THE INFLUENCE OF MORAL MESSAGES IN THE QURAN ON THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF MUSLIMS

e-ISSN: 2809-3712

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Abstract

The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, contains various moral messages aimed at directing the individual and social behavior of humanity. This study aims to explore the influence of moral messages in the Qur'an on social behavior in the context of contemporary Muslim society. Through a literature approach, the study identifies and analyzes Qur'anic moral values and their application in social life. The results show that moral values such as justice, patience, kindness, and cooperation taught in the Qur'an have great potential in shaping positive social behavior in Muslim societies. Social practices such as zakat and social care are tangible applications of these values, showing a significant influence on social solidarity and harmony. However, challenges such as divergent interpretations, cultural influences and socio-economic conditions affect the way these values are applied in real life. The findings call for a more integrative and contextual approach to understanding and applying the Qur'ānic moral messages in social practice.

Keywords: Quranic Moral Messages, Muslim Social Behavior.

Introduction

In this fast-paced era of globalization, society is faced with a variety of complex social challenges, ranging from moral degradation, inter-group conflicts, to identity crises. These challenges often test the resilience of moral and social values that form the basis of individual and community character building. Religion, as one of the main pillars in the formation of social values and norms, has a significant role in shaping the behavior and social attitudes of its adherents.

Understanding the moral messages in the Quran has a deep significance for the social behavior of Muslims because the Quran not only guides the spiritual aspects of individuals but also establishes principles that govern fair and ethical social interactions (Tubagus et al., 2023). The moral messages contained therein resonate with universal values such as justice, compassion, tolerance and peace, all of which play a key role in shaping a cooperative and harmonious society (Maemonah et al., 2023). In a broader scope, these messages have the potential to influence Muslims' attitudes and actions in various aspects of life, whether in the

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family environment, the workplace, or in their interactions with the wider society, ultimately contributing to positive social and cultural development (Saada, 2023).

Moreover, the relevance of the Quran's moral messages to Muslims' social behavior is inseparable from the need to address contemporary challenges faced by the global community. With increasing pluralism and intercultural interactions, it is important for Muslims to navigate the complexities of these social relationships based on solid moral guidance (Faris, 2023). A deep understanding of the moral messages in the Quran helps in affirming a Muslim identity that respects diversity and promotes peaceful coexistence. The study of these messages is therefore not only important for theological understanding, but also as a practical means to ensure that Muslims can implement Islamic principles in a fast-changing world, while ensuring that they contribute positively to the larger social dynamics. In this context, Islam, with the Quran as its source of teachings, offers religious moral messages that are rich in humanist and social values (Rofiq et al., 2024).

The influence of moral messages in the Quran on the social behavior of Muslims is an interesting and relevant topic to study, considering that Islam is a religion followed by more than a quarter of the world's population (Bakhshizadeh, 2023). The teachings in the Quran are not only related to spiritual aspects and individual worship, but also have a broad social dimension, including ethics, justice, brotherhood, tolerance, and social care. It is hoped that by understanding and implementing these moral messages, Muslims can make a positive contribution to the establishment of a just, peaceful and harmonious society (Murjazin et al., 2023).

However, in practice, there are various perceptions and interpretations of how the moral messages in the Quran are applied in social life (Hariana et al., 2023). This raises questions about the extent to which these messages influence Muslims' social behavior in their real lives. Do the moral messages in the Quran successfully permeate and guide the behavior of its people in daily social interactions? Or, are there other factors at play in shaping Muslims' social behavior that may not always be in line with the teachings of the Quran?

Given the importance of understanding the relationship between religious teachings and social behavior in creating a harmonious society, this study aims to explore the influence of moral messages in the Quran on the social behavior of Muslims. It is hoped that through this research, useful insights and recommendations can be provided to strengthen the foundation of social morality in the Muslim community and society at large.

Research Methods

The research method carried out by researchers uses literature review. The literature research method is an important approach in academia to investigate and analyze certain topics by relying on existing written sources (Sio et al., 2024). In this context, "literature" can refer to various types of texts, such as books, scientific journals, conference papers, theses, and other published sources relevant to the research topic (Nguyen et al., 2024). The purpose of the literature research method is to collect, identify, organize, and analyze published information to establish a solid theoretical context for the research being conducted and to identify gaps in the existing literature (Kim et al., 2024).

Literature review research is applied through a series of methodical steps starting from topic selection, identification of relevant sources, collection and evaluation of literature, and synthesized analysis of the findings (Nesset et al., 2024). The effectiveness of this method relies heavily on the researcher's ability to systematically critique the literature and compile a structured summary of the resulting literature. By conducting a literature review, researchers can achieve a deeper understanding of the field of study and set the foundation for further research (Gökçearslan et al., 2024).

Results and Discussion Theory of Social Behavior

In social psychology, the main theories explaining social behavior often focus on how an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are affected by the presence of others, either actual or imagined. One of the core theories is the Cognitive Dissonance Theory, developed by Leon Festinger in 1957. This theory states that there is a natural drive in individuals to maintain consistency between their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Fozaie, 2023). When dissonance, or misalignment, occurs, people tend to attempt to reduce or eliminate the contrast, often by changing their attitudes or behaviors to match the actions that have been taken. This can play an important role in many aspects of social behavior, including decision making, attitude change, and behavior justification (Aslan, 2019).

Along the same lines but from a different angle, Symbolic Interaction Theory, which is gaining attention in sociology, is a framework that emphasizes the formation of self and society through the process of social interaction. This theory, influenced by the work of George Herbert Mead, focuses on the ways symbols and language are used to create shared meaning and how individuals communicate themselves and make sense of the world through the process of interpreting those symbols (Islam & Al-Alwani, 2023). Symbolic Interaction Theory reveals that individual identities, social norms, and societal institutions are the result of ongoing social interaction and negotiation of meaning. Both in one-to-one interactions and in broader social groups, individuals constantly adjust their behavior based on explicit and implicit messages gained from these interactions (Melki & Saidi, 2023).

Advancing theories in social psychology and sociology offer different ways to understand human social behavior, which is complex and multifaceted. For example, Social Categorization Theory explains how individuals classify themselves and others into categories such as ethnic group, gender, and political affiliation, which then influence how they see and interact with the world. This theory helps in understanding the dynamics of discrimination and prejudice and how group identity influences social beliefs and behaviors (Asyari et al., 2024).

On the other hand, Social Exchange Theory views social interactions as a series of transactions in which individuals try to maximize benefits and minimize costs. Based on economic principles and rational thinking, this theory presents a more calculative analysis of social behavior, where social decisions and relationships are seen as the result of subjective profit and loss calculations (Shamim et al., 2024).

Thus, understanding social behavior through the lens of social psychology and sociology theories provides us with tools to unravel the complexity of how humans think, feel and act in social contexts. Each theory provides unique perspectives that often complement one another

and provide guidance for further research within the field. By applying these theoretical frameworks to understand social behavior, we can better appreciate how individual behaviors are influenced by the presence, actions, and expectations of others, as well as how social structures and dynamics are created and continuously change through complex social processes.

The Influence of Religion in Social Behavior Theory

Within the framework of social behavior theory, religion can be viewed as a system of beliefs and values that shape social norms and individual and group behavior. Particularly in Islam, religious doctrines and strictly regulated worship practices are often instrumental in shaping the identity and social behavior of its adherents (Bakhshizadeh, 2023). In this context, religion offers a moral and ethical framework that guides both interpersonal interactions and behavior within the wider community. For example, the concept of ummah in Islam not only strengthens the bonds between individuals who share the same faith, but also promotes the principles of modesty, honesty and equality among them. Adherence to these religious rules and respect for social norms dictated by religious beliefs help to establish consistent and coherent patterns of behavior within the Muslim community (Chetioui et al., 2023).

Furthermore, Islamic principles guiding social behavior are not only embedded in everyday interactions but also reflect the dynamics of power and influence within social groups. For example, the concept of amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (advocating good and preventing evil) is a form of social behavior driven by Islamic values and can be seen as a form of social interaction aimed at reinforcing norms and values in Islamic societies (Fozaie, 2023). Through the lens of social behavior theory, such practices can be interpreted as ways in which individuals and groups use religion to negotiate identity, influence group norms, and maintain social cohesion, all of which continue to shape and be shaped by broader social structures (Yudiyanto et al., 2023). Therefore, in understanding the social behavior of Muslims, it is crucial to consider how Islamic principles interact with social, economic, and political factors in a given context.

Furthermore, in understanding social behavior within an Islamic framework, it is important to look at how Islamic teachings are applied and interpreted in diverse sociohistorical contexts. This approach allows attention to how factors such as colonial history, contemporary political dynamics and globalization affect the way Islamic practices and values are lived by its adherents (Borham et al., 2023). For example, in some societies, the emphasis on social justice principles in Islam may inspire social and political action, while in others, the emphasis may be more on spirituality and personal worship. These two aspects, along with many others, are part of a broad spectrum of interpretations and applications of Islam in social life. Social behavior theory helps in analyzing how religion, in this case Islam, is not just a passively accepted collection of doctrines, but as something that is actively interpreted, negotiated, and integrated into everyday life, often in ways that touch on critical issues such as identity, power, and social change (Sule & Musa, 2023); (Kambali et al., 2023).

Thus, viewing Islam through the framework of social behavior theory offers valuable insights into how religion functions not only as an abstract belief system, but as a dynamic force that shapes and is shaped by social context. By recognizing the complexity of the interaction between Islam and various social structures and dynamics, we can better understand the variations in the practice and interpretation of Islam around the world, as well as the important

role that religion plays in responding to and giving meaning to social, economic, and political challenges. This approach paves the way for a more inclusive and empathetic dialogue on the role of religion in modern life, while recognizing religion as an important source of identity, inspiration, and moral guidance for many individuals and communities.

Quran Text Study

The Quran, as the holy book of Muslims, provides a broad foundation for the understanding of moral and ethical values that guide social behavior in Islam (Maemonah et al., 2023). The moral messages contained therein emphasize the importance of justice, hospitality, honesty and solidarity among others. For example, verses calling for justice (Q.S. An-Nisa' [4]:58), maintaining ties of kinship (Q.S. Al-Isra' [17]:26-27), and encouraging good and preventing evil (Q.S. Ali 'Imran [3]:104) all provide a framework for how individuals should interact with each other in society. Through these messages, the Quran encourages the formation of harmonious communities where each individual plays an active role in promoting the general welfare (Saada, 2023).

In the context of modern social interactions, the moral messages in the Quran remain relevant as a guide for dealing with contemporary issues. For example, the Quranic principle of social justice can be interpreted as an encouragement to combat injustice and inequality in society, while the teaching on solidarity inspires social action and support for the weak and oppressed (Faris, 2023). In the context of the plurality of modern societies, the Quranic message of tolerance and peaceful coexistence with those of different faiths (Q.S. Al-Mumtahanah [60]:8) offers an ethical framework for promoting coexistence and valuing diversity (Rofiq et al., 2024). Thus, the moral messages in the Quran not only shaped social behavior in the historical context in which the revelation was revealed, but also provide ongoing guidance for understanding and navigating the challenges of contemporary society.

The linkage between Quranic moral messages and social behavior is not static; it is a fluid process that continuously adapts to the social context and needs of humanity throughout time. The application of the moral principles in the Quran leads Muslims to critically assess and respond to changing social dynamics (Hefner, 2023). This creates a society that not only preserves core Islamic values but is also responsive to new developments and challenges. In this sense, the moral guidance conveyed by the Quran is not just rigid rules, but a flexible framework that guides social behavior and interactions with the aim of creating peace, justice, and harmony in diversity (Yunita et al., 2023).

In conclusion, the moral messages in the Quran have deep relevance to social behavior in every context of time, providing guidance for Muslims to interact in society in an ethical and meaningful way. Through the interpretation and application of these values in daily life, Muslims can contribute to the building of a more just and harmonious society, enlivening the concepts of togetherness, tolerance and solidarity. Therefore, understanding and applying Quranic values in a social context proves that Islamic teachings remain relevant and able to face the challenges and dynamics of modern life, while maintaining its moral and spiritual integrity.

Moral Messages in the Quran Social Justice

In Islam, social justice is one of the basic principles that guide social behavior and interaction. Allah SWT says in the Qur'an, "Verily Allah enjoins you to give the trust to those who are entitled to it, and when you set a law among men, set it justly. Indeed, Allah gives you the best teaching. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (Q.S. An-Nisa' [4]:58). This verse explicitly emphasizes the importance of giving rights to those entitled to receive them and making decisions fairly, as a reflection of the importance of justice in all aspects of life. In addition, the verse, "O you who believe, be ye upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah's sake even against yourselves, or parents and relatives. If he is rich or poor, Allah has more right over both. So do not follow your lusts to deviate from justice" (Chetioui et al., 2023). If you distort [words] or refuse to testify, then surely Allah is Exacting in what you do." (Q.S. An-Nisa' [4]:135), emphasizes the principle of fairness regardless of one's social or economic status, implying that the deepest social justice is when the rights of every individual, rich or poor, are protected and respected (Fozaie, 2023).

The application of these verses in the daily lives of Muslims underscores the importance of integrating social justice in every aspect of life, both at the individual and community levels (Guna & Yuwantiningrum, 2024). In the individual context, Muslims are reminded to always be fair and objective, even if it means going against their own self-interest (Dalimunthe & Siregar, 2023). Moreover, from a community perspective, Muslims are encouraged to actively participate in social and justice endeavors, including providing support to the weak, orphans, as well as ensuring that human rights are respected and protected. Through practices such as zakat, almsgiving and other social activities, Muslims can put social justice values into action, affirming their role as caring members of society and contributing to creating a more just and harmonious environment for all (Murjazin et al., 2023).

Empathy and Social Care

The Qur'an teaches the value of empathy and responsibility towards others through a number of verses that urge Muslims to recognize and respond to the suffering and needs of others. For example, in Surah Al-Ma'un, verses 1-3, Allah says, "Do you know [those] who deny the religion? These are those who abuse orphans and do not recommend feeding the poor." (Q.S. Al-Ma'un [107]:1-3). This verse criticizes the indifferent attitude towards orphans and the poor, emphasizing the importance of being proactive in alleviating the burden of those less fortunate (Ibrahim & Riyadi, 2023). The tendency to care and empathize with the conditions of others is not just recommended but a measure of one's faith. Empathy in Islam is also emphasized in the practice of giving from what is loved, as in the verse, "You will never reach the (perfect) good until you spend some of what you love." (Q.S. Ali 'Imran [3]:92). This teaches Muslims to have a high sense of social responsibility, by not only giving aid, but also giving something of value to oneself, reflecting a true level of empathy (Castrawijaya, 2023).

The responsibility to care for others is also seen in the concept of "ummah," which explains that Muslims are a community of brothers and sisters. The Qur'an commands, "And let there be among you a group of people who call to the good, enjoin the ma'ruf and forbid the evil; they are the fortunate ones." (Q.S. Ali 'Imran [3]:104) (Pradana & Uthman, 2023). Encouraging the good (ma'ruf) and preventing the bad (munkar) is not only an individual responsibility but involves being actively involved in communal welfare. This principle triggers

a sense of responsibility not only for oneself but also for the well-being of fellow community members. Thus, the Qur'anic teachings on empathy and social responsibility instill in the hearts of Muslims the importance of fostering human relationships based on understanding, concern and concrete action to support and uplift one another in good and bad times (Saada, 2023); (Faris, 2023).

Peace and Tolerance

The Qur'an contains many verses that encourage peace and tolerance, both in relationships between individuals and between groups. One of the basic principles upheld in Islam is the concept of peace as the foundation of human relations (Saputra et al., 2023). Allah SWT says in the Qur'an, "O mankind, indeed We created you from a man and a woman and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious. Verily, Allah knows best." (Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]:13). This verse teaches that ethnic and cultural differences are riches meant to strengthen human relationships through mutual recognition and respect. Through this perspective, Islam encourages tolerance and respect for diversity as a medium to achieve deeper understanding and social harmony (Suryadi & Al-Shreifeen, 2024).

In addition, tolerance and mutual respect between beliefs are also underlined in Qur'anic verses that recognize the plurality of religions and beliefs. Allah SWT asserts, "There is no compulsion to (enter) the religion (Islam); surely the right way is clear from the wrong way (Mainiyo, 2023). Whoever disbelieves in Thaghut and believes in Allah, then indeed he has taken hold of a very strong rope that will not break. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing." (Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]:256). This verse teaches that faith is a matter of conscience and should not be coerced, emphasizing the importance of maintaining peaceful relations and respecting religious freedom (Yudiyanto et al., 2023). Islam calls on its followers to interact with others fairly and with good ethics and not to restrain others from following their beliefs. Thus, Islamic teachings create the basis for deep peace and tolerance between diverse individuals and groups in Society (Komalasari & Yakubu, 2023).

Respect for Individual Rights

The Qur'an explicitly upholds human rights and individual honor through various verses that regulate fair treatment and protection of everyone's basic rights. One of the main principles taught is the importance of justice, which is the foundation for the protection of human rights (Kurniawan et al., 2023). Allah SWT says, "Verily Allah enjoins you to deliver the trust to those who are entitled to it, and when you judge among men, that you judge justly. Indeed, Allah gives you the best teaching. Verily, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." (Q.S. An-Nisa [4]:58). This verse emphasizes the need to act justly and ensure the protection of the rights and honor of every individual, reflecting how important these aspects are in the Islamic view. Justice and fulfillment of trust are considered essential aspects of protecting human rights, including the right to life, liberty, and personal security (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023).

Furthermore, the Qur'an condemns all forms of insult, slander, and unfair treatment that can degrade the honor of an individual. Allah SWT says in addressing hostility and insults, "And say to My servants let them speak better (and true) words. Verily the devil corrupts

between them. Indeed, the shaitan is a real enemy to man." (Q.S. Al-Isra [17]:53). This verse shows the importance of positive communication and warns about the dangers of slander and hostility that can damage social relationships and dehumanize a person (Rofiq et al., 2024). By promoting good communication and avoiding speech or actions that can harm others, Islam teaches the importance of respecting the honor and dignity of each individual as part of the protection of human rights. Thus, the Qur'an provides a framework of values that prioritize justice, dignity, and human honor, as the main foundation in establishing harmonious and fair social relations (Alfarisi & Darmiyanti, 2023).

The Quran's Influence on Muslims' Social Behavior

The teachings in the Qur'an theoretically provide a foundation for ideal social behavior within Muslim societies, focusing on values such as justice, patience, kindness and solidarity. These concepts are meant to be transformed into everyday practice, seen in how individual Muslims interact with others, including how they give, are compassionate, reconcile conflicts and support social justice. For example, the distribution and practice of zakat (one of the pillars of Islam) is a tangible manifestation of the social solidarity advocated by the Qur'an, aimed at supporting the underprivileged and reducing social inequality (Hefner, 2023). However, this practice can vary in reality, depending on interpretations, economic conditions, and sociopolitical constructs within a Muslim society (Jamalie & Wibowo, 2023); (Suroso et al., 2021).

On the other hand, there are challenges when Qur'anic teachings are confronted with contemporary social practices. Society can experience shifts in religious values or practices due to the influence of globalization, modernization, and internal political dynamics (Adiyono et al., 2024); (Manullang, Mardani, et al., 2021). This can lead to tensions between religious ideals and social realities, such as in the case of family law or interfaith relations. Although the teachings of the Qur'an explicitly emphasize the importance of tolerance and peace, in practice, social phenomena such as discrimination and communal conflict sometimes arise due to various factors, including a lack of understanding of the essence of religious teachings, the use of religion for political purposes, or broader socio-economic issues (Aslan & Pong, 2023). This points to the importance of intercultural education and dialogue to ensure that Qur'ānic values can be maintained in social behavior in various contexts of Muslim societies (Suryadi & Al-Shreifeen, 2024).

To bridge the gap between Qur'anic teachings and social reality, there are efforts that can be made by the Muslim community. One of them is through education and dialog. Comprehensive Islamic education, which emphasizes not only the memorization of texts but also the understanding and application of those values in modern social contexts, is essential (Yunita et al., 2023). Thus, individuals can internalize the teachings of the Qur'an and apply them in daily social interactions more effectively, creating a more just and tolerant society. Intercultural and interreligious dialogue also plays an important role in promoting understanding and mutual respect, so that conflicts and misunderstandings can be minimized (Mizani et al., 2020).

In addition, the implementation of public policies based on the values of justice, equality and humanity in state and community governance can be a concrete reflection of the teachings of the Qur'an. This includes the development of inclusive social and economic systems, fair and equitable education, and legal tools that prevent discrimination and respect human rights. When these values are integrated into a socio-political framework, the Qur'ānic teachings can inspire social progress and offer solutions to some contemporary challenges (Jannah, 2023); (Manullang, Risa, et al., 2021).

In order to respond to the complexity of social realities, the insights and initiatives of various stakeholders-including ulama, community leaders, social activists and political leaders-are essential. It is also important that partners from across religions and cultures work together to build a harmonious society. Through such collaboration, the potential for conflict can be reduced, and goodwill can increase understanding and acceptance of differences (Nasri et al., 2023).

Reinforcing such principles is not only relevant to the context of Muslim societies, but can also be a valuable contribution to humanity as a whole. In line with universal values such as those found in the teachings of the Qur'an, concerted efforts to dialogue, educate and initiate just public policies can be an important step towards a more peaceful and prosperous global society.

Conclusion

The influence of moral messages in the Qur'ān on social behavior suggests that fundamental values such as justice, patience, kindness and solidarity have a fundamental role in guiding individual and group behavior in Muslim societies. As a spiritual and moral guide, the Qur'ān urges Muslims to practice these values in their daily lives, creating a foundation for harmonious and inclusive social interactions. The practice of zakat and family law are clear examples of how the principles of social justice and solidarity are applied, emphasizing the importance of responsibility towards others and the community. However, the realization of these moral messages in real life is often hampered by various factors including differences in interpretation, external influences such as globalization and politicization of religion, and socioeconomic challenges.

Addressing such challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes in-depth religious education and intercultural dialogue, as well as the integration of justice and equality values into public policymaking. Education that focuses on understanding and applying Qur'anic values can inspire more positive social behavior, while cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation offer pathways to strengthen tolerance and understanding. These efforts, along with policies that reflect universal principles of justice and humanity, can strengthen the application of Qur'ānic teachings in modern societies, address the gap between religious ideals and social realities, and make a valuable contribution to the development of more peaceful and harmonious societies.

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