

Tahfiz-based Model on Akhlaq of Adolescents (TMAA): Views from Selected Tahfiz Associations in Malaysia

Norazmi Anas¹, Anasztasia Natasha Muhamad Ramlan²,
Muhammad Ghazi Faris Abdul Mutalib³

¹Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak Branch, Tapah Campus, 35400 Tapah Road, Perak, Malaysia, ²Akademi Pengajian Bahasa (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka Branch, Alor Gajah Campus, 78000 Melaka, Malaysia, ³Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies (ACIS), Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i3/14673>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v11-i3/14673

Published Online: 26 August 2022

Abstract

At present, the moral collapse of adolescents has become more alarming given the frequencies of crimes such as rape, adultery, drugs and abortion that have been reported in mainstream mass media. It is regarded to be attributable from lack of religious education within family unit, as well as being forsaken by their career-driven parents. Thus, the goal of this research is to identify the issues with respect to moral decay among youngsters and propose a *Tahfiz*-based Model on *Akhlaq* of Adolescents (TMAA) by reflecting the perspectives of selected experts from the Association of National Tahfiz al-Quran Institutions (PINTA) and Association of Madrasah Tahfiz Al-Quran Malaysia (PERMATA). The design adopted for this study is qualitative, using a semi-structured interview instrument on the Chairman/representative of chosen tahfiz association and followed by content analysis to analyze the interview data. From the finding, it is revealed that young people's moral, particularly those of Muslims, can be moulded by the training and education methods utilized in Malaysian tahfiz institutions' curricula. Nevertheless, neither public nor private tahfiz institutions in our country are places to house morally challenged youngsters, leading parents to reserve it as a last resort for their children's rehabilitation. These Qur'anic-based Islamic educational institutions ought to be held to the same standards as other mainstream learning establishments in our country, given the Qur'an's stature as the Divine Word. Therefore, it is appropriate to highlight the proposed development of TMAA as one of the efficient options to address the moral collapse of adolescents in order to produce a generation of future leaders with high morals in accordance with the requirements of Islamic law.

Keywords: Tahfiz-based Model on Akhlaq of Adolescents (TMAA), Association of National Tahfiz al-Quran Institutions (PINTA), Association of Madrasah Tahfiz Al-Quran Malaysia (PERMATA), Malaysia

Introduction

Morality is described as a character, behaviour or habit (Dictionary of Dewan 4th Edition, 2005) that is directly tied to the God who perfected human creation and a personal height (Khambali, 2000) that encapsulates the exterior characteristics of mankind. According to Kasmali (2015), morality is a quality that is ingrained in a person who generates spontaneous behaviours without the need for thought or coercion. It is divided into two types: *akhlaq mahmudah*, which consists of praiseworthy morals that benefit oneself and people around, and *akhlaq mazmumah*, which originates from the lust impulse and consists of terrible deeds that are detrimental to all parties (Wahyudi, 2017). According to Hawwa, moral education or personal formation of Islamic humanity is the responsibility of every individual starting with their respective families (Awaliyah & Nurzaman, 2018). The Prophet SAW said that:

"And practice good morals with people".
(Riwayat Tirmidzi & Ahmad)

Muhammad et al (2004) claim that the symptoms of moral decay that afflict Muslims today consist of various forms namely (i) Serious crimes like burglary, rape and murder, (ii) Sexual violence, (iii) Juvenile criminality, (iv) Child abuse and (v) Corruption. While Junoh (2011) indicated peer influence as the most dominant contributor to moral decay among teenagers, Derani (2004) on the other hand highlighted other contributing factors including those related to families, religious upbringing, environment, and media. Hence, this paper will explore the moral decline of Muslim youngsters and propose the Tahfiz-based Model on *Akhlaq* of Adolescents (TMAA) as a potential solution to this issue.

- The study's objective is to pinpoint the problem of moral collapse in young people and suggest development of *Tahfiz*-based Model on *Akhlaq* of Adolescents (TMAA) from the viewpoint of chosen professionals from Association of National Tahfiz al-Quran Institutions (PINTA) and Association of Madrasah Tahfiz Al-Quran Malaysia (PERMATA).

Literature Review

Adolescents are defined as those between the ages of 10 and 19 (Saidin & Mohd Ali, 2012) as a result of the transition between childhood and adulthood, which brings about changes in terms of biology, psychology, social interaction, and economics; thus, they are more mature than they were before (Saputro, 2018). Diananda (2018) states that this stage can be broken down into three main stages: (i) Pre-adolescence, which occurs between the ages of 11 and 14; (ii) Early adolescence, which occurs between the ages of 13 and 17; and (iii) Advanced adolescence, which occurs between the ages of 17 and 19 or older. The adolescents phase is recognized by Fatmawaty (2017) as critical since it is a stage of transformation and change in age-related concern, on lookout for self-identity before embarking adulthood. Tunggak et al. (2015) claim that the factors of moral decadence among these teenagers are interrelated with each other stemming from themselves, family, peers, institutions, mass media and the wider environment. Peer element heavily influence the said phase with the existence of four major hindrances connected with this group of youngsters such as drug abuse, misdemeanour, sexual activity, and schooling (Diananda, 2018), while Ibrahim et al. (2019) indicated that the predominant component of their moral collapse derive from self, followed by peers and environment. Consequently, in order to deal with this issue thoroughly, it must be addressed by parents, teachers, educational institutions, the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM),

Department of Religion, mass media, scholars, and all sections of society. An emphasis on religious education is an effective approach to generate civilized and upright youth who are instilled with Islamic values.

This is backed by Abd Mutalib and Anas (2020) who assert that the discipline-focused tahfiz method raises youngsters to be more refined and ethical, for its condensed schedules are filled with pursuit of knowledge and Qur'an memorization sessions (Abd Mutalib & Anas, 2020). Their pact routines guard them from futile attempts, thereby able to prevent them from being stirred in social problems that can ravage their moral standing. Furthermore, Fauziyah (2020) acknowledged the claim made earlier when she points out that character or character in adolescents when using the tahfiz method improves as a consequence of the mould of the Qur'an, together with the regulations developed as a prevention mechanism (Fisol & Samuri, 2020). According to Abu Bakar et al (2017), spiritual rehabilitation of young people's moral is an appropriate initiative, particularly through Qur'anic approach that addresses faith and spirituality, knowledge, worship, jihad and discipline, *bi'ah salihah*, *qudwah hasanah*, psychology, prayer, and a touch of sharia including *zikir* and *wirid* (refer to Figure 1). Kamaruddin and Majid (2017) on the other hand, indicate that the aspects of Islam including *qalb*, *aql*, and *nafs* have a role in preventing human from undertaking unethical behaviours and implement soul-purification techniques like *zikir* (Azman, 2019), five daily prayers, to exercise patience, enhance self-reflection, constantly draw closer to Allah and lead life based on the Qur'anic revelation. Society has begun to recognize the vast potential of the tahfiz approach in moral development to create holistic human capital consistent with the increasingly trying times nowadays (Nawi et al., 2021). Likewise, the tahfiz method aspires to generate *huffaz* who are balanced and integrated, able to connect *naqli* and *aqli* knowledge, sensitive to the challenges confronting the *ummah*, and able to provide Islamic solutions rather than just memorizers or *huffaz* alone (Nawi & Salleh, 2017).

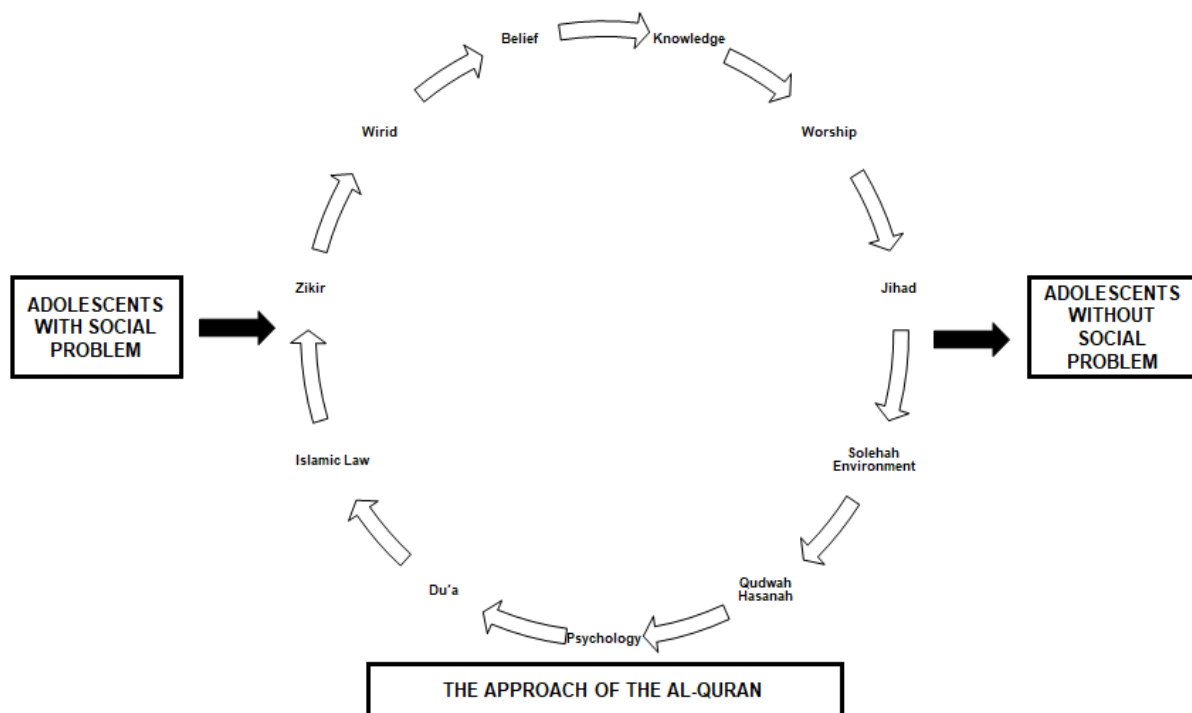


Figure 1: Means of Dealing with Social Problems Concerning Adolescents in reference to the Qur'an (Sahlawati et al., 2017)

Methodology

The study's design is qualitative, utilizing a semi-structured interview instrument on the Chairman/representative of selected tahfiz organizations, such as the Association of National Tahfiz al-Quran Institutions (PINTA) and Association of Madrasah Tahfiz Al-Quran Malaysia (PERMATA). Subsequently, the interview data were analyzed using ATLAS ti9 software-assisted content analysis.

Table 1

Interview's Questions

Theme	Interview Questions
Moral Decline of Adolescents	1. What kinds of moral concerns do adolescents often face nowadays?
	2. What are the causes of adolescents' moral concerns nowadays?
	3. What is the moral standing of Muslim adolescents nowadays?
Significance of TMAA Development	4. To what extent is the significance of research related to the tahfiz approach, in the formation of adolescents' moral?
	5. Which existing approaches are implemented in tahfiz to mould the moral of Muslim adolescents?
	6. Is it vital to develop a Tahfiz-based Model on <i>Akhlaq</i> of Adolescents (TMAA) in Malaysia?

Source: Research Instruments

Results and Discussions

The Moral Decline of Adolescents today

"As for the cause of teenagers' moral issues at the present time, we all currently hold the view that everyone is responsible for it's great success. Particularly from the perspective of *murabbi*, teachers' primary responsibility is to educate. Yet, there is no denying that parents have played a crucial part in their children's education from the start." **(PINTA)**

"But one of the most notable based on studies that had been conducted, if you've read it, is adultery. There you go." **(PERMATA)**

The findings reveal that social problem is the underlying cause of moral decay among Muslim adolescents in Malaysia which causes adultery and normalization of LGBT namely Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, followed by another set of social problem such as smoking, loitering and so on. These are caused by parents who prioritize their careers, especially those in urban areas; thus, results in lack of parental supervision of their offspring's daily activities and a disregard for religious education, which is essential for the development of moral competence as prescribed by Islam. It is common knowledge that in addition to faith and sharia, which act as the spine and bastion of humanity for a person with religion, morality is one of the tenets of Islamic teaching.

"We observe that Muslim youth nowadays suffer fairly significant challenges from the aspect of their socialization, use of social media, and exposure to the world without restrictions. Keeping an eye on that is one of the duties of parents and instructors." **(PINTA)**

“The moral of students in their adolescence or Muslim youngsters in general can be said to adhere to traditions and religious education that is implemented in conformity with a state's national and religious education policy. Being too engaged or having limited time to observe teenagers is the overriding factor in their decadence.” **(PERMATA)**

Moreover, environmental factors like peer pressure and modern technology have led youngsters to partake in immoral and futile acts that are contrary to Islamic teachings. On top of that, rules and legal restrictions against them have become increasingly lax compared to earlier times, such as when caning was permitted in schools. As such, the moral decline among Muslim teenagers is at an alarming and onerous stage especially in the age of borderless digital technology today which makes it easier for them to engage in unfitting actions inapt for their age.

Hence, as parents are in charge of instilling in their offspring an Islamic disposition while also regulating and supervising their daily activities, they hold the key to overcome moral degradation of adolescents. The assiduity in one's job and profession ought to be balanced with obligation of educating children, in order to nurture the next generation of leaders who will build a stable and secure nation within the confines of Islamic ethics.

Significance of TMAA Development in Malaysia

"Thereby, amongst the basis of tahfiz methods is to discipline students" **(PINTA)**

“Studies on the tahfiz method of moral construction are valuable for they educate the public on its two categories; the first is to restore one's moral, followed by formation of moral” **(PERMATA)**

The study's outcomes show that both informants from the Association of National Tahfiz al-Quran Institutions (PINTA) and Association of Madrasah Tahfiz Al-Quran Malaysia (PERMATA) to have emphasized that tahfiz centers are not sites to dispose problematic youngsters who are in need of rehabilitation and moral construction. In fact, they are Qur'an-based educational institutions capable of correcting students/teenagers in compliance with the dictates of revelation. Study of the Qur'an enforced in Private Tahfiz Institutions (PTIs) is added with component of tarbiah that stresses on maintenance of obligatory ibadah besides to accenting optional ibadah. This technique allows a positive atmosphere that is capable to revive and influence the moral of those who devote themselves to studying tahfiz; thence, constructing outstanding and suitable model on *akhlaq* of adolescents ceaselessly. It is consistent with the second objective outlined in the National Tahfiz Education Policy (DPTN) which is to create a Tahfiz Institutional Model that promotes the aspect of wholesome adolescents through rehabilitation and moral development as one of the cornerstone of Islamic teachings itself.

“Given that it forms the foundation of education, the tahfiz approach is accurate. This indicates that we prioritize both education and tarbiah highly” **(PINTA)**

“We may categorize this programme into two categories: short-term and long-term. The long-term plan includes creating Qur'anic-based atmosphere as well as one where the

students are actively advancing their knowledge; subsequently, preventing them from contemplating alternative options" (**PERMATA**)

Apart from non-obligatory ibadah, both informants claimed that the tahfiz al-Quran instruction serves as the base for moral development and rehabilitation of Muslim youngsters. Individual development programmes implemented in tahfiz setting involve two categories: short-term and long-term programmes. Short-term programmes are typically held during school breaks to expose youths who are not enrolled in tahfiz to a structured tahfiz environment, focusing on motivational camps, the pondok education system, studying the Book of *Turath*, funeral management, and others. Contrarily, a long-term programme is designed to supervise and monitor tahfiz students owing to Qur'anic-based environment built in respective tahfiz institutions. It is carried out to ensure that the Qur'an is ingrained in these youngsters' souls and to serve as model for their daily activities and behaviour that will reflect Islamic ethics.

"Two often utilized approaches are disciplinary and scientific approach that can shape adolescents' moral, succeeded by manners and leadership" (**PERMATA**)

The administration of a tahfiz institution uses two key tahfiz strategies to develop moral of young people, including discipline and knowledge-based methods, followed by the use of manners and leadership strategies in the programmes as previously described. Hence, it is determined that the Tahfiz-based Model on *Akhlaq* of Adolescents (TMAA) should be developed in order to address the issue of moral decay among Muslim adolescents, particularly outside of tahfiz setting. This can be achieved by making the Qur'anic principles applied in tahfiz environment the primary framework for TMAA for all to benefit.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is imperative to develop the proposed model, the *Tahfiz*-based Model on *Akhlaq* of Adolescents (TMAA), as one of the remedies to the crisis of moral degradation among Muslim adolescents in Malaysia. It is regarded as possible to restore and mould the morals of Muslim youth back to the authentic teachings of Islam by adopting the approach of *tarbiah* through discipline and education, backed by manners and leadership implemented in tahfiz settings via the Qur'an. As a result, the religious *tarbiah* heavy reliance on the Qur'anic revelation can discipline youngsters and reshape their personalities in accordance with Islamic requirements with the assistance of parents who are responsible of their children's education from an early age, along with outside support from educators and government to ensure that this next generation of leaders is shaped in the best manner in compliance with Islamic standards.

The proposed model will be implemented by Islamic stakeholders, tahfiz and youngsters in Malaysia, such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), Tahfiz Associations, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS), to construct a *tahfiz*-based module on *akhlaq* of adolescents (Qur'anic-based education) to address concerns and social problems that arise among this particular group in our country, ultimately producing morally upright Muslim youth in accordance with the Islamic Shari'a.

Acknowledgement

The study was funded by the Universiti Teknologi MARA under 'Geran Insentif Penyelidikan' (GIP) PHASE 3/2021 entitled 'Pembangunan Model Akhlak Remaja Berteraskan Tahfiz (MART) di Malaysia'

Corresponding Author

Anasztasia Natasha Muhamad Ramlan

Akademi Pengajian Bahasa (APB), Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka Branch, Alor Gajah Campus, 78000 Melaka, Malaysia

Email: anasztasia@uitm.edu.my

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