

The Integration of Sufism and Islamic Law (Sharia) in Buya Hamka's Thought and Its Relevance to Children's Character Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the dimensions of integration Sufism and Islamic law (sharia) in Buya Hamka's thinking and its relevance in children's character education. The focus of the study is on the relevance of the values of Sufism and Sharia integration, which emphasize a balance between ritual piety and social involvement as instruments for strengthening mental resilience and spiritual intelligence in children. The research method used is qualitative with a literature study approach and content analysis of the main text in Buya Hamka's book Tasawuf Modern (Modern Sufism). The results of the study show that Hamka's interpretation of the concepts of zuhud and qana'ah does not mean avoiding the world, but rather self-control over the flow of information and materialism. This Sufi interpretation can produce a paradigm model of Islamic religiosity that harmonizes morality and formalistic legal aspects, which can become the basis for strengthening character education for children in facing the pressures of modernity. This study contributes to the importance of integrating Sufism and Sharia as ethical and psychological foundations in children's character education.

Keywords: Sufism, Sharia, Buya Hamka, Character Education

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PENDAHULUAN

Student delinquency in 2024, according to data from the Indonesian Education Monitoring Network (JPPI), increased by 285 cases compared to 2023. This data is not in accordance with Law No. 20 of 2003, paragraph 1, which explains that national education aims to develop the potential of students to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed by themselves, the community, the nation and the state.(Pemikiran & Hamka, 2024)

In response to the above problem, religious life is currently intertwined with other aspects of life. Religion can become a lifestyle, or conversely, religion can produce a certain lifestyle.(Atamimi et al., 2024) In Islam, educators have a direct responsibility to educate children to develop good character. This is explained in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa, verse 9, which means: And let those fear Allah who, if they left behind them weak offspring, would be concerned for their welfare. Therefore, let them fear Allah and let them speak the truth (Q.S. An-Nisaa': 9). (TERJEMAHNYA AL-QUR ' AN, 2019). This verse explains that children are the new generation and should be prepared to have resilience both in terms of knowledge and noble character. This is because humans are born with the gift of reason, which can be used and utilised to the fullest so that they can achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. The Islamic philosophy of diversity in the form of Sufism is one of the teachings that can greatly contribute to children's character education. For example, the Sufi philosophy offered by Buya

Hamka, which is the subject of this study, can be a medium for preventing character problems in children amid the current wave of modernity.

Buya Hamka was a unique scholar because he was able to combine Sufism teachings with moderate Islamic thought, while at the same time understanding social and cultural dynamics. Through his famous works, such as 'Tafsir Al-Azhar' and 'Modern Sufism,' Buya Hamka provided a rich and unique perspective on how Sufism can be an important part of spiritual and social development in Indonesia.(Rizka et al., 2023). Hamka was an extraordinary thinker, as reflected in his great works, various remarkable essays, influential career, and active involvement in Masyumi, MUI, Muhammadiyah, and as a preacher. Humanism, according to Hamka's view, is humanism based on Islamic thought. In one of his works, entitled 'Falsafah Hidup' (The Philosophy of Life), Hamka discusses not only the various dimensions of human life, but also his view of human nature itself, which is a discussion of humanism. Hamka views humans as material in humanism, as entities capable of using their reason and freedom as creatures of God in living their lives. According to Hamka, bonds define reason; these bonds are like ropes, tying humans down so that they do not stray too far in following their desires. Desires are indeed one of the causes of the destruction of life, where actions are carried out in ways that are not controlled by humans themselves. As for freedom, according to Hamka, it is a human trait that has existed since birth.(Hardewita, 2025)

This study focuses on describing the dimensions of integration Sufism and sharia in Buya Hamka's thinking and its relevance in children's character education. Various relevant previous studies, including research by Diningrat explain that Hamka's synthesis between classical Sufism and modern pedagogical needs can be understood as a form of neo-Sufism, an adaptive and context-sensitive interpretation of spiritual Islam. This framework does not reject rationality or scientific inquiry; rather, it places them in a moral and spiritual context. In this view, Islamic education must be intellectually rigorous and spiritually nourishing. Islamic education must nurture students who are not only knowledgeable but also wise, compassionate, and grounded in ethical principles derived from the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet (Diningrat, 2021)

Then, research by Gunarsih, Yusciantara, and Baidi mentions Buya Hamka is not only known as an interpretive scholar and writer, but also as an educational philosopher who systematically compiled his ideas in various works, such as Institut Budi, Filsafat Kehidupan, and Sufisme Modern.(Gunarsih et al., 2025). Atamimi's study explains that in modern Sufism, Hamka seeks to give meaning to Sufism as an ancient discipline that is relevant to modern times. According to him, the essence of Sufism is the purification of the soul, avoiding evil, misery, and disaster. Through frequent remembrance of God, the "superego" within a person functions as a control mechanism for appropriate behaviour. By remembering God, a person's soul will be at peace, leading to peaceful individual and social behaviour. They will be able to accept reality and realise their true humanity. (Atamimi, 2026) Hamka wanted Sufism to be not only a theory or concept, but also applied in everyday life by modern society. (Conference et al., 2024) Buya Hamka has made an extraordinary contribution to Islamic and Sufi education in Indonesia.(Firnando, 2024)

Hamka, as one of the leading figures, was also open to deepening and contributing his thoughts in the field of Sufism. This is evidenced by several of Hamka's ideas that have been incorporated into his works, such as Modern Sufism (1996), Returning Sufism to its Roots (1958), Reflections on Sufism (2017), and The Development and Purification of Sufism (2016). In addition to the works discussed above, Hamka also acknowledged his love for the world of Sufism in the book he wrote, Muqaddimah (Modern Sufism).(Zulkifli & Rhosyidy, 2024) Scholars have extensively analysed and highlighted the diverse contributions of HAMKA's modern Sufism, explaining its relevance and impact in various areas of modern life. One important aspect of HAMKA's contribution is the integration of traditional Sufi teachings with contemporary realities.(Fuad, 2024)

Unlike previous studies that examined Buya Hamka's thoughts, this study has a distinctive aspect in emphasising describe the dimensions of integration Sufism and sharia in Buya Hamka's thinking and its relevance in children's character education. This study is urgent

because character education is a programme that has become a key feature of the 2013 Curriculum, which has been promoted by the government since 2010. (Wardani et al., 2019) It is hoped that this can be implemented and achieve its objectives to the fullest extent possible, both within formal and informal institutions. Therefore, educational activities are expected to be based on values that not only relate to knowledge, but are also practised in real life in the surrounding environment so that the objectives of character education can be achieved. For example, spiritual character education does not suddenly appear in a person, but rather through a process that begins with formation and development. This is because good character can be related to spiritual intelligence.

METHODS

To answer the research objectives, which aim to describe describe the dimensions of integration Sufism and sharia in Buya Hamka's thinking and its relevance in children's character education, this study uses a qualitative method in the form of a literature review. Furthermore, descriptive analysis and content analysis approaches are used in this study. The secondary data for this research was sourced from various scientific literature discussing Buya Hamka's Sufi thought and character education for children. The data collection technique used by the researcher was documentation. Data analysis included reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ontological Discourse on Character Education

Education is the entire state or atmosphere in life that influences a person's development for learning experiences that take place around them throughout their life.(Pendidikan, 2022) Education is an activity to prepare and enhance the growth of students, a process that occurs continuously from birth until death. The aspects that are taken into consideration include physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects as a whole, without neglecting or exaggerating any other aspect. This preparation and effort for growth is aimed at enabling children to become individuals who are useful to themselves and others and can lead a good life.(Waruwu et al., 2025)

The word 'character' comes from the Greek word 'karaso,' meaning blueprint, basic format, and imprint.(Dr. Agung Pramujiono et al., 2020) Character is an important aspect for improving the quality of human resources in society because the quality of a nation's character can determine its progress. Character is a reflection of attitudes and behaviours that demonstrate right and wrong, as well as good and bad. Therefore, it is important to develop good character from an early age. Character education is considered successful if children can demonstrate good behavioural habits. Therefore, character education in children must be related to cognitive aspects and supported by affective aspects that involve parents, teachers and the community.(Siregar et al., 2025)

Character is a distinctive trait that sets a person apart from others. Character has positive qualities such as caring, fairness, honesty, respect for others, forgiveness, sociability, and so on.(Akip & Adab, 2024) Character can be defined as all the permanent traits of a person that distinguish them from others.(Hermawansyah, 2025)

Akhmad Muhaimin states that character is specifically defined as: 'distinctive values (knowing the value of goodness, wanting to do good, living a good life, and having a positive impact on the environment) that are ingrained in oneself and manifested in one's behaviour. Character is a distinctive trait of a person or group of people that encompasses values, abilities, moral capacity, and resilience in the face of difficulties and challenges'.(Dr. Noor Amirudin et al., 2025)

Character is goodness that is taught, nurtured, and shaped through education by internalisation or by providing material and values that are relevant to developing children's thinking and behaviour. Character is taught by recognising, understanding, and encouraging children to be able to practise and interpret it as an ingrained habit and become a habitual

attitude (reflective action) and develop into the soul (centre of human excellence). (Prayogi et al., 2024)

Based on several definitions of character described above, character and its relationship with education can be interpreted as education in values, morals, ethics, and character, which aims to shape and develop children's ability to judge right and wrong, and to cultivate and spread goodness in their lives with a whole heart and soul.

The term character education refers to positive actions or teachings by teachers that subsequently influence their students. As stated by Muchlas Samani and Hariyanto in their book, character education is a conscious and sincere effort by teachers to teach values to their students. Character education is also a process of demanding that students become people of character in terms of their hearts, minds, bodies, feelings and intentions. (Mulyani et al., 2024)

Furthermore, character education is education that instils character values regarding knowledge, self-awareness, determination, and actions to implement these values, both for oneself and for fellow human beings in the community and beyond. (Lamadang et al., 2025)

According to Abuddin Nata, character education can be defined as the formation of a person's character, behaviour, disposition and personality by instilling noble values, so that these values become ingrained, integrated into the heart, mind, speech and actions, and manifest their influence in real life easily, willingly, originally and sincerely for the sake of Allah SWT. (Wathoni, 2020) Meanwhile, Mustakim defines character education as the process of internalising the main characteristics of a society, which are then instilled in children so that they can grow and develop into individuals who embody the values of that society and culture. (Mustakim, 2011)

Character education is not only carried out by providing understanding that can then change a person's mindset and perspective on what is good and right, but also by habitually practising, training, and implementing it continuously in everyday life until a good character is formed, namely one that is moral and has good manners in accordance with the objectives of education.

Based on the various explanations and descriptions above, it can be concluded that character education is education that is taught not only by imparting knowledge but also through actions in order to shape a person's character or personality to have good character and morals towards God Almighty, oneself, and the surrounding environment with a genuine attitude that can be seen from one's behaviour, honesty, responsibility, and respect for others. Globally, this is very important for protecting children from multidimensional moral crises. (Jauhari, 2025)

The Construction of Buya Hamka's Modern Sufism Concept

Buya Hamka was a reformer in the field of Islamic scholarship in Indonesia. His full name was Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, the son of KH. Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) and Siti Shafiyah Tanjung binti Gelanggar. (Nurlina & Busro, 2021) Hamka was a renowned scholar of tafsir, historian, writer, and politician in Indonesia during his lifetime and remains so today. The most significant contribution made by Hamka was the development of Al-Qur'an tafsir studies in modern tafsir and Sufism studies. (Husaini & Setiawan, 2020)

Buya Hamka was born on the Batang Maninjau River in West Sumatra on 17 February 1908. Hamka's mother was named Syafi'iyah and his father was named Abdul Karim Amrullah, often known as Haji Rosul, a well-known religious leader who brought the concept of Islamic reform to Minangkabau. Abdul Karim Amrullah was one of 15 figures who founded the Islamic Teachers' Association School (PGAI) with Sheikh H. Abdoellah Ahmad as its chairman in Minangkabau in 1918, which received official approval from the Dutch colonial government on 5 August 1919. (Husaini & Setiawan, 2020)

Hamka is a modern figure who still shows an academic interest in Sufism at a time when many modernist figures tend to be anti-Sufism. (Madjid, 1997) Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, known as an Islamic intellectual. With a background in the Islamic reformist community, he introduced modern Sufism. Hamka's ideas on modern Sufism ran counter to the views of Islamic modernists who rejected Sufism. (Nawwari & Mada, 2025) The basis of

Hamka's thinking is that Sufism still retains the original values of Islamic teachings, especially monotheism. Hamka illustrates Sufism as a place of 'return' for people who encounter difficulties and obstacles in their journey through life, and also a place of 'refuge' for those who find themselves in desperate circumstances. Sufism provides strength to the weak and a foothold for those who have lost their way. (Rofi et al., 2021) Sufism also teaches people to have spiritual insight and sincerity of character, always prioritising humanity in every issue they face in order to avoid actions that are considered bad according to religion. (Mustofa, 2018)

Sufism is an integral part of Islamic teachings that prioritises intuition over reason. Sufism supports the spiritual aspect as a manifestation of its practitioners' dissatisfaction with the religious understanding of theologians and philosophers (intellectualism) and the understanding of fuqaha' (formalism-legalism). (Abdullah et al., 2000) Sufism is generally defined as a spiritual or mental attitude that constantly maintains purity within oneself, worship, simple living, doing good deeds, and always acting wisely. The moral teachings of Sufism also help to form daily habits of discipline for students, such as fasting, reciting prayers, praying on time, and so on. (Indarto, 2024) This attitude is essentially a noble moral attitude.

According to Buya Hamka, not all religions are relevant to modern society today. This is because modern humans greatly revere the fruits of intellectual development, making it difficult for society to accept a belief system. Only religions that do not deny the importance of rationality will survive, due to their ability to fulfil spiritual needs that cannot be met by science and technology.

Buya Hamka also revealed that Sufism has positive and negative sides. It becomes negative when it is practised in a manner that is not in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, for example, by completely restricting and forbidding oneself from everything that Allah SWT has made lawful and focusing on a view that requires hatred for the world. On the other hand, it is positive when practised in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which emphasise the connection between pure worship (hamblumminAllah) and real social worship (hablumminannas). Therefore, someone who wishes to study Sufism must obtain this knowledge from a trusted source and under the guidance of a mushrif (teacher). (Hamka, 2018). In this context, it is important to disseminate Islamic values to society in a persuasive and contextual manner (Aini et.al, 2026).

Modern Sufism, as proposed by Buya Hamka, states that a Sufi must place God in 'tauhid'. Tawhid refers to the One God who is in a transcendent position, meaning that He is outside and above, separate from His creation, yet close to the heart. This understanding is a combination of the concepts of aqidah or kalam and ihsan according to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, God is neither too far nor too close. This belief is also known as the belief of Sufism. (Hamka, 2018)

Buya Hamka's view on education explains that education is a means to support and shape, as well as a foundation for human progress in various fields of science. Through education, human nature can be developed to achieve character goals. According to Hamka, the fundamental human nature is to always do good and be obedient to the Creator. If there are people who do not do good, then they have deviated from their nature. According to Hamka, there are three factors within humans that support their role as caliphs, namely reason, heart, and the five senses. (Kasmuri et al., 2023)

Efforts to shape a child's character cannot be separated from the education provided by their parents. Education becomes inappropriate if parents aim to make their children like themselves, that is, parents who shape their children according to the norms of their own era. Parents should educate and shape their children in accordance with and in line with the child's era. (Kasmuri et al., 2023) Therefore, the ability of parents to educate their children greatly assists teachers in their role and helps the children themselves. The goal of education is to shape each student to become a useful member of society. This is in line with Hamka's statement regarding character education, which is to cultivate the habits of being honest, brave in speaking the truth, strong, and resilient.

From the explanation above, it follows that education is not only a process of intellectual and personality development, but also a process of socialisation with the surrounding environment.

And in shaping character, parents play an important role in instilling the foundations of character education, namely religious education, because with strong faith, students will be able to have the right guidance in life. In addition to parents, teachers also set an example at school in instilling moral values, and with the support of the community as a social control, the goals of Buya Hamka's character education to cultivate honesty, courage to speak the truth, strength, and resilience can be achieved.

The Dimensions of Sufism and Islamic Law (Sharia) Values in Buya Hamka's View and Their Relevance in the Basis of Children's Character Education

The development of the modern era shows various things that can cause a moral crisis. This is due to a person's lack of readiness and inadequacy in facing the developments that have taken place. Moral crises spread like a virus throughout the reformist generation, originating from spiritual crises. Spiritual intelligence is important in the reformist generation, namely young children, so that they can develop Islamic personalities in accordance with norms, thereby reducing and even eradicating moral crises in the new generation. The fruit of religion is moral values, so when a moral crisis occurs, it indirectly means that a spiritual crisis has occurred. Therefore, the role and function of Sufism is very much needed in the dynamics of life because with Sufism we can cleanse our hearts and souls from the negative energies in our bodies, and of course as a medium for us to always be taqorrub (close) to God Almighty and always remember Him wherever we are and in whatever condition we are in. As for the values of character education according to Buya Hamka's perspective, they include the following:

1. Religius

According to Buya Hamka, a religious person is someone who performs all acts of worship obediently, and whose words and deeds are in accordance with religious teachings. From the time of Prophet Adam to the end of the Prophet Muhammad, all souls submitted to Allah SWT with a firm and faithful implementation of Sharia law because of Allah SWT's call.

2. Simple, Honest, and Noble

According to Buya Hamka, a simple person is someone who is not excessive in anything, is not overly dominant, and is always content with what they have and face. According to Buya Hamka, honesty is something that is expressed verbally or from the heart, or actions that are carried out in reality. As stated in the quote, 'something that is said from the heart will easily enter the heart'. (Hamka, 2018) Meanwhile, someone who deserves to be called noble or virtuous is someone who can be straightforward, sincere, and honest in their words and deeds. A noble or virtuous person does not like to be praised by others and is steadfast when others criticise them. They always do good not because of others but because of the goodness itself, and they do not easily forget the kindness others have shown them. (Hamka, 2018)

3. Communicative

Being friendly means being able to establish relationships with others, and through this, a person will easily find their true self. Friendship is a form of mutual assistance that is commanded by Islamic teachings. Through friendship, we can communicate and open our hearts to our friends in order to lighten our burdens. (Hamka, 2018)

4. Independent, Hardworking and Responsible

According to Buya Hamka, independence is a person's attitude to act freely on their own initiative and also the ability to manage themselves in accordance with their rights and obligations, so that they can solve their own problems without the help of others and take responsibility for the choices they have made.

According to Buya Hamka, hard work is an effort that is continuously carried out with enthusiasm, not giving up easily when doing something before it is achieved, and always asking for Allah SWT's help by praying and asking for His blessing. Responsibility, according to Buya Hamka, is an awareness of one's actions, whether intentional or not. A person who possesses a sense of responsibility is one who carries out their duties sincerely, works diligently, and is confident in the decisions they make. (Hamka, 2018)

5. Tolerance and Love of Peace

According to Buya Hamka, tolerance is the act of understanding or allowing others their right to believe in their respective religions. According to Buya Hamka, peace-loving people are those who always prioritise calmness, tranquillity and the welfare of society.(Hamka, 2018). Such an explanation can also be said to show the importance of the awareness of Muslims to be able to have a moderate religious character amid diversity in national life (Inayah et.al, 2026).

When analyzed in depth, the various values of religious character education above show the integration of Sufism and Sharia. In practice, this integrative dimension can become the basis of values in the formation of a personality that maintains a balance between material and spiritual needs, between individual and social life, and between a worldly-oriented life and an ukhrawi-oriented life. A person who combines the practice of Sharia with Sufism properly and correctly will avoid the spiritualism reflected in the following lifestyles: (1) prioritizing the inner dimension over the outer dimension; (2) preferring an ascetic lifestyle (zuhd) with khalwah, 'uzlah, and tirakatan as depicted in the lifestyle of hermits; (3) prioritizing individual spiritual satisfaction over collective social responsibility; and (4) viewing all forms of materialism as something low, despicable, and an obstacle to spiritual development; and (5) viewing muamalah activities such as working, trading, farming, having a wife and children as acts of loving the despicable world. Furthermore, someone who combines the practice of fiqh with Sufism will avoid a hedonistic lifestyle (Ismail, 2012). Hal demikian semakin menegaskan pentingnya orientasi pendidikan karakter yang aspek kognitif, afektif dan psikomotorik secara holistik dan berimbang (Anamisari et.al, 2026).

Based on the description of character education values above, it can be said that these character education values must be cultivated through good habits by parents and teachers, instilled through culture, especially school culture, because school culture is the key to character education, where children seek knowledge and receive education. Furthermore, for the implementation of character education in schools to be successful, it is essential that teachers, school leaders, school policymakers, and the surrounding community consistently and continuously set a good example.(Meisarah et al., 2020)

The results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers show that the character education implemented by teachers has a positive impact on the development of children's spiritual intelligence because teachers are consistent in implementing character education at school. In addition, the consistent implementation of character education is also complemented by methods that are tailored to the needs of Buya Hamka's character education values, as mentioned above, so that its application can accurately achieve its learning objectives. Children can understand and see examples from their teachers of the praiseworthy traits taught in this Sufi character education.

Character education is taught by teachers not by explaining lengthy descriptions and definitions that children may not immediately understand. Because children are excellent imitators, teachers create a school environment that can serve as a role model. In the implementation of character education, there are forms of motivation given by teachers to children that can make character education successful in its objectives. The motivation given is in the form of providing understanding, insight, advice, guidance, encouragement, instructions, and invitations as an introduction before children practise it themselves. The importance of exemplifying character education for children in today's digital era is increasingly needed, especially with the presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) which brings various challenges as well as opportunities in the transformation of education for Muslims in the digital space.(Utami et.al, 2026).

The findings of this study show that, upon deeper examination, various dimensions of Sufism and Islamic law (Sharia) can be found in Buya Hamka's views, which can be used as a basis for a character education paradigm for children. This conclusion can be seen from various aspects, including Hamka's interpretation of the concepts of zuhud and qana'ah, which do not mean avoiding the world, but rather controlling oneself against the flow of information and materialism.

The novelty aspect of this research emphasizes that the Sufistic interpretation as described above can produce a model of Islamic religious paradigm that harmonizes the moral and formalistic aspects of Islamic law, which can be the basis for strengthening character education for children in facing the pressures of modernity.

This research can contribute theoretically and practically to the importance of integrating Sufism and Sharia as ethical and psychological foundations. However, this research has limitations, namely that it is still theoretical in nature.

Referring to the various explanations above, it is important to conduct further research that examines the application of Buya Hamka's Sufi thought in children's educational institutions, both formal and non-formal. This is important so that there will be further confirmatory research in the context of case studies.

CONCLUSION

The main discussion of this study concludes that there are dimensions of Sufism and Islamic law (Sharia) values in Buya Hamka's views that can be used as a basis for a paradigm of character education for children. This can be seen, among other things, from Hamka's interpretation of the concepts of *zuhud* and *qana'ah*, which do not mean turning away from the world, but rather self-control over the flow of information and materialism. This Sufi interpretation can produce a model of Islamic religious paradigm that harmonizes morality and formalistic legal aspects in Islam, which can be the basis for strengthening character education for children in facing the pressures of modernity.

This research contributes to the importance of integrating Sufism and Sharia as ethical and psychological. The limitation of this study is that it is still a theoretical study. It is important to conduct further research that examines the application of Buya Hamka's Sufi thought in children's educational institutions, both formal and non-formal.

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