

## TRENDS IN MORAL UNDERSTANDING IN MODERN SOCIETY RESEARCH

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### Abstract (Indonesia)

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**Latar Belakang:** Kemajuan zaman saat ini sangat mempengaruhi masyarakat Islam di Indonesia, terkhusus dari segi akhlak. Saat ini masyarakat sedang dihadapkan pada zaman yang semuanya serba modern. Bukan hanya dari segi teknologi, pendidikan dan ekonomi saja yang terdampak, namun akhlak manusia juga ikut terkena dampak dari modernisasi.

**Tujuan:** Untuk mengetahui apa yang dimaksud dengan akhlak. Untuk mengetahui bagaimana fenomena akhlak masyarakat di masa modern. Untuk mengetahui bagaimana pemberian pemahaman akhlak yang baik bagi masyarakat.

**Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan model deskriptif untuk menjelaskan konteks dari setiap variabel.

**Hasil:** Seseorang dikatakan berakhlak jika perilakunya selalu mencerminkan kebaikan tanpa memerlukan pemikiran. Ketika perbuatan itu tertanam secara kuat dalam diri seseorang maka akhlak itu akan menjadi bagian dari dirinya. Biasanya akhlak yang terbentuk melalui pembiasaan itu tidak didasarkan pada tekanan dan paksaan orang lain, tetapi timbul dari dalam dirinya sendiri, karena hasil dari proses belajar yang telah dilakukannya.

**Kesimpulan:** Pemberian pemahaman akhlak yang baik bagi masyarakat adalah dengan memahamkan bagaimana islam mengajarkan cara kita menjalankan kehidupan dan memahamkan benar mengenai akhlak baik dan buruk agar selain paham, masyarakat juga dapat mengamalkan bagaimana konsep akhlak yang sebenarnya.

**Kata kunci:** akhlak, akhlak terpuji, akhlak tercela

**Abstract (English)**

**Background:** *The progress of the current era greatly affects the Islamic community in Indonesia, especially in terms of morals. Nowadays, society is faced with an era that is all modern. Not only in terms of technology, education and the economy are affected, but human morals are also affected by modernization.*

**Purpose:** *To know what is meant by morals. To find out how the moral phenomenon of society in modern times. To know how to provide a good understanding of morals for the community.*

**Method:** *This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive model to explain the context of each variable.*

**Result:** *A person is said to be moral if his behavior always reflects kindness without requiring thought. When the deed is firmly ingrained in a person then the morals will become a part of him. Usually, the morals formed through habituation it is not based on the pressure and coercion of others, but arise from within themselves, due to the result of the learning process that it has carried out.*

**Conclusion:** *Providing a good moral understanding for society is by understanding how Islam teaches how we live our lives and understanding the truth about good and bad morals so that in addition to understanding, society can also practice how the concept of morals is.*

**Keywords:** *morals, praiseworthy morals, despicable morals*

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## INTRODUCTION

The progress of the current era has greatly affected the Islamic community in Indonesia, especially in terms of morals. Nowadays, society is faced with an era that is all modern. Not only in terms of technology, education and the economy affected, but human morals are also affected by modernization. "One of the impacts on modern society today is hedonism and dependence on the world" (Rahmawati, 2015).

There is a lot of moral understanding that is contrary to the norms found in society. The ignorance of today's young people about Islamic figures and getting to know foreign artists better is one of the most common ones among the people. In addition, models and ways of dressing that are un-Islamic and reveal aurat are one of the most frequently

encountered among the public. The influence of outside culture has also eroded the tata krama among modern society today.

The term modern society exists along with the development of the times, or commonly known as *globalization*. In this case, we can't stop the development, and we can't put it aside. Although the development of the times has a negative side, it also has a very positive side for human life. "The development of the world continues to occur, along with the development of human thought". Therefore, we should follow the existing developments, but positively. And "a society that continues to *upgrade* itself along with the development of the current times is what modern society says" (Rahmawati, 2015).

In practice, morals in a good society can start from small things in the family sphere. By setting a good example such as an honest attitude and saying politely and politely towards parents. Today's society even considers ordinary things such as the words "anjay", "anjir" and similar words as slang/contemporary language and does not consider it to be disrespectful when the true meaning of those words means to call others animals and it is also considered a trend. So here is the need for a good understanding of morals in modern society so that the progress of the times does not make people, and Muslims in particular lose the good morals that Allah has taught through the Qur'an.

As God has explained in his words in Qs. Al Maidah verse 48: (Departemen Agama RI, 2004).

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ  
وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ  
مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً  
وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَشِيرُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ  
جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

It means: "And We have sent down the Book (Qur'an) to you (Muhammad) by bringing the truth, which justifies the previously handed down books and keeps them, then decide their cause according to what Allah has handed down and do not follow their wishes by forsaking the truth that has come to you. To every people among you, We give the rules and the way of light. If God wills, you will undoubtedly make Him one people (only), but God wants to test you against the gifts He has given you, then compete for virtue. It is only to God that you all return, and he tells you against what you once disputed.

We must return to the Quran because it contains *Al Haqq* (which is certain, sturdy, fixed, and true) so as not to be swayed like foam in the ocean because it follows the flow of human opinion, supposedly as a Muslim, we have a strong and good person, even though the times are constantly evolving and changing. This is as Allah has affirmed in Q.S Al Ahzab verse 21 (Departemen Agama RI, 2004).

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ  
الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

It means: "Truly, there has been on (self) the Messenger of Allah a good example for you (i.e.) for one who wishes (mercy) of Allah and (the coming) of the Day of Judgment and who remembers Allah a lot".

From the verse above we know, that no matter what the age is to come, the standard of good nature and behavior is what has been exemplified by the Messenger of Allah. But unfortunately, Muslims today don't even understand how he should be a good person. They just think that self-actualization or recognition from people can be obtained by following current trends, without sorting out which ones are worth emulating, and which ones are not.

Therefore, the researchers are interested in raising this topic in this study entitled *Trends in Moral Understanding in Modern Society*.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive model to explain the context of each variable. Researchers use documentation techniques to collect data sourced from various documents such as books, journals, and other relevant ones. All collected data are then analyzed and selected which one is appropriate to answer the problem formulation in this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Research Results

#### 1. Understanding Morals

Morals are derived from Arabic vocabulary and there are two opinions about morals. According to the first opinion, the word "akhlak is *isim jammed* or *ghair Mushtaq*, meaning a noun that has no root because its form has been such and stands alone" (Imam al-Ghazali, n.d.).

According to imam Al-Ghazali, morals are "a state in the fixed soul that gives rise to an act easily and lightly without the need for consideration of thought and analysis". While the second opinion "akhlak is an *infinitive* form (*isim mashdar*) of the word *akhlaqa*, *yakhliq*, which means *al-thabi'ah* (character), *al adat* (custom), *al march* (good civilization) or *al-din* (religion)" (Imam al-Ghazali, n.d.).

According to Ibn Miskawaih written by Dr. H.M. Jamil, MA states that "morals are a state of the soul that drives to actions without consideration of thought" (Dr. H. M Jamil, 2013). In the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "morals referred to as moral science which has the meaning of a systematic study of the character of the notion of good, bad, and right-looking values can be applied to something".

From the description of the explanation above, the research can conclude, that what is said to be moral is a good deed and it must be continuous or continuous, and a person who does good deeds only once, is not necessarily said to be moral. Morals are all deeds, good human behavior that exists and is ingrained in a person because of habituation or has become a habit and not an act or behavior that is deliberately contrived for a certain purpose.

A person is said to be moral if his behavior always reflects kindness without requiring thought. When the deed is firmly ingrained in a person then the morals will become a part of him. Usually, the morals formed through habituation it is not based on the pressure and coercion of others, but arise from within themselves, due to the result of the learning process that it has carried out.

The person who has a character also does not think about the opinions and judgments of others towards himself but he does the good fight purely just hoping for ridho from Allah Almighty. As for those who do not like his morals in looking at or doing things, nor is it a burden.

## 2. Division of Morals

Morals are divided into 2, namely praiseworthy morals (*mahmudah*) and despicable morals (*psalms*). Here are examples of commendable morals and despicable morals (M.Solihin, 2005).

### a. Commendable morals

- 1) A sense of mercy and meekness,
- 2) Forgiving and deliberative, these two behaviors Allah explains in Q.S Ali Imram verse 159.
- 3) An attitude of trustworthiness and being able to keep promises, such as the attitude of the mandate of the prophet,
- 4) Sweet-faced (always friendly and smiling, or not sour in the face) and not arrogant,
- 5) Persevering and condescending before Allah Almighty,
- 6) Have a shy nature (*haya'*),
- 7) Have a sense of brotherhood between mankind and always live in peace,
- 8) Always do good and do good shaleh (*al-shalihah*), according to the word of Allah in Q.S An-Nisa verse 124,
- 9) Sabar (*al-Shabr*),
- 10) Always like to help others,
- 11) Respect for others,
- 12) Refrain from maxiate,
- 13) Honest and humble, et cetera.

### b. Despicable morals

- 1) Selfish or self-feeling most of all,
- 2) Miser (*al bukhl*),
- 3) Like to lie (*al buhtan*), an example of a lying attitude is to accuse others,
- 4) Not keeping promises, as in Q.S An Nisa verse 107,
- 5) Cowardly (*al jubn*),
- 6) Swearing and swearing, this is one of the despicable morals seen as ordinary and not a sin in the eyes of today's society,
- 7) Spiteful (*hasad*), as in Q.S al Falaq verse 5,
- 8) Always doing vandalism, doing vandalism not only from a big thing but the attitude of not throwing garbage in its place is also vandalism,
- 9) Excess (*al israf*), dressing, eating and drinking should not be excessive
- 10) Doing zalim (*al zulm*), zalim not only commits the crime of physically harming, but does not give the rights of others that we should also give zalim, or a small example if we do not give the right of the learner as it should also be said to do zalim, and
- 11) Committed a great sin (*al fawahisy*).

This kind of morality will continue to be ingrained in someone who continues to learn and get used to behaving well. These behaviors are ingrained and become human characteristics. These good habituations will keep morals good, and vice versa if those good habituations are not continuously carried out or are continuous, they will disappear from oneself.

It is important for us to continue to get used to good behavior since childhood and continue to be sustainable, so that when we grow up we are able to become human beings with a personality and a commendable character. If the human beings in the sphere of society have a commendable personality, then the society can be said to be a bekahlak society.

Based on its object, the scope of morals is divided into two, namely morals to Khaliq (Creator) and morals to beings (Abuddin Nata, 2003).

- a. Morals to Khaliq (Creator) is our way of serving and servitude to God. The attitude of man who continues to desire and strive to be an obedient servant of his creator is that of a man who is considered to have good morals to God.
- b. Morals to beings are reflected in how one treats and engages with one's fellow beings.

In context, it is not only between people but also to animals and plants. In today's modern age, humans are increasingly becoming individualist human beings. We only care about our own importance without thinking about the interests of others. Even towards animals or plants, we also behave arbitrarily. We are too ambitious about our desires regardless of the surroundings. Human beings who have reason, are actually more terrifying than plants that belong to lifeless objects.

As is well known, God created his environment not only of man, but of many other devices that God created. The creation took place not with the aim of oppressing or destroying each other but to take care of each other and protect each other. It is not uncommon for us to even see today, so easily that humans take the lives of other humans, it happens not only because of external human factors but because it is not embedded in him good morals, thus making it easy to harm others and their environment.

### 3. Postulates That Explain Morals

There are several verses of the Qur'an and hadith that explain morals, namely:

- a. Q.S Al Qalam verse 4

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ

It means: "And indeed thou art truly virtuous" (*Al Qur'an*, n.d.)

- b. Q.S Ali Imran verse 159

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظًا  
الْقَلْبِ لَأَنفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ

It means: "Then thanks to the grace of Allah thou (Muhammad) act meekly towards them. If you are harsh and rough-hearted, surely they distance themselves from your surroundings. Therefore forgive them and beg forgiveness for them, and consult with them in the matter. Then, when you have made up your mind, then be devoted to God. Truly, God loves the man of the man" (*Al Qur'an*, n.d.).

- c. Q.S An Nisa verse 107

وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۗ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا

It means: "And you shall not argue for (defending) those who betray him. Truly, God does not like people who are always treasonous and sinful" (*Al Qur'an*, n.d.).

- d. Q.S An-Nisa verse 124

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ  
أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا

It means: "And whoever works the charity of virtue, both male and female is at play, then they will go into heaven and they will not be zalimi in the slightest" (*Al Qur'an*, n.d.).

## A. Moral Phenomena in Modern Times

### 1. Modern Society

Society in the Big Dictionary Indonesian interpreted as the association of human life. Whereas modern means latest, latest, up-to-date. Modern society is a one-of-a-kind society, assembled from people living together somewhere with certain rules that are up-to-date (W.J.S Poerwadarminta, 1991).

Modern society is a class or group of human beings whose life orientation is directed towards the present. This society is often called the change from a traditional society to a more advanced society from all aspects and living with advanced technology.

Human beings experience a process of change in both the way of thinking and the lifestyle. Modern society adapts to the progress of the times by adjusting the lifestyle according to the needs of the times. Society is a society that is open to a new view. They put forward individual attitudes by not putting the public interest first.

Modern society has several features, as follows (W.J.S Poerwadarminta, 1991).

- It is rational, that is, it prioritizes the opinion of reason over the opinion of emotion. Before doing the work, consider first how profitable a job they will do.
- Thinking for a more distant future, not only thinking about problems that are momentary, but always looking at the social impact more closely.
- Appreciating time, that is, always seeing that time is something that is very valuable and needs to be utilized as well as possible.
- Being open, that is, accepting suggestions, input in the form of criticism, ideas, improvements where it comes from.
- Objective thinking, that is, looking at everything from the point of view of its function and usefulness for society.

### 2. Wrong Understanding of Morals in Society

From time immemorial, man was a being who felt capable of carrying out the mandate given by God. Man feels capable of worshipping and preserving the earth and the heavens from the corruption done by the hands of man himself. The attitudes and deeds of man have been given by Allah in advance in Q.S al-Qashash verse 77, which is:

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ  
نَصِيْبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا  
تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

That is to say: "and look to what God has bestowed upon you (happiness) the land of the hereafter, and do not forget your happiness from the worldly (pleasures) and do good (to others) as God has done good, to you, and do not do mischief on (the face of) the earth. God doesn't like people who do mischief".

Humans should realize that it is their duty to protect the environment and not damage it. In today's modern era, it is not only humans who do not care about their environment because they overexploit natural resources, modern humans also seem to be indifferent to their environment, especially to their fellow humans. A small example in a family environment is the attitude of parents who do not ask questions or do not reprimand their children because they are busy at work. For example, in a school or campus environment, the attitude of knocking each other down or not caring about their friends is one of the despicable morals.

Allah's advice in the Qur'an to have good morals in the environment is not only because it is a commandment, but also for the benefit of mankind itself. Modern life that tends to be the cause of the uprooting of human values and feeling rivaled in life must have awareness and be able to improve its social life (Dr. H. M Jamil, 2013).

Commendable morals are usually lost due to shifts in good and bad values in society. The values of goodness in society derived from religious values gradually perverted and caused changes in human morals.

Some examples of moral deviations that can be encountered in modern society, for example (Dr. H. M Jamil, 2013).

- a. Promiscuity between men and women that has been considered to violate religious and cultural values is considered a lifestyle,
- b. Culture shows aurat which is now no longer considered a disgrace,
- c. Individualistic attitude and egoism,
- d. Regardless of halal and haram, and
- e. It is far from religious teachings because it is considered to be the time of day.

People's lifestyles that tend to be materialistic and hedonistic occur because of the loss of commendable morals. God's disrespect for the world is no longer practiced. Unkind behaviors in man will give rise to morals that are not commendable. In addition, there are some bad morals in modern society, namely:

- a. The worship is low,
- b. Not acquainted with his apostle,
- c. Not close to the Qur'an,
- d. Did not shy away from the temptation of the genie,
- e. Unwilling to seek heaven,
- f. Knowing about hell but not avoiding it,
- g. Knowing the favors but not being grateful.

Based on a survey conducted by the Far eastern Economic Review (FEER) mentioned by Dr. H.M Jamil, MA in his book said that Indonesian bahhwa is a society in Asia that has a population that has a population that has mental illnesses both mild and moderate caused by money and health problems.

This raises the question of how can Indonesia, which is the largest Muslim community, experience this. If it is associated with morals, it can happen because of the lack of public understanding of the true nature of life.

### **3. Factors Causing Incorrect Understanding of Morals in Society**

Some of the factors that cause incorrect moral understanding in society are:

- a. The use of increasingly advanced technology,
- b. Soap operas or films that are less educational,
- c. The large number of foreign products coming in, and
- d. The influx of foreign cultures.

The above factors do not only have a negative effect on society. However, the above factors have contributed to the wrong moral understanding in society. Technology that is widely used makes it easier for people to get any information, anytime and anywhere. Humans can access any news they want. But it is not uncommon to find a lot of false news in society.

Nowadays, many of us encounter soap operas or tv movies that are felt to provide no learning at all. It's okay to make movies as a way to entertain themselves, but if they can't provide or insert education in the storyline, at least they must be wise not to show films that will damage the mindset of the people, especially the successors of the nation.

For example, a tv movie entitled "Dari Jendela SMP" which aired on one of Indonesia's private tv stations. They aired stories of middle school children involved in the "pink virus" to the point of making the female lead pregnant at a young age and in extramarital conditions. If kids watch such a show, they will think if it is normal to happen and it can be a wrong understanding for society. People should be wiser to choose spectacles for their families so that they can become a society that understands good morals.

In addition to the two things above, the entry of foreign products into the country is also one of the impacts of incorrect moral understanding in society. Korean culture, for

example, ranging from music, beauty products and other markets has penetrated into Indonesian society.

Foreign cultures make our society as self-guided and guided as they are. It makes them feel that they are not out of date and feel proud of being able to keep up with existing trends. Indonesian society is considered unable to adapt and select so that it is relative to foreign cultures.

### **B. Providing Good Moral Understanding for Society**

In fact, modern does not always have negative connotations, but depending on how a sphere of society deals with the currents of modernization that enter its environment to help society become a modern society that has good morals is to return to Islamic guidelines.

Muslim communities have boundaries and guidelines in acting in their daily lives. Similar to morals, we must be guided and act according to the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. Islamic morals are directing, building and guiding society to a good civilization and keeping away from all social ills due to wrong understanding of morals in society.

Man should live according to Islamic morals and not merely seek his own happiness, as stated by Drs. Sahilun A. Nasir who mentioned that Islamic morals revolve around the following:

- a. The purpose of every Muslim's life is to be servile to Allah Almighty,
- b. Believing in the truth of Allah's revelation and the Sunnah of His Messenger,
- c. Have confidence in the day of vengeance, and
- d. Human life is based on the principle of good and free from evil.

In Islam, morals are a reflection of one's faith. Noble morals are morals that prevail and take place on the path of the Qur'an and Hadith.

Islam provides solutions for humans to face the current current of modernization by decorating themselves with good values such as:

- 1) Sincere
- 2) Patient
- 3) Tawadhu'
- 4) Ridha
- 5) Tell and do honestly
- 6) Displaying noble behavior
- 7) Tawakkal, and
- 8) Various other akhlakul karimah practices.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Morals are good deeds and they must be continuous or continuous, and a person who does good deeds only once is not necessarily said to be moral.
2. This phenomenon of moral society in modern times is the beginning of the loss of good behavior in society. Good values in society began to be replaced with false modern understandings due to the negative impacts caused by the currents of modernization.
3. Providing a good understanding of morals for society is to understand how Islam teaches how we live our lives and understands the truth about good and bad morals so that in addition to understanding, society can also practice how the concept of morals really is.

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