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JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN ISLAMIC STUDIES

<https://ejournal.iainpalopo.ac.id/index.php/jiis/>

## Preaching Through Islamic Education: The Challenge of Education of Millennial Muslim Character

Ahmad Noviansah✉

PGMI, STIT Darussalimin NW Praya, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Indonesia

### Articles

#### Information

##### History:

Received .....

Approved.....

Publish.....

##### Keywords:

Understanding of  
Da'wah, Islamic  
Education, Character of  
Millennial Muslims.

### Abstract

This study aims to find out the challenges in preaching through Islamic education for the millennial generation. In Muslim society, the word preaching, both as a concept and an activity, is often identified as education (tarbiyah) on the grounds that in preaching there is an element of education and in education there is an element of preaching, especially since both activities do not recognize age. This millennial era is interpreted by some experts as the back to spiritual and moral or back to religion . Namely the period of returning to spiritual, moral and religious teachings. The challenge of the current millennial generation is how to change the information obtained by someone into meaningful knowledge. The main assets of the millennial generation in this era are ideas and creativity, research and findings supported by science. The Millennial Generation is a generation terminology that is currently widely discussed by many circles in the world in various fields. Millennials or also known as the Millennial Generation or Generation Y are demographic groups ( cohorts ) after Generation X. Social researchers often group the generation born between the 1980s and 2000s as the millennial generation. It can be said that the millennial generation is the current young generation who are currently in the age range of 21 to 41 years.

✉Correspondent Email:

[ahmadnoviansah12@gmail.com](mailto:ahmadnoviansah12@gmail.com)

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## Introduction

The existence of major and rapid changes in all aspects of human life in various sectors that have resulted in advances in technology and science is a transformation that has occurred today. Advances in communication, information, biotechnology, material engineering have occurred very rapidly, resulting in fundamental changes in all aspects of people's lives. This situation has led us to a new period where everything is driven by computerization and the use of machines to help humans in their work, and it is all so fast and uncontrollable. This rapid change is now known as the Industrial Revolution 4.0, namely the fusion of technology with internet facilities, the use of which has so far been able to reach billions of users. According to research published by the Future of Humanity Institute at Oxford University (2019), "One of the negative consequences of the development of technology and artificial intelligence is the replacement of the role of humans in various fields of life. Even according to 352 *artificial intelligence experts* , the influence of digitalization is not only on work, but its negative impacts have spread to various professional fields, businesses, and also on education in the future (Parhan et al., 2022, p. 170) .

Advances in technology and science have ushered in a new era of human progress. Because the very wide reach makes interaction between humans limitless in various dimensions of space and time.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the creation of a technological device by humans aims to make human life more efficient, easier, and prosperous. This situation results in differences in a person's behavior in social life, namely between the previous generation and the next generation. According to "The term generation refers to a group of people who are roughly the same age and have significant social experiences (such as economic conditions, historical events, and dominant cultural values) that can influence each other". Birth cohorts are usually used to determine generations ( Parhan et al., 2022: 170).

The Millennial Generation is a generation terminology that is currently being discussed by many people in various fields in the world. Millennials or also known as the Millennial Generation or Generation Y are a demographic group ( *cohort* ) after Generation X. Social researchers often group generations born between the 1980s and 2000s as the millennial generation. It can be said that the millennial generation is the current young generation who are currently in the age range of 21 to 41 years (Asy'ari, 2022, p. 116) .

Then according to the generation theory there are 5 generations born after the Second World War and related to the present, namely:

- a. Baby Boomer (1946 – 1964) This generation born after World War II had many siblings, as a result of many couples who dared to have many children. An adaptive generation, easy to accept and adapt. Considered an old person who has life experience.
- b. Generation X (1965-1980) The years when this generation was born were the beginning of the use of PCs (personal computers), video games, cable TV, and the internet. Data storage also used floppy disks or diskettes. MTV and video games were very popular at this time. . According to research conducted by Jane Deverson, some of this generation have negative behaviors such as disrespecting their parents, starting to know punk music, and trying to use marijuana.

- c. Generation Y (1981-1994) Known as the millennial generation. The term generation Y began to be used in major US newspaper editorials in August 1993. This generation uses a lot of instant communication technology such as email, SMS, instant messaging and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. They also like to play online games.
- d. Generation Z (1995-2010) Also called I Generation, net generation or internet generation. They have similarities with generation Y, but they are able to apply all activities at one time such as tweeting using a cellphone, browsing with a PC, and listening to music using a headset. whatever is done is mostly related to the virtual world. Since childhood they have known technology and are familiar with sophisticated gadgets that indirectly affect their personalities.
- e. Generation Alpha (2011-2025) The generation born after generation Z, born from the end of generation X and Y. A highly educated generation because they entered school early and studied a lot, on average having rich parents ( Asy'ari, 2022, p. 117) .

## Method

This research method uses a literature study method. Where the literature study method is a data collection technique by conducting a review study of books, literature, notes, and reports that are related to the problems being solved, namely the problem of preaching through Islamic education or those concerning the character of the millennial generation. As an example in the article written by Muhammad Parhan et al entitled " The Challenge of Educating the Millennial Muslim Generation in the Era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 to Create a Modern Islamic Education Environment " and the author does not present other writings as a data analysis tool. The data collection technique that the author uses in this article is the literature review study technique.

## Results and Discussion

### A. Definition of Da'wah

Etymologically, the word da'wah comes from Arabic, *namely da'a - yad'u da'watan* which means calling, encouraging, praying for goodness, and praying for vilified. The term da'wah has various meanings that are not in harmony for example, da'a ila means to encourage or call, then da'a lahu means praying for goodness, while *da'a 'alaihi* means praying for ugliness (Shodikin, 2015, p. 449).

It can be concluded that da'wah is an action carried out with the intention of inviting people to the path of truth and leaving the path of error as taught by the Prophet to the people he loved.

In terms of terminology, many Islamic figures provide understanding of da'wah, including *Taufiq al-Wa'i* , implementing its concept, embracing its beliefs, and implementing its sharia. While da'wah Contemporary means Contemporary da'wah is da'wah that uses the latest technological facilities using three indicators, namely da'wah that utilizes modern technology, da'wah materials that are in this era and da'wah using media in this era (Efendi et al.,

2023, p. 1181) . Meanwhile, da'wah in terms of terms according to several experts is as follows:

- a. Ibn Taymiyyah stated that da'wah is a call to believe in Him and in the teachings brought by His messengers, justifying the news they deliver and obeying His commands.
- b. Sheikh Ali Mahfudz stated that da'wah is inviting people to the goodness and guidance of Allah SWT, calling them to good habits and forbidding them to bad habits in order to be successful in this world and the hereafter.
- c. Prof. Toha Yahya Oemar stated that da'wah is an effort to invite people in a wise way to the right path in accordance with God's command for the benefit of this world and the hereafter.
- d. Hamzah Ya'qub stated that da'wah is inviting mankind with hikmah (wisdom) to follow the guidance of Allah and His Messenger.
- e. Prof. Dr. Hamka stated that da'wah is a call or summons to adopt a position that basically has a positive connotation with the substance lying in activities that order amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (Sukayat, 2009, pp. 27–28) .

Preaching and education are essentially the same, because preaching is part of education and preaching is one of its methods. The purpose of education is to create adult children. Islam is even sharper in its concept, namely the creation of a child who is physically and mentally mature, who has both physical and psychological integrity that is blessed by Allah the Almighty. While the purpose of preaching is to create humans who are responsible for themselves as servants of Allah and at the same time responsible as caliphs.

#### 1. Educational institutions

Educational institutions are institutions or places where educational or teaching and learning processes take place which are carried out with the aim of changing individual behavior towards a better direction through interaction with the surrounding environment. In addition, educational institutions are state or private educational institutions that offer education, both general and specific. Educational institutions are also social institutions that become agents of further socialization after the family institution.

Meanwhile, Islamic education is the process of conveying information in order to form a faithful and pious person so that humans are aware of their position, duties, and functions in this world by always maintaining their relationship with Allah, themselves, society, and the surrounding environment and being responsible to God Almighty, humans (including themselves) and their living environment.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the aim of holding Islamic education is to foster and develop four senses of responsibility in humans, namely;

- a. Responsibility to Allah
- b. Responsible to one's own conscience,
- c. Responsibility to society,
- d. Responsibility and care for everything in heaven and on earth

#### 2. Between Tarbiyah and Da'wah

In Muslim society, the word da'wah, both as a concept and an activity, is often identified with education (tarbiyah), on the grounds that da'wah contains elements of education, and education contains elements of da'wah, especially since in practice both activities do not recognize age. Roughly speaking, it can be said that education is focused on the "basic" area, while da'wah is focused on the advanced area. Along with its "basic" area, education essentially prepares humans, or makes humans ready, both physically, mentally, and intellectually, to enter productive periods.

After education has completed its 'task', then da'wah should start to play a role. The area of da'wah is humans who are entering their productive period, and of course have finished their preparation period. Thus, it is not wrong to conclude that da'wah targets people who are older in age. Unlike education where all potential, ability, and talent are still in the process of being trained, developed, in the area of da'wah, talent, creativity, are ready to go and act.

### 3. Humans as Subjects of Da'wah

Humans are the noblest creatures compared to other creatures or forms in this universe. One of the advantages possessed by humans is that they are given reason and lust that angels, Jinns and animals do not have, with this reason it is hoped that humans can manage the earth well, to carry out this difficult task, humans need knowledge. This is what causes humans to become subjects of education or creatures that need education. As creatures who carry the mandate of Allah, humans will be asked to be accountable for that mandate by Allah who gave the mandate to them. From here it can be formulated that humans are essentially creatures who carry the mandate who are responsible according to the guidelines that have been outlined, so humans are required to seek knowledge and preach the truth so as not to deviate from the rules that have been outlined.

### 4. Educational Institutions in Da'wah

In the discussion of Educational Institutions in Da'wah, there are 2, Informal and Formal education, my friends. For informal education, Islamic Education first grew and developed in the process of Islamization was education in informal form, which does not have a special place, time, material, and teaching guidelines, but is delivered orally (mouth to mouth) or da'wah bil lisan (with speech) and bil arkan (with body or behavior). After informal education took place, formal education emerged, namely education that was planned, had a certain time and place and material. This formal education is carried out in Mosques and Langgar, Islamic boarding schools, surau and madrasah, and many more.

## B. Islamic Education

Islamic education is a means of transforming knowledge in religious aspects (cognitive aspects), as a means of transforming norms and moral values to form attitudes (affective aspects), which play a role in controlling behavior (psychomotor aspects) so that a complete human personality is created. Islamic education is expected to be able to produce humans who always strive to perfect their faith, piety, and noble character, ethics, character, or morals as a manifestation of education. Such humans are expected to be resilient in facing challenges, obstacles, and changes that arise in social

interactions both locally, regionally, nationally, and globally (Anwar & Salim, 2018, pp. 233–234) .

Islamic education as an education system, it is undeniable that it has a fairly well-established contribution to supporting the formation of national character with various strategies and methods that are quite impressive and convincing. As seen in the teaching system in Islamic education which is directed not only at achieving increased intelligence (reason) for students but more essential in Islamic education is expected to produce a complete person (having faith and noble morals). Likewise, in the process of achieving this, Islamic education is not only a burden for educators (teachers), but rather the first and main responsibility of parents in the household in shaping their children's personalities from the womb, birth and even to puberty. The role of parents can provide a sense of comfort, security and safety in instilling moral and religious values from an early age in their children ( Anwar & Salim, 2018, pp. 235).

### 1. Basic Concepts of Islamic Education

The basic concept of Islamic education includes the understanding of the terms *tarbiyah* , *ta'lim* and *ta'bid* . Abdurrahman An-Nahlawi stated that according to the Arabic dictionary, the term *At-Tarbiyah* comes from three words, first, *raba-yarbu* which means to increase and grow. This meaning can be seen in the Qur'an, Surah Ar-Rum verse 39. Second, *rabiya-yarba* which means to become big. Third, *rabba-yarubbu* which means to improve, master affairs, guide, guard and maintain. 3 The word *Tarbiyah* is the masdar of *rabba-yurabbi-tarbiyatan* . This word is found in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra verse 24.

وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّزْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي  
صَغِيرًا

"And humble yourself towards them both with love and say, "O my Lord, love them both as they both (loved me when) brought me up when I was a child." (Al-Isra' Verse 24).

Dr. Abdul Fattah Jalal, author of *Min al-Usul at-Tarbiyah fii al-Islam* (1977:15-24) says that the term *ta'lim* is broader than *tarbiyah* which actually applies only to the education of young children. Which is meant as a process of preparation and operation in the first phase of human growth (which Langeveld called "preliminary" education), or according to popular terms called the infant and child phase. The view of Fattah is based on two verses as stated by Allah SWT in Surat al-Isra verse 24 and As-Shuara verse 18.

قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

"He (Moses) answered, "The Lord (creator and sustainer) of the heavens, the earth, and everything in between if you are those who believe." ( As-Syuara verse 18).

The word *ta'lim* according to Fattah is a process that is continuously attempted by humans since birth. So that one aspect has covered the cognitive aspect and on the other side does not ignore the affective and psychomotor aspects. Fattah also based this view on the argument that the Messenger of Allah, was sent as a *Muallim*, as educators and Allah SWT himself confirmed the position of His Messenger in the letter Al-Baqarah: 151.

كُمع أُرْسُنَا فِينَكُم رُسُولًا مِّنْكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابُ

“As for you (We have perfected the favor given to you), We again sent to you a Messenger (Nabi Muhammad) who read to you the verses, taught you, and taught you the Book (Al-Qur'an) and wisdom (sunah), and teach what you did not know”.

## 2. Understanding Education According to Islam Language

In Indonesian, the word education consists of educate, as explained in the big Indonesian dictionary, which is the act (thing, method and so on) of educating (National, 2008, p. 323).

This understanding gives the impression that the word education refers more to the way of educating. In addition to the word Education, in the Indonesian dictionary there is the word teaching, as explained by Poerwadarminta, meaning how to teach or teach, another word that is similar to the word is teaching which means giving knowledge (Poerwadarminta, 1991, p. 250).

## 3. Definition of Islamic Education according to Terms

In terms of terminology, Islamic education is an educational system that can provide a person with the ability to lead his life according to the ideals of Islam, because Islamic values have inspired and colored his personality. Nur Uhbiyati stated. Islamic education is "an educational system that covers all aspects of life needed by Allah's servants". Therefore, Islam guides all aspects of Muslim human life both in the world and in the hereafter. (Uhbiyati, 1999, p. 12).

## C. The Challenge of Educating Millennial Muslim Characters

*Millennial* vocabulary comes from the English *millennium* or *millennia* which means a thousand years. *Millennia* then became a term for a period that occurred after the *global era*, or the *modern era*. Therefore, the *millennial era* can also be called the *post-modern era*. This era is interpreted by some experts as the *back era to spiritual and moral* or *back to religion*. Namely the period of returning to spiritual, moral and religious teachings. This era emerged as a response to the *modern era* which prioritizes reason, empiricism, and things that are materialistic, secularistic, hedonistic, pragmatistic, and transactional. Namely a view that separates worldly affairs from the afterlife. As a result of such a life, humans become free to act without spiritual, moral, and religious foundations. Such a life has indeed led humans to the stage of creating something amazing, such as *digital technology*, cloning, and so on. However, because it is not

accompanied by a spiritual, moral and religious foundation, all of these amazing findings have also been used by humans to support their lustful desires (Nata, 2018, p. 10) .

The challenge of the millennial generation today is how to change the information obtained by someone into meaningful knowledge. The main assets of the millennial generation in this era are ideas and creativity, research and findings supported by science. According to Mucharomah, the millennial generation has various characteristics, including:

1. Most millennials do not like reading conventionally (traditionally). They think that reading is not interesting. Millennials tend to look at photos, especially if the photos are interesting and have color. They prefer to read books online ( *e-books* ) rather than having to bother carrying books. Currently, *e-books* have been provided and sold online by publishers to make it easier for readers, especially millennials who have *smartphones* , to be able to view them anywhere and anytime they are.
2. The millennial generation believes that social media is a necessity. Communication between their peers is very easy, although not always done face to face. Through the information and communication space on the internet, the millennial generation can interact verbally, text messages, images or videos. In addition, they can also interact using social media by creating accounts on applications such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and so on. With the existence of social media, the millennial generation can also express themselves and actualize themselves according to their abilities.
3. This generation is very knowledgeable about the world of technology and digitalization compared to their parents. This generation views the world through cyberspace rather than through direct observation. Millennials are a very modern generation, they even educate their parents about technology regularly. Everything is digital and online.

From the explanation above, the generation that cannot be separated from technology, which makes technology the main media to foster communication, collect information, and facilitate all work processes every day is a characteristic of the millennial generation.

The rapid pace of change in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, significantly encourages the expansion of education that is more meaningful and constructive. This is because the industrial revolution 4.0 has a significant impact and influence on the existence, image, and dignity of education. The educated millennial generation shows a shift in mentality, with digital activities, information flow and industrial technology 4.0 becoming the color of life and perspective (Parhan et al., 2022, p. 174) .

Instilling values education is a challenge as well as a demand for education stakeholders, theorists and practitioners, including parents from Muslim families, in the world of education in facing this era of revolutionary technology. (Parhan et al., 2020, pp. 70–255) . This value education aims to prevent the increasing number of crimes, moral decay and drug use by the millennial generation. The millennial Muslim generation should be able to distinguish between good and negative traits through value-based learning so that they are able to determine

positive traits to improve their quality of life in the community. However, with rapid technological advances, the younger generation is increasingly complacent, reluctant to take responsibility, moral decay, and increasing cases of crime among the millennial generation. This situation is caused by the challenges of educators in the era of the 4.0 revolution and the lack of instillation of value education taught to the millennial generation (Parhan et al., 2022, p. 175) .

## Conclusion

Based on the explanation above, the author can conclude that there is a change in the millennial generation, especially in Islamic Education because they cannot be far or free from technology. Instilling value education is a challenge as well as a demand for stakeholders in education, theorists, and practitioners, including parents from Muslim families, in the world of education in facing this Millennial Era.

The challenge of the millennial generation today is how to change the information obtained by someone into meaningful knowledge. The main assets of the millennial generation in this era are ideas and creativity, research and findings supported by science so that at this time the millennial generation has the following characteristics: First , Most millennials do not like reading, they think reading is not interesting. Second , the millennial generation believes that media is a necessity. Third , this generation understands technology very well than their parents.

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