

Hamka's transcendental values in *Pribadi Hebat*: Bridging philosophical thought and contemporary character education

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Abstract

Character education requires a strong spiritual foundation to develop individuals with integrity. However, studies on transcendental values in Hamka's *Pribadi Hebat* have largely been limited to identifying educational values without proposing a conceptual implementation model for contemporary character education. This study aims to analyze the transcendental values presented in *Pribadi Hebat* and develop their implementation model for character education. A qualitative *library research* approach was employed, and the data were analyzed using *qualitative content analysis* of Hamka's major works and relevant supporting literature. The findings reveal that transcendental values consist of three interconnected dimensions—*aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak*—which collectively form an integrated framework for personality development. Based on these findings, this study proposes a conceptual model linking transcendental values with the curriculum, teachers, family, school culture, community, and the digital environment to foster a *great personality*. The proposed model extends Hamka's philosophical thought into a more applicable framework for contemporary character education.

Keywords: Transcendental values; Buya Hamka; *Pribadi Hebat*; Character education; Islamic education.

Abstrak

Pendidikan karakter memerlukan fondasi spiritual yang kuat agar mampu membentuk pribadi yang berintegritas. Namun, kajian mengenai nilai transendensi dalam *Pribadi Hebat* karya Hamka masih didominasi oleh identifikasi nilai dan belum menghasilkan model implementasi konseptual bagi pendidikan karakter kontemporer. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis nilai-nilai transendensi dalam *Pribadi Hebat* serta mengembangkan model implementasinya dalam pendidikan karakter. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis *library research* yang dianalisis melalui *qualitative content analysis* terhadap karya-karya Hamka dan literatur pendukung yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai transendensi terdiri atas tiga dimensi utama, yaitu *aqidah*, *ibadah*, dan *akhlak*, yang membentuk sistem pembinaan kepribadian secara terpadu. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, penelitian ini menghasilkan model konseptual yang menghubungkan nilai transendensi dengan kurikulum, guru, keluarga, budaya sekolah, masyarakat, dan lingkungan digital menuju pembentukan *great personality*. Model ini memperluas pemikiran Hamka dari ranah filosofis menuju kerangka implementasi pendidikan karakter yang lebih aplikatif.

Kata Kunci: Nilai transendensi; Buya Hamka; *Pribadi Hebat*; Pendidikan karakter; Pendidikan Islam.

Introduction

Character formation is one of the fundamental objectives of education because it shapes how individuals think, behave, and act in their daily lives (Cholifah & Faelasup, 2024). However, the development of modern society has introduced increasingly complex challenges, including declining integrity, rising intolerance, weakening social responsibility, and the widespread use of digital technology without corresponding moral awareness (Royackers et al., 2018). These conditions indicate that character education has not yet been fully successful in cultivating individuals who consistently uphold moral values (Anam et al., 2019). To date, character education has largely emphasized behavioral change and social habituation, while the spiritual dimension that serves as the foundation of character formation has often received less attention (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023). As a result, the character that is developed tends to depend on external control rather than evolving into an intrinsic moral consciousness grounded in personal conviction and ethical responsibility.

From the perspective of Islamic education, character is understood not merely as behavior that conforms to social norms but as the manifestation of one's relationship with Allah, reflected in every aspect of life (Khaidir & Suud, 2020). This relationship is conceptualized as transcendental values, which position the divine dimension as the foundation for thinking, behaving, and acting (Razaqtana et al., 2025). Within this framework, *aqidah* serves as the foundation of life orientation, *ibadah* functions as the means of internalizing values, and *akhlak* represents the visible expression of an individual's spiritual quality (Schnitker et al., 2019). Together, these three dimensions constitute a comprehensive process of personality development that not only encourages adherence to rules but also nurtures an intrinsic sense of moral responsibility. Therefore, strengthening transcendental values is regarded as a more robust foundation for advancing character education across various educational levels.

One of the prominent Muslim scholars who devoted considerable attention to character formation grounded in transcendental values was Buya Hamka through his book *Pribadi Hebat* (Syam et al., 2025). Rather than merely presenting moral advice, the book offers a philosophical framework explaining how a strong personality is cultivated through the harmonious integration of *aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak*. Hamka argues that a person's greatness is determined neither by wealth, lineage, nor social status, but by the quality of one's relationship with Allah, which is reflected in self-control, the wise use of reason, and the ability to contribute positively to others (Fajria & Fahmi, 2026). This perspective positions *Pribadi Hebat* as a valuable conceptual resource for character education, particularly in response to the growing need for educational models capable of integrating spiritual values with the challenges of contemporary life.

Studies examining the values presented in *Pribadi Hebat* are not new within the field of Islamic educational research. Abdullah, Sakir, and Faisal (2025) identified three core dimensions of Islamic education in the book—*aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak*—as the foundation of personality formation. Dalimunthe, Erawadi, and Hasibuan (2025) demonstrated that the values articulated in *Pribadi Hebat* are closely aligned with the five principal dimensions of Indonesia's Strengthening Character Education (PPK) program, particularly religiosity, honesty, diligence, nationalism, and social responsibility. Meanwhile, Nurmawansyah, Fakhrullah, and Abdussyukur (2026) expanded the discussion by reconstructing Hamka's concept of transcendental education based on several of his major works and formulating the concepts of *izzah*, *ghirah*, *adab*, and the "Golden Triangle" mechanism as the core framework of Hamka's transcendental education. Although these studies have significantly enriched scholarly understanding of Hamka's educational thought, they remain primarily focused on value identification, relevance assessment, and conceptual reconstruction. To date, no study has developed a conceptual implementation model that systematically explains how these transcendental values can be operationalized within contemporary character education.

Against this background, the present study aims to analyze the transcendental values embedded in Hamka's *Pribadi Hebat* and to develop a conceptual model for their implementation in contemporary character education. Unlike previous studies, which primarily emphasized value identification or conceptual reconstruction, this study positions transcendental values as the central element connecting key educational components—namely curriculum, teachers, family, school culture, community, and the digital environment—within an integrated implementation framework. This model is expected to extend Hamka's philosophical thought into a more operational framework that is applicable to addressing contemporary challenges in character education. Accordingly, this study not only enriches the conceptual discourse on Hamka's educational philosophy but also proposes an alternative implementation framework that may serve as a reference for the development of character education grounded in transcendental values.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design to examine transcendental values in Hamka's thought and their relevance to contemporary character education (Connaway & Radford, 2021). The primary data sources consisted of Hamka's major works that explicitly discuss personality development, spiritual values, and *akhlak*, namely *Pribadi Hebat*, *Falsafah Hidup*, *Lembaga Budi*, and *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. In addition, books, scholarly journal articles, and previous studies on Islamic educational philosophy, character education, and the concept of transcendence were used as supporting sources for analysis. These sources were selected purposively

based on their substantive relevance, the authority of the authors, and their direct connection to the research focus, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the construction of Hamka's educational thought.

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis through four sequential stages (Miles et al., 2019). The first stage involved an intensive reading of all selected sources to identify ideas related to transcendental values. The second stage consisted of coding and categorizing the data according to similarities in meaning, leading to the emergence of major thematic categories. The third stage involved a critical interpretation of the relationships among these themes to develop a conceptual framework of *aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak* as the core dimensions of transcendental values. The final stage synthesized the analytical findings into a conceptual model for implementing transcendental values in character education. All stages were conducted iteratively to ensure that the relationships among concepts were comprehensively understood and that the resulting interpretation remained systematic, coherent, and aligned with the objectives of the study.

Results and Discussion

Hamka's transcendental values in *Pribadi Hebat*

Buya Hamka was one of Indonesia's leading Muslim intellectuals who devoted considerable attention to human development through the cultivation of spiritual, intellectual, and moral dimensions (Trisnani et al., 2025). This intellectual commitment was consistently reflected throughout his major works, including *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, *Falsafah Hidup*, *Lembaga Budi*, and *Pribadi Hebat*. Hamka Rusdi (2016) explains that Hamka's writings emerged from his deep concern for the condition of the Muslim community and his aspiration to nurture individuals who possess faith, knowledge, and noble character. This consistency is also evident in Hamka's life, in which da'wah, education, and writing were integrated into a unified intellectual mission (Hamka Irfan, 2014). Among these works, *Pribadi Hebat* represents Hamka's most comprehensive discussion of personality development, as it specifically addresses the sources of human strength, the process of character formation, and the moral qualities that every individual should possess.

Pribadi Hebat demonstrates that a person's greatness is measured not by social status, wealth, or lineage, but by the strength of one's character and the ability to govern every aspect of life. Hamka (2016) develops this perspective through religious reflections, life experiences, exemplary figures, and moral advice, all of which emphasize that one's relationship with Allah constitutes the starting point of personality development. This approach illustrates that transcendental values do not exist as isolated concepts but are integrated throughout the discussion of how individuals think, worship, and interact with their surroundings. Within this conceptual framework, the

transcendental values presented in *Pribadi Hebat* can be understood through three principal dimensions: *aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak*.

Table 1. Identification of transcendental values in *Pribadi Hebat*

Dimension	Indicators	Value orientation
<i>Aqidah</i>	<i>Tawhid</i> , faith, <i>tawakkul</i> , use of reason	The relationship between humans and Allah as the foundation of personality development
<i>Ibadah</i>	Devotion, sincerity, gratitude, spiritual discipline	Internalization of values through acts of worship
<i>Akhlak</i>	<i>Izzah</i> , <i>ghirah</i> , <i>adab</i> , responsibility, courage	The manifestation of transcendental values in everyday life

Source: Developed by the authors based on Hamka (1982, 2015, 2016, 2018).

Aqidah occupies the most fundamental position within Hamka's philosophical framework. *Tawhid* is understood not merely as belief in the oneness of Allah but also as the guiding principle that shapes how individuals perceive themselves, knowledge, and life itself. Hamka (2016) asserts that a strong personality originates from unwavering faith, enabling individuals to resist worldly temptations and external pressures. This perspective is closely aligned with *Falsafah Hidup*, in which Hamka (2015) explains that reason is a divine gift that enables human beings to recognize the signs of Allah's greatness, while revelation provides guidance to ensure that reason remains properly directed. Consequently, *tawhid* becomes the foundation of an integrated worldview that harmonizes faith and rationality within a unified framework of life. This interpretation is also consistent with Al-Faruqi (1992), who regards *tawhid* as the Islamic worldview that integrates the spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions of human existence.

Transcendental values are further developed through *ibadah* as a process of cultivating inner spiritual qualities. In *Pribadi Hebat*, Hamka (2016) does not restrict *ibadah* to ritual worship alone; instead, he conceptualizes it as a continuous practice that nurtures discipline, sincerity, patience, and an awareness of human responsibility before Allah. When practiced consistently, devotion transforms faith-based values into enduring habits that influence how individuals make decisions and respond to life's challenges. This idea is further reinforced in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, where Hamka (1982) explains that *ibadah* serves as a means of spiritual purification and as a pathway for cultivating *taqwa*, enabling individuals to contribute to the common good. Accordingly, *ibadah* functions as a bridge between belief and action, ensuring that transcendental values are not confined to abstract concepts but are embodied in everyday life.

Akhlak represents the most tangible manifestation of the entire process of personality development. Hamka (2016) describes a great personality as one characterized by the courage to uphold truth, a strong sense of responsibility, dignity, perseverance, and the ability to maintain harmonious relationships with others. These qualities

demonstrate that moral excellence is not founded upon social recognition but emerges from a deeply rooted spiritual consciousness. This perspective is consistent with *Lembaga Budi*, in which Hamka (2018) portrays moral character as the outward expression of inner spiritual purity. From the perspective of Islamic education, this interpretation is in line with Al-Attas (1991), who identifies *adab* as the ultimate objective of education, namely the recognition of the proper order of existence that gives rise to justice, integrity, and responsibility. Thus, within Hamka's thought, *akhlak* is not merely a set of ethical norms but the direct consequence of one's relationship with Allah.

Table 2. Synthesis of transcendental values in *Pribadi Hebat*

Dimension	Role in personality development
<i>Aqidah</i>	The foundation of faith and life orientation
<i>Ibadah</i>	The internalization of values through devotion and spiritual habituation
<i>Akhlak</i>	The manifestation of transcendental values in behavior and action

Source: Developed by the authors based on the study findings.

These three dimensions constitute an integrated framework within Hamka's concept of personality development. *Aqidah* provides direction and purpose in life, *ibadah* internalizes spiritual values through continuous devotion, and *akhlak* represents the concrete expression of faith that has matured within the individual. This structure demonstrates that the relationship between human beings and Allah serves as the source of all moral action, enabling personality development to extend beyond personal piety toward broader social and humanitarian responsibility. From the perspective of the philosophy of values, this framework places transcendental values at the highest level because they constitute the foundation from which all other values governing human life emerge (Kaelan, 2004). At the same time, it demonstrates that Hamka's conception of character education is not merely concerned with cultivating desirable behavior but with forming individuals who possess *tawhid*-based consciousness, profound spirituality, and mature *adab* as an inseparable unity.

Implementing Hamka's transcendental values in contemporary character education

Previous studies on Hamka's educational thought have primarily focused on identifying the Islamic educational, moral, and character values embedded in his works (Bahrudin, 2019; Dinata et al., 2025; Febriyani et al., 2024). Although these studies have successfully demonstrated the richness of Hamka's intellectual legacy, they have not fully explained how these values can be translated into the practice of contemporary character education. The findings of this study reveal that the transcendental values articulated in *Pribadi Hebat* encompass not only the dimensions of *aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak*, but also constitute an implementation mechanism that connects multiple educational components toward the formation of a *great personality*.

Therefore, the contribution of this study extends beyond identifying transcendental values by proposing a conceptual implementation model that bridges Hamka's philosophical thought with the practice of contemporary character education.

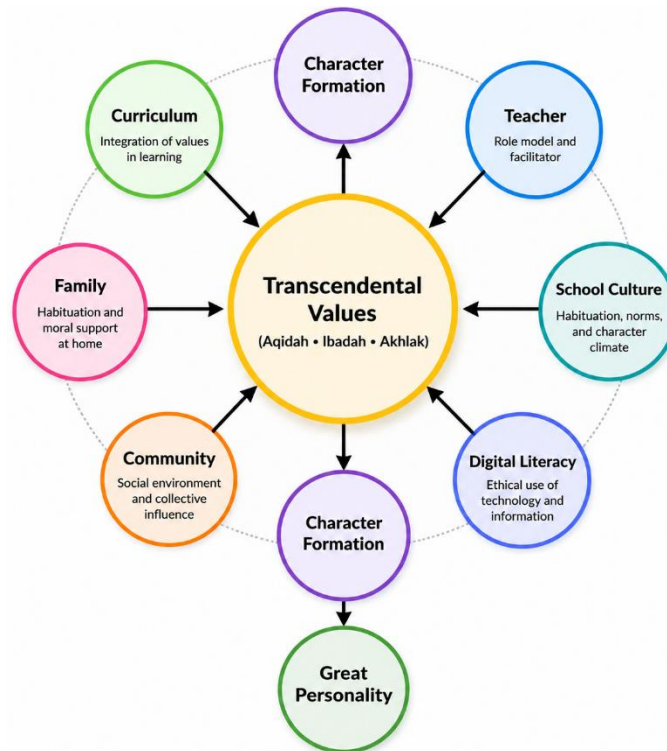


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for implementing Hamka's transcendental values in contemporary character education

Source: Developed by the authors based on Hamka (1982, 2015, 2016, 2018).

Figure 1 presents a conceptual synthesis of the overall findings of this study. The model was developed to demonstrate that transcendental values do not operate independently but require an interconnected educational ecosystem to be effectively internalized. Unlike previous studies, which generally concluded with the classification of educational or character values, this model illustrates the functional relationships among the core values (*Transcendental Values*), the implementation environment (curriculum, teacher, family, school culture, community, and digital environment), the process of character formation (*Character Education*), and the ultimate outcome (*Great Personality*). Accordingly, Figure 1 is not merely a visualization of the research findings but a conceptual representation of the mechanism through which transcendental values can be implemented in character education.

The placement of *Transcendental Values* at the center of the model indicates that *aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak* constitute the core of the entire character formation process. These three dimensions do not function independently but form an integrated and mutually reinforcing structure. *Aqidah* provides life orientation, *ibadah* internalizes values through spiritual habituation, and *akhlak* represents their practical manifestation in

social life. Hamka (2016) regarded these three elements as the inseparable foundation of a strong personality. These findings extend the study by Solihin et al. (2020), which primarily classified Islamic educational values, by demonstrating the functional relationships among these dimensions and illustrating how transcendental values can serve as an implementation framework for character education.

The first component surrounding the core of the model is the curriculum. Its position indicates that the curriculum serves as the formal entry point for integrating transcendental values into the entire learning process. According to Hamka (2015), knowledge cannot be separated from *tawhid*; therefore, education should not merely transmit knowledge but also cultivate students' orientation toward life. This perspective is consistent with Al-Faruqi (1992), who positioned *tawhid* as the foundation for the integration of knowledge. These findings reinforce the study by Rukmana et al. (2024), which identified value integration within the curriculum as an essential prerequisite for character education, while further demonstrating that such integration should be grounded in the unified dimensions of *aqidah*, *ibadah*, and *akhlak*.

The teacher occupies a strategic position as the primary mediator in the process of value internalization. The proposed model demonstrates that the successful implementation of transcendental values depends not only on the content delivered in the classroom but also on the exemplary conduct demonstrated by teachers in their daily lives. Hamka (2018) emphasized that noble character reflects the purity of one's inner self, whereas Al-Attas (1991) identified *adab* as the ultimate objective of Islamic education. This finding is consistent with the study by Rafif and Dafit (2023), which highlighted the central role of teachers in shaping students' character. However, the present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that teachers' exemplary conduct acquires deeper educational significance when it is rooted in transcendental values rather than merely in social norms.

The position of the family in Figure 1 indicates that it serves as the primary environment for the internalization of transcendental values before learners enter formal educational institutions. The habituation of *ibadah*, respectful communication, and parental role modeling provide the earliest foundation for character formation. Hamka (2016) explains that a strong personality is developed through continuous practice until values become enduring habits. This perspective resonates with Al-Ghazali's emphasis on the importance of cultivating *akhlak* from an early age. These findings complement the study by Smoljo-Dobrovoljski (2025), which identified the family as a supporting factor in character education, by demonstrating that the family is, in fact, the primary foundation for the internalization of transcendental values.

Beyond the family, school culture reinforces character formation through collective habituation. A positive school culture enables the values acquired by students to develop into consistent patterns of social behavior. From Hamka's perspective (2018),

character is not formed solely through advice but through repeated practice until it becomes an integral part of one's personality. These findings confirm the study by Afandi (2018) regarding the importance of school culture in character education. Unlike that study, however, the present model demonstrates that school culture becomes more effective when it is grounded in transcendental values, allowing habituation to cultivate not only social discipline but also spiritual consciousness.

The final two components, community and the digital environment, extend the implementation of transcendental values beyond the boundaries of the school. The community represents the social arena in which character is tested and practiced, whereas the digital environment reflects a contemporary space where learners interact, acquire knowledge, and construct their identities. The inclusion of these two components is based on the reality that character formation in the digital era no longer occurs exclusively within the home or school. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that human development is influenced by multiple interconnected environmental systems. Building upon this perspective, the present study positions transcendental values as the central element connecting these environments, thereby suggesting that digital literacy should be understood not merely as technological competence but also as the capacity to uphold ethics, responsibility, and integrity in digital spaces.

All of these components converge in *Character Education* as a continuous process of character formation. Within this model, character education is understood not as a single subject or educational program but as a comprehensive process of value internalization involving all educational environments. Consequently, *Great Personality* is positioned as the ultimate outcome because it reflects Hamka's educational ideal: individuals who possess steadfast *aqidah*, profound spirituality, mature *akhlak*, critical thinking skills, and a strong sense of social responsibility. Thus, the conceptual model proposed in this study demonstrates that effective character education cannot rely solely on behavioral habituation but must be grounded in transcendental values that are implemented systematically through the curriculum, teachers, family, school culture, community, and the digital environment.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the transcendental values presented in Hamka's *Pribadi Hebat* are not merely a collection of moral and spiritual principles but constitute an integrated system for personality development. This system is structured around three core dimensions: *aqidah* as the foundation of one's life orientation, *ibadah* as the process of internalizing values through continuous devotion, and *akhlak* as the manifestation of transcendental values in both individual conduct and social life. These three dimensions are interconnected and collectively form the mechanism through which a *great personality* is cultivated. Consequently, transcendental values should not be understood solely as philosophical concepts but as values that can be operationalized

in character education through the synergy of the curriculum, teachers, family, school culture, community, and the digital environment. These findings highlight that effective character development requires a spiritual foundation integrated across the entire educational ecosystem to address the moral challenges of contemporary society.

The primary contribution of this study lies in the development of a conceptual model for implementing transcendental values that bridges Hamka's philosophical thought with the practice of contemporary character education. Unlike previous studies, which have largely focused on identifying educational values in Hamka's works, this study proposes an implementation framework that demonstrates the relationships among core values, educational environments, the character formation process, and the educational outcome in the form of a *great personality*. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its library research approach, which relies primarily on Hamka's works and therefore does not empirically evaluate the proposed model in educational settings. Future research is therefore encouraged to further develop and validate this model through case studies, action research, or quantitative and mixed-methods approaches across different educational levels in order to examine the effectiveness of implementing transcendental values in fostering students' character development.

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