

# Prophetic Leadership of Madrasah Principals in Instilling Akhlakul Karimah at MTsN Tulungagung: A Multi-Case Study at MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung

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**Abstract.** Prophetic leadership of madrasah principals represents a highly significant leadership phenomenon. Various cases of bullying, brawls, sexual violence, and promiscuity have become serious threats for students, raising deep concern among parents. The existence of madrasah tsanawiyah is considered highly relevant for instilling akhlaqul karimah in the present era. Many parents place great expectations on madrasah tsanawiyah to provide their children with beneficial knowledge and to nurture noble character, whether in their conduct toward fellow human beings, toward the natural environment, or toward Allah SWT. The aim of this research is to explore the prophetic leadership of madrasah principals in cultivating akhlaqul karimah. The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a multi-site design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using single-case analysis and cross-case analysis. The validity of the data was ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The findings reveal that: (1) The vision of prophetic leadership among madrasah principals in instilling akhlaqul karimah is to develop students with the characteristics of the Profil Pelajar Pancasila and as *rahmatan lil-'alamin*, grounded in exemplary conduct and implemented through several programs, including habituation activities, value-based learning, Qur'anic memorization and literacy, Friday *infaq*, role modeling, and collaboration with parents/guardians. (2) The integrity of prophetic leadership is reflected in serving as a role model, adopting an empathetic approach, being honest and transparent in delivering information and policies, assuming responsibility for all assigned duties, and consistently monitoring the moral conduct of students.

**Keywords:** Akhlaqul karimah; Madrasah principals; Multi-site qualitative study; Prophetic leadership; Student character education.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Akhlaqul karimah* (noble character) plays a vital role in nation-building and in fostering harmonious social life. It serves as a moral and ethical foundation applied in relationships with fellow human beings, the environment, and Allah. Its implementation encompasses attitudes of tolerance, mutual assistance, speaking kindly, honesty, environmental stewardship, and gratitude for Allah's blessings.

The development of *akhlaqul karimah* is strongly influenced by a person's social interactions, whether within the family, the surrounding community, or the learning environment. A positive environment fosters virtuous character, whereas a negative environment can shape individuals toward undesirable behavior. This aligns with the Javanese proverb "*Galangan Kalab Karo Golongan*", which conveys that no matter how good the teachings may be, if an individual is surrounded by a negative environment, those noble teachings may gradually be eroded by the behaviors and habits prevailing within that social setting.

Madrasah Tsanawiyah is a formal educational institution that combines the national curriculum with strong religious content through subjects such as *Aqidah Akhlaq, Fiqh*, Al-Qur'an Hadith, Islamic Cultural History, and Arabic. These institutions also frequently offer madrasah diniyah programs to strengthen students' mastery of religious knowledge and its application in daily life—an educational feature that is rarely found in non-

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madrasah formal schools.

The rapid advancement of technology has influenced lifestyles and social behavior, marked by the emergence of several negative phenomena. Among these are the increasing prevalence of bullying, with 3,800 reported cases in Indonesia in 2023; student brawls that result in both physical and psychological harm; sexual violence within educational settings, frequently reported to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI); and promiscuity in major cities, encompassing free sex, gang fights, alcohol abuse, and premarital sexual relations. Contributing factors to these issues include family conditions, social environment, and internet misuse.

This situation has generated deep concern and fear within society, as it may exert a significant impact on children if not grounded in religious education. Such anxiety is further reinforced by statistical data on the growing prevalence of students' moral misconduct. Examples include physical violence and bullying, inter-student brawls, sexual harassment among learners, as well as issues of promiscuity and the abuse of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances—problems that have become increasingly alarming and wearisome to hear in the news (Syafitri, 2014).

The theme of instilling *akhlaqul karimah* in madrasah tsanawiyah is of great importance, as society expects its children to possess both academic knowledge and noble character. Madrasah tsanawiyah must serve as a solution to this need. The cultivation of *akhlaqul karimah* can be achieved through the synergy of prophetic leadership from the principal, the teaching staff, the madrasah committee, parents, and the wider community.

As an educational institution with an Islamic identity, the principal of a madrasah holds a strategic role in fostering the cultivation of *akhlaqul karimah* among its members. Effective leadership significantly influences the development of individuals, families, communities, or organizations, shaping them toward better or worse outcomes (Kurniawan, 2013). The progress or decline of an educational institution is largely determined by the leader rather than other factors. While other elements may contribute to the advancement or deterioration of an institution, the role of the leader remains the most influential and decisive factor in determining the future trajectory of an educational organization (Paton, 2017).

Prophetic leadership, rooted in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Qur'an, is essential in the administration of *madrasah*. This form of leadership begins with exemplifying virtuous behavior and moral conduct. A leader must embody noble character and serve as a role model for others within the madrasah, the family, and the broader community.

In managerial practice, a madrasah principal as a leader formulates ideas based on the evolving needs of society, which are then translated into policies and implemented through the Madrasah Work Plan (RKM) for a four-year period. The execution of these policies is further detailed in the Annual Work Plan (RKT) to ensure that program implementation is consistent and measurable. The Annual Work Plan (RKT) is subsequently disseminated to all stakeholders within the madrasah in a structured manner, aligning with their respective main duties and functions in the form of activity programs.

MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung hold strong potential in fostering *akhlaqul karimah* in line with their respective visions and missions. The vision of MTsN 1 is to establish an excellent madrasah characterized by the Profil Pelajar Pancasila and *Rahmatan Lil-'Alamin*, with its eighth mission emphasizing the enhancement of noble character. Meanwhile, the vision of MTsN 5 is to develop a distinguished Islamic institution, with its first mission focusing on instilling *akhlaqul karimah*. MTsN 1 is supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure, high-achieving students, and effective communication channels through social media platforms such as the digital newspaper MatsanetaOne.

MTsN 1 Tulungagung has a distinctive characteristic in being led by a principal with a background in journalism/print media, along with a strong emphasis on character development in religious education through madrasah diniyah. MTsN 5 Tulungagung, on the other hand, is located far from the administrative center, in proximity to the Ngunut Islamic boarding school. Its students come from various sub-districts, predominantly from farming and laborer families. MTsN 5 accommodates 21 study groups (*rombel*) and communicates its programs through the digital newspaper Liptan Madtsanema with the motto "Berbudi Pekerti, Mengukir Prestasi, dan Sukses Menggapai Mimpi" (Cultivating Character, Achieving Excellence, and Succeeding in Reaching Dreams). The uniqueness

of MTsN 5 also lies in its notable non-academic student achievements and its reinforcement of character through religious education. The study on “Prophetic Leadership of Madrasah Principals in Instilling *Akblaqul Karimah* at MTsN Tulungagung” was conducted at both MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research on Prophetic Leadership of *Madrasah* Principals in Instilling *Akblaqul Karimah* at MTsN Tulungagung (a Multi-Site Study at MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung) employs a qualitative approach, which seeks to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language, within a natural context, and by utilizing various scientific methods (Fitri & Haryanti, 2020). The study has thus far produced a wealth of descriptive data in the form of words, both written and oral, as well as observed behaviors. This approach is directed toward the context and individuals in their entirety. Hence, no attempt is made to isolate individuals or organizations into variables or hypotheses; rather, they are viewed as integral parts of a whole.

In qualitative research, the data collected consist of words, images, and not numerical figures. Moreover, all data gathered may serve as key elements in understanding the phenomenon under investigation. Accordingly, the research report is derived from interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, videotapes, personal documents, notes or memos, and other official records. This qualitative study emphasizes that the meanings and interpretations obtained should be discussed and agreed upon with the individuals who serve as the sources of data.

The data collection techniques in this study employed in-depth interviews to explore information regarding the prophetic leadership of madrasah principals in *instilling akblaqul karimah*. Interviews were conducted with various informants at MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung, including principals, vice principals, teachers, parents, and students. These interviews were divided into structured and unstructured formats to obtain comprehensive data. In addition to interviews, participant observation was carried out both overtly and covertly to observe daily life within the madrasah. The documentation method was also utilized to gather data in the form of records, transcripts, photographs, and other documents related to the prophetic leadership of the principals. Documents collected at MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung included student handbooks, newspapers, activity photographs, and statistical data of the *madrasah*.

Data analysis in qualitative research was carried out through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Cross-site analysis was conducted by comparing the findings from each case at MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung to identify similarities and differences. The results of the analysis were then utilized to construct a systematic conception and to develop substantive theoretical findings.

The verification of data validity concerning prophetic vision, integrity, commitment, and communication in the effort to instill *akblaqul karimah* at MTsN 1 and MTsN 5 Tulungagung, based on the data collected, was conducted through several techniques: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ahmadi, 2005). The validity and reliability of data are essential in qualitative studies; therefore, data verification was carried out to ensure trustworthiness.

## 3. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Vision of Prophetic Leadership of Madrasah Principals in Instilling *Akblaqul Karimah*

Based on the research findings regarding the cultivation of *akblaqul karimah* among the madrasah community through the prophetic leadership vision of the principals at MTsN Tulungagung, the vision is to develop students characterized by the Profil Pelajar Pancasila and *rahmatan lil-'alamin*, grounded in exemplary conduct, through: (1) habituation activities, (2) value-based learning, (3) Qur'anic memorization and literacy, (4) Friday *infag*, and (5) role modeling.

Helgeson, as cited by (Mulyasa 2012), states that vision is an explanation of what an organization should look like when it is functioning effectively. Vision can also be defined as a perspective that represents the crystallization and essence of competence, ability, and

self-efficacy in perceiving, analyzing, and interpreting. A madrasah principal who succeeds in developing effective management and leadership possesses and comprehends a comprehensive vision of the institution (Marno dan Supriyatno, 2008).

Through an exemplar-based approach, teachers, staff, and the madrasah environment actively serve as role models of behavior. They demonstrate positive qualities expected to guide students, such as honesty, discipline, care, and tolerance. By integrating the values of Pancasila with the principles of *rahmatan lil-'alamin*, which encompass compassion, kindness, and justice for all, this educational approach aims to cultivate students who excel not only academically but also possess strong moral character and contribute positively to their environment and the nation.

It is noteworthy to examine the vision developed by madrasah principals in instilling *akhlaqul karimah*. From the perspective of the vision formulated, it aligns with what Akdon has conveyed. (Akdon 2016) explains that vision is a realistic portrayal of the future to be realized within a certain timeframe, which may also imply the existence of missions and challenges. Vision is a statement expressed or written today, representing a current management process that projects into the future. This vision embodies the aspirations of the madrasah regarding what it seeks to achieve in the years ahead (Mutohar, 2014). A vision reflects the desired future of the madrasah, enabling it to ensure sustainability and development. Such a vision must be grounded on a juridical foundation, namely the education law and relevant government regulations, particularly the goals of national education. Moreover, the vision must be adjusted to the specific profile of the madrasah, as each institution has its own unique characteristics, leading to differences in vision and mission. The vision of a madrasah should align with the framework of national education, while also addressing the needs of students, the community it serves, and educational stakeholders, as well as encompassing noble aspirations for achieving quality education (Mutohar, 2014). A madrasah vision must also be realistic and credible. Burt and Nanus, as cited in (Ancok 2012), state: "a vision is a realistic, credible, attractive future for your organization." Vision is the defining identity of an organization—realistic, believable, attainable, and appealing to all.

As stated by Muhaimin, as cited in Mujamil (2010), managing change requires a clear vision, which is then elaborated into a mission and supported by skills, incentives, and resources (both physical and non-physical, including human resources), and subsequently realized in a well-defined work plan. In this way, change can be effectively achieved. However, if even one of these aspects is neglected, it will have certain consequences. For instance, if the vision is abandoned or if the development of the madrasah does not originate from a clear vision, it may ultimately lead to failure.

The prophetic leadership vision of *madrasah* principals in instilling *akhlaqul karimah* is implemented through an example-based approach. This is in line with the concept of prophetic leadership. The conduct and exemplary character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) do not require validation or recognition from modern leadership theories, as his practices have already proven to be effective. In fact, many modern theories have taken the Prophet's exemplary leadership as a primary point of reference (Antonio, 2007).

### **Habituation Activities**

The implementation of the prophetic leadership vision is carried out through several activities, including habituation practices such as greeting with *salam*, smiling, and showing respect, reciting the Qur'an and *Asmaul Husna*, performing Yasin and tahlil, among others. These habituation activities are particularly interesting to examine in fostering *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character) among students. Lickona emphasizes that moral education for children requires repeated activities to train them to become good individuals, where children must be given continuous opportunities to act honestly, politely, and fairly, so that these behaviors become ingrained habits consistently practiced even in difficult circumstances (Lickona, 2008).

The habituation activities in instilling *akhlaq al-karimah* have been proven effective. This is supported by the study conducted by Yetti Nurhayati (2017), which shows that exemplary conduct and habituation, carried out from the moment students arrive at school until the end of classroom learning, contribute to shaping the noble character of both teachers (educators) and students (learners). Strengthening this finding,

Ahmad ([Fahrudin's dissertation 2022](#)) demonstrates that habituation fosters mutual respect among students, between students and teachers, and among teachers themselves. These practices are expected to cultivate core character values in children, such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and perseverance. The successful implementation of character education through habituation in madrasahs requires support from multiple stakeholders, ranging from teachers and principals to parents. Teachers and principals are expected to serve as positive role models, while parents must provide support and supervision for their children in applying character education within the home environment.

### Value-Based Learning

In addition to habituation, the cultivation of *akhlakul karimah* is also carried out through value-based learning. Value-based learning in instilling *akhlakul karimah* is an educational approach that emphasizes moral and Islamic character values, such as honesty, patience, compassion, and respect for others. In this method, learning is not solely focused on academic content but also integrates ethical values into every aspect of the educational process.

Value-based education is regarded as one of the fundamental solutions to various social problems, including Indonesia's initiative to launch a character-based curriculum. The function of character education for learners includes fostering awareness and understanding of value systems within socio-cultural contexts relevant to their environment. Accordingly, learning materials related to values, norms, and morals need to be explicitly developed and connected to real-life contexts, not limited to the cognitive dimension but also internalized in daily life.

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### Tahfidz and Qur'anic Literacy

Another activity implemented to instill *akhlakul karimah* is tahfidz (memorization) and Qur'anic literacy (reading and writing of the Qur'an). This activity serves as an essential means of nurturing noble character among students. Through tahfidz, students are not only engaged in memorizing sacred verses but are also encouraged to reflect upon the values contained within the Qur'an, such as honesty, patience, sincerity, and compassion. The vision of the madrasah to cultivate a Qur'anic generation must be accompanied by measurable targets for both literacy and memorization, including monthly, semester-based, and annual objectives ([Maunah, 2021](#)). This practice fosters discipline, strengthens spiritual awareness, and motivates students to embody virtuous behavior in their daily lives. Furthermore, by learning to read and write the Qur'an, students are taught to revere the holy text, develop discipline in the learning process, and cultivate perseverance as well as a deep love for their faith. Through this approach, students are expected to internalize the Qur'an as a guide for life, thereby shaping noble character and enabling them to act in accordance with Islamic values in all aspects of their existence.

If observed carefully, the primary objective of the Qur'anic memorization (*tahfidz al-Qur'an*) program is not merely to commit the Qur'an to memory, but also to understand and practice its content. The cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects are given balanced attention. Accordingly, a Qur'an memorizer is expected to become a devout Muslim, embody noble character, and behave in accordance with Islamic teachings. This indicates that the *tahfidz al-Qur'an* activity is not solely focused on mastery of the text but also on the cultivation of character and the internalization of Islamic values in daily life ([Acim, 2022](#)).

Thus, students are expected to lead lives in accordance with Islamic principles, enabling them to become positive agents of change within society. Furthermore, by internalizing Qur'anic values, they can inspire others to consistently practice Islamic teachings and make meaningful contributions to their surrounding environment. Through

this process, it is anticipated that the younger generation will grow into leaders who embody integrity, a strong sense of responsibility, and compassion for others.

### Friday Alms (*Infaq al-Jumu'ah*)

Friday Infaq represents one of the practices that instills *akhlak al-karimah* (noble character) among Muslims. Through this activity, individuals are encouraged to share their sustenance and demonstrate care for others, particularly those in need. By giving *infaq*, both students and congregants are taught the significance of solidarity and mutual cooperation in social life. The practice of Friday *infaq* also strengthens empathy and compassion, while cultivating generosity within each individual. Moreover, this activity serves as an opportunity to instill values of honesty, discipline, and responsibility, as every contribution must be carried out with sincerity and transparency.

Mustika and Amrullah, in their research, explain that routine activities such as the habituation of the 5S principles (Smile, Greet, *Salam*, Politeness, and Courtesy), praying before and after lessons, practicing gratitude and tolerance, giving infaq or alms, as well as engaging in worship according to one's religious teachings, form part of this implementation. Thus, strengthening religious character education through the habituation of madrasah culture serves as an effective strategy to reinforce the religious character of students. (Mustika dan Amrullah, 2024).

Sari et al., in their research, also revealed similar findings. The habituation activity of Friday infaq is capable of instilling *akhlakul karimah* (noble character) in students. This activity aims to shape the character of a strong generation. The values instilled through morning habituation activities include religious values, discipline, communicative skills, responsibility, social awareness, democratic attitudes, and environmental concern. Overall, these morning habituation activities have a positive impact by accustoming students to good practices, providing an understanding of virtuous character values, and fostering the development of positive behavior among students (Kumala Sari, dkk, 2024).

### Role Modeling

In addition, role modeling serves as the foundation for instilling *akhlakul karimah* (noble character) in students. The head of the madrasah must act as a role model—an *uswatun hasanah* (exemplary figure) for the entire school community. This aligns with the concept of prophetic leadership. The conduct and exemplary character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) do not require validation or recognition from modern leadership theories, as his practices have already been proven effective. In fact, many modern theories have drawn upon the Prophet's exemplary leadership as a point of reference (Antonio, 2007).

Micheal. H. (Hart, 1978) An American national placed the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the most influential figure among one hundred world figures throughout human history. This became highly controversial because it ranked Jesus Christ (Isa Al-Masih) third, despite him being a Christian. Hart explicitly stated in his book *The List of the World's Most Influential Persons*: "My choice of Muhammad as the foremost figure in the world may surprise and be questioned by many people. However, he is the only individual in world history who achieved success both in religious matters and in interfaith relations".

Therefore, in the effort to instill *akhlakul karimah* (noble character), the vision of prophetic leadership serves as a highly significant guiding principle. Through exemplary conduct and the noble values it imparts, leaders who embrace this vision not only play a role in guiding others but also in shaping a generation of individuals with virtuous character. By upholding the principles of honesty, justice, and compassion, prophetic leadership fosters the development of individuals prepared to contribute positively to society and to build a more harmonious and prosperous world. Thus, this vision is not merely an idealism, but also a concrete commitment to realizing meaningful change that benefits humanity.

### Collaboration with Parents / Guardians of Students

In order to ensure the success of its programs, a madrasah principal requires intensive collaboration with parents or guardians. Every program of the madrasah can only be achieved as expected when it receives full support from parents or guardians. Essentially, the madrasah serves as a second home for students, where character formation takes place through interactions with teachers, peers, and a conducive learning environment. This collaboration must be reciprocal and not one-sided, as a unilateral partnership would significantly affect outcomes, leading to conclusions drawn solely from one perspective—whether by teachers and educators or by the parent and guardian community.

The purpose of collaboration with parents or guardians, as stated by Roucek and Warren and cited by (Abdul Syani 1994), is that cooperation refers to working together to achieve a common goal. It constitutes one of the most fundamental social processes. Typically, cooperation involves the division of tasks, whereby each individual carries out responsibilities assigned to them for the attainment of the shared objective.

Collaboration between schools and parents in character education is influenced by several factors, including parents' orientation in entrusting their children to the school and the mutual trust established in the partnership. Such parental orientation and inter-party trust affect the implementation of school–parent collaboration. As noted by Evan and Hines in (Grant & Ray 2013), teachers often conclude that parents who do not respond to school communications are indifferent to their children. These unilateral assumptions, however, can undermine the cooperative relationship between schools and parents.

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وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ (٢)

It means : “Cooperate with one another in goodness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and hostility. And be mindful of Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in punishment”.(Q.S. Al Maidah: 2).

This underscores the importance of mutual assistance and cooperation. In the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions, helping one another in acts of goodness was strongly emphasized. They frequently extended support in various circumstances, such as assisting companions facing economic hardship, providing food and drink to those who were hungry and thirsty, and caring for companions who were ill or in difficulty. Mutual assistance in righteousness constitutes a fundamental principle in Islam. Such actions are encouraged as an integral part of faith and were exemplified in the lives of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions.

### **The Integrity of the Prophetic Leadership of the Madrasah Principal in Instilling Noble Morals**

The integrity of madrasah leadership is reflected in the research findings, which highlight: (1) serving as a role model, (2) employing an empathetic approach, (3) demonstrating honesty and transparency in conveying information and policies, (4) taking responsibility for all assigned duties, and (5) monitoring students' akhlakul karimah (noble character), which constitutes a key element in fostering moral values within the educational environment.

#### **Be A Role Model**

As a leader, the head of the madrasah bears a significant responsibility to serve as a role model in daily behavior and actions. Strong integrity fosters a positive atmosphere in which the values of honesty, discipline, and responsibility become embedded within the culture of the institution. By demonstrating consistency between words and actions, the head of the madrasah can inspire both teachers and students to internalize virtuous character. Through transparent and fair leadership, as well as decision-making grounded

in moral principles, the head of the madrasah is able to create an environment that supports the holistic development of students' character.

The manifestation of a madrasah principal's integrity in instilling *akhlakul karimah* (noble character) is reflected in serving as a role model for the school community, particularly for students. Role modeling plays a crucial role in the educational process. Ideally, if a leader demonstrates virtuous qualities, students are likely to emulate those good behaviors, and vice versa. A leader should act as an exemplary figure for the madrasah community, especially the students, not only in delivering academic material but also in demonstrating commendable behavior that can serve as a reference in daily life, both within the madrasah environment and in society at large.

In any case, the head of the madrasah must serve as a role model, becoming an *uswatun hasanah* (exemplary figure) for the entire school community. This aligns with the concept of prophetic leadership. The behavior and exemplary character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) require no validation or recognition from modern leadership theories, as his practices have been proven effective. In fact, many contemporary leadership theories have drawn upon the Prophet's exemplary conduct as a reference (Antonio, 2007).

Michael H. Hart, an American historian, ranked Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the most influential figure among one hundred world figures throughout human history. This ranking sparked significant controversy, particularly because he placed Jesus Christ in third position, despite Christ being a Christian. (Hart 1978) explicitly stated in his book *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*: "My choice of Muhammad as the world's greatest person may surprise and be questioned by many, but he is the only person in world history who succeeded both religiously and in interfaith relations".

Research conducted by Suhada et al. (2024) indicates that role modeling is the most crucial factor in instilling *akhlakul karimah* (noble character) in students. The findings demonstrate that the implementation of role-modeling methods by *Aqidah Akhlak* teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Nurul Walidain was successful and effective in enhancing students' moral character. The study reveals that the exemplary conduct of *Aqidah Akhlak* teachers not only helps students understand theoretical concepts but also provides tangible examples that can be emulated. Students draw inspiration from these teachers, who serve as role models in their daily lives.

The exemplary character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is clearly evident in his personal life. He was known as an honest, trustworthy, and compassionate individual. Even before his appointment as a Prophet, he was given the title Al-Amin (the Trustworthy) by the people of Mecca due to his honesty. The Prophet's example in speaking and acting rightly serves as a reflection of noble character that every Muslim should emulate.

The exemplary character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is also reflected in his family life. He was a caring husband, a loving father, and a gentle grandfather. The Prophet consistently demonstrated great affection and attention toward his wives and children. In every interaction, he exhibited understanding and gentleness. This is in accordance with Allah's words in Surah Al-Ahzab (33:21)

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا (٢١)

It means "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) there is a good example for you— for those who hope in Allah's mercy and the coming of the Day of Judgment, and who frequently remember Allah. (Q.S. Al Ahzab: 21)

### Using an Empathetic Approach

In addition to being a role model, the head of the madrasah must also adopt an empathetic approach in instilling *akhlakul karimah*. In relation to communication studies, this approach aligns with the theory of empathetic communication. Empathetic communication is a form of interaction that reflects mutual understanding between the communicator and the communicant. This type of communication facilitates cooperation, mutual respect, and compassion between both parties. Empathy involves the ability to understand the feelings of others and is considered a crucial element in fostering positive behavior toward others. Furthermore, empathy helps an individual to be wise in perceiving and appreciating the experiences of the interlocutor (Taufik, 2012).

Meanwhile, when related to the prophetic leadership paradigm, this aligns with a paradigm characterized by compassion and gentleness. These two traits are highlighted in QS. Ali Imran: 159,

فِيمَا رَحِمَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْتَضَوْا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ (١٥٩)

It means “It is by the mercy of Allah that you deal gently with them. If you were harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. Therefore, pardon them, ask forgiveness for them, and consult them in the matter. Then, when you have made a decision, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely upon Him”. (QS. Ali Imran: 159)

The message conveyed in this verse is that humans should act with gentleness and kindness toward one another. This guidance is not without reason, as when someone behaves harshly or rudely toward others, people will naturally distance themselves from that individual. Furthermore, the verse emphasizes that humans should forgive one another and seek forgiveness for those who may have wronged them. It also encourages consultation (*shura*) among people so that unclear matters can find clarity and resolution. At the end of the verse, Allah reminds that He loves those who are God-conscious and who place their trust in Him.

### Honest and Open in Conveying Information and Policies

In addition, the integrity of the head of the madrasah in instilling *akhlakul karimah* is also demonstrated through honesty and transparency in conveying information and policies. As the leader of the madrasah, the head consistently communicates policies and information with sincerity and openness. This practice aims to build trust among the administration, teachers, and students. By communicating transparently, all parties feel involved and gain a clear understanding of the objectives and decisions being implemented.

When associated with prophetic leadership, the attitude of being honest and transparent regarding information and policies aligns with the concept of Tabligh being courageous, just, firm, and truthful. Moreover, when conveying messages to all of humanity about the rights of Allah, prophets and messengers must exhibit firmness and courage, considering that what they communicate often represents new guidance previously unknown to most people. In upholding Sharia, prophets and messengers are also required to be just and honest. Justice here demands that leaders do not discriminate among people and remain truthful in what they convey to their followers. As for honesty and courage, these principles are also emphasized in QS. At-Taubah: 33.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ (٣٣)

It means :“ He it is who sent His Messenger with guidance, the Qur’an, and the true religion, so that He may prevail it over all religions, even though the polytheists dislike it.” (QS. At-Taubah: 33)

The verse explains that Allah is the One who sends His Messengers to deliver guidance to humanity through the teachings of Islam and His holy book, the Qur’an. The existence of Islam is legitimized by Allah through this verse, even though outside of Islam, the polytheists deny the existence of Islam and the Qur’an. One of the inherent attributes of the Prophet is shiddiq, or truthfulness. *Shiddiq* can also be understood as righteousness, whereby a person specially chosen by Allah possesses high integrity and is free from wrongdoing. A person or leader with the attribute of shiddiq is expected to have perspectives and actions that consistently adhere to established laws and regulations (Munardji, 2016). When this trait of shiddiq exists within a leader and forms the basis of their behavior, every effort they make to achieve collective goals will be facilitated.

Honesty, as a characteristic of the Prophet as Allah’s Messenger, is one of his defining traits and simultaneously serves as a foundation for success. According to Ary Ginanjar (2007), this indicates the existence of a universal standard of character across the world as a determinant of success. This aligns with the findings of Thomas Stanley, cited by Purnamasari (2015), who in her research noted that among one hundred factors contributing to human success, honesty ranks first. This demonstrates that honesty is a crucial aspect of effective leadership.

### Responsibility for all obligations that have been given

Moreover, integrity is also manifested through taking responsibility for all assigned duties. The head of the madrasah demonstrates full accountability for every obligation entrusted to them, including ensuring that each program and activity is executed properly and that established commitments are upheld. This sense of responsibility reflects the leader's integrity and dedication in achieving educational goals.

This aligns with the characteristics of prophetic leadership, namely Amanah (trustworthiness). The second virtue possessed by Prophet Muhammad SAW is amanah, which is a moral quality essential for a leader to build professionalism within themselves and the institution they lead. Amanah implies being trustworthy (Munardji, 2016), which is closely related to a leader's sense of responsibility. When a leader fulfills their responsibilities effectively, they gain the trust of others. In an organization or state institution, this responsibility is crucial as it affects the sustainability and progress of the organization or company. The story of Prophet Muhammad has reached Muslims today, illustrating that before becoming a Messenger, he was already honored with the title Al-Amin (the trustworthy). In the Qur'an, Allah has indicated that a person chosen to serve the people must possess the quality of trustworthiness, as stated in QS. Al-Qasas: 26.

قَالَتْ إِخْلِبْهُمَا يَا بَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ أَنْ خَيْرَ مَنْ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ (٢٦)

It means : “One of the two women said: “O my father, hire him as a worker for us, for truly the best person you could hire to work for us is one who is strong and trustworthy.” (QS. Al-Qoshos: 26)

The essence of this verse explains that the person considered best to serve the people, or to work on behalf of the people, is someone who possesses strength and is trustworthy—that is, when entrusted, they bear the responsibility to safeguard that trust.

The trait of *amanah* (trustworthiness) is indeed essential for every leader and represents a key aspect of a leader's personal quality. Possessing amanah indicates that an individual can be trusted. If such a person is a leader, they are capable of maintaining the public's trust. When a leader successfully upholds the community's trust, the people are willing to entrust all matters and affairs within their environment to the leader (Mustopa & Supardi, 2021). Consequently, the leader gains the authority to manage the community's welfare effectively, facilitating the swift achievement of shared goals.

### Monitoring Students' *Akhlakul Karimah*

In addition to the aforementioned traits, the integrity of a madrasa principal also requires firmness in monitoring the achievement of instilling *akhlakul karimah* among the *madrasah* community. The continuous development of students' character must be accompanied by ongoing monitoring to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of character formation.

In addition to the aforementioned traits, the integrity of a madrasa principal also requires firmness in monitoring the achievement of instilling *akhlakul karimah* among the madrasa community. The continuous development of students' character must be accompanied by ongoing monitoring to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of character formation.

Controlling, whether understood as supervision or regulation, essentially involves the adjustment and standardization of planning processes aimed at achieving organizational goals or effectiveness. Supervision, in particular, focuses more on the implementation process of programs. Efforts in controlling must be maximized to ensure that the outcomes of organizational activities are carried out efficiently (Dale, 2003).

In the context of monitoring, from an Islamic perspective, this is explained by Allah in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Mujadalah, verse 7.

ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

It means : “He will inform them of what they have done on the Day of Judgment. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing of everything. (QS. Al Mujadalah, 7)

This verse explains that everything we do must be controlled, monitored, and reported, as Allah is fully aware of all our actions, as emphasized at the end of the verse

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ This reinforces the attribute of Allah as All-Knowing. Regarding this verse, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal emphasizes that it begins and ends with knowledge, illustrating the vastness of Allah's awareness. It is inevitable that every action undertaken by an organization cannot escape oversight. Likewise, even a well-structured program with all its components must be continuously monitored to ensure its continuity and that its objectives are achieved as planned.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the prophetic leadership vision of the madrasah principal in instilling *akhlakul karimah* is to cultivate students with the character of the Pancasila student profile and *rahmatan lil'alam*, grounded in exemplary behavior. This vision is implemented through several activities, including habituation practices, value-based learning, Qur'an memorization and literacy (*Tahfidz* and reading-writing), Friday *infaq*, modeling exemplary behavior, and fostering cooperation with parents/guardians. The integrity of the madrasah principal's prophetic leadership in instilling *akhlakul karimah* is demonstrated by serving as a role model, employing an empathetic approach, being honest and transparent in conveying information and policies, taking responsibility for all assigned duties, and continuously monitoring students' *akhlakul karimah*.

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