

The Integration of Core Value “AKHLAK” into Business Strategy of Prophet Muhammad

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Abstract

Core Value is the soul of an organization or institution. The Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises has established AKHLAK as a core value in working well and correctly to build the nation. AKHLAK is an acronym for Amanah, Kompeten, Harmoni, Loyal, Adaptif, and Kolaboratif. The aim of this research is to determine the relationship between the core value of AKHLAK and the business strategy implemented by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This type of research is descriptive qualitative using the library research method. The main data sources for this research were obtained from books and articles published in the last 10 (ten) years in journals that are accredited both nationally and internationally. The results of the research show that the core value of AKHLAK is related to the business strategy of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, keeping promises and telling the truth about the products (Amanah), learning to do business from the age of 12 (twelve) years (Kompeten), without badmouthing other people's businesses who are competitors and paying employee wages before the sweat dries (Harmoni), obeying the leadership's orders as long as they do not conflict with the Shari'a (Loyal), understanding market needs (Adaptif), building strong relationships with various tribes (Kolaboratif).

Keywords: *Akhlak; Business; Core Value; Strategy; Modern*

INTRODUCTION

Core values are essential guiding principles that define the character of an organization and shape its culture ([Ahmad et al., 2017](#)). They serve as the foundational beliefs that drive behavior and decision-making within the organization ([Anwar & Hasnu, 2013](#)). In the context of the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN) in Indonesia, the core values are encapsulated in the acronym AKHLAK, which stands for Amanah (Trustworthy), Kompeten (Competent), Harmoni (Harmonious), Loyal, Adaptif (Adaptive), and Kolaboratif (Collaborative). These values were established to ensure that all employees and stakeholders operate with integrity, competence, and a spirit of collaboration, ultimately contributing to the nation's development (Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises, 2022).

The integration of core values into business practices is not a novel concept. Historically, successful leaders and organizations have consistently aligned their strategies with their core values ([Ferguson & Milliman, 2008](#))([Osborne, 1991](#))([Anwar & Hasnu, 2013](#)). This alignment ensures coherence in actions, decisions, and policies, fostering trust and respect among stakeholders. The Prophet Muhammad SAW is one such historical figure whose business strategies were deeply rooted in ethical principles and core values ([Zandi et al., 2015](#))([Kamaluddin & Citaningati, 2023](#))([Sulaiman et al., 2015](#))([Beekun, 2012](#)). In his dealings, the Prophet exemplified the principle of amanah, which emphasizes trustworthiness and ethical conduct in all aspects of life, including business ([Kasim et al., 2020](#)). Moreover, the Prophet's approach to trade was not solely focused on profit maximization; rather, it encompassed principles that promote transparency and fairness, thereby establishing a business environment grounded in ethical values, as highlighted in various studies on Islamic business practices ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#))([Yunus, 2019](#))([Hassan & Hippler, 2014](#)).

The integration of core values, such as those encompassed by the AKHLAK framework, into the business strategies of Prophet Muhammad can provide valuable insights for modern-day organizations. By examining the ethical foundations laid by the Prophet, contemporary businesses can recognize the importance of honesty, kindness, and respect in their operations, which not only enhance their reputation but also contribute to long-term success and sustainability in the marketplace ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)). Furthermore, the adoption of such values can cultivate a culture of accountability and excellence, where ethical behavior is not just encouraged

but expected, as it aligns with the historical context in which these values thrived during the Prophet's time, leading to improve organizational performance and social impact, as suggested by the research findings presented in the provided sources. ([Udin et al., 2018](#)) ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)) ([Salleh, 2019](#)) ([Kasim et al., 2020](#)). Additionally, the integration of these core values can foster a strong sense of trust, loyalty, and commitment among employees, customers, and other stakeholders, thereby strengthening the organization's relationships and enhancing its position within the broader business ecosystem ([Salleh, 2019](#)).

In contemporary business environments, the importance of ethical practices cannot be overstated. With increasing scrutiny from consumers, regulators, and stakeholders, businesses are under pressure to demonstrate ethical behavior and social responsibility ([Enciso et al., 2017](#)). The integration of AKHLAK values into business strategies offers a robust framework for achieving these goals ([Maulamin et al., 2021](#)). This research aimed to explore the historical precedent set by Prophet Muhammad in aligning his business practices with core ethical values, and to examine the potential benefits of adopting a similar approach in AKHLAK core value framework.

Literature Review

AKHLAK: A Framework of Ethical Business

AKHLAK core values is an acronym for Amanah (trustworthiness), Kompeten (competent), Harmoni (Harmony), Loyal, Adaptif (adaptive), and Kolaborasi (Collaborative), established by The Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN) Republic of Indonesia in 2020 ([Kementerian Badan Usaha Milik Negara Republik Indonesia, 2023](#)). Here is the elaboration of those acronym:

1. **Amanah:** Trustworthiness is the foundation of solid and productive relationships. BUMN employees are expected to be responsible, honest, and reliable in carrying out their duties and obligations.
2. **Kompeten:** Proper skills and knowledge are crucial in achieving excellence. BUMN employees are expected to have qualifications and professional attitudes that align with their respective fields of work.
3. **Harmonis:** Harmony in the work environment creates an atmosphere that supports growth and collaboration. BUMN

employees are expected to respect diversity, help each other, and build an inclusive and supportive work environment.

4. **Loyal:** Loyalty to the company and the nation is the essence of responsible leadership. BUMN employees are expected to be dedicated and prioritize the interests of the nation and the country in all aspects of their work.
5. **Adaptif:** The ability to adapt to change is key to maintaining relevance and competitiveness. BUMN employees are expected to adjust to changing environments, challenges, and emerging opportunities.
6. **Kolaboratif:** Success cannot be achieved alone. BUMN employees are expected to collaborate with teams, partners, and other stakeholders to achieve common goals and make a positive impact on society.

These values are not merely abstract ideals but practical guidelines for ethical conduct in all aspects of life including business. By integrating these values into business strategies, organizations can foster a culture that not only prioritizes ethical conduct but also enhances overall performance and commitment among employees, ultimately leading to a more sustainable business model that resonates with both Islamic principles and modern management practices ([Hakim et al., 2019](#)).

Business Strategy of Prophet Muhammad: A Literature Review

In the realm of business strategy, the figure of Prophet Muhammad stands as a remarkable and influential role model, whose approach to entrepreneurship and commercial ventures has been the subject of extensive scholarly examination ([Kamaluddin & Citaningati, 2023](#)). His life exemplifies a blend of ethical principles, strategic foresight, and resilience, resonating with contemporary business practices and offering valuable insights for modern entrepreneurs aiming to achieve sustainable success ([Ikhsan et al., 2020](#)). One of the key elements of his business strategy was the emphasis on ethical trade practices, which included honesty and fairness, serving as a foundation for trust and long-term relationships with clients and partners ([Ismail & Misrah, 2022](#)). Prophet Muhammad's strategies were not solely focused on profit maximization but rather on establishing mutually beneficial partnerships, fostering a sense of community, and ensuring the well-being of all stakeholders ([Sulaiman et al., 2015](#)) ([Zandi et al., 2015](#)).

Basic business principle of Prophet Muhammad involve the fundamental tenets of Islamic teachings, such as the prohibition of usury, the importance of risk-sharing, and the emphasis on transparent and equitable transactions ([Uyuni, 2021](#)). Furthermore, these principles are deeply ingrained in the conduct of business, guiding entrepreneurs towards ethical decision-making and promoting social justice, which ultimately contributes to a balanced and fair economic system that meets the needs of all individuals involved in commerce ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)). According to Uyuni, the characteristics of entrepreneurship in the Prophet's tradition include hard work, honesty, risk-taking, and service-oriented mindset, all of which are essential for sustainable business success ([Uyuni, 2021](#)).

One of the key aspects of Prophet Muhammad's business strategy was his ability to adapt to changing circumstances and to seize opportunities that aligned with his principles. This adaptability is particularly evident during his time as a trader, where he navigated various markets, built relationships with diverse stakeholders, and leveraged the insights gained from extensive travel to inform his business decisions, thus applying a strategic approach that resonates with contemporary concepts of strategic agility and market responsiveness ([Uyuni, 2021](#)).

In addition to his adaptability, Prophet Muhammad was also known for his swift decision-making and decisive action, which allowed him to capitalize on emerging opportunities and maintain a competitive edge in the marketplace. Moreover, his emphasis on cultivating a positive reputation and fostering loyalty among customers not only contributed to his individual success but also laid the groundwork for ethical business practices that align with the core values of mutual respect and integrity, which remain crucial in today's business environment ([Ismail & Misrah, 2022](#)) ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)) ([Uyuni, 2021](#)).

Overall, the business strategy of Prophet Muhammad, rooted in Islamic principles and his own lived experiences, offers a comprehensive and holistic approach to entrepreneurship that can serve as a valuable reference for modern business leaders seeking to achieve sustainable success while upholding ethical and socially responsible practices ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)) ([Ramadani et al., 2015](#)) ([Uyuni, 2021](#)) ([Udin et al., 2018](#)).

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing the library research method. Library research is a fundamental aspect of academic scholarship, providing researchers with a vast array of resources and information that can be leveraged to enhance the depth and quality of their work. Beyond its immediate benefits for scholarly endeavors, the skills cultivated through library research are also invaluable in preparing students for the demands of their future professional environments. The ability to navigate diverse information landscapes fosters critical thinking and analytical abilities that are essential in various fields, empowering students to sift through data and apply relevant insights effectively in their workplace challenges ([Nikoulina, 2020](#)). Data sources include books and scholarly articles published in the past ten years, sourced from both national and international journals. The qualitative nature of this research allows for an in-depth exploration of the integration of AKHLAK values into the business strategies of Prophet Muhammad SAW. The data will be analyzed through thematic coding, focusing on key themes such as trustworthiness (*amanah*), competence (*kompeten*), harmony (*harmoni*), loyalty (*loyal*), adaptability (*adaptif*), and collaboration (*kolaboratif*) to draw insights on the potential benefits and applications of this framework in modern business environments. The findings from the literature suggest that implementing these core values can lead to improved organizational relationships and the fostering of a positive work environment, ultimately benefiting both employees and the broader community in which the organization operates, as emphasized in recent studies on Islamic business ethics and practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the literature reveals that the integration of core values, such as those encompassed by the AKHLAK framework, into the business strategies of Prophet Muhammad SAW can offer significant benefits for modern organizations. These benefits include enhanced ethical standards, improved employee morale, and increased customer loyalty, all of which contribute to sustained organizational success and social responsibility within the marketplace ([Salleh, 2019](#)) ([Salin et al., 2020](#)). Moreover, as organizations embrace these values, they may experience an elevation in creativity and innovation, driven by a workplace culture that prioritizes profound ethical principles and moral responsibilities beyond mere compliance or profit orientation, thereby

facilitating a more holistic approach to business success and employee well-being.

Amanah (Trustworthy)

Prophet Muhammad SAW was known for his trustworthiness, often referred to as "Al-Amin" (the trustworthy) ([Shafin & Kasim, 2018](#))([Kamaluddin & Citaningati, 2023](#)). His business dealings were marked by honesty and integrity, ensuring trust from partners and customers alike([Beekun, 2012](#)). In Hadits, Rasulullah SAW said, "The truthful and honest merchant is associated with the Prophets, the upright and the martyrs" ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)), underscoring the significance of accountability and integrity in the pursuit of commercial success, as these values are intrinsically linked to the highest levels of ethical conduct and spiritual enlightenment within the Islamic tradition. Moreover, accountability in business serves as a catalyst for fostering an environment where stakeholders feel secure in their interactions with the organization, ultimately contributing to a culture of trust and collaboration that enhances overall performance; thus, organizations embracing these principles based on the prophetic model will be better positioned to navigate the complexities of the modern business landscape and establish themselves as reliable, trustworthy entities within their respective industries. In essence, the integration of the AKHLAK value of Accountable into business strategy not only enhances operational transparency but also aligns organizational goals with ethical imperatives, leading to improved stakeholder relationships and sustained competitive advantage in the marketplace ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)). This holistic approach to accountability reflects the essence of good corporate governance, as it demands both performance accountability and transparency in dealings, which ultimately fosters a sense of responsibility and ethical conduct within the organization, making it crucial for long-term sustainability and trust in the business community.

This aligns with the AKHLAK value of Amanah, emphasizing the importance of keeping promises and being truthful about products. In addition, the commitment to ethical practices fosters a positive reputation, which is critical in attracting and retaining customers who seek brands that reflect their values, ultimately driving long-term success and sustainability in competitive markets, as underscored in research examining the significance of ethical conduct and social responsibility in business ([McKechnie et al., 2007](#)) ([Kasim et al., 2020](#)) ([Salleh, 2019](#)) ([Salin et al., 2020](#)). The consistent application

of these values not only enhances an organization's image but also cultivates a loyal customer base, reinforcing the notion that ethical integrity is inherently linked to business success, which is particularly relevant in studies that highlight the relationship between religious principles and effective management practices. The trustworthy dealings of Prophet Muhammad serve as a model for modern businesses to emulate, fostering a culture of transparency and accountability that resonates with stakeholders and contributes to the overall well-being of the organization and its community.

Kompeten (Competent)

From a young age, Prophet Muhammad SAW engaged in business, learning the trade from his uncle ([Ismail & Misrah, 2022](#)). This early exposure and continuous learning reflect the AKHLAK value of Kompeten, which advocates for lifelong learning and skill enhancement to achieve excellence in business practices. Throughout his life, Prophet Muhammad SAW demonstrated a commitment to developing his business acumen, staying up-to-date with industry trends and best practices ([Ikhsan et al., 2020](#)). This dedication to competence not only allowed him to excel in his trade but also set a standard for his followers to prioritize knowledge and skill development as essential components of ethical business conduct, thereby aligning personal development with broader organizational goals and societal contributions ([Ismail & Misrah, 2022](#)). Moreover, this emphasis on competence fosters an environment where employees are encouraged to pursue continuous improvement and professional growth, ultimately leading to enhanced performance and innovation within the organization, as outlined in discussions on the vital roles of knowledge and ethical practice in achieving sustainable business success. By incorporating the AKHLAK value of Kompeten into their strategies, modern organizations can harness the synergistic benefits of ethical leadership, employee empowerment, and organizational excellence, positioning themselves as thriving, socially responsible entities within their respective industries. Harmony

The Prophet Muhammad SAW's business dealings were characterized by a commitment to creating harmony and maintaining positive relationships with customers, suppliers, and the broader community. This approach embodies the AKHLAK value of Harmoni, emphasizing the significance of collaboration and mutual respect in all business interactions, which ultimately fosters a cohesive work environment conducive to productivity and innovation. By prioritizing harmony in business practices, organizations can

mitigate conflicts and promote teamwork, leading to enhanced organizational performance and employee satisfaction, as seen in studies that highlight the impact of interpersonal relationships and ethical conduct on workplace dynamics ([Wong et al., 2019](#)). Prophet Muhammad SAW's emphasis on fostering harmony and building trust-based relationships with stakeholders serves as a model for modern businesses to emulate, enabling them to cultivate a culture of cooperation and shared prosperity that extends beyond the confines of the organization ([Maishanu & Dutsin-ma, 2012](#)) ([Uyuni, 2021](#)) ([Udin et al., 2018](#)) and into the broader community.

Loyal

Prophet Muhammad SAW's unwavering commitment to his principles and the well-being of his community is reflected in the AKHLAK value of Loyal. This loyalty not only established a strong sense of allegiance among his followers but also reinforced the importance of maintaining integrity and fidelity in all business relationships, which is essential for cultivating long-term partnerships, fostering community support, and ensuring sustainable growth. Furthermore, this loyalty serves as the foundation for building trust with customers, as individuals are more likely to engage with businesses that demonstrate commitment to their values and the welfare of their clientele, ultimately leading to a more loyal customer base that supports the organization through thick and thin, as observed in studies examining the impact of ethical brand positioning and customer loyalty.

Loyalty of Prophet Muhammad can be seen through his consistent adherence to ethical practices, even in the face of adversity, which earned him the respect and trust of his community. Loyalty of Prophet Muhammad to Khadijah is particularly noteworthy, as he remained steadfast in his commitment to her and their family, despite their initial financial struggles, a devotion that later contributed to their successful business ventures by fostering a strong foundation of trust, support, and mutual understanding. This resilient loyalty not only enhanced the Prophet's credibility but also provided a framework for modern businesses to establish robust relationships built on mutual respect and shared values, underscoring the vital role that sustained ethical conduct plays in achieving long-term success and community engagement in the commercial arena. Furthermore, by embodying the AKHLAK value of Loyal, organizations can not only strengthen internal relationships but also extend this loyalty outwardly to their customers and stakeholders, fostering a deep sense of community and aligning corporate

objectives with societal well-being, which is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in achieving sustainable business growth.

Adaptive

The Prophet Muhammad SAW's business acumen was marked by a keen ability to adapt to changing market conditions and customer needs, a trait that is embodied in the AKHLAK value of Adaptif. This adaptability allowed him to navigate challenges effectively and seize opportunities, demonstrating a flexible approach that is essential for any successful enterprise; it also emphasizes the importance of resilience and responsiveness in today's dynamic business environment, where understanding and aligning with market demands is crucial for maintaining a competitive edge.

The Prophet's adaptability was particularly evident in his ability to tailor his business strategies to the specific needs of his customers, as evidenced by his willingness to travel to different regions and engage with diverse communities, adjusting his offerings and communication styles to cater to their preferences and cultural sensibilities. This customer-centric approach not only enhanced his reputation as a trustworthy merchant but also deepened customer loyalty, demonstrating how adaptability to consumer needs can foster lasting relationships and drive business success. By integrating the AKHLAK value of Adaptif into modern business strategies, organizations can cultivate a culture of innovation and responsiveness that enables them to thrive in a rapidly evolving marketplace, ultimately contributing to sustainable growth and a competitive advantage that aligns with ethical standards and community expectations ([Udin et al., 2018](#)) ([Uyuni, 2021](#)) ([Shafin & Kasim, 2018](#)) ([Ismail & Misrah, 2022](#)) This cultural integration of adaptability is crucial for businesses aspiring to achieve a holistic strategy that aligns ethical practices with market demands, echoing the principle that ethical conduct coupled with flexibility can lead to enhanced consumer trust and satisfaction, which are essential components of long-term business success ([Uyuni, 2021](#)) ([Sulaiman et al., 2015](#)) ([Uyuni, 2021](#)) ([Udin et al., 2018](#)). Furthermore, by fostering an organizational mindset that embraces change and prioritizes ethical adaptability, businesses can effectively respond to emerging trends and challenges in a way that reflects the core values exemplified by the Prophet, thereby ensuring not only commercial viability but also alignment with societal expectations and the greater good.

Collaborative

The Prophet Muhammad SAW's business approach was marked by a strong emphasis on collaboration and cooperation, as reflected in the AKHLAK value of Kolaboratif. His ability to bring together diverse individuals and foster teamwork was instrumental in building a cohesive community and facilitating successful trade relationships, highlighting how collaborative efforts can enhance organizational effectiveness and adaptability in a competitive landscape, which is crucial for navigating the complexities of modern business environments that demand cross-functional coordination and stakeholder alignment.

The Prophet's collaborative approach is exemplified by his willingness to engage with and learn from others, actively seeking out the expertise and perspectives of his business partners and community members, which enabled him to make informed decisions and leverage collective knowledge for mutual benefit. This collaborative spirit fostered a sense of shared purpose and camaraderie, which in turn strengthened the resilience and cohesion of his trading networks, a practice that can serve as a model for modern businesses seeking to cultivate a collaborative culture that empowers employees, engages stakeholders, and enhances overall organizational performance.

In Hadist, the Prophet Muhammad SAW drew a powerful analogy, comparing the relationship between believers to the interdependence of a well-constructed building, where each part reinforces and supports the others. This metaphor emphasizes the importance of interconnections and shared responsibilities within a community, suggesting that when individuals work in harmony toward a common goal, the overall strength and stability of the group are enhanced, a principle that resonates deeply with contemporary business practices that prioritize teamwork, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problem-solving.

By embedding the AKHLAK value of Kolaboratif into their business strategies, modern organizations can foster a culture of mutual support, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving, which not only enhances operational efficiency but also promotes a sense of shared ownership and commitment among employees and stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Human The integration of the core AKHLAK values into the business strategies of Prophet Muhammad SAW serves as a powerful blueprint for modern organizations seeking to achieve sustainable growth and long-term success, while upholding ethical principles and fostering a strong sense of social responsibility.

The values of Amanah, Kompeten, Harmonis, Loyal, Adaptif, and Kolaboratif, as exemplified by the Prophet's business approach, offer a holistic framework that combines commercial acumen with moral integrity, empowering businesses to navigate the complex challenges of the modern marketplace in a manner that aligns with the expectations of stakeholders, customers, and society at large.

Author's Contribution

Muh Shadiqul Fajri AF: Conceptualization and correspondence

Swadia Gandhi Mahardika: Data Collection

Akbar Lufi Zulfikar: Data Curation

Abiyajid Bustami: Editing

Indra Maulana: Proof-reading

Declaration of Competing Interest

Declare that Authors have no conflict of interest

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