

Improving Understanding Of Good Character Through The Habits Method In Class B Of Al-Khuzamy Kindergarten In The 2025/2026 Academic Year

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Abstract

This research was structuralized by the low level of understanding regarding noble character (akhlakul karimah) among group B children at TK Al-Khuzamy Bentek, which was indicated by a lack of discipline in greeting, implementing a queuing culture, behaving respectfully towards educators, and orderliness in praying before and after conducting learning routines. The central objective of this action research is to describe the improvement of early childhood moral and character understanding through systematic implementation of the daily habituation method. The methodology adopted was Classroom Action Research (CAR) executed across two interconnected cycles, where each cycle comprised planning, acting, observing, and reflecting stages. The research subjects consisted of 14 students within Group B at TK Al-Khuzamy Bentek. Data compilation techniques were administered through operational observation checklists, structured interviews, portfolio documentation, and child performance tasks. The empirical outcomes manifested a progressive improvement in children's moral indicators. In the Pre-Cycle phase, classical mastery achievement only reached 28.26% with an average performance score of 51. Following interventions in Cycle I, the completion threshold expanded to 50% with an average classroom score of 67. The peak of action success was fully established during Cycle II, where classical mastery advanced to 85.57% with a mean score of 77, successfully outperforming the institutional target criteria of 75%. Based on these explicit milestones, it is concluded that the utilization of daily habituation methods is profoundly effective to optimize noble character development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education plays a very central and crucial role in the national education system because it serves as the first foundation for the personality, character, intellect, and spirituality of students. Based on Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, the arrangement of educational stimulation in the early childhood range (4-6 years) is focused on boosting the full potential of children's basic growth and development, with aspects of religious and moral values occupying the highest priority hierarchy (Sujiono, 2022). The child's developmental period during this phase is widely known as the golden age, a crucial

period during which the child's brain nerve cells develop very radically and have an extraordinarily broad capacity to absorb environmental information. Therefore, failure to instill the foundation of noble morals during this golden phase will result in the child's fragility of moral stability in adulthood (Mulyasa, 2023).

Moral virtues in Islamic education are not merely normative theoretical components passively memorized, but rather the embodiment of conceptual faith that is clearly manifested in children's daily behavior (Latif, 2022). Instilling moral values in early childhood includes developing noble social etiquette, such as habituating greetings, appreciating others, being honest, respecting educators, and cultivating religious and spiritual discipline through prayer (Susanto, 2022). These noble characteristics act as internal moral immunity for children, filtering negative sociological onslaughts from the destructive dynamics of modern digitalization (Latif, 2022).

However, instilling Islamic moral values in early childhood requires an instructional approach that aligns with their psychological developmental stage. According to Jean Piaget's cognitive theory, children aged 4-5 are in the intuitive pre-operational phase, where they lack the capacity for mature abstract thinking (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). Children's dominant egocentrism demands the provision of realistic, repetitive, concrete, and functional learning strategies. Rigid indoctrination teaching patterns have been proven to fail to shape children's character permanently (Fadillah, 2022). One of the best pedagogical solutions recognized for its long-term impact on children's subconscious memory is the implementation of structured habituation methods (Fadillah, 2022).

The habituation method is positioned as a classroom instructional engineering effort that requires children to perform certain positive actions consistently, repeatedly, and sustainably within the daily school routine (Ahmadi & Supriyono, 2021). Through this constant repetition, a good behavior initially performed by a child based on the teacher's conscious instruction will gradually assimilate into an automatic habit that integrates with the child's daily personality without the burden of psychological coercion (Ahmadi & Supriyono, 2021).

Although the habituation method is recognized as having strong theoretical advantages, empirical reality in the school environment often shows significant gaps. This fundamental problem was clearly identified in class B of Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten, North Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. Based on preliminary study data collected by researchers through initial observations, a picture of student behavior was found that was still far from the target achievement of institutional moral development. This phenomenon was clearly evident from the still dominant actions of children who were reluctant to say hello when entering the gate, impatiently waiting their turn (ignoring the culture of queuing) during the distribution of APE, speaking in a rude and impolite tone to partner teachers, and the noisy and disorderly atmosphere during the joint prayer procession.

The low moral awareness of early childhood children in the institution triggers an urgent need to improve classroom governance. Researchers believe that conditioning methods of habituation packaged in a varied, consistent, and planned manner can reverse the curve of moral decline of students in the class. Based on the foundation of academic urgency, researchers consider it essential to conduct collaborative classroom action research with the title: "Improving Understanding of Akhlakul Karimah Through the Habitual Method in Class B of Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten in the 2025/2026 Academic Year."

Based on this background, the objective of this research is to describe the improvement of early childhood understanding and actualization of noble character (akhlakul karimah), specifically in the indicators of greeting politely, orderly queuing, polite speech toward teachers, and solemnity in daily prayers, through the systematic implementation of the daily habituation method in Class B of Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten during the 2025/2026 Academic Year.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This action research was designed in a planned manner using a collaborative Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach. The operational workflow follows the spiral intervention model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart, where the process of improving children's, behavior moves dynamically through a series of continuous action cycles (Arikunto, 2020). The structure of the classroom action implementation in each cycle consistently integrates four interconnected mandatory work stages, namely: (1) Planning Corrective Actions (Planning), (2) Implementing Classroom Interventions (Acting), (3) Observing the Dynamics of Child Development (Observing), and (4) Collaborative Evaluative Reflection (Reflecting) (Sugiyono, 2019).

The research location was geographically located in Class B of Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten, located in Bentek Hamlet, Menggala Village, Pemenang District, North Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. The field intervention was carried out intensively for one full month in the even semester of the 2025/2026 Academic Year. The main subjects of character change in this study were all actively registered Group B students, with a total sample of 14 children. The characteristics of the socio-economic background and domestic parenting patterns of the subjects' families were very heterogeneous, which was one of the factors triggering the diversity of early morality formation.

To clarify the population and sample of this study, the population consisted of all Group B children officially registered at Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten in the 2025/2026 Academic Year, totaling 14 children. Because the entire population was accessible and manageable in size, this study employed a total sampling (sampling jenuh) technique, in which all 14 children in the population were included as the research subjects/sample, with no separate sampling procedure applied. This approach was considered appropriate given the class-based nature of Classroom Action Research, which requires intervention on the entire class rather than a subset of students.

To ensure the validity of scientific data, the collection of development data in the field applies a triangulation scheme of data collection methods which include: (1) Participatory Observation, utilizing a behavioral observation checklist matrix instrument based on children's daily moral performance indicators; (2) Semi-structured Interviews, rolled out to class educators to explore aspects of children's psychological changes in depth; (3) Documentation Study, compiling portfolio sheets of children's work and original photos of daily class activities; and (4) Oral Performance Test Assessment, used specifically to measure the accuracy of students' pronunciation of daily prayer readings (Moleong, 2018). Moral development data is calculated descriptively quantitatively using the classical completeness formula. This classroom action research is declared complete and successful if at least 75% of the total child subjects have achieved the criteria for developing according to expectations (BSH) or developing very well (BSB) (Arikunto, 2020).

3. RESULTS

The presentation of the findings presents quantitative data and comparative qualitative descriptive analysis of each stage of classroom action starting from Pre-Cycle, Cycle I, to Cycle II.

3.1 Baseline Capability Portrait (Pre-Cycle)

The initial step of the research focused on a baseline assessment through observation without intervention of the habituation method in Class B. This measurement was intended to see the original initial condition of the students' moral behavior against four predetermined indicators: greeting politely, orderly queues for games, compliance with polite language to teachers, and solemnity in daily prayers. The results of the initial data recapitulation provided a concerning picture, where the majority of early childhood children in the class were in the Not Yet Developing (BB) category.

Based on empirical data tabulation, out of a total of 14 Group B children who were subjects, only 4 were recorded as being able to reflect on noble moral values independently without close supervision. In quantitative aggregate, the classical development completion index of children at this pre-cycle stage was considered very low, namely only reaching 28.26% with an average class score of 51. Students often shouted when calling the teacher and ignored instructions to be patient, waiting for their turn to play daily.

3.2 Analysis and Reflection of Cycle I Actions

In response to the low pre-cycle baseline data, researchers together with partner teachers drafted a corrective action intervention scenario for Cycle I. The main focus of the strategy rests on conditioning three daily habituation models at school: (1) Morning Conditional Habituation, requiring the practice of the 5S culture (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Polite, Courteous) directly at the school entrance; (2) Integrative Habituation of Teaching and Learning Activities (KBM), training children to queue patiently when taking learning media and tidying up APE in lockers; and (3) Religious Ritual Habituation, guiding memorization of daily prayers using interactive audio-visual media stimuli (Suyadi, 2021).

The implementation of actions in Cycle I successfully shifted the child development curve in a positive direction. Some children began to shift from the Not Yet Developing (BB) criteria to Starting to Develop (MB). The results of processing the Cycle I observation instrument documented that the percentage of children's classical moral development completion increased to 50%, with the average class performance score creeping up to 67. Although there had been a 21.74% increase in performance from the initial condition, the results of this Cycle I achievement were academically declared not to meet the ideal completion standard (75%). Based on collaborative reflection, the failure to meet the target was triggered by the short attention span of the children, so that the children were still vulnerable to distraction by internal class noise and refused to follow daily routine commands.

3.3 Analysis and Reflection of Cycle II Actions

Improvements to the action plan in Cycle II were specifically formulated to curb operational weaknesses in the classroom that emerged in Cycle I. Researchers implemented tactical modifications in the form of strengthening habituation methods that were integrated with direct modeling strategies by educators and extrinsic reinforcement incentives in the form of a token economy reward system in the form of achievement star stickers (Hurlock, 2020). Classroom teachers were positioned as mirrors of real behavior who consistently

exemplified the words 'please' when asking for help, 'sorry' when making a mistake, and 'thank you' after receiving daily kindness.

Students who successfully demonstrated consistent noble moral attitudes independently were given instant recognition in the form of visual star stickers attached to the individual achievement board on the classroom wall. This innovative intervention successfully triggered intrinsic motivation and positive competition among students in group B. The psychological atmosphere of the classroom mutated into a conducive, orderly, cheerful ecosystem, and strongly supported the internalization of religious morals in children. The results of the final assessment in Cycle II showed a very satisfying surge in development. The percentage of classical completion of children's understanding of noble morals successfully shot up sharply to 85.57% with an average class score of 77. Because the results of the intervention had exceeded the minimum limit of the action success indicator (75%), this CAR was officially stopped in Cycle II.

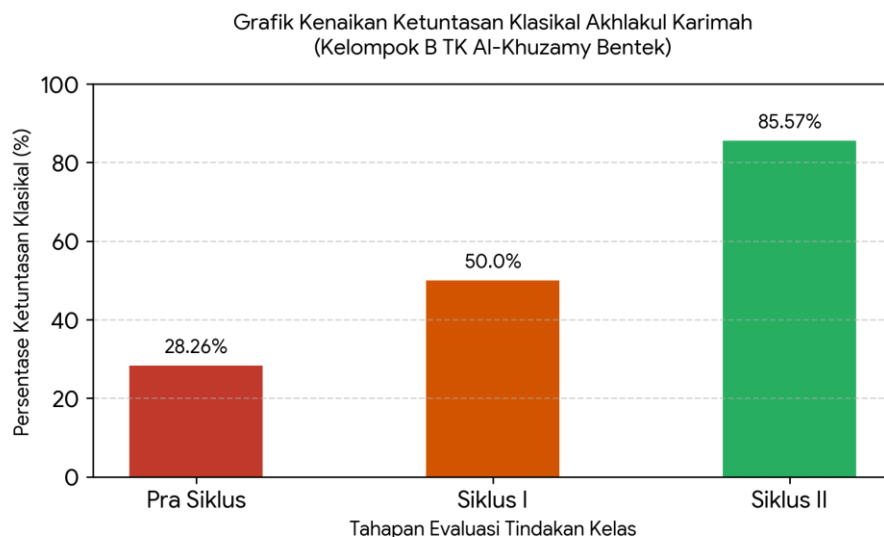


Figure 1. Comparative Graph of the Increase in the Percentage of Classical Completion Per Class Action Cycle

3.4 Theoretical Discussion of the Dynamics of Internalization of Children's Moral Values

The successful accumulation of developmental data from the pre-cycle (28.26%), Cycle I (50%), and ultimately the success of Cycle II (85.57%) confirms the scientific validity that the understanding and actualization of noble morals in early childhood are not formed instantly, but rather through a process of constant, consistent, planned, and loving social environmental conditioning. This empirical fact confirms the Social Learning Theory pioneered by Albert Bandura. Bandura stated that early childhood children acquire new social behavioral responses through observational learning and modeling of the behavior of significant figures in their immediate circle, in this case, the classroom teacher (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). The teacher's consistent and polite attitude acts as a powerful cognitive stimulus for children to adopt this Islamic moral value system into their personal behavioral scheme.

In addition, the success of accelerating behavioral change in Cycle II was greatly influenced by the integration of a positive reinforcement system in the form of achievement star sticker tokens. Referring to the Law of Effect formulated by Thorndike, every association

of a child's behavior that produces pleasant consequences or responses (verbal praise and visual rewards) will have a strong tendency to be repeated and maintained voluntarily by the child until it finally crystallizes into a permanent innate character (Moeslichatoen, 2004). Thus, the understanding of akhlakul karimah in Group B children of Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten successfully transformed from mere cognitive verbal memorization into real daily habituation actions based on the child's emotional inner awareness.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on all stages of the results of the action data processing, empirical field analysis, and reflective theoretical studies that have been presented, this classroom action research concludes: the classical completion of children's moral understanding rose consistently across the three measurement points, from 28.26% at Pre-Cycle (only 4 of 14 children able to independently reflect noble moral values), to 50% after Cycle I, and finally to 85.57% after Cycle II, a trajectory that directly exceeds the 75% institutional success criterion. Grounded in this documented data trajectory, the implementation of daily habituation methods that are carried out in a planned, consistent, participatory, and collaborative manner has been proven to be able to significantly increase the understanding and actualization of noble character behavior in Group B children at Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten in the 2025/2026 Academic Year. This latest conclusion is validated by the surge in the children's classical development completion curve which has increased consistently from the initial condition of Pre-Cycle which was only 28.26% (average score of 51), creeping up post-intervention Cycle I to 50% (average score of 67), and reaching the climax of optimal achievement in the final evaluation of Cycle II which succeeded in breaking through the percentage figure of 85.57% (average score of 77), where the results of this final achievement have successfully exceeded the target indicators for class completion set by the institution.

Based on the scientific conclusions above, several constructive suggestions are proposed to improve the quality of implementation of children's character education: (1) For Early Childhood Educators, they should always maintain the consistency of daily moral role models at school and package habituation programs in a creative, innovative, fun way, and avoid physical/psychological coercion; (2) For the Management of the Al-Khuzamy Bentek Kindergarten Institution, it is hoped that they can facilitate the draft of the SOP for the standard Islamic character habituation curriculum and schedule regular parenting training; (3) For Parents of Students, it is recommended to build harmony in the conditioning program for noble moral values that have been taught at school when the child is at home to ensure the continuity of the crystallization of the noble personality of early childhood children daily.

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