

Islamic Character Values in Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Volume II: A Philological and Cultural Analysis

Ach Hakiki

University of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia
achhakiki@gmail.com

Dedi Supriadi

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
dedi.supriadi@uinsgd.ac.id

Jajang A. Rohmana

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
jajangrohmana@uinsgd.ac.id

Usman Supendi

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
usmansupendi@uinsgd.ac.id

Suggested Citation:

Hakiki, Ach; Supriadi, Dedi; Rohmana, Jajang A.; Supendi, Usman. (2026). Islamic Character Values in Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Volume II: A Philological and Cultural Analysis. *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas*, Volume 6, Number 2: 729–740. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v6i2.48195>

Article's History:

Received July 2025; Revised April 2026; Accepted May 2026.
2026. journal.uinsgd.ac.id ©. All rights reserved.

Abstract:

This article examines the values of Islamic character in Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk, volume II, through a philological approach and cultural analysis. This manuscript is not only a literary heritage but also a medium for character education, full of Islamic moral and spiritual values. This study aims to reveal forms of values such as *hikmah* (wisdom), *sidq* (honesty), *amanah* (responsibility), *shajā'ah* (moral courage), *tawakkul*, and *ikhlas* (sincerity), which are articulated in the actions and dialogues of the main characters, and enriched by the context of traditional Malay culture. The results of the study show that this tale combines Islamic values with socio-customary norms through language symbolism, narrative structure, and local idioms. These findings emphasize the importance of classical tales as a source of character learning that is relevant to modern education based on local wisdom.

Keywords: character education; Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk; Islamic character; Malay culture; philology.

INTRODUCTION

Classical Malay literature, especially the genre *hikayat*, plays a central role in constructing the cultural and spiritual identity of the Malay-Nusantara community. Since the heyday of Islamic kingdoms on the coast of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, *hikayat* has not only been present as an entertaining narrative, but has also become a very effective moral foundation and religious teaching. Its existence in the form of long prose with language rich in symbolism, metaphors, and spiritual nuances makes *hikayat* an important instrument in the spread of Islamic teachings rooted in local values. The importance of a *Hikayat* as a preaching tool is

also recognized by (Winstedt, 1969), according to him it becomes a bridge between Arab-Islamic concepts and the knowledge system of the local community, especially the Malay community. In the observations he made, many of the manuscripts of the saga contain Islamized Hindu-Buddhist stories, the manuscripts are combined with the teachings of *Tauhid*, *akhlak*, and the lives of Islamic prophets. Tales like *Hikayat Nabi Yusuf*, *Hikayat Iskandar Zulkarnain*, or *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*, is a concrete example of how Islamic culture is creatively absorbed into local aesthetics through literary narratives (Winstedt, 1969).

Manuscripts are a significant primary source, especially in historical research, because ancient manuscripts are related to historiographic studies, both traditional and local, both important parts of History, in which there are elements of myth, eschatology, chronology, cosmology, religious-magical, and cosmogony (Priyadi & Nursam, 2012). For researchers, local history often has a significance comparable to national history, although it has not been formally recognized in the grand historical narrative (Irrshanto, 2020).

Local history is characterized by various criteria that are local in nature, such as local culture which is reflected in various aspects, such as language, dialect, writing system, and form of delivery. In addition, most of these local historical sources are characterized by strong primordial characteristics, which are reflected in various aspects such as language, dialect, writing system, and form of delivery (Fauzan, 2020). Local history is usually formed from the beginning of the process to the end, as explained by the Leicester school, Local history includes all the processes from the beginning to the end of a particular community in an area, as well as Taufik Abdullah's explanation, according to him Local history is a history of a place where the boundaries of events or stories are determined by the author, or can be interpreted as a story of events of a group of people in a certain area that continues (Darmawan et al., 2023).

In current academic studies, the role of fables as a medium for character building is again strengthened through philological approaches and cultural studies. One important study comes from Shaliha (2023), who studies *The Hikayat of Abu Shamah* based on two manuscripts. He found that the character of Abu Syamah represents the main Islamic character values such as religiosity, honesty, justice, trustworthiness, and nationalism. This study proves that the story can convey applicable Islamic ethics in the context of Malay culture, making it very relevant for character education in the modern era (Shaliha, 2023).

In line with that, Saefullah and Wirajaya (2024) in their article *Islamic Values and Morality in the Hikayat Nabi Isa Manuscript* study the *Jawi* language manuscript stored in *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*. They revealed that *Hikayat Nabis Isa* presents three main dimensions of Islamic values: the transcendental relationship between humans and Allah (*ḥabl min Allāh*), ethical social relations (*ḥabl min al-nās*), and the values of life wisdom (*hikmah*). This study strengthens the argument that the tale is not only a literary document, but also a value document (Saefullah et al., 2024). In a follow-up study, Saefullah and Wirajaya (2023) in their article entitled *Tawhid, Worship, and Noble Morals in the Hikayat Nabi Isa*, emphasize three central teachings of Islam in the story, namely *tauhid*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak karimah*. Using textual and hermeneutic methods, they show how moral and theological elements are articulated in the narrative, making the story an instrument of da'wah that is also aesthetic (Saefullah & Wirajaya, 2023). Although these studies have made significant contributions, the focus of their studies is still limited to popular tales such as *Abu Shama* And *Prophet Isa*. On the other hand, *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* has not received enough academic attention, even though it has an equally rich narrative structure. This text contains Sufi elements, court language structures, and strong leadership characteristic values, as well as the use of religious language such as the mention of the name of Allah SWT in various contexts.

Oktaviani and Purwanto (2022) through the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia have published a translated edition of the manuscript, making it more accessible and easier to study for researchers and academics. Unfortunately, until now, there has been no in-depth study that specifically dissects the content of Islamic character values in this tale. Most of the existing studies, such as those conducted by Darmawan et al. (2023), still focus on historiographic aspects, non-chronological story structures, the presence of mythological elements, and the hagiographic style of the main characters (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021). This condition opens up academic space to study *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* not only as a work of history or plot structure, but also as a source of Islamic character values. Especially in the context of local wisdom-based character education, this text has great potential for integration into Islamic literary studies, moral studies, and for strengthening moderate and rooted Muslim-Malay identities.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach by applying philological methods and content analysis based on cultural studies (Lexy J. Moleong, 2018). This approach was chosen to explore and understand in depth how Islamic character values are articulated and conveyed in *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021). This approach also allows researchers to not only analyze the text linguistically and structurally, but also interpret the cultural and religious meanings contained in the text. The main data in this study comes from primary sources, namely manuscripts. *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* which has been translated by Oktaviani and Purwanto (2022) and published by Perpustakaan Press (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021). As a complement, secondary sources in this study include literature relevant to the study of Islamic character values in classical Malay literary works, such as journal articles and books.

In this context, researchers identified a number of Islamic character values that are present in the characters and events in *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II*, among others: wisdom (*hikmah*), honesty (*amanah*), trust (*sidq*), moral courage (*shujā'ah*), tawakal (*tawakkul*), and sincerity (*ikhlas*). These values are analyzed in depth to be classified into three dimensions of Islamic character: cognitive (knowledge and understanding of values), affective (feelings or inner attitudes towards values), and psychomotor (practice of values in the actions of characters). This analysis is also linked to the context of traditional Malay culture, which is the background of the birth of the text. The researcher interprets that the character values in the text do not appear in a vacuum, but are closely connected to the social structure, religious norms, and worldview of the Malay-Islamic community. Therefore, a cultural approach is used to link the text's narrative with symbolic practices, social values, and religiosity that are rooted in the Malay Muslim community in the past.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Wisdom (*Hikmah*)

In *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk II*, wisdom or *hikmah* is one of the most prominent Islamic character values in the main character. This value is not only reflected in his actions, but is also explicitly present in his speech and decisions he takes in various critical situations. One of the important moments that displays the character's wisdom occurs in the chapter "*Perjalanan ke Negeri Syams*". When faced with two opposing views from his advisors, one supporting the path of diplomacy and the other proposing military conquest, Masyhud showed a calm and reflective attitude. He said:

"*Syahdan ia berkata, 'hendaklah kita hamba berbicara dahulu sebelum menghunus pedang, karena dengan lidah terkadang bisa lebih tajam daripada mata pedang.'*" (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021)

["And he said, 'Let us, servants, speak first before drawing our swords, for the tongue can sometimes be sharper than the edge of the sword.'"]

This statement shows how Masyhud chose a peaceful approach by prioritizing dialogue, showing that wisdom in this context is not just a matter of intellectual intelligence, but the ability to restrain oneself, consider many points of view, and believe in the power of communication. This value also emphasizes that in Malay-Islamic culture, good leadership must be based on *akal, adab* and *hikmah*. According to Nurizzati, the use of diction such as "*syahdan*", "*hamba*", and metaphorical expressions such as "*Lidah lebih tajam daripada mata pedang*" is a distinctive feature of the speech style in classic Malay tales. Language structure like this not only beautifies the narrative, but also creates an atmosphere that reinforces the moral and religious message. "*Syahdan*" diction, for example, not only functions as a flow transition tool, but also brings the reader into a sacred storytelling atmosphere and contains implicit teachings that the reader must reflect on (Nurizzati et al., 2023).

The wisdom displayed by Masyhud can also be interpreted as a form *tawakal* and *tafakkur*, namely dependence on Allah after going through rational *ikhtiar*, and the tendency to reflect before acting. This is in line with the values *hikmah* in Islamic character education as stated by Lickona, namely the ability to make decisions based on truth values, not based on emotional impulses or personal interests (Lickona, 1991). In this context *hikmah* not only individual but also social, because wise decisions have an impact on the safety of the people. Furthermore, Masyhud's choice to prioritize diplomacy also reflects the roots of Malay culture that upholds the principle *de musyawarah* and *perundingan*. In a cultural context, this shows that wisdom does not only come from

religious texts, but is also sown through local traditions that are deeply rooted in the values of social harmony. Masyhud, as a legendary figure, is an ideal representation of a leader who is not only intelligent, but also understands the depth of his people's traditions and spirituality.

Thus, wisdom in *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* not only functions as a moral value, but also becomes the basis of social ethics and leadership strategies in the context of Malay-Islamic society. This value further strengthens the position of the story as a medium for character development that is not only based on religiosity, but also comes from local cultural wisdom.

Honesty (*laughte*r) and Trust (*Amānah*)

The value of honesty (*sidq*) and trust (*amanah*) are two fundamental aspects of Islamic character that are clearly displayed in the *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk jilid II*. These two values appear not only in moral statements but also in the main character's real actions, demonstrating the consistency of personal ethics and social responsibility. One of the most striking parts related to this value is in the chapter "*Pembagian harta kemenangan*". In the story, after gaining a great victory from a battle, Masyhud is faced with an important decision regarding the spoils of war. Instead of claiming the treasure as belonging to the kingdom or to himself as the supreme leader, he chooses to return it to the people and society who are entitled to it. The manuscript states:

"Aku tidak mengambil sedikit pun dari negeri ini tanpa seizin Allah, dan jika aku berbuat demikian, maka kuburku tidak akan menerima berkah-Nya." (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021).

[I did not take anything from this land without Allah's permission, and if I did, my grave would not receive His blessing.]

This quote shows the internalization of values (*sidq*) honesty to God and his fellow people, then value (*amanah*) namely the ability to maintain trust and responsibility, which in this context includes the rights of the people. The statement is not only symbolic, but also reflects deep spiritual submission and ethical responsibility. According to Fahma, honesty and trustworthiness are values that cannot only be seen from the cognitive dimension (knowledge of the truth), but must also be manifested in the psychomotor dimension, namely real actions that reflect an honest and trustworthy attitude in everyday life. In their study of Islamic character education ala KH Bisri Mustofa, honesty and trustworthiness are considered direct expressions of religious sincerity and dedication to the welfare of the people (Maulida & Rohmah, 2024).

This is in line with Thomas Lickona's character education model, which states that true character involves the integration of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Lickona, 1991). In this case, Masyhud's decision not to touch the spoils of war, even though he was legally and politically entitled to them, shows that he has moral awareness (*knowing*), empathy towards society (*feeling*), and the courage to act righteously (*action*). This also shows that in the Malay-Islamic tradition, a true leader must be able to practice the values of honesty and trustworthiness in their entirety, not just say them as rhetoric.

In addition, Masyhud's actions also emphasize the relationship between personal values and collective responsibility. In the context of traditional Malay society that upholds the principle of "*Pemimpin sebagai pengayom*", returning property to the community is a symbol that a leader is not only measured by strength and authority, but by his loyalty in maintaining justice and public rights. This value is a moral legacy that is very relevant to the needs of today's character education. Furthermore, the diction "*Kuburku tidak akan menerima berkah-Nya*" implies an eschatological awareness in Masyhud's actions. This means that honesty and trustworthiness are not merely worldly responsibilities, but also part of spiritual accountability in the afterlife. This awareness is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, where someone who is not trustworthy is considered to have betrayed Allah and His Messenger. This perspective strengthens the impression that the values of Islamic character in the story are not just social ethics, but also part of the faith.

In the Malay hikayat tradition, the use of such religious idioms and symbols is very common and serves as a means of internalizing values through narrative aesthetics. Nurizzati in their study of the *Hikayat Si Miskin*, shows that spiritual symbolism such as "*berkah kubur*", "*hak rakyat*", and "*amanah Tuhan*" are part of the moral structure inserted into the narrative to shape the reader's ethical awareness (Nurizzati et al., 2023). Thus, through Masyhud's actions in upholding the values of honesty and trustworthiness in the crucial moment of distributing wealth, *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk jilid II* shows that Islamic character can not only be spoken orally, but also

demonstrated in symbolic actions that have social and spiritual impacts. This emphasizes the role of hikayat as a medium for character education that is integrated with the Malay-Islamic scientific and religious traditions.

Moral Courage (*Shujā'ah*)

Shujā'ah value or moral courage is one of the important pillars of Islamic character, and in *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II*, this value is strongly reflected in the actions of the main character, especially when he is directly confronted with a tyrannical ruler. One of the climactic moments in the text is when Masyhud dares to reprimand a corrupt and arbitrary sultan against his people. In that section, Masyhud says:

"Kalau kau menolak nasihat, keruntuhanlah negeri yang kau pimpin. Demi Allah Ta'ala, aku tidak takut akan musuh duniawi, tetapi takutlah terhadap dosa yang melumpuhkan negeri." (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021).

[If you refuse advice, the country you lead will collapse. By Allah Ta'ala, I am not afraid of worldly enemies, but I am afraid of the sins that paralyze the land.]

This statement describes the form *shujā'ah* which is not limited to physical courage or facing enemies on the battlefield, but rather the courage to speak the truth in the face of power, even though it is at high risk. In the context of Islam, moral courage like this occupies a high position because it is rooted in the awareness of faith and a sense of responsibility towards the values of truth and justice. Masyhud's courage in rebuking the tyrant ruler reflects his moral position as a leader who is not only vertically obedient to God but also horizontally responsible for the welfare of the people. His actions show that *shujā'ah* not just a desperate or heroic act, but a reflection of deep inner integrity. From an Islamic perspective, this is in line with the hadith of Prophet Muhammad SAW. who stated that "*jihad paling utama adalah menyampaikan kebenaran kepada yang dzalim*" ["The most important jihad is conveying the truth to the wrongdoers"] (HR. Abu Dawud).

According to Thomas Lickona's character education theory, *moral behavior* is the courage to do the right thing, especially when facing social pressure, threats, or power. In this context, Masyhud's courage is a real manifestation of *moral courage*, namely ethical actions that arise from inner convictions in divine principles and social justice. Lickona explains that moral courage includes three important elements: awareness of true values, commitment to those values, and readiness to face the consequences to defend them (Lickona, 1991).

The Malay cultural context also supports this dimension, because in Malay custom, bravery is praised not only for physical courage, but "*berani karena benar*". This kind of courage is called "*berani beradab*", namely daring to speak up while *tatakrama* and *akhlak*. Masyhud, although harsh in substance, remains polite formally. This is evident from the use of the diction "*nasihat*" instead of "*perintah*", and the statement *ta'zim* to Allah Ta'ala as a moral basis. This shows that in classical Malay literature, moral courage is conveyed in a subtle but sharp manner. In *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II*, Masyhud's courage becomes more meaningful because the act was carried out in a politically unequal position. He was not a king in the region, and had no military power or administrative authority. Therefore, his courage was truly born purely from inner strength and steadfastness of principle. This shows that moral courage is not only an attribute of a leader, but also an ethos that must be possessed by anyone who wants to uphold justice.

Research by Saefullah & Wirajaya (2024) in *Hikayat Nabi Isa* shows that the courage of the Prophet Jesus to advise the tyrannical ruler in the classical text also contains moral values. *shujā'ah*, as a combination of firmness of faith and social responsibility. This strengthens the finding that the story not only conveys abstract values, but presents them through concrete and contextual actions, as done by Masyhud in the text discussed (Saefullah et al., 2024). Thus, moral courage in *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* is not only a heroic episode, but an important foundation in Islamic character education. The figure of Masyhud shows that a true leader must have the courage to speak the truth and fight falsehood, even if he must face oppressive power. This value is very relevant to the current context, where the challenge of moral courage in facing injustice is still an important issue in society (Maulida & Rohmah, 2024).

Spirituality (*Tawakkul*) and Sincerity (*Ikhlas*)

In *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk II*, spiritual values occupy an important position in shaping the main character's character. Among the various religious expressions shown, the values *tawakkul* (surrender to God) and *ikhlas* (sincerity of intention for the sake of Allah alone) became the moral and spiritual foundation that guided every decision and action of Masyhud, especially in critical and crisis situations. One part that explicitly shows this

appears in the scene when the country led by Masyhud is under threat. Instead of seeking protection in military power, political alliances, or other worldly strategies, Masyhud knelt down and prayed deeply:

"Allah Ta'ala, Engkau penolong orang yang tunduk dan ikhlas. Hamba menitipkan negeri ini hanya kepada-Mu, bukan karena manusia." (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021).

[Allah Ta'ala, You are the helper of those who are submissive and sincere. I entrust this country only to You, not because of humans].

This statement carries a deep, complex spiritual meaning. On the one hand, Masyhud shows the form *tawakkul*, namely the total belief that all affairs can only be submitted to Allah. In Islamic tradition, *tawakkul* does not mean surrender without effort, but rather the peak form of human endeavor after all rational and physical paths have been carried out. Masyhud, in this context, has shown endeavor as a leader, but still submits the final result to Allah as a form of deep faith.

On the other hand, the statement "*hamba menitipkan negeri ini kepada-Mu*" is an expression *ikhlas*, sincerity of intention and motivation only for Allah, not for personal gain, popularity, or power. In the concept of Islamic morality, sincerity is the main requirement for the acceptance of deeds and becomes the main parameter of a person's character. Masyhud did not seek safety to maintain the throne or power, but solely because he believed his leadership was a mandate that must be upheld with full sincerity.

Reading about this spiritual aspect becomes important when associated with the Islamic-based character education model as explained by (Maulida & Rohmah, 2024), they place *tawakkul* and *ikhlas* in the moral feeling dimension, namely the emotional and spiritual involvement of a person in responding to life's challenges. In this framework, spirituality is not only a moral complement, but also the core of the drive to act ethically, honestly, and fairly. Masyhud shows that spiritual values are not just a comfort in suffering but also a moral compass for leadership.

Furthermore, the expression form of Masyhud's prayer reflects the special characteristics of classical Malay literature which is loaded with religious and Sufistic elements. Expressions such as "*Allah Ta'ala*" and "*hamba*" convey humility and an awareness of the human position as a creature completely dependent on the will of God. In Nurizzati's study of *Hikayat si Miskin*, it was found that the form of prayer and dhikr in the story is a literary tool to internalize spiritual values into the narrative structure and psychology of the characters. Thus, spirituality is not only presented as an explicit teaching, but is formed as a character's inner habit in dealing with situations (Nurizzati et al., 2023).

Masyhud's spirituality in the form of *tawakkul* and *ikhlas* also illustrates that the strength of a leader does not only lie in expertise and power, but more importantly in spiritual qualities. In Malay-Islamic culture, ideal leaders are those who can maintain a vertical relationship with God and a horizontal relationship with the people. Masyhud realized both in one action: he prayed to God (vertical dimension) while protecting his people (horizontal dimension), all done with sincere intentions. In the context of today's character education, the values of *tawakkul* and *ikhlas* are very relevant. Amidst the challenges of the modern world full of competition, individualism, and pragmatism, these spiritual values become a balance that directs humans to remain humble, grateful, and act on the basis of sincerity. *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk* narratively presents an integrative model between spirituality, morality, and social leadership. Thus, *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* not only presents a story of physical heroism, but also presents a deep portrait of inner strength, namely a spiritual character based on strong faith. *Tawakkul* and *ikhlas* are the foundations of Masyhud's personality that make him not only a true leader, but also a spiritual role model for readers of the story across time.

Integrity and Moral Leadership

In *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II*, the values of integrity and moral leadership are at the core of the main character, Masyhud's, personality. He is depicted not only as a strategically capable and physically brave leader, but also as a figure who upholds ethical responsibility towards his people. One of the quotes that best reflects this is his statement:

"Bahagia itu bukan pada kemegahan istana, tetapi pada suara anak kecil yang tidak lagi menangis karena lapar." (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021).

[Happiness is not in the splendor of a palace, but in the sound of a child who no longer cries from hunger.]

The quote implies that for Masyhud, the glory of a leader is not determined by symbols of power such as palaces, crowns, or material splendor, but by the leader's own ability to prosper the people. Thus, "*bahagia*" in Masyhud's view, it is a collective and social concept, not individual and elitist. This shows the moral integrity of a leader who understands that power is a mandate, not a privilege. The concept of integrity depicted in this tale is holistic. It does not only mean honesty and consistency between words and actions, but also includes full awareness of the responsibility of leadership aimed at the welfare of the people. In this context, integrity merges into part of the spiritual and social character at the same time. Masyhud does not position himself as the center of power, but as a servant of the people. In Islamic tradition, this is very closely related to the concept *khilafah* where humans, including leaders, are seen as representatives of God who are tasked with maintaining justice and balance on earth.

Masyhud's statement also shows the characteristics of moral leadership (*moral leadership*), namely a leadership model based on ethics, social concern, and siding with the weak. In classical Islamic leadership theory, as found in the *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyah* al-Mawardi's work, the ideal leader is one who is just (*adl*), trustworthy, and caring for his people before himself (Al-Māwardī, 1989). These characteristics are found in Masyhud's character who consistently places the needs of the people as the main priority. Literature study by Fitzgelard & Wirajaya *Hikayat Raja-raja Siam* that leadership narratives in Malay-Islamic tales are often framed by Islamic moral standards, not by worldly greatness. In the tale, a just king who sides with the people is revered, while a king who only pursues power and ignores the people is criticized by the text both symbolically and explicitly. The narrative about Masyhud has the same pattern, the greatness of a leader is measured by his sensitivity and sincerity in upholding social justice (Fitzgelard & Wirajaya, 2023).

Masyhud's integrity is also manifested in his lifestyle and personal decisions. He is depicted as a simple figure, refusing to live in luxury, and not using office as a means to accumulate wealth. This choice is in stark contrast to the figure of the oppressive ruler in the text who is depicted living in luxury amidst the suffering of the people. This narrative contrast reinforces the moral message of the text that a true leader must be prepared to live with the people and experience the same hardships as them. From the perspective of Islamic character education, values of integrity and moral leadership such as these are important to instill from an early age, especially in the context of the modern leadership crisis which is often tainted by corruption, injustice, and abuse of power. Lickona calls integrity a combination of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral behavior* which is manifested in the consistency between believed values and real actions (Lickona, 1991). Masyhud, as a literary figure, represents the ideal of integrity in a form that can be used as an example across generations. Thus, *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* not only a narrative of victory and heroism, but also a reflection on how power should be exercised within the framework of morality and integrity. This tale offers a model of Islamic leadership that is relevant to the modern world, where the need for leaders who are just, honest, and care about the fate of the people is becoming increasingly urgent.

Interpretation in the Context of Traditional Malay Culture

Islamic character values contained in *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* not present in a vacuum, but integrated with the cultural structure and social norms of traditional Malay society. In this case, the story functions as a medium that combines the dimensions of Islamic ethics with local cultural practices that are deeply rooted in society. The strength of this text lies not only in its moral message, but in its ability to convey that message in idioms, symbols, and narrative structures that are familiar to its readers, namely the Muslim Malay community.

For example, the choice of the main character, Masyhud, to adopt a peaceful strategy in dealing with conflict not only shows personal wisdom (*hikmah*), but also reflects the collective values of Malay culture such as *politeness*, *deliberation*, and *avoid open hostility*. In Malay culture, taking the initiative is often considered a breach of manners. Therefore, Masyhud's decision to engage in dialogue before taking military action shows that this tale conveys a moral message within a cultural framework highly respected by its people. This is seen in the narrative which mentions idioms such as:

"*Lidah lantang beradab, menyejuk sebelum membakar.*"

"*Mengikut adat nenek moyang yang tak menghunus pedang sebelum kata selesai berbicara.*" (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021)

[A civilized loud tongue, cools before it burns.

Following the ancestral custom of not drawing the sword before the words are finished.]

These expressions reflect the values of politeness and social balance in Malay culture. Terms such as “*beradab*” and “*mengikut adat nenek moyang*” carry strong normative weight, as in Malay society “*adab*” is seen as a benchmark for a person’s nobility and dignity. Deviating from *adab* is tantamount to destroying the social order. Furthermore, the spirituality in the text is rooted in the traditional perspective of Malay society, which combines Islamic beliefs with local value systems.

When Mashhud said,
“*Negeri ini hamba titipkan hanya kepada Tuhan, bukan manusia.*” (Oktaviani & Purwanto, 2021).

[I entrust this country only to God, not humans]

It is not just a religious expression, but a form of understanding *khalifah* in Islam that has experienced cultural localisation. This aligns with Milner’s view that, in Malay culture, the concept of religious leadership cannot be separated from the customary structure and cosmological views of a harmonious social order (Milner, 2008). Masyhud did not act on the basis of political ambition, but on the basis of spiritual responsibility, which is in line with Malay values such *amanah*, *tawadhu*, and *berhikmah*.

In this framework, the narrative of the story not only explicitly teaches religious doctrine but also does so through a distinctive cultural aesthetic. This is in accordance with the classic observation by Richard Winstedt, who asserted that the Malay saga functions as *cultural propagation tool* because it is able to coordinate the Arabic-Islamic vocabulary with the format, rhythm, and structure of the local narrative. *Hikayat* becomes an integrative vehicle, where the teachings of monotheism and Islamic morals are translated in the form of stories, figures, and symbols that can be understood and accepted by the Malay community (Winstedt, 1969).

Further, Masyhud al-Hakk’s stories show how Islamic values are formulated into cosmological and historical concepts in the Malay world. For example, the leader’s responsibility for the welfare of the people is often associated with the blessings and sustainability of nature. If a leader is tyrannical, then “*bumi tak lagi menghijau dan tak lagi menurunkan hujan*” expressions like this show the close relationship between social morality and cosmic balance in the perspective of traditional Malay culture. Thus, Masyhud’s just, *adl*, and *tawakal* actions are seen as not only having an impact on society, but also bringing cosmic and spiritual harmony.

Malay tradition also strongly upholds the value of education through stories. According to Mohd. Taib Osman, folktales and tales in Malay culture not only function as entertainment, but also as instruments of value transmission, belief systems, and social norms passed down across generations (Osman, 1989). Therefore, *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk* can be read as a form *literary didactics*, namely texts that are not only entertaining, but also educate and shape the character of the reader. The existence of values such as *sidq*, *amanah*, *shujā’ah*, and *ikhlas*. This manuscript proves that traditional literature is no less effective in conveying character education values than modern media. Thus, *Hikayat Masyhud Hakk Jilid II* is a harmonious representation of the meeting between Islamic values and traditional Malay culture. The characters are not only symbols of individual morals but also articulations of social norms and the wider society’s value system. This tale is a witness to how Islam in the archipelago was not instilled with violence, but with narratives, aesthetics, and symbols that live in its society.

In the context of global scholarship, the Islamic character values identified in *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Jilid II* can be further examined through the lens of contemporary character education theories and moral philosophy. This perspective is essential to demonstrate that the values embedded in this classical Malay text are not only culturally significant but also possess universal relevance within broader academic discourse.

Conceptually, values such as *hikmah* (wisdom), *sidq* (truthfulness), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *shujā’ah* (moral courage), *tawakkul* (reliance on God), and *ikhlas* (sincerity) align closely with the framework of virtue ethics developed by Aristotle. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle emphasizes that moral character is cultivated through habituation and the consistent practice of virtues in daily life. Virtues such as honesty, courage, and wisdom as reflected in the *hikayat* correspond to what Aristotle describes as the *golden mean*, a balanced state between two extremes (Aristotle, 2012).

In this regard, the figure of Masyhud may be understood as a representation of a *virtuous agent*, an individual who not only comprehends moral values but also consistently embodies them in action. His moral courage (*shujā’ah*), particularly in confronting unjust authority, parallels Aristotle’s conception of courage as a moral virtue rooted in rational judgment rather than mere physical bravery.

Furthermore, modern character education theory, as articulated by Thomas Lickona, reinforces the relevance of these values. Lickona (1991) proposes that character education comprises three interrelated components: *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*. This tripartite framework closely parallels the analytical structure employed in this study, which categorizes Islamic character values into cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions (Lickona, 1991).

From a more contemporary global perspective, Martha Nussbaum, through her *capabilities approach*, highlights the importance of developing human capacities to live a dignified and ethical life. The values depicted in *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk*, particularly those related to social justice and concern for the welfare of the people, resonate with Nussbaum's concepts of *practical reason* and *affiliation*, which emphasize ethical reasoning and just social relationships (Nussbaum, 2013).

In addition, within the global discourse on religious-based character education, James Arthur (Arthur, 2005) argues that religious traditions play a crucial role in moral formation by providing narratives, exemplars, and integrated value systems. In this context, the hikayat serves as a medium of moral exemplarity, transmitting ethical values through exemplary characters and narrative structures.

Significantly, the hikayat conveys moral values not merely in a prescriptive manner but through narrative engagement, enabling deeper internalization. This aligns with Alasdair MacIntyre's perspective, who posits that human beings understand morality through stories, or what he terms the *narrative unity of human life* (MacIntyre, 1984). From this viewpoint, *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk* should be seen not only as a literary text but also as a moral narrative that shapes its readers' ethical consciousness.

Moreover, the values of *tawakkul* and *ikhlas* can also be examined through the lens of moral psychology and spirituality. In the psychology of religion, Kenneth Pargament explains that religious practices such as reliance on God (*religious coping*) play a significant role in fostering moral resilience and psychological stability (Pargament, 2013). Thus, Masyhud's reliance on divine guidance is not merely theological but also reflects a psychological mechanism that strengthens integrity and emotional balance in leadership.

From a global educational standpoint, UNESCO emphasizes the importance of value-based education through its framework of *Global Citizenship Education (GCED)*. This framework promotes universal values such as integrity, responsibility, empathy, and social justice. These values are substantively aligned with those found in the hikayat, demonstrating that local literary traditions can contribute meaningfully to the formation of ethical global citizens (UNESCO, 2015).

In conclusion, the integration of Islamic character values found in *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Jilid II* with global theories of character education and moral philosophy highlights the universal significance of this classical text. It demonstrates that traditional Malay literature is not merely a cultural artifact but also an important epistemological resource capable of contributing to contemporary global discussions on ethics, education, and moral development.

Islamic Character Values in the Context of Contemporary Culture and Digital Society

In the contemporary era, characterized by the acceleration of globalization, the expansion of digital technology, and increasingly complex cultural transformations, the Islamic character values embedded in *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Jilid II* demonstrate not only historical significance but also strong contextual and practical relevance. Although the text originated within the framework of classical Malay society, it contains ethical principles that can be reinterpreted to address moral challenges in modern life, particularly within the landscape of digital culture and global society.

Contemporary culture faces a number of serious ethical crises, including the rise of individualism and consumerism, and the erosion of moral values in public life. The rapid development of social media, for instance, has created expansive spaces for communication, yet it has also intensified the spread of misinformation, hate speech, and information manipulation. In this context, the values of *sidq* (honesty) and *amānah* (trustworthiness), which are strongly embodied in Masyhud's character, become increasingly crucial. Honesty is no longer merely a personal virtue; it is now a foundational element of trust within digital ecosystems. Without honesty, social relations in digital society risk losing their moral legitimacy.

From the perspective of modern social theory, this phenomenon can be understood through the concept of the *network society* introduced by Manuel Castells. He argues that contemporary society is structured around digital communication networks that redefine social, economic, and political relations. In such a networked environment, power is no longer solely rooted in formal institutions but also in the ability to control flows of information (Castells, 2009). Consequently, honesty and trustworthiness become essential for

maintaining ethical integrity in fast-paced, large-scale digital communication. In this regard, the hikayat offers an ethical framework that can serve as a counterbalance to value disruptions caused by technological developments.

In addition, the value of *shujā'ah* (moral courage), as demonstrated by the character of Masyhud, is highly relevant to responding to contemporary socio-political dynamics. In an era where public opinion is heavily shaped by digital media, expressing truth and confronting injustice often involves considerable risks, including social backlash, *cancel culture*, and marginalization. Moral courage in this context extends beyond physical bravery; it encompasses the willingness to uphold ethical principles in the face of complex social pressures.

This condition can be further analyzed through the concept of *liquid modernity* proposed by Zygmunt Bauman, which describes a social reality in which norms, values, and identities are fluid and unstable. In such a context, individuals often lack firm moral foundations, making them more susceptible to shifting social currents (Bauman, 2001). Therefore, stable and transcendent values such as those found in the hikayat, play a crucial role as sources of ethical orientation. The hikayat, in this sense, functions not merely as a literary work but as a form of "moral anchor" that provides direction amidst the uncertainties of modern life.

Furthermore, the spiritual dimensions within the hikayat, particularly the values of *tawakkul* (reliance on God) and *ikhlas* (sincerity), are highly significant in addressing the psychological and existential challenges faced by modern individuals. Contemporary life is often marked by high levels of stress, intense competition, and existential uncertainty. In such circumstances, spirituality becomes an essential source of inner resilience.

From the perspective of contemporary psychology, Martin Seligman, through the framework of *positive psychology*, emphasizes the importance of developing character strengths such as hope, meaning, and transcendence in achieving psychological well-being (Seligman, 2011). The value of *tawakkul* can be interpreted as a form of existential trust that fosters inner peace, while *ikhlas* reflects a life orientation that is not driven solely by external motivations. Thus, the spiritual values presented in the hikayat are not only theologically significant but also carry important psychological implications for enhancing individual well-being.

In the context of globalization, issues of cultural identity have also become increasingly prominent. The forces of globalization often lead to cultural homogenization, which may threaten local identities. However, *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Jilid II* demonstrates how Islamic values can interact harmoniously with Malay cultural traditions, resulting in a unique and adaptive cultural expression. This suggests that globalization should not always be perceived as a threat, but also as an opportunity for cultural dialogue and creative synthesis.

This perspective resonates with the concept of *cultural hybridity* developed by Homi K. Bhabha, which emphasizes that cultural identity is formed through processes of negotiation and interaction among diverse influences (Bhabha, 1994). Within this framework, the hikayat can be understood as a hybrid cultural space in which universal Islamic values are translated into the local Malay context, producing a dynamic and evolving cultural synthesis. This process reflects the historical development of Islam in the Malay world, which was characterized by cultural adaptation and inclusivity rather than coercion.

Moreover, the relevance of the hikayat in contemporary culture can also be observed within the field of education. Amid the challenges of modern education systems, which often prioritize cognitive and technical skills, the character values embedded in the hikayat offer a more holistic approach to human development. Education should not only aim to produce intellectually capable individuals but also morally grounded, ethical, and spiritually aware persons. In this regard, the hikayat can be recontextualized as an effective pedagogical tool, particularly within culturally based character education. Through narrative structures, symbolic expressions, and exemplary figures, the hikayat conveys moral values in ways that are both meaningful and accessible. This aligns with contemporary educational approaches that emphasize the importance of storytelling in shaping moral understanding and character formation.

In conclusion, the Islamic values found in *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Jilid II* are highly relevant to contemporary culture and digital society. Values such as honesty, responsibility, moral courage, and spirituality offer ethical solutions to various crises faced in modern life. These values provide not only moral guidance but also spiritual resilience and cultural grounding in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing world. Ultimately, this hikayat should be understood as a timeless source of moral wisdom. It not only represents a cultural heritage of the past but also offers ethical guidance that remains applicable in the present and future. Therefore, efforts to study, reinterpret, and integrate the values contained within this text into contemporary life are essential, both in academic discourse and in broader social and educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

This tale is an effective vehicle for conveying Islamic character values. Values such as wisdom (*ḥikmah*), honesty (*ṣidq*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), moral courage (*shujā'ah*), trustworthiness (*tawakkul*), and sincerity (*ikhlās*) are not only displayed explicitly in the words of the main character, but are also manifested in the choice of actions based on Islamic ethics. In addition, these values are combined with Malay social norms and traditions such as politeness, deliberation, and respect for customs, resulting in a harmonious synthesis between Islam and local culture. The *Hikayat* also shows that ideal leadership is not determined by status or power, but by integrity, social responsibility, and loyalty to the values of truth. The Malay cultural context reinforces this message by presenting *adab* as the basis for behavior, making the text not only historically relevant but also contextual for today's times.

The preservation and digitization of manuscripts needs to be continuously encouraged so that classic tales such as *Masyhud al-Hakk* can be widely accessed and studied across disciplines, especially in the context of local culture-based character education. The Islamic values in this story can be adapted into character education teaching materials for schools or Islamic boarding schools to introduce younger generations to local Islamic and contextual wisdom. Further research is recommended to examine this text through other interdisciplinary approaches, such as semiotics, the sociology of literature, or cultural politics, to deepen understanding of the dynamics between text, power, and society. Comparative study between *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk* and other classic *Hikayat* (eg. *Hikayat of Abu Shamah*, *Hikayat nabi Isa*) is important to identify narrative patterns and Islamic character values in various Malay historical and cultural contexts.

REFERENCES

- Al-Māwardī, 'Alī ibn Muḥammad. (1989). *al-Aḥkām as-Sultāniyyah*, (Terj.) Aḥmad Mubārak al-Bagdādī. Maktabah Dār ibn Qutaibah.
- Aristotle, A. (2012). *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. University of Chicago Press.
- Arthur, J. (2005). The Re-emergence of Character Education in British Education Policy. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 53(3), 239–254. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8527.2005.00293.x>
- Bauman, Z. (2001). *Liquid Modernity*. Polity Press.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge.
- Castells, M. (2009). *The Rise of the Network Society*. Wiley Online Library. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444319514>
- Darmawan, B., Huzaini, M. Al, Azizah, F. P., Riza, Y., & Hidayat, A. T. (2023). Kritik terhadap Naskah Hidayat Masyhud Hakk dalam Perspektif Ilmu Sejarah. *MALAY Studies : History, Culture and Civilization*, 2(2), 1–10.
- Fauzan, R. (2020). Penulisan Sejarah Lokal Indonesia (Wacana Magis-Religio Hingga Pendekatan Multidimensional). *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan FKIP Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa*, 3(1), 367–375. <https://doi.org/ISSN 2620-9071>
- Fitzgelard, A. R., & Wirajaya, A. Y. (2023). Analisis nilai moral dalam naskah Hikayat Raja-Raja Siam. *Pena: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 13(2), 46–56. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22437/pena.v13i2.27633>
- Irshanto, A. B. (2020). *Materi konfrontasi Indonesia - Malaysia 1963-1966 dalam perspektif buku teks pelajaran sejarah SMA di Indonesia dan Malaysia*. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.
- Lexy J. Moleong, M. A. (2018). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif [Qualitative Research Methodology]* (38th ed.). PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for character: How our schools can teach respect and responsibility*. Bantam Books.
- MacIntyre, A. C. (1984). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. University of Notre Dame Press.
- Maulida, F., & Rohmah, F. (2024). Pendidikan Karakter dalam Tafsir Al-Ibriz Karya Bisri Mustofa. *Shād : Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 2(2), 92–119.

- Milner, A. (2008). (2008). *The Malays*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/9781444305098>
- Nurizzati, N., WS, H., Zulfadhli, Z., Juita, N., Nasution, M. I., & Sari, H. Y. (2023). A text criticism of Hikayat Si Miskin: A textological study of writing and use of letters. *Bahastra: Jurnal Ilmiah Dan Sastra*, 43(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26555/bs.v43i2.556>
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2013). *Creating Capabilities*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt2jbt31>
- Oktaviani, & Purwanto, D. (2021). *Hikayat Masyhud al-Hakk Jilid II*. Perpusnas Press.
- Osman, M. T. (1989). *Malay Folk Beliefs*. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.
- Pargament, K. I. (2013). *The Psychology of Religion and Coping: Theory, Research, Practice*. Guilford Press.
- Priyadi, S., & Nursam, M. (2012). *Sejarah lokal: konsep, metode, dan tantangannya*. Penerbit Ombak.
- Saefullah, M. I., & Wirajaya, A. Y. (2023). Tawhid, Worship, and Noble Morals in the Hikayat Nabi Isa. *Buletin Al-Turāth*, 30(1), 52–68. <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v30i1.34129>
- Saefullah, M. I., Wirajaya, A. Y., Jesus, I. D. C. De, & Ahmad, W. (2024). Islamic Values and Morality in the Hikayat Nabi Isa Manuscript: A Textual Study. *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion*, 9(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v9i1.2107>
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being*. Free Press.
- Shaliha, C. A. A. (2023). Nilai Pendidikan Karakter dalam Naskah Hikayat Abu Syamah: Kajian Filologis. *An-Nahdah Al-'Arabiyah*, 3(1), 78–93.
- UNESCO. (2015). *Global citizenship education: topics and learning objectives*. UNESCO. <https://doi.org/10.54675/DRHC3544>
- Winstedt, R. O. (1969). *A history of classical Malay literature*. oxford university press.



© 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY SA) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).