

## Symbolic Interaction and the Art of Islamic Communication: A Strategic Approach to Education

Hafsah Juni Batubara<sup>1✉</sup>, Suhendri<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam As-Sunnah Deli Serdang, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>hafsahjunibatubara@stain-madina.ac.id, <sup>2</sup>suhendri@assunnah.ac.id

### Article History

Submitted: 2025-05-22 | Accepted: 2025-06-01 | Published: 2025-06-30

E-mail correspondence: hafsahjunibatubara@stain-madina.ac.id

### Abstract

*This article explores communication strategies based on symbolic interaction theory in the context of Islamic values education, especially in response to the challenges posed by modernisation and globalisation. In Islamic education, communication serves as an important instrument for the transmission and internalisation of values that shape students' character, ethics and worldview. Using a literature review approach, this study analyses how symbolic interaction centred on the creation of meaning through social interaction can be applied to develop effective educational communication strategies. Findings show that interpersonal communication, group discussions and digital media integration are key strategies that align with the symbolic interactionist framework. These approaches allow educators to connect with students in meaningful ways, recognising their social backgrounds and individual identities. By emphasising symbols, shared meaning and personal engagement, Islamic educators can foster a deeper understanding and stronger commitment to Islamic values among students. This approach not only supports character development, but also prepares students to navigate the globalised world while maintaining their religious identity. This study underscores the importance of adaptive and value-based communication strategies in enhancing the relevance and impact of Islamic education in contemporary society.*

**Keywords:** Islamic Communication, Symbolic, Islamic Values, Globalisation, Digital Media

### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi strategi komunikasi berbasis teori interaksionisme simbolik dalam konteks pendidikan nilai-nilai Islam, khususnya dalam menghadapi tantangan modernisasi dan globalisasi. Dalam pendidikan Islam, komunikasi berperan penting sebagai sarana penyampaian dan internalisasi nilai-nilai yang membentuk karakter, etika, dan pandangan hidup peserta didik. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan pustaka, studi ini menganalisis bagaimana interaksi simbolik yang berfokus pada pembentukan makna melalui interaksi sosial dapat diterapkan untuk mengembangkan strategi komunikasi pendidikan yang efektif. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi interpersonal, diskusi kelompok, dan pemanfaatan media digital merupakan strategi utama yang selaras dengan kerangka interaksionisme simbolik. Pendekatan ini memungkinkan para pendidik untuk terhubung secara bermakna dengan peserta didik, dengan mempertimbangkan latar belakang sosial dan identitas individual mereka. Dengan menekankan simbol, makna bersama, dan keterlibatan personal, pendidik Islam dapat menumbuhkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam dan



komitmen yang lebih kuat terhadap nilai-nilai Islam. Pendekatan ini tidak hanya mendukung pembentukan karakter, tetapi juga mempersiapkan peserta didik untuk menghadapi dunia global tanpa kehilangan identitas keagamaannya. Studi ini menegaskan pentingnya strategi komunikasi adaptif dan berbasis nilai dalam meningkatkan relevansi dan dampak pendidikan Islam di era kontemporer.

**Kata Kunci:** Komunikasi Islam, Simbolik, Nilai-nilai Islam, Globalisasi, Media digital

## Introduction

Islamic value education plays an important role in shaping the identity and character of the Muslim generation in the midst of the times (Qur, 2025). Through Islamic values, individuals are expected to have a good and correct understanding of ethics, morality, and life principles in accordance with Islamic teachings (Bucky Wibawa Karya Guna, Sri Endah Yuwantiningrum, Firmansyah, Muh. Dzihab Aminudin S, & Aslan, 2024). However, the process of transmitting these values faces complex challenges in a modern society that is heavily influenced by globalisation, technological development, and cultural diversity. This phenomenon raises a number of questions, especially how Islamic values can remain relevant and socially acceptable, and how the process of transmitting these values can take place effectively in different social contexts (Rohman, Roibin, Barizi, Walid, & Akbar, 2025).

In the context of formal education, especially in Islamic educational institutions, communication between teachers and students is key in instilling values (Kurniawati & Fatimah, 2024). Islamic value education often tends to be abstract and requires an approach that promotes understanding, exemplification, and internalisation of values rather than just the transmission of cognitive knowledge (Siahaan, Ahkas, & Pulungan, 2022). In addition, the use of communication technology is also one of the factors that can facilitate or complicate the delivery of Islamic values. The use of digital media, social media, and technology-based educational applications on the one hand can reach a wider audience in a more interactive way (Shabur & Siddiki, 2024). However, on the other hand, unfiltered access to digital content also presents challenges in the form of exposure to values that may conflict with Islamic teachings.

In communication studies, especially in the sociology of communication, social interaction is the main medium in shaping meaning and values in society. Effective communication involves not only the way of delivering messages, but also includes understanding the social and cultural context of the audience (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Therefore, the sociology of communication approach is considered relevant in designing communication strategies that can touch the core values of Islam without ignoring the social and cultural uniqueness of each society. Current social dynamics show that society is becoming increasingly heterogeneous and intercultural interactions are increasingly frequent. This situation gives rise to the phenomenon of cultural hybridisation, where traditional values often intersect with modern or foreign values. In this case, Islamic value education requires adaptive communication strategies, not only in the form of messages but also delivery methods that are relevant to various age groups and social backgrounds. An in-depth study is needed to understand how communication approaches can be designed to present Islamic values meaningfully in the midst of a complex society (Masturin, 2023). This research aims to

contribute to this effort by formulating a communication strategy based on the sociology of communication perspective that is expected to support the achievement of Islamic value education goals in the midst of changing social dynamics.

The main issue in this study is how communication strategies based on symbolic interaction can be effectively used in Islamic value education to address the challenges of modernisation, globalisation, and social heterogeneity. In the context of Islamic education, there is an urgent need to understand communication methods that can ensure Islamic values remain relevant, understood, and applied by the younger generation amidst global cultural influences and increasing exposure to digital media (Diana, Azani, & M, 2024). This research focuses on several main issues, namely: The effectiveness of symbolic interaction in shaping the understanding of Islamic values among students, particularly through interpersonal communication between teachers and students. The suitability of Islamic communication strategies with diverse social contexts, where communication approaches should be adaptable to different cultural, social, and age backgrounds.

The role of communication technology in Islamic value education - how digital media can support or hinder the cultivation of values, as well as strategies to minimise the negative impact of digital content that is contrary to Islamic teachings (Abdillah & Nugraha, 2024). This research presents a new perspective by utilising symbolic interaction theory to develop a more contextualised approach to communication in Islamic value education. This approach focuses on how symbols and meanings formed through interactions between educators and learners can be a means of deeper internalisation of Islamic values. The theory of symbolic interactionism, which has previously been widely applied in sociological studies, is adapted in the context of Islamic education as a framework to understand how symbol-based communication can enhance the understanding and acceptance of religious values in students.

In addition, this research also offers an adaptive strategy that integrates digital media as a means to convey Islamic values that are relevant to the younger generation. Digital media is considered a new symbol and medium that can attract the interest of the modern generation without neglecting the substance of Islamic teachings. By combining interpersonal communication through Islamic symbols, language use, and digital media, this research proposes a comprehensive strategy to address evolving social and cultural challenges. By combining interpersonal communication through Islamic symbols, language use, and digital media, this study proposes a comprehensive strategy to address the growing social and cultural challenges.

Based on the above background, this study raises the following research questions: (1) How can symbolic interaction-based communication strategies be effectively implemented in Islamic value education in the face of modernisation and globalisation? (2) To what extent can symbolic interaction enhance the understanding and internalisation of Islamic values among students from various social and cultural backgrounds? (3) How can digital media be optimally utilised to support the transmission of Islamic values while minimising the influence of content that is contrary to Islamic teachings?

Therefore, the focus of this research is to formulate and analyse Islamic communication strategies rooted in symbolic interaction theory that are relevant to contemporary educational challenges. The aim is to offer a contextual and adaptive communication model that



strengthens the internalisation of Islamic values in formal education settings, especially among Muslim youth living in an increasingly globalised and digitally connected world.

### **Research Methods**

This article uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature review method to analyse communication strategies in Islamic value education and the challenges faced in their implementation (Rustamana, Adillah, Maharani, & Fayyedh, 2024), specifically in answering the main question: how can communication strategies based on symbolic interaction be used effectively in Islamic value education amid the influence of modernisation and globalisation? The data collected came from secondary sources, including books, journal articles, and conference papers related to communication and Islamic value education, which were obtained through academic databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and ResearchGate (Lim, 2024). The literature collection process followed a structured protocol, starting with a keyword-based search using terms such as Islamic communication, symbolic interaction, Islamic value education, digital media in Islamic education *and* modernisation and religion. After obtaining initial results, the researcher applied inclusion and exclusion criteria specifically focussing on peer-reviewed publications from the last ten years that directly addressed the integration of communication theory and Islamic education.

The selection process involved reviewing abstracts and full texts to ensure relevance and credibility. Articles that did not meet thematic alignment or scientific quality standards were excluded. The final sample consisted of approximately 30 relevant sources on which to base analyses. The collected data were analysed using qualitative content analysis, which involved several main steps: (1) coding recurring concepts and themes, (2) categorising the data into thematic clusters such as communication strategies, symbolic meanings, and educational challenges, and (3) interpreting the data by relating theoretical perspectives to observed trends and implications. This process enabled the identification of meaningful patterns and insights into how symbolic interaction is applied in the context of Islamic education. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, triangulation was utilised by cross-referencing from different types of sources of journal articles, books, and conference papers thus enhancing the consistency and depth of the analyses (Busetto, Wick, & Gumbinger, 2020).

### **Results and Discussion**

Symbolic interactionism is an approach in sociology that emphasises the importance of symbols and meaning in shaping social reality. First developed by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer, this theory focuses on how individuals create and interpret symbols in social interactions. This approach suggests that society is not merely a rigid structure, but is formed through dynamic interactions between individuals, who give each other meaning and shape their identity and understanding of the world.

George Herbert Mead is considered the main figure behind this theory, although the term "Symbolic Interactionism" was first introduced by Herbert Blumer in 1937. Mead believed that humans are different from other living things because of their ability to use symbols, especially language, to communicate and understand the world around them. In Mead's view, individual identity, or "self", develops through a social process. This process



involves interaction with others, which then affects the way we perceive ourselves. Through this process, we learn to understand the expectations, values and norms that exist in society. Our selves are not formed independently, but as a result of complex social processes.

Blumer, a student of Mead, further developed this concept by formulating three basic principles of Symbolic Interactionism, namely; first, Humans act based on the meanings they give to objects or symbols in their environment. Second, meaning arises from social interactions that occur between individuals and groups. Third, the meaning given to an object or symbol can be changed through the process of personal interpretation. Blumer mentions the basic concepts in symbolic interactionism, among others; first, Symbols. In this theory, symbols are anything that carries special meaning for individuals or groups. Symbols can be language, gestures, physical objects, or even rituals. Through symbols, we can understand and predict the actions of others and communicate in society. For example, a smile in social interaction can be considered a symbol of friendship or friendliness.

Secondly, Self and Identity: Mead proposed the concept of "self", which refers to an individual's identity formed through social interaction. The self is divided into two components, namely "I" (the spontaneous and personal side of the self) and "Me" (the self influenced by social expectations). Through interactions with others, we develop an identity that reflects our self-perception as well as how we want to be perceived by others. Third, Empathy and Role-Taking: Role-taking is the ability to see things from another person's perspective. It is very important in Symbolic Interactionism, as it allows one to understand how their actions affect others and respond appropriately in social interactions. This process also helps individuals to understand the social expectations and norms that apply in their group. Fourth, Situation Definition: Symbolic Interactionism emphasises that every situation has a subjective meaning that is defined by the individuals involved in it. This concept illustrates how the meaning given to a particular situation can shape individual actions and reactions. For example, a situation that is perceived by one individual as a conflict may be interpreted as a healthy discussion by another individual. This interpretation will then influence the way they interact.

Symbolic Interaction Theory can be applied in various aspects of life, ranging from family, education, to social media. In the context of family, for example, the roles played by each family member are the result of repeated symbolic interactions. Children learn their roles as children through interactions with parents, while parents interpret their roles based on experience and social expectations. In education, teachers and students continuously interact through symbols and meanings. For example, in communication between teachers and students, the language used, facial expressions, and gestures have symbolic meanings that can influence how students perceive the lesson and the teacher. If the teacher appreciates students' efforts, then students will feel valued, which in turn can increase their motivation to learn. In the digital age, Symbolic Interactionism is also evident in the use of social media. Profiles, statuses and comments on social media create meaning for their users and shape their social identity. Social media users create a "virtual self" that reflects how they want to be seen by others. Symbols, such as "like" and "share", become representations of support or approval, thus having a significant impact on interactions in the online world.



In the context of Islamic education, communication strategies based on Symbolic Interactionism can be very effective in fostering a deep understanding and internalisation of religious values among students (Junaedi, et. al, 2024). Islamic education does not only teach theoretical religious knowledge but also aims to shape the morals, personality, and identity of a Muslim. This is where the Symbolic Interactionism approach becomes very relevant, because through symbols, meanings, and interactions, educators can instil Islamic values in a more meaningful and contextual way.

In this process, symbols and meanings formed in the interaction between educators and learners become the foundation that enriches Islamic learning. However, the challenges of modernisation and globalisation affect how these values are conveyed and understood, so a more effective communication strategy based on symbolic interaction is needed. Modernisation and globalisation have changed the pattern of social interaction among young Muslims, especially regarding the consumption of information and popular culture that is often incompatible with Islamic values (Farchan & Rosharlianti, 2021). Research highlighting the impact of globalisation on religious education shows that there are differences between local values and global values that influence daily life, such as hedonistic, individualistic and materialistic lifestyles, which can affect students' perceptions of religion and spiritual values. Therefore, the Symbolic Interactionism approach can be an effective solution to bridge this gap by presenting Islamic symbols that are relevant and appealing to the modern generation.

Within the framework of Symbolic Interactionism, religious symbols play a key role in shaping the understanding of Islamic values. These symbols can be in the form of language, gestures, and religious practices, each of which has its own meaning in conveying Islamic moral and ethical messages. Research by Shabran (2021) shows that teaching that incorporates Islamic symbols such as Islamic clothing, the pronunciation of greetings, and the use of prayers in daily life can strengthen students' spiritual ties to Islamic values. With this strategy, Islamic values education becomes more personalised and meaningful, helping students understand the meaning behind every action, not just rote or ritual.

Role-taking is a concept in Symbolic Interactionism that can be applied in Islamic education to help students understand the perspectives of others in various situations. Through this approach, students are invited to put themselves in the shoes of Islamic figures, such as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ or the Companions, to experience firsthand the values exemplified. An example of this role-taking practice has been discussed in Mulyana's (2021) research, where students are involved in the dramatisation of Islamic stories that build empathy and a deep understanding of the values of compassion, patience, and courage. The results of this study showed that students not only understood the stories but also internalised the values contained in them, thus strengthening their connection to Islamic values.

Language is one of the strongest symbols in Symbolic Interactionism. In Islamic education, the use of language rich in Islamic values can help create an atmosphere conducive to spiritual learning. The use of Islamic language such as "Insha Allah", "Barakallah", or "Jazakallah Khair" not only becomes part of everyday communication, but also reinforces the religious atmosphere in the classroom, as described in Rahim's (2020) research. This use of symbolic language helps students connect their communication with Islamic values, even in a modern context. The repetition of Islamic language in the classroom is able to create shared

meanings between teachers and students, forming a pattern of communication that is Islamic and full of respect for religious values.

Symbolic Interaction Theory highlights that self-identity is formed through social interaction. In Islamic education, teachers can create an environment that strengthens students' Islamic identity through mutually supportive and respectful communication. Positive interactions supported by religious symbols and Islamic values can shape students' self-identity as proud and noble Muslims. Teachers can utilise classroom interactions to develop students' characters in accordance with Islamic values, such as respecting others, being honest and helping each other.

In the digital age, technology-based symbols can be utilised to communicate Islamic values. Media such as Islamic videos, religious education apps and other digital content are becoming new symbols that resonate with young Muslims. Fadhillah's research (2021) found that students are more enthusiastic about learning Islamic values through digital platforms as this way is considered more in line with their digital lifestyle. Teachers can utilise media such as short videos or nasyid to deliver meaningful and relevant Islamic messages, making it easier for students to connect with the message.

#### A. Challenges in Islamic Value Education

Islamic value education in the modern era faces various internal and external challenges. These challenges arise along with social changes, technological advances, and the expanding influence of globalisation. Some of the main challenges in Islamic value education that need to be addressed to design a more adaptive and effective approach include;

##### 1. Influence of Globalisation and Modernisation

Globalisation and modernisation have had a significant impact on the value system and culture of societies, including Muslim societies. Through access to the internet and social media, students are exposed to various foreign cultures and values that are often different or even contradictory to Islamic teachings. The process of globalisation accelerates the convergence of different cultures, values and lifestyles, which has the potential to cause value conflicts among young Muslims. In the context of education, Islamic values are sometimes considered rigid or less relevant to modern lifestyles that tend to emphasise individualism, materialism and hedonism. This challenge makes the younger generation more vulnerable to ignoring or even abandoning Islamic values, especially when these values are not conveyed in a relevant and adaptive way. To answer this challenge, Islamic value education needs to be more creative in explaining the relevance of Islamic values in modern life and providing concrete examples of how Islamic teachings can be a guide in dealing with complex life problems.

##### 2. Technology and Digital Media Challenges

Advances in information and communication technology open up great opportunities in education, but also pose serious challenges. Social media, the internet, and digital devices provide unlimited access to information, including content that is incompatible with Islamic values. Exposure to negative content, such as violence, pornography and values contrary to Islam, can affect the morality and worldview of the younger generation.



In addition, conventional Islamic value education sometimes finds it difficult to compete with the appeal of digital media that offers content in a fast and interactive manner. Many students prefer to learn through social media, games or apps rather than listening to lectures or reading books. Therefore, Islamic value education must be able to adapt to technology, for example by creating engaging and interactive educational content on digital platforms. In this way, Islamic values can be delivered in a form that is more in line with the interests and preferences of the younger generation.

### 3. Changes in Family Structure and Parental Roles

Rapid social change also affects family structure and dynamics. In this modern era, more and more families consist of parents who work outside the home or even families where one or both parents work away from their children. This reduces the role of parents as the primary educators of Islamic values. The limited time parents have to accompany their children in the process of learning and internalising values means that children tend to rely on other sources, such as schools or digital media, to understand Islamic values.

However, the family plays a very important role in the education of Islamic values, because the family environment is the first place where children learn about Islam and internalise basic values. The lack of time spent with family, especially in religious activities such as congregational prayer, reading the Quran, or other religious activities, can weaken the foundation of children's religious understanding. Therefore, there is a need for support for parents in the form of family education or parenting programmes that help them to remain involved in their children's Islamic religious education despite time constraints.

### 4. Curriculum and Resource Limitations in Schools

Another challenge faced in Islamic value education is the limited curriculum and resources in schools. The existing curriculum often focuses on the cognitive aspect or religious knowledge, while the internalisation and character building aspects are less emphasised. The religious education materials available in schools often tend to be theoretical and do not provide enough space for students to understand Islamic values practically and contextually. In addition, the limited number of teachers who are competent in teaching Islamic values education is also a problem. Not all religious teachers have sufficient ability to convey Islamic values with an approach that is relevant and resonates with students. Limited facilities and support for extracurricular activities that teach Islamic values are also a challenge, especially in general schools or schools that do not have a special focus on Islamic education. To overcome this, there needs to be a renewal of the curriculum that is more character-orientated and an increase in teacher competence in Islamic value education.

### 5. The Challenge of Interpreting Islamic Teachings in a Modern Context

The interpretation of Islamic teachings is also one of the challenges, especially when dealing with issues in modern society. Some Islamic values, such as social relations, gender roles or workplace etiquette, are often interpreted in different ways by different groups. This can lead to confusion for the younger generation, who are



looking for a clear and relevant explanation of how Islamic teachings can be applied in a modern context.

To answer this challenge, Islamic value education needs to involve a comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings that is flexible and adaptive, without neglecting the basic principles of the religion. Islamic value education that is responsive to the social context, such as through critical studies, open dialogue, and moderate approaches, can help the younger generation understand Islamic values as relevant and solution-oriented guidelines in various aspects of life (Kusnawan & Rustandi, 2021).

#### 6. Identity Crisis and Value Challenge in the Era of Multiculturalism

In the era of multiculturalism, interactions between different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups have intensified (Mubit, 2016). Muslim students, especially those living in heterogeneous neighbourhoods, often encounter values that are different or even contradictory to Islamic teachings. This situation can lead to an identity crisis for Muslim students, who may experience confusion between maintaining their Islamic identity or adapting to a social environment that has different values.

In this context, Islamic values education needs to provide an understanding of a strong yet flexible Islamic identity in interacting with a diverse society. This approach can include education on tolerance, multicultural understanding and inclusive attitudes without compromising Islamic principles. Value education that strengthens a positive and characterful Muslim identity can help the younger generation to remain confident in upholding Islamic values in a multicultural society.

The results of this study indicate that the symbolic interaction-based communication approach in Islamic value education makes a significant contribution to the formation of character and religious identity among students. Further explanation of this finding is as follows: Application of Symbols and Meanings in Islamic Education. Symbols in Islamic education, such as Islamic language, clothing and daily worship practices, provide deep meaning in communication between educators and learners. These symbols enable students to understand Islamic values in a more personal way, as the meanings contained in them go beyond the cognitive aspect and touch the emotional and spiritual dimensions. For example, the use of Islamic expressions such as "Alhamdulillah", "Insya Allah", and "Jazakallah Khair" in daily classroom interactions reinforces the Islamic atmosphere of communication and encourages students to internalise these values as part of their identity.

Effectiveness of Role-Taking in the Formation of Empathy and Islamic Values  
The process of role-taking helps students understand the perspective of others, especially in internalising the values and stories of Islamic figures. In educational practice, methods such as dramatisation or role simulation of Islamic figures (for example, the stories of the Prophet and his companions) provide students with the opportunity to directly experience Islamic values, such as honesty, courage and compassion. Thus, the concept of role-taking not only enhances students' understanding of Islamic teachings but also builds empathy, as they can imagine themselves in situations that illustrate Islamic values.



## B. Digital Media as a New Symbol and its Challenges

Digital media has become an important new symbol in modern Islamic education, as it can reach the younger generation in a more relevant way. Islamic digital content, such as educational videos, infographics and Islamic apps, provide an interactive learning experience, allowing students to understand Islamic values in a format they prefer and find engaging. However, there are significant challenges in managing access to this digital content. Uncontrolled digital media can present values that contradict Islamic teachings, so supervision from educators and parents is needed to ensure that the content consumed remains in line with Islamic principles.

## C. The Importance of Interpersonal Communication to Strengthen Islamic Identity

There is no such thing as Islamic communication or religious communication if the study does not include the first element of Godhead, which is very important in Islam. Islamic communication is not just taking Quranic verses and combining them with conventional communication and then considering it as Islamic communication. Second, the Humanity element in Islamic communication is communication based on the Quran as a guide, where communicators must use true and honest words, and have deep faith. Third, Ethical, according to the Quran and Hadith, being moral and having good character is ethical and good. As mentioned above, differences among scholars in understanding the verses and hadith, as well as the use of *ijma* and *qiyas*, do not detract from the general belief that Islamic ethics stem from the Quran and hadith. Fourthly, Moderation is a mediator as an act of reconciliation between two extremes. *Al-ghuluw* or exaggeration in faith is unknown in Islam. One of the important messages of Islamic moderation is that it exists in the context of politeness and compassion. Fifth, Islamic knowledge or Islamic nature, among others, Islamic communication must be built on the foundation of faith, morality, and professionalism in the relevant field.

Apart from digital media, interpersonal communication between educators and learners remains the main foundation of Islamic education. This communication, which involves empathy, attention and exemplification from educators, creates a deep and personalised relationship that is crucial in shaping students' Islamic identity. This direct interaction allows educators to not only impart knowledge but also serve as role models for students in applying Islamic values. These positive interpersonal relationships strengthen students' confidence in upholding Islamic values in an increasingly heterogeneous society.

## D. The Relevance of the Symbolic Approach in the Context of Globalisation and Modernisation

Globalisation and modernisation pose significant challenges to Islamic values education. With increased exposure to global culture, which often contradicts Islamic values, young Muslims face a dilemma between maintaining their Islamic identity and adapting to a more individualistic or materialistic culture. The symbolic interactionist approach offers a solution in this situation, by helping educators craft relevant messages

and highlighting powerful Islamic symbols in a modern context. In this way, Islamic value education becomes more relevant and acceptable to students as part of their dynamic lives.

## Conclusion

From this research, it can be concluded that communication based on symbolic interaction is an effective approach in Islamic values education, especially in facing the challenges of globalisation and modernisation. Symbolic interaction theory provides a relevant framework for educators to understand and shape the meanings that students associate with Islamic values. By using symbols, language and methods that are relevant to the learners' socio-cultural context, Islamic value education can be transformed into a meaningful and contextualised experience. The use of digital media as part of the communication strategy can also expand the reach and relevance of Islamic values for the younger generation, although there still needs to be supervision of the content consumed.

Islamic value education that combines interpersonal communication, the use of Islamic symbols and digital technology has great potential in shaping strong, tolerant and adaptive Muslim characters amidst the influence of global culture. Islamic education institutions need to provide special training for educators to improve their understanding of symbolic interaction theory and its application in teaching. Educators who are able to use symbolic approaches will be more effective in transmitting Islamic values that are relevant to learners' daily lives. Educational institutions and religious organisations are advised to develop interactive, informative and timely Islamic digital content for the younger generation. This includes videos, infographics, educational apps, and online platforms that can be used as a means to teach Islamic values in an engaging and accessible format.

The findings from this study offer practical implications not only for educators, but also for policy makers and curriculum developers. Educators can adopt symbol-based communication strategies that reflect the reality of students' lives, while policymakers should consider integrating communication theory, particularly symbolic interactionism, into teacher training modules and the national religious education curriculum. Curriculum developers are encouraged to design learning materials and activities that prioritise meaningful interaction, active dialogue and symbolic representations of Islamic values, ensuring that they are aligned with current technological and cultural developments.

In addition, this study opens up opportunities for further research by suggesting the need for empirical studies to test the effectiveness of symbolic interaction-based strategies in the classroom. Future research could explore how different age groups respond to symbol-laden messages, investigate the impact of digital Islamic content on students' internalisation of values, or conduct comparative studies between conventional and symbolic approaches to Islamic education. Such applied research will enrich the theoretical foundations and practical applications of Islamic communication strategies, contributing to the continuous improvement of Islamic education practices in a modernised and globalised world.



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