



Empathy Development Among Generation Z in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: A Hadith Perspective

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Abstract

The development of Artificial Intelligence has transformed Generation Z's patterns of social interaction and raised moral challenges in the form of declining social sensitivity and a decrease in the quality of human interaction. This situation calls for strengthening moral education focused on fostering empathy. This study aims to analyze the values of empathy in the hadith and their relevance to the character development of Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence. The study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis of hadiths related to empathy. The analysis involves the process of hadith authentication (*takhrīj*), evaluation of hadith authenticity, and fiqh al-hadith interpretation to understand their meaning and relevance in a contemporary context. The results indicate that the examined hadiths are authentic and contain values of empathy, such as the ability to understand others' circumstances, social concern, compassion, and human solidarity. These values are relevant in addressing the challenges of social interaction, which is increasingly mediated by digital technology and Artificial Intelligence. This study demonstrates that hadith-based moral education can serve as an ethical foundation for developing empathy in Generation Z, thereby fostering a generation that is morally upright, socially responsible, and wise in utilizing technology.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology supported by Artificial Intelligence has brought significant changes to various aspects of human life. Artificial Intelligence is not only utilized in the fields of industry, economics, and healthcare but has also become an integral part of everyday activities, particularly among Generation Z. Various social media platforms, algorithm-based recommendation systems, AI-powered chatbots, and other digital applications have transformed the ways individuals access information, communicate, and establish social relationships. The presence of these technologies has provided numerous benefits, particularly in enhancing efficiency and improving access to information (Amiruddin, 2021).

Generation Z refers to a cohort that was born and raised in a digital environment, enabling them to adapt rapidly to technological developments (Fadillah et al., 2022). Their close engagement with technology has positioned them as the

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primary users of various digital platforms powered by Artificial Intelligence. However, the intensive use of technology has also generated a number of social challenges that require serious attention. The increasing dominance of virtual interactions in daily life has the potential to reduce the frequency of direct social engagement, which may ultimately affect individuals' ability to understand the emotions, perspectives, and circumstances of others (Danial et al., 2023).

This phenomenon is reflected in various social behaviors, including growing individualism, cyberbullying, declining social concern, and reduced sensitivity toward social issues within the surrounding environment. In many cases, technological advancement encourages individuals to feel more comfortable interacting through digital media than engaging in face-to-face communication. Such conditions may reduce the quality of social relationships and hinder the development of healthy interpersonal connections (Alam et al., 2023). Therefore, technological advancement should be understood not only from the perspective of technical progress but also in terms of its implications for character formation and social life.

The transformation of social interaction patterns in the digital era indicates that education can no longer focus solely on cognitive development and knowledge acquisition; it must also emphasize character formation and the strengthening of moral values (Sholihah & Maulida, 2020). Education plays a strategic role in instilling values that guide individuals to use technology responsibly. Without a strong moral foundation, technological advancement may lead to various social problems that affect the quality of human relationships, particularly among younger generations who are highly engaged with digital technologies.

From an Islamic perspective, moral education is not merely intended to teach concepts of right and wrong but also to develop individuals with noble character who are capable of implementing moral values in their daily lives (Nasihatin, 2019). Moral education emphasizes the development of individual awareness regarding responsibilities toward oneself, society, and the broader social environment. One of the most important character traits within moral education is empathy. Empathy refers to an individual's ability to understand, experience, and respond positively to the conditions of others. This character trait plays a crucial role in fostering harmonious social relationships, enhancing concern for others, and preventing behaviors that may harm fellow human beings. Individuals with high levels of empathy tend to better understand the feelings of others and are more inclined to provide assistance when encountering people in need (Maemunah et al., 2026).

In the era of Artificial Intelligence, the development of empathetic character has become increasingly important because technological advancement has the potential to shift human social relationships toward more virtual forms of interaction. The convenience of digital communication often reduces the intensity of direct emotional engagement, making individuals less sensitive to the circumstances of others. If such conditions persist without adequate character reinforcement, they may result in a generation that possesses advanced technological skills but lacks social sensitivity (Alam et al., 2023).

Islam places great emphasis on the cultivation of empathy through the teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). As the second primary source of Islamic teachings after the Qur'an, Hadith contains numerous universal moral values related to social life. Various prophetic traditions emphasize compassion, brotherhood, social concern, and mutual assistance among individuals. These values serve as essential foundations for building harmonious and civilized social relationships within society.

Numerous studies have examined moral education and character education from Islamic perspectives. Most of these studies focus on general character traits such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and religiosity. Other studies highlight the importance of character education in addressing challenges arising from digital technological development. Nevertheless, research that specifically analyzes the values of empathy contained in Hadith and relates them to the character development of Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence remains limited. This gap highlights the need for further investigation, considering that empathy is one of the most essential character traits required to maintain the quality of social relationships amid the growing dominance of digital interactions.

In this study, the selected Hadiths were chosen because they are directly related to key indicators of empathy, including understanding the conditions of others, social concern,

compassion, and human solidarity. These values are highly relevant to the challenges faced by Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence. Unlike previous studies that generally discuss Islamic character education, this study focuses specifically on analyzing empathy values in Hadith and contextualizing them within contemporary social challenges resulting from digital technological development. Therefore, this study offers a new perspective on the utilization of Hadith values as a foundation for moral education aimed at fostering empathetic character among Generation Z.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the values of empathy contained in Hadith and examine their relevance to the development of empathetic character among Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence. It is expected that this study will contribute to the development of Islamic moral education by providing an ethical foundation for character formation capable of addressing the social challenges arising from modern technological advancement.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using content analysis to examine hadiths related to empathy and their relevance to the character development of Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence. The primary data consisted of selected hadiths that contain moral values associated with empathy, compassion, social concern, and human solidarity (Engkizar et al., 2026; Heriyanto, 2018; Pohontsch, 2019; Vourvachis & Woodward, 2015). Secondary data were obtained from books, journal articles, and other scholarly sources relevant to moral education, empathy, Generation Z, and Artificial Intelligence (Alouzi et al., 2026; Baroud et al., 2025; Hafizah et al., 2025; Tadol et al., 2025).

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques by identifying and compiling hadiths relevant to the theme of empathy from authoritative hadith collections. The selected hadiths were subsequently subjected to *takbrij* analysis to determine their sources and evaluate their authenticity. Only hadiths classified as authentic (*sahih*) were included in the analysis (Kassymova et al., 2025; Mustafa et al., 2026).

The data analysis process consisted of four stages. First, *takbrij al-hadith* was conducted to trace the origin and transmission of the selected hadiths. Second, the authenticity of the hadiths was examined through an assessment of their *sanad* and *matan*. Third, content analysis was employed to identify and categorize empathy-related values contained in the hadith texts. Finally, a *fiqh al-hadith* approach was used to interpret the meanings of the hadiths contextually and to examine their relevance to the challenges of character development among Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence (Engkizar 2025; Zou & Schiebinger, 2018).

To ensure analytical rigor, the interpretation of hadith texts was supported by classical and contemporary commentaries as well as relevant scholarly literature. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of empathy values and their potential contribution to Islamic moral education in contemporary society.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Takhrij Results and Classification of Hadith Quality on the Development of Empathy Character

Takbrij al-hadith is the process of tracing hadith sources to identify their origins of transmission, the reliability of their chains of narrators (*sanad*), and the validity of their textual content (*matan*) (Sugitanata et al., 2023). Through this process, the hadiths related to the development of empathy character were analyzed to ensure their suitability as normative foundations for Islamic moral education. The findings indicate that all hadiths employed in this study originate from primary hadith compilations and possess a level of authenticity that is academically acceptable.

Hadith on Loving One’s Brother as Oneself

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

Meaning: *None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.*

This hadith was narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in *Sabih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Iman, Bab Min al-Iman an Yuhibba li Akbihi ma Yuhibbu Linafsihi* (Hadith No. 13), and by Imam Muslim in *Sabih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman* (Hadith No. 45). The hadith is categorized as *Muttafaq ‘Alaih* because its authenticity is unanimously acknowledged by both Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim. An examination of its chain of transmission reveals that all narrators are considered *thiqah* (trustworthy), and the chain is uninterrupted up to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Therefore, this hadith is classified as *sabih* and possesses a very high degree of authenticity.

Hadith on Compassion toward Others

الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ، ارْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمْكُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ

Meaning: *The merciful are shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Show mercy to those on earth, and the One in heaven will show mercy to you.*

This hadith was narrated by Imam al-Tirmidhi in *Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Kitab al-Birra wa al-Shilah, Bab Ma Ja’a fi Rahmat al-Nas* (Hadith No. 1924). It was also narrated by Imam Abu Dawud in *Sunan Abu Dawud, Kitab al-Adab* (Hadith No. 4941) and appears in *Musnad Ahmad*. Imam al-Tirmidhi classified this narration as *hasan sabih*. The sanad analysis demonstrates that the narrators possess acceptable levels of reliability, making the hadith suitable as a foundation for the development of Islamic moral values.

Hadith on Social Solidarity and Brotherhood

مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ الْوَاحِدِ، إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى

Meaning: *The example of the believers in their mutual love, compassion, and sympathy is that of a single body. When one part of the body suffers, the rest of the body responds with sleeplessness and fever.*

This hadith was narrated by Imam Muslim and is also reported through strong chains of transmission in the narrations of Imam al-Bukhari. Based on the sanad analysis, the hadith is classified as *sabih* because its chain of transmission is continuous and its narrators are regarded as trustworthy and reliable by hadith scholars. The content of the hadith emphasizes the importance of social solidarity, mutual care, and collective responsibility within society.

Based on the results of the *takehrij* and sanad analysis, all hadiths employed in this study possess strong levels of authenticity and may serve as normative foundations for the development of empathy character. The classification of hadith quality is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of Hadith Quality on the Development of Empathy Character

Hadith	Theme	Classification
Hadith 1	Loving one's brother as oneself	Sahih (<i>Muttafaq ‘Alaih</i>)
Hadith 2	Compassion toward others	Hasan Sahih
Hadith 3	Social solidarity and brotherhood	Sahih

These findings indicate that all selected hadiths possess strong validity and are therefore appropriate as conceptual foundations for Islamic moral education aimed at fostering empathy character.

Empathy Values Embedded in the Hadiths

The content analysis of the three hadiths reveals four major empathy-related values: *perspective taking*, social concern, compassion, and human solidarity.

The first hadith emphasizes that the perfection of faith is closely associated with an individual’s ability to love others as oneself. This teaching highlights the

importance of understanding the needs, feelings, and interests of others. Such a value reflects the concept of *perspective taking*, which is widely recognized as a core indicator of empathy. Furthermore, the hadith promotes brotherhood, respect for others, and the reduction of egocentric attitudes in social life.

The second hadith underscores compassion as a fundamental principle governing human relationships. Compassion is not merely an emotional state but is manifested through concrete actions such as care, assistance, respect, and concern for others. Accordingly, this hadith embodies the values of compassion, social concern, tolerance, and social responsibility, all of which contribute significantly to the formation of empathy character.

The third hadith portrays the community of believers as a single body whose members are interconnected. This metaphor suggests that the suffering experienced by one individual should be felt by others, thereby encouraging social solidarity and collective action to support those in need. The values reflected in this hadith include social solidarity, cooperation, brotherhood, and social responsibility.

Based on the analysis, a synthesis of the empathy values embedded in the hadiths is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Empathy Values Embedded in the Hadiths

Hadith	Empathy Values
Hadith 1	Perspective taking, brotherhood, respect for others
Hadith 2	Compassion, social concern, tolerance
Hadith 3	Social solidarity, cooperation, social responsibility

These findings demonstrate that the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) contain universal moral principles that are highly relevant to contemporary concepts of empathy in educational studies. These values function not only as religious teachings but also as foundations for the development of social character required in contemporary society.

Relevance of Empathy Values in the Hadiths to the Development of Generation Z Character in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence has significantly transformed patterns of social interaction, particularly among Generation Z, who are widely recognized as digital natives (Ramadhani & Khoirunisa, 2025). Digital technologies provide numerous benefits, including easier access to information, more efficient communication, and broader social networks. However, the intensive use of technology may also contribute to social challenges such as increasing individualism, declining social concern, reduced ability to understand the emotions of others, and the emergence of cyberbullying (Nisrina et al., 2025).

In this context, the first hadith is particularly relevant for addressing tendencies toward digital individualism. The value of loving others as oneself serves as a foundation for developing social awareness and the ability to understand different perspectives. Hadith-based moral education can help Generation Z cultivate *perspective-taking* skills, ensuring that digital interactions do not diminish their sensitivity to the needs and circumstances of others.

The second hadith is relevant for strengthening emotional connections and social concern amid the growing dominance of virtual communication. The value of compassion contained in this narration can serve as a basis for promoting prosocial behavior, increasing concern for others, and preventing negative behaviors such as cyberbullying, hate speech, and discrimination in digital environments.

Meanwhile, the third hadith provides a normative foundation for fostering social solidarity in the era of Artificial Intelligence. The concept of society as a single body emphasizes the importance of cooperation, unity, and social responsibility in addressing contemporary challenges. Such solidarity can serve as a counterbalance to

the individualistic tendencies that may arise from excessive dependence on digital technology.

Overall, the findings indicate that hadith-based moral education has strong relevance for the development of empathy character among Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence (Engkizar 2025). The values of *perspective taking*, social concern, compassion, and social solidarity embedded in the hadiths provide an important foundation for nurturing a generation that excels not only in technological competence but also in social, emotional, and moral intelligence. Therefore, integrating hadith values into moral education may serve as an effective strategy for addressing the social challenges emerging from rapid technological development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the hadiths examined have a strong connection to the development of empathy in Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence. The analysis shows that the hadiths used are of sahih and hasan sahih quality, and can therefore serve as a foundation for Islamic moral education. These three hadiths contain important values such as the ability to understand others' circumstances, social concern, compassion, brotherhood, and solidarity among people all of which are key elements in the formation of an empathetic character. Amid the rapid advancement of technology, Generation Z faces various challenges, such as rising individualism, a decline in face-to-face social interaction, and diminishing sensitivity toward the surrounding environment. Therefore, moral education based on hadiths can serve as one approach to instilling an empathetic character, ensuring that the younger generation not only possesses the ability to utilize technology but also demonstrates social awareness, mutual respect, and the ability to build positive relationships within society.

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