Analysis of Non-Violence Education Verses in the Tafsir of Al-Azhar

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ABSTRACT: Hamka is an Indonesia Muslim scholar and he is known as a Qur’anic scholar. He has interpreted the Qur’an verses about specific topic of Islam such as education and non-violence education. Hamka’s concept on nonviolence education has been widely adopted and implemented in Indonesia education institutions. This study aim is to investigate the concept Hamka’s non-violence education based on Qur’an verses in his book Tafsir of Al-Azhar. This study is a literature review study and used qualitative approach. Data was gathered from published books, journal articles, conference proceedings, and research reports. The results of this study show that in al-Azhar’s interpretation there are several verses from the Koran that discuss the theme of anti-violence education. These verses include messages about love, gentleness, wisdom and good examples in educating children. Apart from that, there are also verses that condemn acts of violence against children. Hamka, in interpreting these verses, places a strong emphasis on the importance of avoiding violence in educating children.

KEYWORDS: Tafsir Al-azhar, non-violence education, Islamic education, Qur’an verses

I. INTRODUCTION

The key to realizing anti-violence education is to instill the values of tolerance and compassion, which are essential foundations (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Several methods have been used to shape the characteristics of people who love peace or are non-violent. A prior research shows that one very effective effort in campaigning for anti-violence education is through the “a watchout” campaign (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). This campaign was carried out massively through media message appeals. This method successfully increases people's awareness of humanizing each other, especially when interacting on social media.

Apart from anti-violence campaigns through the media, educational efforts are also carried out through cultural reconstruction (Liritzis, Volonakis, & Vosinakis, 2021). The patriarchal culture that is still rooted in society is one of the important points that encourage violence, especially violence against women in the domestic space. The unequal power relations between men and women cause women always to be oppressed and become the object of venting anger from men (husbands). Ironically, such patriarchal culture is often supported by religious understandings and interpretations, which tend to be produced by those who are pro-culture (Duderija, 2017). As a result, the interpretation of the Qur’an is directed at justifying the increasingly powerful status quo of men in front of women. Several verses and hadiths were produced to strengthen male superiority in all aspects. This fact is indeed hazardous and hurts the values of Islamic humanism, and is contrary to the basic principle of women being equal to men before Allah and the law.

Education in the Islamic discussion space has been discussed for quite a long time. This topic exists simultaneously as the transmission of Islamic teachings from the first speaker (Rasulullah) to subsequent generations across time and space. Among the Islamic thinkers who are pretty firm in discussing the issue of education is Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, the author of the book "Ihya' Ulumuddin," which discusses many aspects of life, including education. In his book, Imam al-Ghazali discusses the aims of education, teaching methods, and the importance of morals in education (Taja, Nurdin, Kosasih, & Suresman, 2021). Apart from al-Ghazali, there is also the name Ibn Kathir. This clever Muslim scholar who wrote a commentary on the Qur’an with a label attributed to his name, "Tafsir Ibn Kathir," discusses many educational topics such as morals, morality, and the importance of education in human life.

Discussions about education are still ongoing in the modern era. Among the figures who are concerned about discussing this is Muhammad Abduh. This great thinker from Egypt, who contributed significantly to the writing of the interpretation of "al-Manar," dissected many educational issues primarily linked to reform and renewal. In terms of education, Abduh made the West
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an ideal model. Education in the West has proven successful in producing knowledge and technology, influencing almost all of the earth’s inhabitants.

Apart from Abduh, another name that also discusses education is Fazlur Rahman. This Islamic scholar from Pakistan has written extensively on theology, philosophy, and other Islamic studies. In his famous book, “Islam,” Rahman discusses education in Islam and the importance of education in Muslim life. In the book “Islam and Modernity,” Rahman discusses various educational issues in the context of the Muslim world, which is experiencing modernization. He argued that education was essential in the transformation of Muslim societies and in building social, political, and economic progress. Rahman criticized traditional education, which only focuses on religious knowledge and pays little attention to modern science. However, he also highlights the weaknesses of contemporary education, which ignores moral and spiritual values too much, resulting in individuals who are too materialistic and insensitive to social problems. Rahman proposed a holistic educational approach that integrates Islamic aspects, modern science, and moral and spiritual values. He believes holistic education will help produce qualified graduates who can contribute to contemporary society. Besides that, Rahman also discussed women’s education, technology education, and Islamic education in Western countries. He emphasized the importance of providing equal opportunities for women in education. He suggested that technology education be integrated into Islamic education to produce graduates who can adapt quickly to the modern world of work. He also highlights the challenges faced by Muslim students in Western countries and provides suggestions on how they can develop their Islamic identity without neglecting secular education.

If several Islamic commentators and thinkers discussed the theme of education in general, then other Muslim commentators and figures who addressed the issue of anti-violence education specifically were no less numerous. Among several names that can be raised here is Muhammad Abu Zahrah, an Islamic jurist and exegete from Egypt who wrote tafsir of the Qur’an and several books of fiqh. In his interpretation, Abu Zahrah discusses peaceful education in Islam and emphasizes the importance of avoiding violence in children’s education. Another Qur’an study scholar who discusses non-violence education is Muhammad Shahrur. In his work entitled “Al-Kitab wa al-Qur’an,” he discusses peace education in Islam. Shahrur emphasized the importance of education that respects human rights and individual freedoms and avoids all forms of violence. The same as Sahrur, Tariq Ramadan: A philosopher, and a scholar from Switzerland who wrote the book “Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation.” In his book, Ramadan discusses the concept of peace education in Islam and emphasizes the importance of developing a mindset based on peace and justice. Some Muslim thinkers from the land of Sudan also participate in the discourse on non-violence education. This figure is named Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im, a legal expert and philosopher who wrote the book “Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law.” In his book, An-Na’im discusses peaceful education and emphasizes that Islam recommends avoiding violence in education.

Departing from this problem, this research wants to elaborate more deeply on the concept of anti-violence education in the world of Buya Hamka’s interpretation in al-Azhar’s interpretation. The anti-violence education referred to in this research is a conceptual formulation of anti-violence education based on the interpretation of the Qur’an. This research also aims to counter unwise interpretations of verses from the Qur’an, which are often used as justification for violent behavior both in the family context and violence in the name of religion. In this context, presenting a humanist and friendly interpretation is very important as an alternative interpretation that is more sensitive to the values of equality and oriented towards universal benefit.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Definition of Education

The word “education” has been used by Indonesian people for quite a long time. Therefore, it is easy to understand the context of the meaning contained in this word. Indonesian speakers, if asked, can easily demonstrate the scope of the meaning of the word “education.” In the Main Indonesian Dictionary, the word "education" means 1) the process, methods, and actions of educating; 2) changing the attitudes and behavior of a person or group of people to mature humans.

In the first meaning, the education entry refers to the category of nouns. The noun nature of education is abstract; that is, it cannot be perceived by the power of the senses (see, hear, smell, and touch). Meanwhile, in the second case, the education entry refers to a complete understanding of the form of education. In this case, education means certain actions to change humans (individuals and groups) into adults (Campbell, 1999).

Many groups use this last meaning when formulating definitions of education, including what is understood by the people themselves when this word is explained. So, it is not surprising that the public equates education with schools, madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, seminaries, and other educational institutions. In these institutions, there is a process of coaching, training, teaching, and guiding people to achieve certain targets in knowledge, skills, and morality. The term "education" in Indonesian is similar to "education" in English. The Oxford Dictionary defines the meaning of "education" as “a process of teaching, training, and learning, especially in schools, colleges or universities, to improve knowledge and develop
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skills (Brewer, 1993). This definition overlaps with what is stated in the Indonesian Dictionary. In this case, “education” is defined as the process of teaching, training, and learning, as in schools, dormitories, or universities, aimed at increasing knowledge and developing skills.

B. Nonviolence Education

The long explanation of the meaning, history, philosophy, and scope of education above has led to the understanding that education is a planned and systemic process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious and spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, morals, and knowledge. The actualization of this educational vision is reflected in learning activities organized by academic institutions, such as schools, colleges, Islamic boarding schools, and other institutions (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019).

Apart from discussing the established system, the educational discourse remains open to discussions and research. Academic discussions are usually related to actual phenomena occurring in society. The debate is intended so that education can participate in resolving these phenomena. One of the issues that is quite prominent in society and which education is expected to join in solving is violence. Violence is a banal event that is widespread at all levels of society. If Galtung categorizes violence into direct, structural, and cultural forms, then all three are equally widespread in society. In short, violence in society is alarming. The results of reports from several institutions that are concerned about cases of violence show that this phenomenon continues to creep up. The growth graph from year to year is quite significant. This has triggered many groups to hack the roadmap for resolution or at least minimize it. One way is through education. So, a concept known as non-violence education was born.

The term "non-violence education" is a combination of three words, namely "education," "non-," and "violence" (Arweck & Nesbitt, 2008). As discussed previously, education is synonymous with "pedagogy," which means "nurturing." Meanwhile, "non-" means "reject," "avoid," or "against." The word "violence" means an action carried out by an individual against another individual, which results in physical or mental disorders. This is a basic understanding commonly encountered and even understood by the public. Thus, non-violence education can be understood as a conscious and systematic effort so that the trained students have a vision, mentality, character, attitude, and concern that is non-violence in any form, level, condition, and mechanism.

Various efforts to build education with a vision of non-violence continue to be carried out by educational practitioners and the wider public. As a result, several theories and concepts were released. So, the idea of non-violence education is different even though the terms used are relatively similar, namely both non-violence education. If the theoretical realm is rich in color, so is the practical realm. This means that schools' efforts to cultivate human resources who care about the problem of violence are very diverse. Some inject it through the curriculum, some emphasize the inclusion model, and some create programs that stimulate empathy, a sense of humanity, and other forms of practice.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is a literature review study with a qualitative method. In qualitative research, the theory is only a guide, so the research focuses on the facts in the field (Nurdin Nurdin & Sagaf S Pettalongi, 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2016). The data was collected through reviewing published literature such as books, journal articles, proceedings, and research reports. The data from the literature review was analysed using thematic approach as outlined by Corbin and Strauss (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Nurdin Nurdin & Sagaf Sulaiman Pettalongi, 2022; Nurdin Nurdin & Sagaf S Pettalongi, 2022). The data analysis used a deductive thinking technique, interpreted as a research procedure that produces deductive data from the interviews and field notes. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis from Strauss and Corbin (1998). The analysis started with open, axial, and selective coding. The final result of the data analysis is themes found from the data.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Structure of Hamka's Interpretation of Nonviolence Education Verses

Hamka's interpretation of the verses about non-violence education is constructed in a general way. There are no partial explanations like classical interpretations, such as starting by dissecting the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences. It also does not include concepts that are commonly known in qawaid al-tafsir. The consideration of asbab al-nuzul needs to be added to the language. What still seems to be an intersection between Hamka's work and classical commentaries is the part that links verses with other verses, which in the terminology of al-Qur'an ulum is known as munasabah.

Thus, the semantic analysis that will be carried out in this discussion focuses on Hamka's word choice and sentence structure, including the language style presented. From this analysis, conclusions will be drawn regarding Hamka's important points about non-violence education.
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QS. Surah Ali Imran (3):159:

فِي مَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كَنْتُ فَظًّا غَلِيْظًا مِّنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى الَّمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزِزْتُ فَتَوَّكُنَّ عَلَى اللّٰهِ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحْبِبُ الْمُتَّوَلِّينَ

Translation

So, because of Allah’s grace, you (the Prophet Muhammad SAW) were gentle towards them. If you act harshly and have a rude heart, they will distance themselves from those around you. Therefore, forgive them, ask for forgiveness, and consult with them. Then, when you have decided, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who trust in themselves.

Hamka opened his interpretation of this verse by explaining Allah SWT’s praise for the Prophet Muhammad. In this case, Allah praised the personality of the Prophet Muhammad, who was gentle and did not get angry quickly, which made his da’wah process successful. Hamka further wrote:

In this verse, we find high praise from God towards His Messenger because of his gentle attitude and not being rude towards His people who were being guided and educated in their faith to be perfect. This was the mistake of some people who abandoned their duties because they were vying for wealth, but the Messenger of Allah did not remain angry. But with a big soul, they were led. In this verse, God emphasizes, as a compliment to the Apostle, that his gentle attitude is because God has put His grace into him. God has instilled a sense of grace, mercy, and love into him, and grace also influences his attitude toward leading. This follows God’s praise, in other words, in the last verses in Surah at-Taubah (sura 9), verse 128.

This quote makes several important points. First, a gentle attitude is a gift from Allah SWT, not the result of the Prophet’s choice. Even though Hamka did not explain it, this meaning likely emerged from considering the term mercy in the sentence: فيما رحمة من الله لنت لهم. Second, Hamka describes the context of gentleness in attitudes, such as a sense of grace, mercy, and love. Third, Allah’s praise aligns with what is contained in the QS. 9:128. According to Hamka, Allah praised the Prophet Muhammad with the characteristics of Allah himself, such as the characteristics of Rauf and Rahim. This is Hamka’s statement:

At the end of this verse, God gives the highest praise to His Messenger; He was given the two titles Rauf and Rahim, which means very loving, caring, and merciful. The two names Rauf and Rahim are the attributes of God, the names of God, included in al-Asmaul Husna, of which there are 99 in number. He has carried out the grace of Allah that has been bestowed upon him well, so it has become his life attitude, and God Himself gave him the title with the name of God. This is where we meet what is often recommended by Sufism experts, namely that humans should try to make themselves imitate the qualities of Allah that are worthy of imitation. So, in the verse that we are interpreting, we find the words of God praising His Prophet gently and respectfully, saying that his gentle attitude towards the ignorant ummah was due to the grace of Allah, which had incarnated within him. God’s grace has become the nature of the womb.

At the beginning of verse 128 of Surah at-Taubah, you find the sentence min anfusikum, which means that the Messenger is not someone else to you. He is you, or like you. For the Arabs he visited, he was no one else but rather a part of themselves. To the Quraysh, he was a blood relative. For the Ansar, he was a child (khal) because Abdullah’s mother (the Prophet’s grandmother) was from the Bani Najjar. nd for us as a whole human race, he too is a descendant of Adam, the same as us, not angels sent from heaven and not jinn. He knows our pain and pleasure and has "Al-Musyararakatil Wijdaniyah" in common. If there is weakness, he knows the causes of that weakness, and then he leads him to a stronger faith. If you’re stupid today, hopefully, you won’t be stupid again after lots of experience and learning.

In terms of attributing Allah’s qualities to the Prophet Muhammad, a vital part to underline is the strong impression of Hamka’s pantheism. Followers of Sufism commonly hold this understanding. This pantheistic assumption confirms that Hamka believes that the Prophet Muhammad is reflected in the presence of Allah. The Prophet was not an ordinary human, even though the verse contains the phrase min anfusikum. This phrase emphasizes the biological (bodily) aspects of the Prophet Muhammad, a descendant of Adam. Meanwhile, in the spiritual aspect, the Prophet Muhammad is an extension of Allah.

Hamka’s presentation of the figure of the Prophet Muhammad as an extension of Allah has a specific purpose, namely, to allow humans to accept what the Prophet Muhammad displayed in his personality. If the Prophet Muhammad had a gentle nature, his people were also required to have the same nature. Hamka’s conclusion is reminiscent of what Hasan Hanafi introduced when discussing the importance of reformulating the science of kalam from traditional, theocentric to modern, anthropocentric. In this renewal, Hanafi emphasizes the reinterpretation of Allah’s attributes. In this case, how can humans implement these characteristics? If Allah has the nature of Rahman, then humans must imitate him in social interaction practices.
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Repetition of the characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad, who was gentle, kind, and merciful, will guide his people toward success in leading. This conclusion can be captured in Hamka's statement as follows: God's high praise for His Messenger because of his gentle attitude means that God is pleased if that attitude continues. With this, God has given instructions about the "Science of Leading." Because of that, God said, "Because if you act harshly, stubbornly, they will scatter from those around you. "A leader who is rude and stubborn or has a rigid attitude, people will be reluctant to approach him. People would move away individually so that he "would walk through the smoke" alone. If someone has run away, don't blame that person. Instead, investigate your defects.

To some of us in the Ummah of Muhammad, who Allah also gave the task of inheriting the Prophet to continue his leadership, this verse also guides us that a leader who is always rude and stubborn will not be successful in leading. Indeed, a leader must be firm in maintaining his stance, as the Messenger of Allah SAW did after signing the Hudaibiyah peace. Loudly and firmly, he ordered Ali to write down what he had dictated. He also strictly ordered his people to shave their heads, cut their dams (fines), and take off their ihram clothes because they would not go on the Hajj that year. So, a firm attitude at such a time is very different from being gentle towards some people who were at fault in the Uhud battle. It is clear that at the time of the Uhud battle, he taught the ignorant and inexperienced so that they would understand better and that such an incident should not happen again. But his firm attitude in Hudaibiyah was a leadership attitude that felt one hundred percent responsible. He was obliged to show a firm attitude to people like Umar and Ali, who seemed disappointed because of emotional impulses (sentiment) that they did not go on the Hajj year because year people left their duties in the battle of Uhud. Then, not even a few months later, Umar apologized to the Apostle because he had seen how superior and far-sighted the Apostle was. The polytheists initially asked that one clause of the agreement be abolished, namely the return of the Makkah youth who had joined Medina, to be revoked with mutual consent. Because the losers are not the Muslims but the Quraysh themselves, as we will interpret at length, God willing, in Surah al-Fath later.

Even though the prologue of this verse contains a depiction of the gentle figure of the Prophet Muhammad, Hamka also emphasizes that the Prophet was also a firm figure. The Prophet's firmness and gentleness were directly proportional. These two characters are shown according to the needs of the context faced. In war situations, the Prophet was more dominant in showing firmness. He showed one of them when leading the battle of Uhud and betraying the Hudaibiyah agreement.

In this way, Hamka sees that being gentle does not mean you have to always position yourself as the one who gives in. Meekness is put forward in everyday interactions. However, a person must change direction in certain situations to become a firm figure. This flexibility is an asset that a leader must have.

In this verse, Hamka also believes that a leader should avoid harsh characters and be stubborn in leading. This negative character will thwart a person's leadership mission. People around him will stay away from him. In explaining the effects of these negative traits, Hamka cited an expression commonly used by the Malay community: "hanging smoke." This expression is a metaphor for futile behavior. No matter how hard someone invites, these efforts will end in futility, as Hamka stated: "A leader who is rude and stubborn or has a rigid attitude will be reluctant to have people approach him. People will move away one by one so that he "will be filled with smoke" alone. If someone has run away, don't blame that person, but investigate your defects"

B. Inter-textual relations in the interpretation of Hamka in the context of verses on non-violence education

In interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, especially the verses on non-violence education, it is clear that Hamka is not only conducting literary studies. It also involves a lot of text. The Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad's hadith, historical texts, scholarly literature, local treasures, community views, and humanities knowledge disciplines are among them. Hamka combines all data sourced from multi-disciplinary sources to form a unique, contextual, critical, and nuanced interpretation of locality.

Hamka demonstrated his involvement in the Qur'an by emphasizing the context of the verse. For example, when he interpreted QS 3:159 with QS. 9:128. The munasabah analysis by Hamka was when linking Allah's praise to the Prophet Muhammad. In this case, the Prophet is said to have the noble qualities Allah attributes to himself. The association of these two verses with different locations of the surah proves that Hamka sees the Qur'an not in a partial way. The verses of the Qur'an, their parts are related to each other. So, it is only possible to conclude a holistic analysis.

Hamka also carried out interpretations involving different verses when explaining the meaning of the prohibition on making fun of or insulting other people (QS. 49:12). Here, Hamka firmly states that making fun of other people is not permissible. The threat to the perpetrator is the Wail state. To strengthen this argument, Hamka quoted QS. 104:1, which expressly mentions the threat. Linking these two verses indirectly gives Hamka's interpretation of a sequence between actions (morals) and sanctions.
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A model like this can be categorized as comprehensive reasoning. When giving moral direction (code of conduct), he also conveys what kind of sanctions will be received if it is violated.

Apart from the Qur’an, Hamka also quoted the Prophet Muhammad’s hadiths when explaining the verses’ meaning. Using hadith in his explanation makes Hamka treat hadith according to its function appropriately. As is known, one of the functions of hadith in the Qur’an is to provide a context for meaning (bayan al-tafsir). In the tafsir bi ma’atsur tradition, almost no commentators do not involve hadith in their interpretation. These commentators believe that the text after the Qur’an (the second text) that is most authoritative in interpreting the meaning of the Qur’an is the hadith of the Prophet.

Among the hadiths of the Prophet that Hamka uses to interpret verses about non-violent education is the hadith about pride. In this hadith, it is revealed that arrogance has several characteristics. These include rejecting the truth and deeming people. Hamka used this hadith to interpret the verse about prohibiting making fun of or insulting others. For him, because this insulting behavior is born of arrogance (considering other people to be inferior), this insulting attitude or action can also be categorized as arrogance. The next hadith quoted by Hamka relates to the prohibition of prejudice. The hadith says: Never be prejudiced because truly evil thoughts are the most false words. And let yourselves be snooping around, and don’t make trouble, and don’t be side by side, and don’t be envious and don’t hate and don’t turn around, and let all of you servants of Allah be brothers”

V. CONCLUSION

This research concludes that in al-Azhar’s interpretation there are several verses from the Koran that discuss the theme of anti-violence education. These verses include messages about love, gentleness, wisdom and good examples in educating children. Apart from that, there are also verses that condemn acts of violence against children. Hamka, in interpreting these verses, places a strong emphasis on the importance of avoiding violence in educating children. He interprets the verses by prioritizing the values of love, gentleness, wisdom and good examples in educating children. Hamka firmly opposes all forms of emotional or physical violence that can damage a child’s soul and future. Hamka’s interpretation provides a comprehensive perspective on anti-violence education based on the Koran. Hamka’s thoughts on non-violent education provide a very valuable contribution to the world of contemporary education. Hamka’s views on the importance of avoiding violence in educating children are in line with modern educational trends which emphasize respect for children’s rights and the use of a humanist approach that is free from violence. The findings of this research can be a basis and inspiration for educators and educational practitioners in creating a learning environment that is safe, healthy and supports children’s positive development.

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