

Implementation of the Habit of Reciting the Qur'an Before Learning in Forming Students' Religious Character

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ABSTRACT

The strengthening of students' religious character has become an important concern in elementary education as schools are expected not only to develop cognitive competence but also moral and spiritual values. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the habit of reciting the Qur'an before learning activities in forming students' religious character at SDN Kedaleman IV. The research employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the implementation process and its influence on students' behavior and learning readiness. The research subjects consisted of Islamic Religious Education teachers and students who participate in the recitation activity, while the object of the study focused on the implementation of Qur'anic recitation as a habituation program in the school environment. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using the interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the recitation activity, conducted routinely from Tuesday to Friday before learning begins, contributes positively to the development of students' religious character, including improved discipline, emotional readiness for learning, confidence in reading the Qur'an, and a more conducive classroom atmosphere. However, challenges remain, particularly differences in students' reading abilities and limitations of supporting learning facilities. Overall, the study concludes that the habituation of Qur'anic recitation serves as an effective strategy for integrating religious values into daily school culture.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education ideally functions not only as a medium for transferring knowledge but also as a process of shaping students' character and moral values. In the context of national education, schools are expected to produce individuals who possess intellectual competence alongside strong spiritual and ethical foundations. According to the Indonesian education framework, character education is an essential

component of holistic learning aimed at developing students' religious awareness, discipline, responsibility, and social sensitivity. The concept of character education emphasizes the integration of moral values into daily educational practices rather than limiting them to theoretical instruction in the classroom. Consequently, educational institutions are encouraged to cultivate character formation through structured routines, school culture, and habitual practices that reinforce positive values in students' everyday experiences. This perspective aligns with contemporary educational theories which argue that character formation is most effective when values are internalized through consistent behavior and repeated practices within the school environment rather than through cognitive instruction alone (Lestari, 2020).

In recent years, the strengthening of religious character among students has become an increasingly important issue in educational discourse. The rapid development of technology, globalization, and digital culture has significantly influenced students' lifestyles, behaviors, and moral orientations. While technological advancement offers many benefits for learning, it also exposes students to various negative influences, including declining discipline, reduced respect toward teachers, and weakened spiritual awareness. Several studies indicate that moral and behavioral challenges among students are becoming more visible in contemporary educational contexts. For example, research conducted by Musarifah, Ifadah, and Azizah (2023) found that many schools are experiencing difficulties in maintaining students' spiritual discipline and religious awareness due to the influence of modern social environments and digital media. Similarly, Robiana and Munir (2025) emphasize that strengthening religious character through structured school programs is necessary to balance intellectual development with moral and spiritual formation. These findings suggest that schools must adopt strategic approaches to cultivate religious values that can guide students' behavior both inside and outside the classroom.

One of the effective strategies widely implemented in schools is the habituation of religious activities as part of school culture. Habituation refers to a process in which repeated actions gradually form stable behavioral patterns and internalized values. In educational settings, habituation practices allow students to develop positive habits through consistent routines guided by teachers and institutional policies. According to Mulyani and H. (2021), routine religious activities in schools, such as congregational prayers, recitation of short surahs, and Qur'anic reading sessions, can significantly contribute to students' discipline and spiritual awareness. Through continuous practice, students gradually develop intrinsic motivation to engage in religious practices without external pressure. This process aligns with the pedagogical principle that repeated exposure to positive behaviors can shape students' attitudes and character over time. Therefore, integrating religious habituation programs within school routines is considered an effective approach to strengthening students' moral development and religious identity.

Among various forms of religious habituation, the practice of reciting or reading the Qur'an before learning activities has gained increasing attention in Islamic educational institutions and public schools. Tadarus Al-Qur'an, which refers to the collective recitation and study of the Qur'an, serves not only as an act of worship but also as a pedagogical tool for character formation. Through regular recitation, students are encouraged to develop spiritual awareness, emotional calmness, and a positive learning mindset before beginning academic activities. Research by Khasanah et al. (2026) demonstrates that Qur'anic recitation programs implemented in elementary schools can enhance students' reading ability, improve classroom discipline, and foster a spiritually conducive learning environment. Likewise, Habituation (2023) found that structured Qur'anic recitation routines contribute significantly to the development of students' religious attitudes, including respect, humility, and responsibility. These findings indicate that religious habituation programs may serve as an effective strategy to cultivate both spiritual and behavioral dimensions of character education.

Despite the growing implementation of Qur'anic recitation programs in schools, several empirical studies reveal that their effectiveness varies depending on implementation strategies, students' reading abilities, and institutional support systems. Some schools experience challenges related to students' differing levels of Qur'anic literacy, limited supporting facilities, and inconsistent program supervision. For instance, research conducted by Maola, Aqil, and Mulyana (2025) highlights that character-building

programs in schools often encounter practical obstacles, including inadequate instructional resources and limited teacher involvement in monitoring students' participation. Similarly, Lestari et al. (2025) emphasize that although many schools have adopted Qur'anic habituation programs, empirical research exploring how these programs are implemented in daily learning contexts remains limited. Most previous studies tend to focus on conceptual discussions or general evaluations of religious education rather than examining the specific processes through which routine Qur'anic recitation shapes students' religious character in elementary school environments.

Based on the review of previous studies, a significant research gap can be identified. First, many existing studies discuss religious habituation programs in general terms without providing detailed qualitative insights into how such practices operate in real classroom settings. Second, limited research specifically examines the implementation of Qur'anic recitation activities before learning as part of structured school culture at the elementary level. Third, previous studies often emphasize outcomes such as improved discipline or spiritual awareness but rarely analyze the challenges encountered during implementation, particularly differences in students' Qur'anic reading abilities and the availability of supporting facilities. Consequently, there is still a lack of in-depth empirical evidence that explains how daily Qur'anic recitation routines function as a character-building mechanism within the broader framework of school culture and religious education.

Considering these limitations, further investigation is necessary to explore how the habituation of Qur'anic recitation before learning is implemented and how it contributes to the formation of students' religious character. Understanding the practical dynamics of such programs is particularly important in elementary schools, where character development occurs during a critical stage of moral and cognitive growth. Elementary students are highly receptive to habitual learning experiences, making routine religious activities a potentially powerful tool for shaping long-term character formation. Therefore, examining the implementation of Qur'anic recitation programs in real school settings can provide valuable insights into effective strategies for integrating religious values into daily learning practices.

Based on the above considerations, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the habit of reciting the Qur'an before learning activities in forming students' religious character at SDN Kedaleman IV. Specifically, the research seeks to describe the process of implementing Qur'anic recitation activities, examine their impact on students' religious character development, and identify challenges encountered during their implementation. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of character education literature, particularly regarding religious habituation in elementary education. Practically, the results may provide recommendations for schools and educators in designing effective religious character-building programs through structured habituation practices within the school environment.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to investigate the implementation of the habit of reciting the Qur'an before learning and its role in shaping students' religious character. The selection of a qualitative approach was based on the nature of the research problem, which focuses on understanding social practices, behavioral patterns, and meaning-making processes that occur in a natural educational setting. Character formation and religious habituation are complex social phenomena that cannot be adequately measured solely through quantitative indicators, as they involve values, perceptions, interactions, and experiences of participants. Therefore, qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to explore the depth of participants' perspectives and to capture contextual dynamics that occur during the implementation of the program. According to qualitative research principles, this approach is particularly suitable for examining educational practices and cultural routines within institutions because it enables researchers to interpret behaviors, interactions, and meanings embedded in daily activities (Moleong, 2018). The descriptive design was chosen because the objective of the study is not to test hypotheses but to provide a systematic and factual description of how the Qur'anic

recitation habituation program is implemented and how it contributes to the formation of students' religious character.

The subjects of this research consisted of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and elementary school students who actively participate in the Qur'anic recitation activities at SDN Kedaleman IV. These participants were selected purposively because they are directly involved in the implementation and experience of the habituation program. The object of the research was the implementation process of Qur'anic recitation before learning and its influence on students' religious character development within the school environment. Data were collected through three primary techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to examine the real implementation of the recitation activity, including student participation, classroom atmosphere, and teacher facilitation. Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain in-depth information from teachers and students regarding their perceptions, experiences, and challenges related to the activity. Documentation, including photographs, schedules, and school records, was used to support and validate the observational and interview data. These techniques were selected to enable data triangulation, which strengthens the credibility and validity of qualitative findings by comparing information obtained from different sources and methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research instruments consisted of observation guidelines, interview protocols, and documentation sheets developed based on the research objectives and conceptual framework of religious character formation. The observation guide focused on aspects such as the structure of the recitation activity, student engagement, and behavioral indicators of religious character, including discipline, attentiveness, and confidence in reading the Qur'an. Interview protocols were designed to explore participants' experiences, perceptions of the program's benefits, and obstacles encountered during its implementation. Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting, simplifying, and categorizing relevant information obtained from field observations and interviews. The data were then organized and presented systematically in narrative form to reveal patterns and relationships between habituation practices and character formation. Finally, conclusions were drawn through interpretative analysis to explain how the Qur'anic recitation habituation program contributes to the development of students' religious character. This analytical framework ensures methodological consistency between the research objectives, data collection procedures, and interpretative processes, enabling the study to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of the habit of reciting the Qur'an before learning at SDN Kedaleman IV has been systematically integrated into the school's routine activities as part of its religious character education program. Based on the analysis of observational and interview data, the recitation activity is conducted regularly from Tuesday to Friday before formal learning begins. The activity is coordinated by the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher and carried out collectively by students in their respective classrooms. The recitation is guided through a school-wide audio system, allowing students to follow the reading of Juz Amma simultaneously. From an institutional perspective, this structured arrangement demonstrates that the school has intentionally designed the activity as a form of religious habituation embedded within its broader educational culture. The regular scheduling and teacher involvement indicate that the program is not merely symbolic but functions as a consistent pedagogical practice aimed at fostering students' religious awareness and discipline.

The observational findings indicate that the Qur'anic recitation activity plays a significant role in conditioning the learning atmosphere before academic lessons begin. Students generally demonstrate attentive and orderly behavior during the recitation process. The collective reading method creates a calm and structured classroom environment that prepares students psychologically for the learning

process. Teachers reported that students appear more focused and emotionally stable after participating in the recitation activity. This finding suggests that the habituation program functions not only as a religious ritual but also as a classroom management strategy that supports a conducive learning environment. From a pedagogical perspective, the activity encourages students to transition gradually from informal morning interactions into a structured academic setting. Such conditioning is important in elementary education, where students often require guided routines to develop learning readiness and emotional regulation.

Further analysis of interview data indicates that the recitation activity contributes positively to the development of students' religious character. Teachers observed that students who regularly participate in the activity tend to show increased discipline, particularly in arriving on time and preparing themselves for the recitation session. This behavioral pattern suggests that the habituation process gradually shapes students' awareness of responsibility and routine. Additionally, teachers emphasized that students' ability to read the Qur'an has improved over time due to repeated exposure to daily recitation practices. Although the activity does not function as a formal reading instruction session, the repetitive engagement with Qur'anic texts indirectly enhances students' familiarity with Arabic pronunciation and reading fluency. Consequently, the habituation practice reinforces both spiritual and cognitive dimensions of religious learning.

Students' perspectives also provide important insights into the perceived impact of the program. Many students expressed that the recitation activity creates a sense of calmness and comfort before lessons begin. They reported feeling more prepared to participate in classroom activities after engaging in the recitation session. Some students also indicated that the routine encourages them to practice reading the Qur'an more frequently at home in order to follow the collective reading more confidently at school. This finding illustrates that the habituation practice has extended its influence beyond the classroom environment by motivating students to engage in religious practices independently. In this context, the recitation program functions as a catalyst for the internalization of religious values, where students gradually develop personal motivation to maintain religious habits.

However, the findings also reveal several challenges in the implementation of the recitation habituation program. One of the primary issues identified during the research is the variation in students' Qur'anic reading abilities, particularly between lower-grade and upper-grade students. Students in the lower grades often experience difficulty following the recitation simultaneously due to their limited reading skills. As a result, some students become less confident when participating in the activity. Teachers acknowledged that this difference in ability requires additional guidance and instructional support. Without adequate scaffolding, the collective recitation method may unintentionally marginalize students who are still in the early stages of Qur'anic literacy. This finding indicates that although the habituation program is effective in promoting religious practice, it still requires complementary instructional strategies to ensure that all students can participate meaningfully.

Another challenge identified during the research relates to the availability of supporting facilities. The study found that the number of Juz Amma copies available in classrooms is limited, which occasionally forces students to share reading materials. While this limitation does not prevent the implementation of the activity, it can reduce students' engagement and concentration during the recitation process. Teachers emphasized that improving the availability of learning resources would significantly enhance the effectiveness of the program. In addition, some teachers suggested that the recitation program could be further developed through additional pedagogical approaches, such as small-group reading guidance or differentiated instruction for students with varying reading abilities. These suggestions highlight the importance of continuous program evaluation to ensure that habituation practices remain effective and inclusive.



Figure 1. High class tadarus habituation



Figure 2. Low class tadarus habituation

The findings of this study demonstrate that the habituation of Qur'anic recitation before learning activities contributes significantly to the formation of students' religious character, particularly in terms of discipline, emotional readiness, and increased familiarity with Qur'anic reading. This outcome can be understood through the theoretical perspective of character education, which emphasizes the role of repeated practices and school culture in shaping students' moral dispositions. Character education theory argues that values are most effectively internalized when they are embedded in daily routines and supported by consistent institutional practices. From this perspective, the recitation activity at SDN Kedaleman IV functions as a form of structured habituation that gradually shapes students' behavioral patterns through repetition and reinforcement. Lickona's framework of character education explains that moral behavior develops through a combination of moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action; therefore, routine religious activities allow students not only to understand religious values cognitively but also to experience them in practice through daily engagement with spiritual activities (Lickona, 2012). The implementation of Qur'anic recitation before lessons therefore represents a practical mechanism through which religious values are translated into observable student behavior.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research indicating that religious habituation programs play an important role in strengthening students' spiritual awareness and discipline. For instance, research conducted by Musarifah, Ifadah, and Azizah (2023) found that the routine practice of morning Qur'anic recitation in secondary schools contributes to the development of students' religious attitudes, including respect for religious practices and increased discipline in classroom activities. Similarly, Khasanah et al. (2026) reported that structured Qur'anic recitation programs in elementary schools improve students' reading fluency and foster a spiritually supportive learning environment. The similarity between these studies and the current findings suggests that religious habituation practices operate as an effective educational strategy across different educational levels. The repetition of religious practices creates a stable behavioral structure that encourages students to internalize religious norms gradually. In this context, the program at SDN Kedaleman IV reflects a broader educational pattern in which daily religious activities serve as a practical extension of formal religious instruction within the school environment.

However, this study also provides a deeper understanding of how the habituation process influences students' psychological readiness for learning. The findings reveal that students experience a sense of calmness and focus after participating in the recitation activity, which contributes to a more conducive classroom atmosphere. This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of spiritual conditioning in educational psychology, which suggests that reflective or spiritual activities can regulate emotional states and improve cognitive readiness for learning. According to Yusuf (2021), spiritual activities such as prayer or Qur'anic recitation can enhance students' emotional stability and self-regulation, thereby supporting their ability to concentrate during academic tasks. The recitation activity therefore functions not only as a religious practice but also as a psychological transition from informal social interaction to structured learning engagement. This dual function explains why the program has a positive impact on classroom discipline and student attentiveness.

Despite these positive outcomes, the findings also reveal challenges related to differences in students' Qur'anic reading abilities, particularly among lower-grade students. This issue highlights an important limitation in the implementation of collective recitation methods. While group recitation promotes a sense of unity and shared participation, it may inadvertently create barriers for students who are still developing basic reading skills. This finding partially contrasts with earlier studies that tend to emphasize the positive effects of religious habituation without examining variations in students' learning capacities. For example, research by Robiana and Munir (2025) primarily highlights the success of religious activity programs in strengthening students' moral character but provides limited discussion regarding individual learning differences. The present study therefore contributes a more nuanced perspective by showing that habituation programs must be supported by differentiated instructional strategies to accommodate students' varying levels of Qur'anic literacy.

Another significant finding concerns the limitations of supporting facilities, particularly the insufficient number of Qur'anic reading materials available for students. This issue illustrates how infrastructural factors can influence the effectiveness of character education programs. Educational management theory emphasizes that successful implementation of school programs requires adequate resources, institutional commitment, and continuous monitoring. As argued by Maola, Aqil, and Mulyana (2025), character education initiatives often face practical constraints related to resource availability and teacher capacity. The situation observed in this study supports this argument by demonstrating that even well-designed programs may encounter implementation challenges if logistical support is limited. Nevertheless, the program at SDN Kedaleman IV continues to function effectively despite these limitations, suggesting that strong institutional commitment and teacher involvement can partially compensate for infrastructural shortcomings.

From a broader analytical perspective, the findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating religious practices into everyday school culture rather than treating them as isolated activities. School culture theory suggests that values are most effectively transmitted through shared routines, rituals, and institutional norms that shape collective behavior over time. The habituation of Qur'anic recitation before learning can therefore be interpreted as a cultural mechanism that reinforces religious identity within the school community. By participating in the activity daily, students develop a shared sense of religious practice that strengthens their collective commitment to spiritual values. This interpretation aligns with research by Lestari et al. (2025), which emphasizes that religious character formation in schools is strongly influenced by the consistency of institutional practices and the presence of supportive social environments.

Nevertheless, the study also reveals an important implication for the development of future character education programs. While habituation practices can effectively introduce and reinforce religious values, they must be complemented by pedagogical strategies that address students' developmental needs. Simply repeating religious activities may not automatically lead to deeper moral understanding unless students are provided with opportunities to reflect on the meaning and significance of those practices. This insight suggests that the effectiveness of religious habituation programs depends on the integration of routine activities with reflective learning processes. Teachers therefore play a crucial role in guiding students to connect their participation in religious practices with broader moral and spiritual values.

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on religious character education by providing empirical evidence of how Qur'anic recitation habituation functions within an elementary school context. The study confirms previous research demonstrating the positive role of religious routines in shaping students' discipline and spiritual awareness while also highlighting practical challenges that require further attention. By revealing both the strengths and limitations of the program, this research provides a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which religious habituation influences students' character development. These insights offer valuable implications for educators and policymakers seeking to design effective character education programs that balance spiritual development, pedagogical effectiveness, and institutional sustainability.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the habit of reciting the Qur'an before learning activities at SDN Kedaleman IV functions as an effective strategy for strengthening students' religious character through structured school culture. The findings demonstrate that the routine recitation activity not only reinforces students' spiritual awareness but also contributes to the development of discipline, emotional readiness for learning, and increased confidence in reading the Qur'an. Through continuous habituation, students gradually internalize religious practices as part of their daily behavior, indicating that character formation is closely related to consistent institutional routines rather than solely to formal instructional processes. The study therefore provides empirical evidence that religious habituation embedded in daily school activities can serve as a practical pedagogical mechanism for integrating spiritual values into the learning environment. However, the research also identifies several limitations that influence program effectiveness, particularly the variation in students' Qur'anic reading abilities and the limited availability of supporting learning resources. These constraints indicate that while habituation practices are valuable in shaping religious character, their impact may vary depending on instructional support, infrastructure, and the ability of teachers to accommodate diverse student needs. Consequently, the scientific contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that religious character formation through habituation is not only dependent on routine activities but also requires pedagogical adaptation and institutional support to achieve more inclusive and sustainable outcomes.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. Schools are encouraged to strengthen the implementation of Qur'anic recitation programs by providing adequate learning facilities, increasing the availability of Qur'anic reading materials, and integrating supportive instructional strategies for students with varying levels of reading ability. Teachers may also incorporate complementary approaches, such as guided reading sessions or small-group assistance, to ensure that all students can participate meaningfully in the activity. From a research perspective, this study is limited by its focus on a single school context and the use of qualitative analysis that emphasizes interpretative understanding rather than measurable outcomes. Future studies are therefore recommended to expand the research scope by involving multiple schools, applying mixed-method approaches, or examining the long-term impact of religious habituation on students' character development. Further investigation could also explore the relationship between religious routines and other dimensions of student character, such as social responsibility, empathy, and moral decision-making, in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how school-based religious practices contribute to holistic character education.

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