practical applications in educational settings such as schools, madrasas, and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). Thus, this research contributes to the development of an Islamic education curriculum grounded in the Qurʾan and Sunnah.

By understanding the role of linguistic approaches in Islamic character education, it is hoped that the findings of this study will offer new insights into building a more effective and applicable educational system. This study may also serve as a reference for educators in applying more contextual teaching methods based on authentic Islamic values. Therefore, this research focuses on a conceptual analysis of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* within the framework of Islamic character education to reinforce the role of education in nurturing a morally upright Muslim generation.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method using a library research approach to analyze the values of character education in Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21 through a linguistic perspective, particularly focusing on the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* in Arabic morphology (*ʿilm al-ṣarf*). This approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to delve deeply into religious texts and relevant literature. The primary data in this study consists of the Qurʾanic text, specifically Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21, while secondary data are

drawn from various supporting sources such as Qur'anic commentaries (*tafsīr*), Arabic linguistic texts, and journal articles discussing Islamic character education and linguistic analysis.

The data were analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method, which included the following stages: conceptual identification, linguistic examination, contextual interpretation, and synthesis of findings to develop a comprehensive understanding of how the concepts of *ittibā'* and *mulḥaq* can be applied in Islamic character education.

To support the analysis, this study refers to several recent sources, including a study by Mumtazul Fikri (2023) which discusses linguistic analysis in Qur'anic exegesis and Islamic pedagogy, and research by Lailatul Masruro & Nasiruddin (2023) that examines semantic aspects of the Qur'an, specifically Surah al-Kahf verse 19 (Ulūm al-Qurʾān: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qurʾan dan Tafsir) (Husna, 2023; Nasiruddin, 2023). In addition, the work of Muhammad Ridha & Muhammad Alfian (2022) on linguistic approaches in classical Islamic legal studies (Jurnal Studi Islam) is also used to understand the connection between linguistics and Islamic education (Labaso' & Hestiana, 2023). With this method, the research aims to contribute significantly to the understanding and application of Qur'anic linguistic concepts in more effective and applicable Islamic character education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Concepts of *Ittibā'* and *Mulḥaq* in Islamic Character Education

Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21 emphasizes the importance of the connection between believers and their offspring, as well as the role of exemplarity in transmitting faith-based values. The key term in this verse is *wa-ittaba ʿat ʾhum* (وَٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ), derived from the root *taba ʿa* (تَبِعَ), meaning "to follow" or "to emulate." In this context, *ittibā'* refers to the act of following the path or example set by righteous predecessors. This concept highlights the critical role of exemplarity in Islamic character education, where the younger generation is expected to emulate the virtuous conduct demonstrated by previous generations (Chasanah, 2024).

In Islamic character education, *ittibā'* involves emulating the behavior and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions. According to Ibn Kathīr, *ittibā'* means adhering to religious law (*sharīʿah*) in one's words, actions, and conditions. The application of *ittibā'* in education can be realized by instilling noble moral values through exemplary conduct exhibited by educators and parents. This aligns with research that emphasizes the significance of modeling behavior in shaping students' character, enabling them to internalize Islamic values in their daily lives (Hidayanti, 2023).

In Arabic morphology (*ʿilm al-ṣarf*), *mulḥaq* refers to words that follow certain morphological patterns despite not conforming completely to the original root structures. This concept represents an inclusion or attachment within a linguistic framework. In the context of character education, *mulḥaq* can be interpreted as a process of value regeneration and adaptation, where Islamic values are continuously renewed and contextualized in response to changing times. This allows these values to remain relevant and applicable in modern contexts without losing their essential Islamic foundation (Masithoh & Ghifari, 2023).

Implementation and Challenges in Contemporary Education

The application of the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* in Islamic character education can be carried out through several strategic efforts. Educators must serve as role models by exhibiting behavior that aligns with Islamic teachings. In addition, the educational curriculum must be designed to deliver Islamic values in ways that are both relevant and engaging for younger generations. Teaching methods must also be adaptive, allowing for integration with technological and informational developments without compromising the core essence of Islamic values (Deden Kurnia Adam et al., 2024).

In contemporary educational contexts, the implementation of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* becomes increasingly critical as globalization and technological advancement demand adaptive teaching methods that still uphold foundational principles. Research has shown that approaches combining role modeling with contextual adaptation of values can enhance the effectiveness of character education. As a result, Islamic education must not only focus on the transmission of knowledge but also on the continuous development of moral character (Syofrianisda, 2022).

Nevertheless, implementing the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* is not without its challenges. A major concern is ensuring that the adaptation of Islamic values remains faithful to the core tenets of the religion. Moreover, educators must continuously improve their competence to serve as authentic role models and to deliver lessons in ways that are meaningful to students. Without proper methods, there is a risk of value distortion that could undermine the integrity of Islamic teachings (Chasanah, 2024).

Several Islamic schools have successfully integrated the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* into their curricula, for example by incorporating technology in instruction while maintaining a strong emphasis on noble character. These initiatives demonstrate that, with the right approach, Islamic values can be effectively taught in modern educational environments (Robaeah et al., 2023; Safwannur et al., 2023; Supriatna et al., 2023). This success affirms that Islamic education must continue to evolve in step with the times while preserving the essence of its noble teachings (Chasanah, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the concepts of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* in Surah At-Ṭūr verse 21, it can be concluded that Islamic character education emphasizes the importance of exemplarity in shaping a generation that is both faithful and morally upright. *Ittibāʿ* teaches that students should emulate the virtuous values inherited from their predecessors, while *mulḥaq* suggests that character education must adapt to changing times without compromising the core principles of Islamic teachings. By integrating both concepts, Islamic education can serve as an effective means of preserving moral and spiritual continuity across generations.

In the context of modern education, the implementation of *ittibāʿ* and *mulḥaq* faces challenges such as globalization and technological advancement, which demand innovative teaching approaches. Educators, therefore, must be able to balance the preservation of Islamic values with adaptations to contemporary developments. The implementation of a curriculum based on role modeling and contextual teaching methods becomes essential in establishing an effective and sustainable Islamic character education system. Thus, Islamic education remains relevant in shaping a

society rooted in noble character in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

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