

The Concept of Ethics in M. Quraish Shihab's Book "Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak" and Its Relevance to Contemporary Islamic Education

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study examines the concept of akhlak as represented in M. Quraish Shihab's *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* and explores its conceptual relevance to contemporary Islamic education. The study focuses on understanding akhlak as a foundation of human personality and its relationship with spiritual awareness, self-control, personal responsibility, and social responsibility.

Methods – This study employed a qualitative approach using library research. The primary source was M. Quraish Shihab's *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*, while secondary sources included relevant books and scholarly articles on akhlak, moral education, and Islamic education. Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis through the identification, coding, categorization, and interpretation of relevant textual units in the primary source to develop the main themes of akhlak.

Findings – The analysis identified four interconnected themes in Shihab's discussion of akhlak: akhlak as the foundation of human personality, spiritual awareness as a source of moral behavior, self-control and personal responsibility as manifestations of akhlak, and akhlak as the basis of social relations and collective responsibility. These themes indicate that akhlak is presented not merely as the transmission of ethical norms but as the internalization of moral values reflected in awareness, self-control, responsibility, and concrete behavior.

Research Implications – Conceptually, these findings suggest that contemporary Islamic education can integrate moral, spiritual, personal, and social development through habituation, exemplary conduct, reflective awareness, and the cultivation of responsible behavior. However, these implications are derived from the conceptual analysis of a single primary work and therefore do not constitute empirical evidence of educational effectiveness.

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Introduction

Humans are beings whose attitudes and actions are shaped by values that are internalized and manifested in their personal and social lives. In Islamic education, *akhlak* refers not merely to outward conduct or adherence to ethical rules but to an internal disposition reflected in a person's attitudes, choices, and actions. *Akhlak* is therefore closely connected to spiritual awareness, self-control, personal responsibility, and the way individuals relate to others. Its formation involves the internalization of values so that they are expressed through consistent behavior rather than remaining at the level of moral knowledge. From this perspective, Islamic education has a role not only in transmitting religious knowledge but also in fostering *akhlak* as an integral dimension of individual development and social life (Rahayu et al., 2023)

The significance of *akhlak* formation becomes increasingly important as digital media have become an integral part of everyday communication and social interaction. Digital environments provide opportunities for learning, information exchange, and social connection, but they also require individuals to exercise self-control, communicate respectfully, consider the consequences of their expressions, and take responsibility for their actions. These challenges are not inherent to technology itself; rather, they are influenced by patterns of technology use, digital literacy, social environments, and educational guidance (Yusnita et al., 2023). In this context, self-control and ethical communication are particularly important dimensions of *akhlak*. Self-control concerns an individual's ability to regulate emotions, impulses, and responses before acting, while ethical communication concerns the responsible and respectful expression of ideas in interactions with others. Within digital environments, these dimensions can be reflected in how individuals respond to disagreement, formulate comments, share information, and communicate with others.

The changing nature of social interaction in digital environments therefore requires Islamic education to address *akhlak* not only as a general moral ideal but also as a value that guides concrete behavior in contemporary communication. Islamic education can provide learners with religious and ethical principles that help them regulate their behavior and maintain respectful relationships when engaging with digital media. The educational significance of *akhlak* thus extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge to the development of learners' capacity to translate internalized values into responsible actions. Previous research indicates that the internalization of Islamic values through habituation, exemplary practices, religious activities, and integrative learning can contribute to the development of responsibility, self-control, compassion, wisdom, and respect for others (Pranoto & Haryanto, 2024). These findings suggest that the internalization of *akhlak* can provide an important basis for addressing ethical behavior in changing social environments, including digital interaction.

Within the Indonesian Islamic intellectual tradition, the thought of M. Quraish Shihab provides an important perspective for understanding *akhlak* and its relationship to human behavior. His work *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* presents *akhlak* as an essential foundation of human life and discusses moral relationships in three dimensions: the relationship between human beings and Allah, the relationship with oneself, and the relationship with others. A study of this work identifies moral values within these dimensions, encompassing religious devotion, self-conduct, and interpersonal relationships (Tambak et al., 2021). These dimensions are particularly relevant to the present study because the relationship with oneself provides a basis for examining self-control and personal responsibility, while the relationship with others provides a basis for examining ethical communication and responsible interaction.

Previous studies have examined *akhlak* and moral education in Quraish Shihab's *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* (Faisal et al., 2023), for example, examining the moral education contained in the book, while Faisal et al. (2023) analyzed the moral values presented in Quraish Shihab's thought. Aprilia and Robi'ah (2023) also discussed the concept of moral education in the work and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education. These studies contribute to an understanding of the types and dimensions of moral values contained in Quraish Shihab's thought. However, their analyses primarily focus on identifying, describing, and interpreting moral values and their general relevance to moral or Islamic education. They do not specifically examine how particular values in Quraish Shihab's conception of *akhlak*, especially self-control, personal responsibility, and respect for others, can be interpreted in relation to ethical communication and interaction in digital environments. Consequently, the connection between the conceptualization of *akhlak* in the book and specific contemporary challenges of digital interaction remains insufficiently elaborated.

This gap is important because the relevance of a moral concept to contemporary education cannot be established solely by stating that the concept is consistent with current educational needs. It requires an analytical connection between particular moral values and particular forms of contemporary behavior. In the context of this study, self-control can be examined in relation to the ability to regulate emotional and impulsive responses in digital communication, while personal responsibility and respect for others can be examined in relation to responsible, respectful, and ethically appropriate interaction. This approach allows the relevance of Quraish Shihab's thought to be discussed at the level of specific educational implications, rather than as a general claim about the importance of moral education in contemporary society.

Accordingly, this study examines the concept of *akhlak* in M. Quraish Shihab's *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education, with particular attention to self-control and ethical communication in digital interaction. The study first identifies the conception and dimensions of *akhlak* presented in the book and

then interprets the relevance of selected values, particularly self-control, personal responsibility, and respect for others to ethical challenges in digital communication. Through this analysis, the study seeks to demonstrate how Quraish Shihab's conception of *akhlak* can provide a conceptual basis for Islamic education in guiding learners toward responsible self-regulation and respectful communication in digital environments. The study therefore contributes to contemporary Islamic educational discourse by connecting a classical Islamic moral concern with a specific contemporary context: the ethical regulation of communication and social interaction in digital spaces.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach using a *library research* design and qualitative content analysis. The study aims to examine the concept of *akhlak* in M. Quraish Shihab's book *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* and to analyze its relevance to contemporary Islamic education, particularly in relation to self-control and communication ethics in digital interactions. The *library research* design was employed because the primary source of the study is a published written work, while qualitative content analysis was used to systematically identify, categorize, and interpret the meanings contained in the text. The primary source serves as the main basis for generating the research findings, while secondary sources are used to provide context and strengthen the interpretation of the findings.

1. Data Sources and Selection of Secondary Literature

The primary source of this study is M. Quraish Shihab's book *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* (6th edition, 2016, Lentera Hat). The book was selected because it specifically discusses the issue of *akhlak* and the relationship between human beings and God, themselves, and others. The secondary sources consist of scholarly journal articles and academic books related to *akhlak*, Islamic education, the thought of M. Quraish Shihab, moral education, self-control, personal responsibility, communication ethics, and digital interaction. Secondary literature is primarily used to provide conceptual context and support the interpretation of findings obtained from the primary source.

The literature search was conducted through the academic database Google Scholar using several keywords, including "Quraish Shihab," "Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak," "akhlak dalam pendidikan Islam," "communication ethics," and "digital interaction." The search was conducted in September 2026 and focused on publications from 2016 to 2026.

2. The literature considered in this study included:

- 1) Peer-reviewed journal articles and academic books;
- 2) Sources published in Indonesian;
- 3) Sources published within the specified publication period, with exceptions for older sources that hold important conceptual significance; and
- 4) Sources directly relevant to the focus of the study.

In this study, the relevance of the literature was determined based on its direct connection to the concepts of *akhlak*, Islamic education, Quraish Shihab's thought, self-control, personal responsibility, and communication ethics in digital interactions. The credibility of the sources was considered based on their status as academic publications, while their contribution was assessed according to the extent to which they provided the conceptual or contextual information necessary to interpret the research findings.

3. Data Collection Techniques and Unit of Analysis

Data were collected through systematic text documentation. The researcher repeatedly read the primary source to identify textual passages containing substantive discussions of the concept of *akhlak*. The unit of analysis consisted of sentences, paragraphs, or sections of text containing explanations, arguments, illustrations, or normative statements concerning *akhlak*. The analyzed passages primarily covered discussions of the relationship between human beings and God, the relationship between individuals and themselves, the relationship between individuals and others, self-control, personal responsibility, and ethical behavior in social relationships.

Each relevant piece of data was documented by recording the textual quotation, page number, section or subsection, initial code, and the researcher's analytical notes. Occurrences of the term *akhlak* that were not accompanied by relevant conceptual discussion were not treated as primary data. The data were subsequently organized into an analytical table containing the text unit, page number, initial code, conceptual category, emerging theme, and analytical interpretation. Secondary sources were documented separately and used after the coding process of the primary source had been completed. These sources were used to provide contextual information and strengthen the interpretation of the findings.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis with a hybrid coding approach that combines deductive initial categories with categories developed inductively from the primary data. At the initial stage, the researcher used several sensitizing concepts to guide the reading process, namely the relationship between human beings and God, the relationship between individuals and themselves, the relationship between individuals and others, self-control, personal responsibility, and social relationships. These categories were not predetermined as final themes but were used as starting points to help organize the data.

The analysis was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher repeatedly read the primary source and extracted relevant textual passages. Second, initial coding was conducted on the selected text units. Third, codes with similar meanings were compared, merged, distinguished, or refined to avoid redundancy and ensure their consistency with the data. Fourth, conceptually related codes were grouped into

categories. Fifth, these categories were developed into themes. Sixth, the themes were reviewed by comparing them with the original textual passages to ensure that each theme was adequately supported by the data and clearly distinguished from the other themes. Seventh, the themes were defined and named based on the substance that best represented the data. The final stage involved interpreting the themes using secondary literature as supporting context.

Through this process, four themes emerged from the analysis: *akhlak* as the foundation of human personality; spiritual awareness as a source of moral behavior; self-control and personal responsibility as manifestations of *akhlak*; and *akhlak* as the basis of social relationships and collective responsibility. These four themes emerged from the coding process applied to the primary source rather than from categories predetermined at the outset. In analyzing their relevance to contemporary Islamic education, particular attention was given to the themes of self-control and personal responsibility, as well as their connection to respect for others. These values were subsequently contextualized in relation to the needs of ethical communication and interaction in digital spaces.

5. Role of Secondary Literature in the Analysis

Secondary literature was not used to determine the main themes of the study. The themes were first developed based on the analysis of the primary source, namely the book *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*. Secondary literature was used at the interpretation stage for three main purposes:

- 1) To compare the findings with previous studies on Quraish Shihab's thought and *akhlak*;
- 2) To provide context for the values of *akhlak* within contemporary Islamic education; and
- 3) To help explain the relevance of self-control, personal responsibility, and respect for others in the context of digital communication and interaction.

This separation was maintained to ensure that the findings concerning the concept of *akhlak* remained clearly distinguishable between those derived from the analysis of the primary source and those based on interpretations supported by secondary literature.

6. Data Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the data was maintained through systematic documentation of the analytical process (*audit trail*), examination of coding consistency, and researcher reflexivity. The *audit trail* was established by documenting the processes of source selection, data extraction, coding, category development, theme formation, and changes in analytical decisions throughout the study. Coding consistency was assessed by repeatedly comparing the codes and themes developed with the original textual passages. Codes that lacked sufficient supporting evidence or had overlapping meanings were reviewed and refined.

In addition, the researcher documented the considerations and assumptions that emerged during the interpretation process to minimize potential subjectivity in interpreting the text. Where applicable, the analytical results could also be reviewed through consultation with a (supervisor/peer/academic) to obtain *peer debriefing*, particularly to assess the consistency between the data, codes, categories, and themes generated from the analysis.

Result

The analysis of M. Quraish Shihab's book *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* resulted in four main themes related to the formation and development of *akhlak*. These four themes were derived through a systematic coding process involving the identification of relevant textual units, assignment of initial codes, grouping of codes into conceptual categories, and subsequent development and review of these categories until broader themes were established.

The first theme presents *akhlak* as the foundation of human personality, reflected in character formation and the internalization of moral values. The second theme identifies spiritual awareness as a source of moral behavior, particularly through awareness of the relationship between human beings and God in guiding behavior. The third theme highlights self-control and personal responsibility as manifestations of *akhlak*, including the ability to regulate desires, attitudes, and actions. The fourth theme positions *akhlak* as the basis of social relationships and collective responsibility, reflected in behaviors characterized by respect, care, and responsibility toward others. The relationship between the textual evidence, initial codes, subthemes or categories, and the main themes is presented in the table below.

Table 1. Main Themes and Dimensions of Akhlak in M. Quraish Shihab's Thought

Main Theme	Subtheme	Initial Code	Textual Evidence from the Primary Source	Analytical Interpretation
Akhlak as the Foundation of Human Personality	Personality and character formation	Character formation, character, habituation, value internalization	Quraish Shihab explains that the term <i>akhlak</i> is associated with the meanings of "measurement," "training," and "habituation." This explanation indicates that <i>akhlak</i> is related to the process of forming dispositions and behavior through training and habituation. (Shihab, 2016, p. 3)	<i>Akhlak</i> is understood as a value system that shapes the quality and personality of human beings, rather than merely a set of behavioral rules.

Spiritual Awareness as a Source of Moral Behavior	Awareness of the relationship with God	Awareness of God, relationship with God, spiritual values, God-oriented orientation	In his discussion of <i>akhlak</i> toward God, Quraish Shihab emphasizes the importance of “placing God in His proper position” and recognizing His attributes of perfection. (Shihab, 2016, p. 215)	Spiritual awareness serves as a foundation that guides individuals in determining and carrying out moral behavior.
Self-Control and Personal Responsibility as Manifestations of Akhlak	Self-control and responsibility	Self-control, restraining desires, regulating actions, personal responsibility	Quraish Shihab explains that discipline is related to maintaining order, while disorder may arise from a lack of discipline. He also provides an example of the importance of following rules to prevent negative consequences. (Shihab, 2016, pp. 191–192)	<i>Akhlak</i> is manifested through the ability to exercise self-control, consider the consequences of actions, and take responsibility for one’s behavior.
Akhlak as the Basis of Social Relationships and Collective Responsibility	Ethics in relationships with others	Respect for others, care, maintaining relationships, social responsibility	Quraish Shihab explains that every human being should be respected on the basis of their humanity and distinguishes honorable behavior from arrogance that may violate the rights of others. (Shihab, 2016, pp. 123–124)	<i>Akhlak</i> guides individuals in developing social relationships characterized by mutual respect, care, and responsibility.

1. *Akhlak* as the Foundation of Human Personality

The first theme concerns the position of *akhlak* as a foundation of human personality. Quraish Shihab explains that *akhlak* is closely related to the formation of moral qualities that become established within a person. He describes *akhlak* as a “firm and established disposition within a person,” which is developed through repeated practice and habituation (Shihab, 2016). This explanation indicates that *akhlak* is not limited to outward behavior but also involves the formation of enduring qualities within the individual.

The emphasis on repeated practice and habituation indicates that *akhlak* develops through a process of internalization. Behaviors that are practiced continuously can gradually become part of an individual's character and eventually be expressed in everyday conduct. This finding is consistent with recent studies in Islamic education that identify habituation as an important process in the internalization of Islamic character values among students (Ma`arif et al., 2024). Thus, the primary text presents *akhlak* as an

important foundation of human personality because moral qualities are formed through sustained practice and become part of an individual's inner disposition.

The analysis further shows that the formation of *akhlak* involves a close relationship between inner qualities and concrete behavior. Moral conduct is not presented merely as an external action but as the expression of qualities that have become established within the individual. Recent research on Islamic Religious Education similarly emphasizes the internalization of moral values as an important component of students' character development (Azzaky et al., 2024). In this sense, Quraish Shihab's explanation positions *akhlak* as a process of character formation in which repeated practice contributes to the internalization of moral qualities and their manifestation in everyday behavior.

2. Spiritual Awareness as the Source of Moral Behavior

The analysis indicates a conceptual connection between spiritual awareness and moral behavior in Quraish Shihab's understanding of *akhlak*. In *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*, *akhlak* is not presented merely as compliance with external rules but is also associated with the inner dimension of human conduct and the individual's relationship with God (Shihab, 2016). From this perspective, awareness of one's relationship with God can be interpreted as an internal foundation through which individuals understand, evaluate, and give meaning to their actions. Moral responsibility, therefore, is not discussed solely in terms of outward behavior but also in relation to the inner orientation underlying such behavior.

Spiritual awareness in this context can be understood as the internalization of religious values that extends beyond belief or ritual practice. Religious values acquire moral significance when they are reflected in everyday attitudes and actions. Accordingly, spirituality may be interpreted as an inner orientation that provides a framework for individuals to understand how they ought to behave and how they should take responsibility for their actions. Through this conceptual process, religious values are understood not merely as external norms but as values that can become part of an individual's moral awareness and guide the interpretation of everyday moral situations.

This interpretation is consistent with recent research emphasizing the integration of spiritual and moral dimensions in Islamic education. Character development cannot be understood solely in terms of cognitive understanding but also involves the internalization of spiritual values in attitudes and behavior. An integrative educational approach that incorporates knowledge, attitudes, skills, ethics, social values, and spirituality has therefore been discussed as a framework for supporting more comprehensive character formation (Budiyanti & Parhan, 2024). This research provides a broader educational context for understanding the relevance of the spiritual dimension in moral development, although it does not establish a causal relationship between spiritual awareness and moral behavior in the context of Shihab's work.

Based on the analysis, spiritual awareness can therefore be interpreted as a conceptual foundation of moral behavior in Quraish Shihab's thought. The relationship between spirituality and *akhlak* is understood here as a relationship of meaning and orientation rather than as an empirically established causal relationship. Spiritual awareness provides a framework for understanding how religious beliefs, personal values, and moral conduct can be conceptually connected. In this sense, *akhlak* represents not only the outward expression of moral conduct in social life but also reflects the individual's inner orientation toward God. This interpretation highlights the spiritual dimension of *akhlak* without implying that a higher level of spiritual awareness necessarily produces stronger moral behavior.

3. Self-Control and Personal Responsibility as Manifestations of Akhlak

The analysis of *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* shows that the concept of *akhlak* in Quraish Shihab's thought is related to the ability of human beings to regulate their impulses and consider the consequences of their actions. In his discussion of reason, emotions, and desires, Shihab explains that these three aspects need to be harmonized by positioning reason as a fair and moderate regulator. According to Shihab, this condition is associated with the development of noble qualities, such as wisdom, courage, *'iffah* (self-restraint), and justice (Shihab, 2016). This discussion provides a textual basis for interpreting the regulation of internal impulses as one aspect of the formation of *akhlak*-related behavior.

This dimension of self-control can also be understood through Shihab's discussion of the conscience. He explains that when individuals follow the guidance of their conscience, they may experience a sense of self-respect and moral satisfaction, whereas failing to follow it may give rise to feelings of self-degradation or the reproach of conscience (Shihab, 2016). Shihab further explains that conscience is shaped through education, experience, and the environment; therefore, its standards need to be related to religious values and positive cultural norms (Shihab, 2016). Based on this discussion, self-control can be interpreted as a reflective process involving inner deliberation before an individual determines how to act.

The aspect of responsibility also has a clear conceptual relationship with *akhlak* in Shihab's discussion. Moral actions, as explained in his discussion of freedom, responsibility, and conscience, are associated with actions performed intentionally and voluntarily. Because such actions are carried out through an individual's own will, the person who performs them can be held accountable for them. Thus, personal responsibility in Shihab's thought is not understood merely as an externally imposed obligation but is related to an individual's awareness of their choices and actions.

Based on the overall discussion, self-control and personal responsibility can be interpreted as two aspects that reflect the concept of *akhlak* in Quraish Shihab's thought.

Self-control is manifested in the ability to position reason as a regulator of emotional and desire-driven impulses, while responsibility is related to the awareness that actions performed consciously and voluntarily carry moral consequences. In this study, the relationship between *akhlak*, self-control, and responsibility is understood as a conceptual relationship based on an analysis of Shihab's ideas, rather than as a causal relationship empirically tested. Thus, *akhlak* in Shihab's thought can be understood not merely as knowledge of right and wrong, but also as a moral quality reflected in the ability to exercise self-control, consider one's actions, and take responsibility for the choices one makes.

4. Akhlak as the Basis of Social Relations and Collective Responsibility

The analysis of *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* indicates that the concept of *akhlak* extends beyond the individual's relationship with oneself and encompasses the way individuals relate to other people. This social dimension constitutes a distinct aspect from self-control and personal responsibility discussed in the previous theme. While the previous theme concerns the individual's ability to regulate personal desires, emotions, and actions and to take responsibility for personal choices, this theme focuses on how moral values are expressed in relationships with others and in the context of shared social life.

In Quraish Shihab's discussion, moral conduct toward others can be understood through values that regulate interpersonal relationships, including respect, tolerance, and the recognition of differences. His discussion of tolerance emphasizes the importance of responding to differences in a manner that allows social relationships to be maintained without requiring individuals to eliminate those differences (Shihab, 2016). This discussion provides a textual basis for understanding *akhlak* as having an interpersonal dimension because the moral value is manifested in the way individuals respond to and treat other people.

The social dimension of *akhlak* therefore concerns not only whether an individual possesses particular moral values but also how those values are expressed in interactions with others. Respect and tolerance, for example, acquire their practical meaning when individuals encounter people who have different views, backgrounds, or positions. In this sense, *akhlak* can be interpreted as a framework for regulating interpersonal conduct and maintaining appropriate relationships within social life (Putra & Fauzi, 2024). The analysis also indicates a distinction between personal responsibility and social responsibility. Personal responsibility concerns an individual's accountability for their own choices and actions, whereas the social dimension of *akhlak* concerns the individual's moral responsibility in relation to other people and shared life. Contemporary Islamic education literature likewise places values such as respect, tolerance, responsibility, and social care within the broader formation of students' moral and social character (Prajoko & Humaedah, 2024). On this basis, the notion of collective responsibility in this study is

understood conceptually as an orientation toward considering the interests, dignity, and rights of others as part of one's moral conduct. It does not refer to an empirically established causal effect of individual morality on society.

Based on the analysis, *akhlak* can therefore be interpreted as a conceptual basis for social relations. Its social dimension is reflected in values such as respect and tolerance and in the recognition that moral conduct is situated within relationships with other people. Research in Islamic education has similarly shown that the internalization of tolerance, respect for diversity, and social responsibility is connected with the development of harmonious social interactions among students (Syamsadea & Amrullah, 2025). Thus, unlike the previous theme, which emphasizes the internal regulation of the individual and responsibility for personal choices, this theme emphasizes the interpersonal and communal dimension of *akhlak*. The concept of collective responsibility is consequently understood as a moral orientation toward others and shared social life rather than as a measurable social outcome.

Discussion

The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of *akhlak* in Quraish Shihab's *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* by identifying four interconnected but analytically distinct dimensions:

- 1) *Akhlak* as a foundation of human personality
- 2) Spiritual awareness as a foundation of moral behavior
- 3) Self-control and personal responsibility as manifestations of *akhlak*
- 4) *Akhlak* as a basis for social relations and collective responsibility.

These four themes indicate that *akhlak* in Shihab's work is not limited to a particular set of moral values or rules of conduct. Rather, it can be interpreted as a multidimensional concept involving the formation of the individual, the inner orientation of the person, the regulation of personal conduct, and the individual's relationship with others. This multidimensional understanding is also relevant to recent discussions of Islamic education that emphasize the integration of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, ethical, and social dimensions in character formation (Budiyanti & Parhan, 2024).

This thematic structure also provides a conceptual contribution to previous studies examining *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*. Previous research has identified various moral and educational values contained in the same book. For example Mumtazah et al. (2025), identified values including sincerity, mercy, knowledge, patience, honesty, trustworthiness, tolerance, and *tabayyun*. While such research primarily focuses on identifying particular moral and educational values, the present study organizes the ideas identified in the primary text into four broader analytical dimensions. These dimensions provide a systematic way of understanding how *akhlak* is represented at different levels

of human life. The distinction between personal and social dimensions is particularly important. Self-control and personal responsibility concern the regulation of personal desires, emotions, choices, and actions, whereas the social dimension concerns how moral values are expressed in relationships with others and within shared social life. Thus, the contribution of this study does not lie in proposing a new definition of *akhlak*, but in providing a systematic conceptual interpretation of the dimensions of *akhlak* emerging from Shihab's work.

The four themes can also be interpreted in relation to the broader framework of moral development. In this discussion, the concepts of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action* proposed in previous literature are not treated as the theoretical framework used to generate the four themes. Rather, they are employed as a post-analysis interpretive lens to examine how the themes identified from Shihab's work relate to established discussions of moral development. This distinction is important because the four themes were derived from the analysis of the primary text, whereas the *moral knowing-moral feeling-moral action* framework is introduced subsequently to facilitate comparison and interpretation. Recent research by Purwati et al. (2024) demonstrates the continued use of these three dimensions in examining students' moral development. Their study developed and tested an instrument based on *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*, showing that the three dimensions can be used to reflect different aspects of students' moral development.

From this post-analysis perspective, the first theme, concerning the formation of human personality, and the second theme, concerning spiritual awareness, can be related to the cognitive and affective dimensions of moral development. Moral understanding involves recognizing values and distinguishing appropriate from inappropriate conduct, while the spiritual dimension concerns the inner orientation through which such values acquire personal meaning. The third theme, self-control and personal responsibility, provides a conceptual bridge between moral understanding and its regulation in personal conduct. Meanwhile, the fourth theme, concerning social relations and collective responsibility, highlights the expression of moral values in interactions with other people and within shared social life. The four themes therefore provide a way of interpreting *akhlak* across the processes of understanding, internal orientation, personal regulation, and social expression, without reducing the findings to the *moral knowing-moral feeling-moral action* framework itself.

This interpretation can be compared with Ma'arif et al. (2024), who examined the internalization of Islamic character values through student habituation. Their study describes the internalization process through *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*, indicating that character formation involves stages extending beyond the acquisition of moral knowledge. In relation to the present findings, this perspective provides a comparative basis for understanding how the dimensions identified in Shihab's

work may be interpreted in relation to moral understanding, internal orientation, and practical conduct. However, the present study does not claim that Shihab's four themes are equivalent to the three dimensions of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*. The latter framework is used only to interpret and contextualize the findings after the thematic analysis has been completed.

The integrated understanding of *akhlak* is also consistent with recent research emphasizing a holistic approach to Islamic education. Budiyanthi and Parhan (2024) for example, examined the Ulul Ilmi model as a form of holistic Islamic pedagogy integrating knowledge, attitudes, skills, ethics, social dimensions, and spirituality in character development. Similarly, Pratama et al. (2024) identified several dimensions of holistic education in Islamic educational institutions, including moral education, social intelligence, independence, discipline, and leadership. These studies provide a broader educational context for interpreting the four dimensions identified in the present study. They do not constitute evidence for the textual findings from Shihab's book but help demonstrate the relevance of a multidimensional understanding of moral and character education within contemporary Islamic education.

The relationship between spiritual awareness, emotional regulation, and moral formation can also be contextualized through recent research on holistic Islamic education. Dwietama et al. (2024) for instance, found that the integration of Islamic values, worship practices, contextual learning, habituation of Islamic manners, and teacher role modeling can be associated with the development of students' emotional and spiritual qualities. This perspective is relevant to the present interpretation because the second and third themes emphasize inner orientation, self-regulation, and personal responsibility. Nevertheless, the study by Dwietama et al (2024) concerns an empirical educational setting, whereas the present study analyzes a conceptual account of *akhlak* in a literary work. The two studies therefore occupy different methodological positions and should not be treated as providing the same type of evidence.

The findings also have implications for contemporary Islamic education. The multidimensional understanding of *akhlak* suggests that moral education should not be limited to the transmission of ethical knowledge or the explanation of religious norms. The four themes indicate that moral education may be understood more comprehensively as involving the development of personal character, spiritual awareness, self-regulation and responsibility, as well as appropriate relationships with others. Recent studies on holistic Islamic education similarly emphasize the integration of religious knowledge with character, spirituality, social development, and everyday educational practices (Budiyanthi & Parhan, 2024). In this context, educational practices such as habituation, reflection, exemplary behavior, and opportunities for responsible social interaction can be discussed as possible ways of connecting moral understanding with everyday practice. These implications should be understood as educational

interpretations of the findings rather than as causal conclusions established by the present library research.

The relevance of Quraish Shihab's conception of morality to Islamic education has also been discussed in recent scholarship Akbar and Arif (2026), for example, examine Quraish Shihab's conception of the Prophet's morality and its implications for Islamic education, emphasizing the relationship between moral formation and broader educational development. This recent study provides additional context for positioning Quraish Shihab's thought within contemporary Islamic education. However, its focus is different from the present study because it examines the concept of *insan kamil* and the Prophet's morality, whereas the present research focuses specifically on the multidimensional concept of *akhlak* in *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*.

Thus, the contribution of this study lies in its systematic interpretation of *akhlak* in Quraish Shihab's work as a multidimensional construct encompassing personal, spiritual, self-regulatory, and social dimensions. The use of the *moral knowing-moral feeling-moral action* framework in the discussion does not replace the four themes derived from the primary text; instead, it provides a comparative lens for situating those findings within the broader literature on moral development and Islamic character education. Recent studies on *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*, moral development, and holistic Islamic education provide a contextual basis for this interpretation, while the present study retains the primary text as the basis of its thematic findings. This distinction strengthens the analytical relationship between the present findings and previous research while maintaining the methodological boundaries of the study as a qualitative library research.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *akhlak* as represented in M. Quraish Shihab's *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* can be interpreted as a multidimensional concept involving four interconnected dimensions: *akhlak* as a foundation of human personality, spiritual awareness as a foundation of moral behavior, self-control and personal responsibility as manifestations of *akhlak*, and *akhlak* as a basis for social relations and collective responsibility. These dimensions indicate that, within the work analyzed, *akhlak* is not presented merely as knowledge of right and wrong or as a set of behavioral rules. Rather, it encompasses the formation of the individual, inner orientation, regulation of personal conduct, and moral relationships with others. The findings therefore provide a systematic conceptual interpretation of the dimensions of *akhlak* represented in the particular work examined, rather than a comprehensive conclusion about the entirety of Quraish Shihab's thought.

The study contributes conceptually by organizing the ideas identified in the primary text into four analytically distinct but interconnected dimensions. This organization extends previous discussions that have primarily identified particular moral or

educational values in *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak* by providing a broader framework for interpreting how those values relate to personal, spiritual, self-regulatory, and social dimensions of *akhlak*. The use of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action* in the discussion further serves as a comparative interpretive lens rather than as the initial framework for generating the themes. Thus, the contribution of this study lies in its systematic interpretation of the primary text and its positioning within contemporary discussions of moral development and Islamic character education.

In relation to Islamic education, the findings suggest that *akhlak* education may be approached through the integration of moral understanding, spiritual awareness, self-regulation, personal responsibility, and social interaction. Practices such as habituation, exemplary behavior, reflection, and opportunities for students to exercise responsibility may provide educational contexts in which moral values can be connected with everyday experience. However, these implications should be understood as conceptual and educational interpretations of the findings rather than as empirically established effects of particular educational practices.

This study has several limitations. First, the analysis is based on a single primary source, namely *Yang Hilang dari Kita: Akhlak*, and therefore does not represent the entirety of Quraish Shihab's writings or thought on *akhlak*. Second, the findings result from qualitative and interpretive analysis of textual material, meaning that the four dimensions identified reflect the analytical interpretation of the selected primary text rather than empirically measured characteristics of individuals or educational settings. Third, the secondary literature is used primarily to contextualize and compare the findings rather than to establish the primary themes. Future research may therefore examine these conceptual findings through empirical studies in Islamic educational settings, including investigations of how the dimensions of spiritual awareness, self-control, personal responsibility, and social responsibility are understood and practiced by students and teachers. Comparative studies involving other works by Quraish Shihab or other contemporary Muslim scholars may also provide further insight into the similarities and differences in contemporary conceptualizations of *akhlak* and their implications for Islamic education.

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