



RELIGIOUS MODERATION AS A MODEL FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION IN INDONESIA: A CASE STUDY OF AL-FATTAH ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN SAROLANGUN, JAMBI

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of religious moderation as a core strategy for character education at SDI Al – Fattah Payolebar, addressing growing concerns about declining students' discipline and moral values. Grounded in Thomas Lickona's theory of character education, this research offers a novel perspective by integrating daily spiritual routines, such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and dhikr, with active teacher supervision and family involvement. Employing a qualitative – descriptive method with a case study design, and thematic analysis, data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The findings reveal that structured religious practices, when consistently reinforced by teachers and supported within the family environment, contribute significantly to the development of key moral traits, including religiosity, empathy, responsibility, and self – discipline. However, several challenges persist, particularly parental disengagement and inconsistencies in students' behavioral internalization of these values. Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse on moral education within Islamic educational. Practically, It offers a contextual model that may be adapted by similar educational institutions. the study concludes that collaboratively implemented religious habituation constitutes an effective approach to fostering holistic character development among students.

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji implementasi moderasi keagamaan sebagai strategi utama dalam pendidikan karakter di SDI Al-Fattah Payolebar, sebagai respons atas kekhawatiran terhadap menurunnya disiplin dan nilai-nilai moral siswa. Berlandaskan teori pendidikan karakter Thomas Lickona, riset ini menawarkan perspektif baru dengan mengintegrasikan rutinitas spiritual harian—seperti salat berjemaah, tilawah al-Qur'an, dan zikir—dengan pengawasan guru yang aktif serta keterlibatan keluarga. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif, desain studi kasus, dan analisis tematik. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa praktik keagamaan yang terstruktur dan dijalankan secara konsisten, apabila diperkuat oleh guru dan didukung oleh orang tua, mampu menumbuhkan nilai-nilai religius, empati, tanggung jawab, dan kedisiplinan pada siswa. Namun demikian, beberapa tantangan tetap ada, terutama terkait rendahnya keterlibatan orang tua dan perilaku siswa yang tidak konsisten. Secara teoretis, studi ini memperluas wacana mengenai pendidikan karakter berbasis nilai-nilai Islam dan secara praktis menawarkan model yang dapat diadaptasi oleh institusi pendidikan serupa. Kesimpulannya, pembiasaan keagamaan yang dijalankan secara kolaboratif merupakan instrumen yang efektif dalam membentuk karakter siswa secara holistik.



Background

In the contemporary educational context, character education at the elementary level faces increasingly complex challenges, including declining discipline, weakened moral conduct, and unstable spiritual development among students. Field observations at SDI Al-Fattah Payolebar, located in Singkut District, Sarolangun Regency, Jambi Province, reveal significant character-related issues, such as frequent student tardiness, inconsistency in participation in congregational prayers, and varying levels of understanding and internalization of Islamic values. These symptoms reflect that Islamic principles have not yet been fully embedded in students' daily behavior, indicating the urgent need for a more strategic, sustainable, and contextually grounded approach to character development in Islamic educational settings.

Integrating the values of religious moderation, namely *tawassut* (balance), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), *i'tidāl* (justice), and *tawāzun* (harmony) into character education can strengthen students' ability to practice Islam in a wise, inclusive, and socially responsive manner, particularly within pluralistic environments. These moderation values ensure that religious habituation does not merely produce disciplined and pious individuals, but also fosters balanced, peaceful, and socially responsible citizens. Previous research has widely documented the positive impact of everyday religious habituation on students' character formation. Studies show that integrating the values of religious moderation—*tawassut* (balance), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), *i'tidāl* (justice), and *tawāzun* (harmony)—is closely associated with enhanced student discipline, moral behaviour, and social awareness within Islamic educational contexts. Systematic forms of Islamic habituation, such as daily congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and structured *dhikr* have been found to significantly improve moral conduct and engagement in religious activities, thereby reinforcing ethical development and fostering supportive learning environments in primary education settings¹.

Research focusing on the implementation of religious moderation values further demonstrates that consistent integration of these principles fosters harmonious character traits, including openness, empathy, and peaceful coexistence among students in diverse school environments.² Additionally, quantitative studies reveal that the habituation of religious activities through a positive school culture exerts a significant influence on student discipline and the internalization of both religious and national character values. Routine practices, such as prayer and Qur'an recitation, contribute to the development of structured ethical behaviour.³ Studies on school culture further emphasize that disciplined environments shaped by clearly articulated norms, sanctions, and sustained religious routines play a crucial role in strengthening students' religious character and social attitudes, underscoring the importance of holistic, value-based school cultures as a foundation for effective character education in Islamic primary schools.⁴

¹ Ainawa Kholilatul Nurizah and M Amrullah, "Religious Character Formation Through Islamic Habituation in Primary Education," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Studies* 12, no. 4 (October 1, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.21070/ijis.v12i4.1741>.

² Idi Warsah and Muhammad Istan, "Islamic Religious Education Learning Approach Based on Religious Moderation," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 9, no. 1 (2025): 181–99, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v9i1.45>.

³ Adi Rosadi, Bambang Samsul Arifin, and Asep Nursobah, "The Influence of School Culture and Religious Activity Habituation Through Discipline on Students' Religious and National Character," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 08, no. 08 (2025): 6431–45, <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v8–i8–79>.

⁴ Dina Mardiana Ni'mah Fikriyah Harfi, Romelah Romelah, "Discipline Culture Shapes Students' Religious Character in Islamic Schools: Budaya Disiplin Membentuk Karakter Religius

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with Thomas Lickona's theory of character education, which emphasizes that moral values are more effectively internalized through consistent habituation and exemplary behaviour rather than through cognitive instruction alone.⁵ Broader educational research similarly supports this view, indicating that religious education contributes to the enhancement of empathy, cooperation, and self-discipline among learners.⁶ Within Islamic educational contexts, daily religious habituation serves as an experiential foundation for moral learning, allowing students to repeatedly practice ethical behaviour within structured and meaningful settings.

Empirical evidence from Indonesian Islamic primary schools further strengthens this theoretical premise. Ainawa and Amrullah report that habitual prayer and gratitude rituals in Muhammadiyah schools foster honesty, social responsibility, and harmony between personal devotion and social life.⁷ Similarly, studies by Solehah et al. and Aini emphasize the critical role of teacher guidance and moral modeling,⁸ showing that procedural clarity and emotional reinforcement during religious activities support moral internalization of moral values.⁹ Research by Safitri et al. further illustrates that integrating acts of worship into daily school routines transforms religious practices into effective pedagogical tools that support both cognitive and moral development.¹⁰ In addition, several studies underline the importance of school-home collaboration,¹¹ demonstrating that parental reinforcement of religious practices significantly increases consistency in students' moral behaviour.¹²

More recent scholarship has explored the role of digital platforms in religious habituation. Aini, for instance, suggests that e-learning modules can extend religious education beyond the classroom while exposing students to broader Islamic perspectives

Siswa Di Sekolah Islam," *Halqa: Islamic Education Journal* 9, no. 1 (2025): 19–38, <https://doi.org/10.21070/halqa.v9i1.1707>.

⁵ T. Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility," in *NASSP Bulletin* (New York: New York, N.Y.: Bantam, 1992), 119–20.

⁶ Florina Magdalena Onaga et al., "How Religion Shapes the Behavior of Students: A Comparative Analysis between Romanian Confessional and Non-Confessional Schools," *Frontiers in Education*, no. November (2024), <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1358429>.

⁷ Nurizah and Amrullah, "Religious Character Formation Through Islamic Habituation in Primary Education."

⁸ Ailula Mufidatus Solihah et al., "Teacher's Role: Implementation of Religious Character Education through the Habituation Method in Elementary School," *Jurnal Ilmiah Sekolah Dasar* 8, no. 3 (August 25, 2024): 402–12, <https://doi.org/10.23887/jisd.v8i3.63426>;

⁹ Rokhmatul Yunita Aini, "Embedding Religious Characters in Elementary School Through E-Learning Materials," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 14, no. 1 (March 7, 2022): 583–90, <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i1.966>.

¹⁰ Laila Nur Safitri, Ujang Jamaludin, and Istinganatul Ngulwiyah, "Character Education through Habituation of Religious Activities at SDIT Al-Khairiyah, Cilegon City," *EduBasic Journal: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar* 5, no. 1 (April 2023): 21–30, <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/edubasic>.

¹¹ Defi Noviatul, and Muhlasin Amrullah Sari, "Implementation of Religious Character Education in Elementary School Students," *Indonesian Journal of Education Methods Development* 17, no. 4 (November 2022).

¹² Fathan Fahmi, Aunur Rofiq, and Indah Aminatuz Zuhriyah, "Transformation of Student Character Building through Religious-Based Child-Friendly School Programs: Responding to Challenges and Creating Sustainable Character Education Solutions," *Educazione: Journal of Education and Learning* 2, no. 1 (December 2, 2024): 52–65, <https://doi.org/10.61987/educazione.v2i1.551>.

that promote harmony and mutual respect.¹³ These findings indicate that religious habituation can be adapted to contemporary educational contexts without losing its ethical relevance.

Despite these contributions, several gaps remain in the existing literature. *First*, many studies remain largely descriptive, focusing on isolated religious activities rather than examining how daily rituals function collectively as an integrated system involving teachers, parents, and broader school culture. *Second*, although values of religious moderation such as *tawassut* (balance), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), *i'tidāl* (justice), and *tawāzun* (harmony) are frequently discussed normatively, they are rarely employed as explicit analytical frameworks in studies of religious habituation. *Third*, key implementation challenges, including inconsistent teacher engagement, limited infrastructure, and the long – term sustainability of programs, receive insufficient critical attention.¹⁴

Furthermore, while Kohlberg's stages of moral development suggest that moral growth progresses from external compliance toward internalized ethical reasoning, few studies examine how daily religious habituation facilitates this transition within actual school contexts. Consequently, there is a clear need for context – based research that analyses religious habituation as a cohesive, moderation – oriented model of character education. This study addresses that gap by examining daily religious practices at SDI Al – Fattah as an integrated system that supports sustainable moral internalization and the formation of socially inclusive character.

Table 1. Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Level/Stage	Age Range	Description
I: Obedience/ Punishment	Infancy	No difference between doing the right thing and avoiding punishment
I: Self – Interest	Pre – school	Interest shifts to rewards rather than punishment – effort is made to secure greatest benefit for oneself
II: Authority and Social Order	School – age	The "good boy/girl" level. Effort is made to secure approval and maintain friendly relations with others
II: Authority and Social Order	School – age	Orientation toward fixed rules. The purpose of morality is maintaining the social order. Interpersonal accord is expanded to include the entire society
III: Social Contract	Teens	Mutual benefit, reciprocity, morally right and legally right are not always the same. Utilitarian rules that make life better for everyone
III: Universal Principles	Adulthood	Morality is based on principles that transcend mutual benefit

Source: *The psychology notes Headquarters*: <http://wwwpsychologyNotesHQ.com>

¹³ Aini, "Embedding Religious Characters in Elementary School Through E – Learning Materials."

¹⁴ Lukman et al., "Effective Teachers' Personality in Strengthening Character Education," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* 10, no. 2 (2021): 512 – 21, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v10i2.21629>.

Collectively, the studies highlight several essential components of effective religious habituation:

Table 2. Essential Components of Effective Religious Habituation

Component	Aspect
Daily ritual integration:	Embedding prayer and Al-Qur'an recitation into school routines.
Active teacher participation:	Guiding, modelling, and correcting through religious practice.
Home – school continuity:	Ensuring parental involvement supports school – initiated habits.
Institutional infrastructure:	Providing policy backing and necessary facilities.
Digital augmentation:	Leveraging technology to reinforce practice and reflection.

By aligning with established theories of moral development, this integrated model shows that religious habituation guided by values of moderation not only cultivates spiritual knowledge but also achieves moral internalization and prosocial behavior.¹⁵ This synthesis provides a practical framework for forming *insān kāmil* (the complete human being), a believer who practices faith with justice, balance, and compassion. Building on these theoretical insights, this study seeks to address two fundamental research questions: (1) How does the daily implementation of religious habituation, such as collective prayers, *Duḥā* prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and *tahlīl*, contribute to character formation at SDI Al-Fattah? (2) What challenges arise in the process, and what contextual solutions can be developed to optimize religious practices as a core approach to character education grounded in values of religious moderation?

To address these questions, the study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design and thematic analysis. This methodological framework enables an in-depth exploration of how daily religious routines operate as instruments of moral formation and moderation-oriented character development. Integrating *tawassuṭ* (balance), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), and *i'tidāl* (justice) into the analytical framework ensures that religious habituation is understood not merely as ritual repetition, but as a dynamic process that fosters balanced ethical reasoning and social harmony.¹⁶

Data were collected through direct observation of daily religious activities, semi-structured interviews with key informants, including the school principal, Islamic education teachers, classroom teachers, and students in Grades IV – V, and document analysis of school religious program records, photos, and activity logs. This triangulated approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how principles of religious moderation manifest across multiple layers of the educational ecosystem.¹⁷ The selection of SDI Al-Fattah as the research site was deliberate, based on the school's demonstrated

¹⁵ Nwafor Chidozie Edwin et al., "Religious Coping and Delinquent Behaviors: Moderated Mediation Roles of Religion Affiliation and Prosocial Moral Reasoning," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 34, no. 2 (2024): 272 – 80, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12967>.

¹⁶ Mualimul Huda, "Incorporating the Value of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education Learning," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education (AJIE)* 8, no. 1 (2024): 222 – 35, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i1.476>.

¹⁷ John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches.*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018).

commitment to integrating Islamic values into both curricular and extracurricular activities. By emphasizing moderation within this setting, the study also examines how school leaders, teachers, and parents negotiate diverse interpretations of Islamic practice in ways that promote inclusivity and fairness.¹⁸

Data analysis was conducted inductively through interrelated stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data relevant to religious habituation and moderation were systematically categorized to reveal how values of balance (*tawāzun*) and justice (*i'tidāl*) are articulated through everyday routines. The analytical process was reflexive, ensuring that the findings are grounded in empirical observation while remaining attentive to ethical considerations consistent with *religious moderation* principles.¹⁹

This study makes a twofold contribution. Theoretically, it enriches the discourse on Islamic character education by integrating religious habituation with the active involvement of educators and families within a framework of religious moderation. Practically, it offers an applicable model for school principals and teachers to design sustainable character education programs rooted in daily religious life and moderation awareness.²⁰ Consequently, this research not only addresses concerns about declining moral quality in Islamic elementary schools but also demonstrates how balanced, tolerant, and just forms of habituation can produce students who embody both *akhlāq* (moral character) and civic responsibility.²¹

Recent scholarship further includes the role of digital innovation in supporting moderation-oriented religious habituation. Aini (2022) shows that e-learning tools can reinforce prayer routines and ritual comprehension through interactive content. When combined with moderation values such as *tawassut* (balance) and *tasānuh* (tolerance), these digital practices extend character formation beyond the classroom, enabling students to engage with Islamic teachings in inclusive and dialogical ways. Similarly, Kabir et al. (2024) explore Islamic mobile applications that promote adherence to daily rituals while encouraging reflection on empathy, social justice, and balance between personal piety and civic life—thereby embodying *tawāzun* (harmony).

Integrating religious habituation with digital media contributes to the cultivation of a culture of moderation that is responsive to contemporary challenges. Virtual Qur'anic recitation programs, online *dhikr* groups, and interactive moral-story modules can develop reflective awareness while countering tendencies toward exclusivism or extremism.²² In this way, digital tools function as *waṣīlah* (means) for strengthening *i'tidāl* (just conduct) and broadening the reach of moral education.

Overall, the entire framework of religious moderation implemented at SDI Al-Fattah demonstrates that sustainable character education arises from the synergy between

¹⁸ Aini, "Embedding Religious Characters in Elementary School Through E-Learning Materials."

¹⁹ Muhammad Irfan Helmy and Muhamad Ali, "The Understanding of Islamic and the Hadiths on Inter-Religious Relations in the Javanese Pesantrens," *IJIMS: Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (2021): 377–401, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.377-401>.

²⁰ Siswanto, "The Islamic Moderation Values on the Islamic Education Curriculum in Indonesia: A Content Analysis," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 8, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2019.81.121-152>.

²¹ Huda, "Incorporating the Value of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education Learning."

²² Ali Muhtarom Abdullah Hanif, Encep Syarifudin, "Integration of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education: Challenges and Opportunities in The Digital Era," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 1 (2025): 49–66, <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v14i01.7767>.

structured spiritual routines and conscious moderation awareness. When daily religious practices are implemented with *tawassut*, *tasāmuḥ*, *i'tidāl*, and *tawāzun*, they nurture students who are spiritually devoted yet socially inclusive, disciplined yet compassionate, and faithful yet open – minded.²³ This integrated approach aligns with both classical moral theories (Lickona 1991; Kohlberg 1976) and contemporary calls for moderation in Islamic education, ensuring that religious practice remains a transformative force for peace and social justice.²⁴

The Daily Implementation of Religious Moderation (Collective Prayers, *Duḥā* Prayer, Qur'anic Recitation, and *Tahlīl*)

The consistent implementation of religious habituation at SDI Al – Fattah Payolebar reflects the internalization of key values of religious moderation, particularly *tawassut* (balance), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), *i'tidāl* (justice), and *tawāzun* (harmony). Daily rituals such as prayers before and after lessons, Qur'anic recitation, congregational *Duḥā* and *Zuhr* prayers, as well as communal *tahlīl* and *dhikr*, are systematically integrated into school life in a balanced and proportional manner. This pattern demonstrates *tawassut*, whereby religious practice is neither excessive nor neglected, but harmoniously aligned with academic activities and students' developmental stages. Teacher supervision during worship practices reflects *i'tidāl*, as guidance is applied fairly and consistently to all students while remaining attentive to individual needs, especially among younger learners. Corrections are made through constructive guidance and exemplification rather than punitive measures, ensuring justice without rigidity. At the same time, teachers' patient mentoring, from *wuḍū'* preparation to post – prayer supplication, illustrates *tasāmuḥ*, fostering understanding, empathy, and respect rather than coercion.

Furthermore, collective religious activities cultivate *tawāzun* (harmony) within the school community. Shared participation by teachers and students in congregational worship encourages a sense of unity and encourages voluntary participation in religious routines. This harmonious atmosphere allows the natural internalization of religious values, as reflected in students' growing ability to practice worship independently at home. As noted by the Principal of SDI Al – Fattah Payolebar, Bapak Muslam, S.Pd.I, religious habituation is deliberately embedded in the school's daily routines. He described that practices such as praying before and after lessons, reciting short Qur'anic surahs, performing *Duḥā* prayers, and participating in *tahlīl* are regular activities designed to shape students' spiritual discipline and moral character. As He stated:

*"Religious habituation activities include praying before and after studying, reciting short surahs of the Qur'an, performing Duḥā prayers, and participating in tahlīl."*²⁵

These religious habituation activities reflect moderation (*wasaṭiyah*) through balance (*tawassut*), as prayer and Qur'anic recitation are integrated into daily learning without displacing academic goals. Their guided implementation fosters *i'tidāl* (justice) and *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance) by emphasizing fair, empathetic supervision rather than coercion. Critically, such routines are effective only when paired with reflective engagement,

²³ Siswanto, "The Islamic Moderation Values on the Islamic Education Curriculum in Indonesia: A Content Analysis."

²⁴ Huda, "Incorporating the Value of Religious Moderation in Islamic Education Learning."

²⁵ Interviewed with the principal Bapak Muslam, S.Pd.I, 11 April 2024.

preventing ritual formalism and sustaining *tawāzun* (harmony) in school life.²⁶ This process is further enhanced through consistent teacher supervision from *wuḍū'* preparation to post-prayer supplication, aligning closely with Lickona's emphasis on adult modelling and direct moral guidance as key pillars of character education. A teacher thoughtfully reflected on this process by noting that:

"Students are accustomed to performing simple religious routines, which definitely impact their daily behaviour both at home and at school."

This observation shows that supervised religious routines foster religious moderation through *tawassuṭ* (balance) and *tawāzun* (harmony), as practices influence behavior across school and home contexts without reliance on coercion. Guided habituation supports *i'tidāl* (justice) through fair and proportional moral guidance, while *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance) is cultivated through patient mentoring. Critically, the effectiveness of this approach depends on reflective guidance rather than mere repetition, in order to avoid formalism and ensure genuine value internalization.²⁷ The hands-on mentoring approach is also illustrated by another teacher's remark:

"We even check the children's ablution one by one—especially in lower grades—because they tend to rush."²⁸

This practice extends beyond routine control toward religious moderation, reflecting *i'tidāl* (just, proportional guidance) and *tawassuṭ* (developmentally balanced supervision). Similar to Lickona's modelling-based approach to character education, this strategy supports moral internalization through guidance rather than punishment.²⁹ While studies that emphasize ritual repetition alone risk formalism, the present findings suggest that age-sensitive mentoring functions as a moderating bridge toward autonomy.³⁰ Student reflections further reinforce this process of internalization. During data collection, several students provided reflective responses, including one who states:

"I can now lead prayer at home as a small imām because I have become used to congregational prayer at school."³¹

This statement indicates a shift from compliance to moral autonomy, reflecting religious moderation through *tawāzun* (harmony) and *tawassuṭ* (balanced habituation). Similar to Lickona's concept of habit-to-character transfer, religious routines practiced at school extend into home environment.³² Unlike studies limited to institutional settings, this case shows contextual transfer as a significant advantage, though the degree of

²⁶ Madian Ahmad Mujib, "Moderasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Education Studies* 1, no. 1 (2022): 24–32; Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

²⁷ Ahmad Mujib, "Moderasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia."

²⁸ The interview with Ibu Nur Hidayati, S.Pd.I, an Islamic Education (PAI) teacher, 12 April 2024.

²⁹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

³⁰ Ahmad Mujib, "Moderasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia."

³¹ The interview with a student whose name is Furqon, 12 April 2024.

³² Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

autonomy may vary across individuals. The study thus positions habituation as a moderated bridge toward independent moral action. Teachers also emphasized the roles of *Duḥā* prayer and *Yāsīn* recitations as spaces for cultivating empathy and communal bonding. One teacher explained:

*"We guide them from the beginning—from taking ablution to post-prayer supplication—so the children do not do it carelessly."*³³

This guidance shows religious moderation through *tawassut* and *tawāzun*, balancing ritual precision with empathy. Similar to Lickona's emphasis on moral feeling, such guidance supports internalization rather than compliance.³⁴ While this approach reduces ritual formalism, it requires gradual withdrawal of supervision to prevent over-dependence. This study contributes by positioning guided ritual practice as a moderated pathway toward communal empathy and moral.³⁵ Another teacher highlighted the moral dimension embedded in *Yāsīn* recitation:

*"The children immediately take their *Yāsīn* books, so they do not forget to pray for deceased family members."*³⁶

This practice demonstrates religious moderation through *tasāmuḥ* (empathy) and *tawāzun* (social harmony), as acts of worship are oriented toward care for others. Consistent with moral habituation research, such routines transform personal devotion into social sensitivity.³⁷ Unlike purely ritualistic approaches, this practice highlights relational values, though it may become mechanical without reflective reinforcement. The present study thus conceptualizes *Yāsīn* recitation as a moderate bridge between worship and empathic moral awareness. Similarly, another teacher observed:

*"At first, I thought the students would be reluctant to pray daily, but because of the unity among friends and teachers, they became enthusiastic."*³⁸

This observation reflects religious moderation through *tawāzun* (harmony) and *tasāmuḥ* (social tolerance), where collective unity motivates voluntary worship. Similar to character education studies emphasizing communal modelling, enthusiasm grows through shared practice rather than coercion.³⁹ Unlike compliance-based models, this approach encourages intrinsic motivation, though peer pressure may limit individuality. This study therefore positions communal harmony as a moderated catalyst for sustained religious engagement.

³³ The interview with Ibu Sumardiningsih, S.Pd.I, the homeroom teacher of Grade IV, 15 April 2024.

³⁴ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

³⁵ Ahmad Mujib, "Moderasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia."

³⁶ The interview with Ibu Sumardiningsih, S.Pd.I, the Grade IV homeroom teacher, 15 April 2024.

³⁷ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

³⁸ The interview with Ibu Nur Hidayati, S.Pd.I, who serves as a PAI (Islamic Education) teacher, 15 April 2024.

³⁹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

Taken as a whole, SDI Al-Fattah's approach corresponds closely with well-known theories of moral and educational development. It embodies Kohlberg's model by helping students' progression from externally regulated behaviour toward internalized moral reasoning. Likewise, it aligns with Lickona's framework through the harmonious combination of moral understanding, moral emotion, and moral behavior as interconnected components of character formation. Furthermore, the approach is consistent with Bloom's taxonomy, as it encourages comprehensive development across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains instead of emphasizing academic success alone.

Table 3. Interview Data for Implementation of Religious Habituation

Informant	Statement	Coding (Theme)
Principal	"Religious habituation activities include praying before and after studying, reciting short surahs, Dhuha prayer, and tahil."	Daily religious routines; structured practice; institutional reinforcement
Teacher	"Students are accustomed to simple religious routines, which impact their behaviour at home and school."	Behaviour transfer; routine internalization; character shaping
Teacher	"We even check the children's ablution one by one, especially the younger ones."	Teacher supervision; ritual correctness; modelling
Student (Upper Grade)	"I can now lead prayer at home as a small imam because I am used to congregational prayer at school."	Worship confidence; moral autonomy; application of school practice at home
Teacher	"We guide them from ablution to post-prayer supplication, so they do not do it carelessly."	Guided ritual performance; procedural scaffolding
Teacher	"The children immediately take their Yasın books, so they do not forget to pray for deceased family members."	Empathy cultivation; remembrance practice
Trainee Teacher	"At first, I thought the students would be reluctant to pray daily. Because of the unity among friends and teachers, they became enthusiastic."	Peer influence; communal support; positive motivational climate

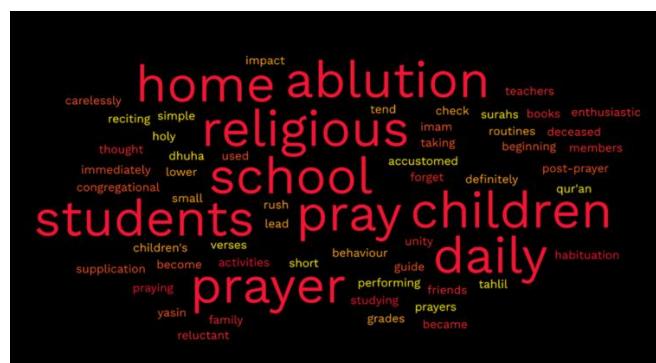


Figure 1. Word Cloud for Implementation of Religious Habituation

The word cloud indicates that children's religious behavior is shaped primarily through moderate habituation, especially prayer and ablution (*wuḍū'*), which are practiced consistently both at school and at home. This pattern reflects *tawassut* (balance), as moral

and religious values are formed through routine engagement rather than coercive enforcement, and *tawāzun* (harmony) between individual practice and collective guidance. The prominence terms related to structured teaching and group – based activities further shows the role of institutional support and peer interaction in sustaining these habits, enabling internalization of moral values and lasting character development beyond formal instruction.

Challenges Emerging during Implementation

At SDI Al – Fattah Payolebar, structured religious routines constitute the foundation of character education rooted in the principles of religious moderation, including *tawassuṭ*, *tasāmuḥ*, *i'tidāl*, and *tawāzun*. Practices such as prayer, *dhikr*, and Qur'anic recitation are systematically and proportionately integrated to daily instruction, maintaining equilibrium between spiritual formation and academic learning. Implemented through inclusive and non – coercive guidance, these activities foster justice, empathy, discipline, and social cohesion, moving beyond ritual performance toward an integrated model of holistic character development. As highlighted by the school principal, these practices extend beyond ritual observance and serve as an integrated framework for holistic character formation:

*"Consistency is key. If practiced daily, it eventually becomes character. Children who used to be lazy become diligent; those who were indifferent now show care."*⁴⁰

This statement reflects *tawassuṭ* through balanced habituation, whereby consistent practice gradually shapes character without coercion. Similar to Lickona's view that repeated moral practice leads to internalization, daily routines contribute to sustained behavioral.⁴¹ Unlike studies that focused discipline alone, this study highlights affective transformation, though it risks mechanical habituation if not accompanied by reflection. This study thus positions consistency as a moderated pathway from practice to character. A class teacher further explained how congregational worship is supervised:

*"Congregational prayers are facilitated with loudspeakers, and teachers stand by as supervisors to correct any improper movements."*⁴²

This practice illustrates *i'tidāl* (fair supervision) and *tawassuṭ* (balanced regulation), ensuring correct ritual performance without coercive pressure. Consistent with Lickona's emphasis on adult modelling, such supervision facilitates value internalization through guidance rather than control.⁴³ However, excessive supervision may constrain autonomy. The present study therefore frames supervised congregational prayer as a moderated link between discipline and moral formation. Internalization of religious values is also evident in students' emotional regulation. One student reflected:

⁴⁰ The interview with the principal, Bapak Muslam, S.Pd.I , 16 April 2024 .

⁴¹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁴² The interview with Ibu NurHidayati,S.Pd.I who serves as a PAI (Islamic Education) teacher,16 April 2024.

⁴³ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

*"I'm calmer now. When facing problems at home or school, I try to be patient and remember to recite dhikr in the morning. It feels soothing."*⁴⁴

This reflection demonstrates *tawassuṭ* and *tawāzun*, as *dhikr* serves as a mechanism for emotional self-regulation. Consistent with research linking spirituality and affective control, religious routines promote emotional stability.⁴⁵ Unlike externally imposed discipline, this highlights intrinsic coping benefits, though outcomes may differ across individuals. Teachers also reported increasing depth in students' moral reasoning:

*"We often ask students why we should do prayer on time. Their answers are getting deeper day by day. One said, "Because Allah loves a disciplined child."*⁴⁶

This reflects *tawassuṭ* (balanced reasoning) and *i'tidāl* (fair moral guidance), as students move from obedience-based compliance toward reflective moral understanding. Similar to Lickona's view that moral reasoning deepens through guided dialogue, reflective questioning fosters internalization.⁴⁷ Unlike ritual-only approaches, this method strengthens moral cognition, though its effectiveness depends on teacher facilitation. Observable behavioral change further supports these findings. One teacher noted:

*"At the beginning of the semester, students struggled to sit neatly. Now, during dhikr, they are quiet, orderly, and even remind their peers if they forget. It is remarkable."*⁴⁸

This observation indicates internalized religious moderation, particularly *tawassuṭ* (balanced discipline) and *tawāzun* (social harmony), as discipline emerges through self-regulation and peer modelling rather than coercion.⁴⁹ Unlike teacher-centered control models, this approach empowers students, although peer correction may risk conformity pressure. This study positions *dhikr* habituation as a moderated pathway to shared moral discipline. Religious habituation also translates into prosocial behavior. A Grade IV student shared:

*"After prayer, I like to approach friends who are sad, because our teacher says we must care about others."*⁵⁰

This response reflects *tasāmuḥ* (empathy) and *tawāzun* (social harmony), as worship translates into prosocial action. In line with Lickona's character education theory, moral habits foster empathy beyond ritual compliance,⁵¹ although sustained outcomes depend on consistent teacher modelling. The Guidance and Counselling teacher further emphasized the broader psychosocial impact:

⁴⁴ The interview with student's name Marhamah, who serves as a PAI (Islamic Education) teacher, 16 April 2024.

⁴⁵ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁴⁶ The interview with class teacher, Bapak Amirul, 16 April 2024.

⁴⁷ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁴⁸ The interview with class teacher, Bapak Joko, 16 April 2024.

⁴⁹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁵⁰ The interview with a student, Ade Putra, 17 April 2024.

⁵¹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

"Children who routinely engage in religious habits are less likely to get into conflict, more willing to apologize, and more responsible with their classwork."⁵²

This perspective reflects *tawassut* and *tawāzun*, demonstrating how religious habituation supports emotional regulation, responsibility, and social harmony. Consistent with Lickona's character education findings, it promotes responsibility and conflict reduction beyond ritual compliance.⁵³ A senior teacher reinforced the importance of dialogic guidance:

"Children are not just told to pray; they are invited to talk, correct, and shown examples. That is what makes the difference. They feel respected and guided."⁵⁴

This approach reflects *tasāmuḥ* and *i'tidāl*, emphasizing respect for students' agency through modelling and dialogue. Unlike directive models, it fosters internalization through modelling, consistent with character education research.⁵⁵ Finally, a newly appointed teacher acknowledged the deeply rooted culture of moderation:

"I have only been here for two months, but I have seen it myself—students respect one another, are slow to anger, and show high initiative in worship."⁵⁶

This observation indicates internalized *tawāzun* and *tasāmuḥ*, as respectful conduct and self-initiated worship emerge organically. Rather than compliance-driven outcomes, these behaviors reflect value internalization sustained by school culture, aligning with character education research on modelling and habituation.⁵⁷

Table 4. Interview Data for Character Formation Through Religious Habituation

Informant	Statement	Coding
Principal	"Consistency is key. If practiced daily, it eventually becomes character."	Consistency; habituation; character formation
Class Teacher	"Congregational prayers are facilitated with loudspeakers, and teachers stand by as supervisors to correct any improper movements."	Discipline building; corrective supervision
Student (Grade V)	"I am calmer now. When facing problems at home or school, I try to be patient and remember to recite dhikr in the morning. It feels soothing."	Emotional regulation; patience; spiritual coping
Class Teacher	"We often ask students why we should do prayer on time. Their answers are getting deeper day by day. One said, "Because Allah loves a disciplined child."	Moral reasoning; reflective understanding

⁵² The interview with the guidance and counselling teacher's, Bapak H. Said Rahman, 17 April 2024.

⁵³ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁵⁴ The interview with a senior teacher, Bapak Agus, 19 April 2024.

⁵⁵ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁵⁶ The interview with a newly appointed teacher, Ibu Hindun, 19 April 2024.

⁵⁷ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

Informant	Statement	Coding
Teacher	"At the beginning of the semester, students struggled to sit neatly. Now, during dhikr, they are quiet, orderly, and even remind their peers if they forget. It is remarkable."	Self-regulation; responsibility; peer accountability
(Grade IV)	"After prayer, I approach friends who are sad. We must care about others."	Empathy; prosocial behaviour
Guidance Counsellor	"Children who routinely engage in religious habits are less likely to get into conflict, more willing to apologize, and more responsible with their classwork."	Conflict reduction; responsibility; social behaviour
Senior Teacher	"Children are not just told to pray; they are invited to talk, correct, and shown examples. That is what makes the difference. They feel respected and guided."	Teacher modelling; relational guidance
New Teacher	"I've only been here for two months, but I have seen it myself—students respect one another, are slow to anger, and show high initiative in worship."	Respect; emotional maturity; initiative



Figure 2. Character Formation through Religious Practice

This finding shows that children's daily religious practices, particularly prayer and ablution, are formed through a moderate and harmonious interaction between home and school rather than developing in isolation. Consistent and coordinated guidance from parents and teachers reflects *tawāzun* (harmony) and *i'tidāl* (shared responsibility), enabling religious routines to develop gradually into stable habits. Such alignment strengthens the internalization of moral values through balanced habituation (*tawassuṭ*), whereby adult modelling and consistent expectations across social environments support sustainable character formation.

Table 5. Summary of Theoretical Alignment

Observed Habituation	Character Outcome	Educational Theory
Daily prayer with teacher supervision	Ritual mastery, discipline	Bloom (psychomotor)
Dialogues on meaning of prayer	Moral reasoning, internalization	Kohlberg (moral stages)
Peer support and empathy after doing prayer	Empathy, prosocial action	Lickona (moral feeling)
Habitual <i>dhikr</i> and emotional calming	Patience, emotional regulation	Bloom (affective domain)
Corrective teacher modeling	Moral behavior, accountability	Lickona (moral doing)
Students reminding peers during prayer	Social responsibility	Kohlberg (conventional)

SDI Al-Fattah's approach exemplifies Lickona's triadic model of character education, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behaviour, while simultaneously aligning with Kohlberg's theory of moral development and Bloom's taxonomy across the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.⁵⁸ Bloom's framework highlights how well-structured teaching and learning processes foster students's sense of competence and self-efficacy.⁵⁹ This theoretical alignment illustrates a comprehensive and transformative model of character formation rooted in Islamic practice and pedagogy.

Through the structured implementation of religious habituation, SDI Al-Fattah Payolebar demonstrates a character education model that is both theologically rooted and pedagogically sound. The integration of routine, reflection, and relational engagement transforms religious rituals into vehicles for deep moral and emotional formation. Supported by a cohesive school culture and informed by established educational theories, these practices yield not only spiritually observant students but also ethically responsible and socially compassionate individuals. Despite the overall effectiveness of religious habituation at SDI Al-Fattah Payolebar, several implementation obstacles were identified. These included students forgetting to bring prayer materials, distractions during prayer times (such as stopping at the canteen), inconsistent teacher supervision, and limited parental support at home. A teacher reflected on these difficulties by sharing personal experiences and highlighting the emotional and practical struggles faced during daily teaching:

*"The obstacle comes from teachers who are sometimes less inattentive. Children head to the mosque, but some stop by the canteen. Sometimes they forget to bring their Yāsīn and tahlīl books."*⁶⁰

This challenge reflects limitations in the application of *tawassuṭ* (balance) and *i'tidāl* (justice), as inconsistent teacher engagement weakens balanced guidance. Similar to Lickona's emphasis on sustained adult modelling, moral routines require sustained supervision to prevent ritual slippage and disengagement.⁶¹ Unlike idealized routine-based character education, this finding exposes practical gaps in everyday implementation. It reframes religious moderation as a collective responsibility that extends beyond students to include disciplined teacher commitment to maintaining harmony (*tawāzun*) and moral consistency. Another teacher emphasized the influence of the home environment on student's engagement:

*"It is apparent that students who lack attention at home show less engagement."*⁶²

This finding underscores the significance of *tawāzun* (ecological balance), wherein misalignment between school and family environments weakens the internalization of religious habits. Echoing Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, the effectiveness of

⁵⁸ Benjamin S. Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*, Handbook 1 (LONGMANS, 1956).

⁵⁹ G. ". Voss, "Benjamin S. Bloom: More than a Taxonomy," in Geier, B.A. (Eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Educational Thinkers* (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2024), 1 – 19.

⁶⁰ The interview with Ibu Nur Hidayati,S.Pd.I, a class teacher, 19 April 2024.

⁶¹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

⁶² The interview with Ibu Sumardiningsih,S.Pd.I, 22 April 2024.

character development declines when microsystems are misaligned.⁶³ Distinctively, this study frames such imbalance within the framework of religious moderation, highlighting shared moral responsibility across educational and familial contexts. A PAI (Islamic Education) teacher further observed challenges among students unfamiliar with congregational prayer:

"There are always some challenges—especially among students who are not used to praying in congregation."⁶⁴

This reflects the importance of *tawassut* (gradual balance), indicating that habituation must be introduced proportionately to students' prior religious experiences. Consistent with research cautioning against enforced ritual compliance, this finding highlights the risk of disengagement.⁶⁵ The study therefore contributes by positioning phased, moderated habituation rather than uniform enforcement. Reinforcing the role of parental involvement, a class teacher explained:

"It is clear when students lack support at home. When parents pay attention to prayer time at home, the child becomes more accustomed to what is practiced at school."⁶⁶

Parental reinforcement of prayer routines embodies *tawassut*, *tawāzun*, *i'tidāl*, and *tasāmuḥ*, by aligning moral expectations across home and school. While this aligns with Hill & Tyson's findings on structured parental involvement in character education,⁶⁷ this study uniquely foregrounds religious practice as a medium of moral internalization, despite its contextual limitations. To address these challenges, the school adopted responsive strategies. One teacher explained the use of corrective measures:

"Students are given educational sanctions—usually in the form of prayer memorization or sweeping the mosque after prayers."⁶⁸

When framed through *tawassut*, *i'tidāl*, *tasāmuḥ*, and *tawāzun*, such educational sanctions function as restorative discipline rather than punitive control. This approach aligns with justice-oriented disciplinary models that emphasize accountability, while embedding religious meaning into corrective practices. Nevertheless, its effectiveness depends on contextual sensitivity to avoid inequitable application.⁶⁹

⁶³ David H. Feldman and Samuel S. Snyder, "Internal and External Influences on Cognitive Developmental Change," *Child Development*, JSTOR 48, no. 3 (1977): 937–43, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1128344>.

⁶⁴ The interview with Bapak Joko, a class teacher 22 April, 2024.

⁶⁵ Donald P. Druin, Diamond, Adele, Meredith B. Prevor, Glenda Callender, "Prefrontal Cortex Cognitive Deficits in Children Treated Early and Continuously for PKU," *Monographs of the Society for Research Child Development* JSTOR 62, No. 4 (1997): I–206, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1166208>.

⁶⁶ The interview with Ibu Hindun, 22 April 2024.

⁶⁷ D. F. Hill, N. E., & Tyson, "Parental Involvement in Middle School: A Meta-Analytic Assessment of the Strategies That Promote Achievement," *Developmental Psychology* 45, no. 3 (2009): 740–763, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015362>.

⁶⁸ The interview with Bapak H. Said Rahman, 22 April, 2024.

⁶⁹ Anne GreGregory et al., "Eliminating Disparities in School Discipline: A Framework for Intervention," *Review of Research in Education* 41, no. March (2017): 253–78, <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X17690499>.

Table 6. Interview Data for Obstacles and Responsive Strategies

Informant	Statement	Coding
Teacher (Obstacle)	"Some students stop at the canteen and forget their Yasin and tahlil books."	Distraction; inconsistency; discipline challenge
PAI Teacher	"Some students are not used to praying in congregation."	Low initial habituation; readiness challenge
Class Teacher	"When parents pay attention to prayer at home, the child becomes more accustomed."	Parental support; home – school continuity
Teacher (Strategy)	"Students are given educational sanctions like prayer memorization or sweeping the mosque."	Educational sanction; corrective discipline

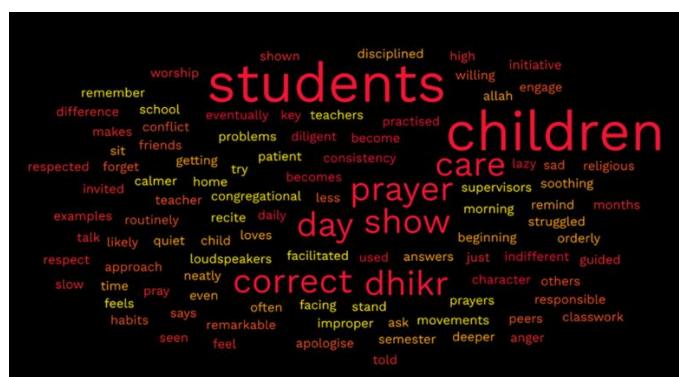


Figure 3. Obstacles and Responsive Strategies

The interpretation indicates that children's religious activities, especially prayer and *dhikr*, are deeply connected to everyday habits, with educators and school overseers being crucial in promoting discipline, ensuring proper execution, and supporting positive behavioural growth.

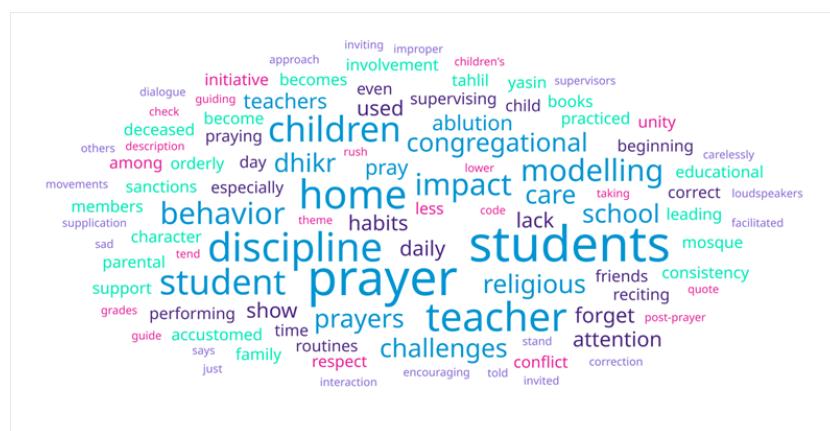


Figure 4. Grouping codes into themes like “teacher modelling”, “student discipline”, and “parental involvement”

The description highlights three connected themes—teacher modelling, student discipline, and parental involvement—in shaping children's daily religious habituation. Teacher modelling appears as a central element, as students learn correct prayer and *dhikr* practices through guided demonstration. This process directly supports the development

of student discipline, reflected in increased attentiveness, respect, and consistency during religious routines. Parental involvement further reinforces these habits at home, ensuring continuity between school and family environments. Together, these themes show that children's religious behaviour is strengthened through coordinated guidance across both settings. Moreover, these approaches demonstrate that responsive strategy-making, when grounded in mutual accountability between teachers and families, is effective in overcoming implementation barriers. As the finding suggest,⁷⁰ this triangulation, namely teacher, family, and environment constitutes a foundational condition for the moral efficacy of religious education programs.

In synthesizing the findings, this study successfully addresses the core research questions concerning implementation strategies, their impact on student behaviour, and the challenges encountered. The evidence affirms theoretical models, particularly Lickona's character education framework, by demonstrating that daily spiritual practices, when supervised and scaffolded by teachers, foster positive learner traits, including empathy, discipline, and responsibility.⁷¹ Furthermore, the study advances the ongoing theoretical discussions by introducing a feasible and replicable framework for primary Islamic education that incorporates routine religious practices, active teacher engagement, prepared facilities, and collaborative parental involvement. This integrated approach suggests that religious character education is most effective when embedded within a supportive school culture, reinforced by family participation, and guided coherent institutional strategies.



Figure 5. *Tahajjud* Reading Activity SDI Al Fattah



Figure 6. Congregational *Zuhra* Prayer Activities

⁷⁰ Fahmi, Aunur Rofiq, and Indah Aminatuz Zuhriyah.

⁷¹ Lickona, "Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility."

The findings of this study highlight that religious activities function not as isolated practices but as an integrated habituation system that connects daily rituals, pedagogical guidance, and family reinforcement. This integrated approach differs from much of the existing literature, which tends to examine *tahfīz*, *Duhaā* prayer, or congregational prayer as separate interventions. By illustrating how these practices are systematically structured, supervised, and reinforced across school and home environments, the study links Lickona's moral pedagogy and Kohlberg's developmental theory to tangible educational processes, including teacher modelling, institutional scheduling, and parental support.

Comparative evidence from the Middle East, Turkey, Africa, and Southeast Asia helps situate these findings within a global context. Research by Osman (2024) in the Middle East emphasizes the importance of structured teacher modelling⁷², while studies by Acevedo (2013) and Babacan (2025) in the Turkish context highlight the role of religious socialization in shaping obedience and social order.⁷³ Research from African and Southeast Asian contexts likewise demonstrates that parental reinforcement is essential for sustaining school-based character development.⁷⁴ Together, these cross-regional patterns suggest that although specific rituals may vary across cultural contexts, the core mechanisms underpinning effective religious habituation, namely modelling, reinforcement, and institutional support, are broadly shared. The principal contribution of this study lies in articulating how these mechanisms interact within a single institutional framework, thereby offering an integrated model of religious habituation with relevance beyond the local context.

Religious habituation at SDI Al-Fattah strengthens discipline and empathy while simultaneously fostering religious moderation (*wasatiyyah*). The model's core elements—teacher modelling, reflective dialogue, empathy-based routines, and home-school cooperation—align closely with moderation values such as *tawassut* (balance), *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance), *ta'ādul* (fairness), and *i'tidāl* (self-restraint). Studies from Indonesia and other Muslim contexts show that ritual practices supported by reflective and relational guidance encourage moderate religious attitudes and reduce rigid or exclusionary behaviour. This pattern is evident at SDI Al-Fattah, where students show calmness, respect, willingness to apologize, and improved emotional regulation. The integrated habituation model therefore not only supports religious character formation but also promotes balanced and socially harmonious Islamic values.

Overall, This study demonstrates that integrated religious habituation constitutes an effective pathway for cultivating religious moderation in primary education. When daily rituals are reinforced through teacher modelling, reflective interaction, empathy-building activities, and sustained parental involvement, students gradually internalize balanced and

⁷² Yousra Osman, "Understanding How to Develop an Effective Role—Modelling Character Education Programme in Saudi Arabia," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 7724 (2024): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2024.2330363>.

⁷³ Gabriel A Acevedo, Christopher G Ellison, and Murat Yilmaz, "Religion and Child-Rearing Values in Turkey," *Journal of Family Issues* SAGE XX, no. October (2013): 1–29, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X13504921>; Muhammed Babacan, "The Impact of Religious Socialization on the Crisis of Faith: The Case of Young Turks in Tūrkiye," *Religions* 16, no. 10 (2025): 1297, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16101297>.

⁷⁴ Babatunde Akinwande, Clement Olugbenro Agbara, and Olufunke Adeitan, "Character And Value Building Through Provision Of Quality Education In Ondo State Secondary School," *Spektra* X, no. X (2025): 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.34005/spektra.v7i1.4706>; Shafa Alistiana Irbathy, Moh Amiril Mukminin, and Azim Abdurakhmovich, "Developing a Religion Tolerance—Based Character Education Framework for Elementary School Students," *Al-Adzka* 15, no. 1 (2025): 37–54, <https://doi.org/10.18592/aladzkapgmi.v15i1.14540>.

tolerant behaviours connected to *wasaṭiyah*. These findings align with international evidence indicating that religious moderation grows most effectively when ritual practice is paired with supportive and dialogic pedagogy. Accordingly, the model thus strengthens moral character while grounding students in moderation as a basis for peaceful coexistence.

Conclusion

The systematic implementation of religious moderation at SDI Al-Fattah Payolebar contributes significantly to students' moral and spiritual development through a balanced (*tawassut*) educational framework. Structured daily practices—such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and *dhikr*—supported by consistent teacher role modelling and an integrated school culture, facilitate the internalization of discipline, empathy, accountability, and justice-oriented moral reasoning (*i'tidāl*). However, the durability of these outcomes is contingent upon reinforcement beyond the school context, indicating the necessity of harmonious (*tawāzun*) collaboration among schools, families, and community actors.

The findings substantiate that effective character education depends on deliberate and reflective pedagogical design and sustained teacher supervision. When guided by ethical reflexivity and tolerant orientations (*tasāmuḥ*), religious practices move beyond procedural compliance toward meaningful moral engagement. This process supports students' cognitive, affective, and behavioural development, aligning with established moral development theories that emphasize value internalization through consistent socialization. Furthermore, family-school synergy enhances value continuity, while institutional readiness and instructional leadership remain critical to program sustainability.

From a practical perspective, schools are advised to institutionalize parental engagement through structured communication and capacity-building initiatives that align home and school values within a moderate and inclusive paradigm. Continuous professional development is essential to equip teachers with the competencies required to manage habituation practices effectively, supported by adequate resources and enabling learning environments. Disciplinary challenges should be addressed through reflective and educative interventions that promote moral awareness and self-regulation rather than punitive measures. Future research should employ mixed-method and longitudinal designs to examine the long-term effects of religious habituation on students' moral development across diverse sociocultural contexts.

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