

## The Implementation of Dhuha Prayer Discipline Habituation in Shaping Character in Early Childhood at TK Ma'arif Alhidayah, Sekampung, East Lampung Regency

Ana Uswatun Hidayah<sup>1\*</sup>, Anissatul Faqziaty<sup>1</sup>, Nikmatur Rodiyah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institut Agama Islam Ma'arif NU (IAIMNU) Lampung, Indonesia



[nikmaturodiyah66@gmail.com](mailto:nikmaturodiyah66@gmail.com)\*

### ABSTRACT

#### ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received

October 11, 2021

Revised

October 26, 2021

Accepted

October 30, 2021

Implementation refers to everything that is carried out and applied according to a program designed to be executed fully in line with established regulations. The implementation of Dhuha prayer in the morning is carried out before the teaching and learning process begins, held every day without exception, performed collectively at the Babussalam Mosque located within the TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah environment. The prayer consists of two rak'ahs performed at 07:30 AM Western Indonesian Time (WIB). The collective Dhuha prayer is initiated by classroom teachers to optimize both the quality and quantity of religious aspects while also serving as practical training for reciting in a clear, loud voice. Before performing the Dhuha prayer, students are required to recite sholawat and practice the adzan together. The habituation of Dhuha prayer discipline in early childhood requires the right stimuli. Establishing this discipline is crucial so that students can perform the Dhuha prayer properly. It is important to note that through repeated habituation of worship activities, children will become trained and find it easier to memorize prayer recitations. This research aims to describe the habituation of Dhuha prayer discipline among early childhood students in Group A and Group B at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah as a means of enhancing moral values. The study also explores the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of this habituation. This is a qualitative study conducted at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah.

**Keywords:** Implementation, Discipline of Dhuha Prayer Habituation, Early Childhood

Journal Homepage

<http://journal.iaimnumetrolampung.ac.id/index.php/ji/>

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### INTRODUCTION

Prayer is the main form of worship in Islam, reflecting a Muslim's obedience and discipline. Instilling the habit of praying from an early age is crucial for building a child's religious character (Ahmad, 2019). The dhuha prayer, as one of the sunnah (voluntary) prayers, plays a strategic role in instilling spiritual and moral values in early childhood. Regular practice of dhuha prayer can help children understand the importance of discipline and responsibility in daily life (Yugo, 2024).

At TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah, Lampung Timur, the dhuha prayer is practiced every morning before learning activities begin. This activity is conducted in congregation at the school's mosque, starting with the chanting of salawat and the call to prayer (adhan) led by students in turns. This method aims to train courage, vocal skills, and instill

religious enthusiasm from an early age. Afterward, the children perform the dhuha prayer in congregation guided by their teachers (Rahmanisa, 2024).

The methods used in this habituation are direct practice and group prayer. The congregational method fosters a sense of solemnity, togetherness, and discipline, while direct practice helps students memorize prayer recitations and perform prayer movements correctly. Research shows that dhuha prayer habituation can improve children's discipline and religious character (Sholicha & Aliyah, 2020).

Supporting factors in the implementation of dhuha prayer at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah include students' awareness of prayer discipline, teacher role models, adequate facilities, and parental involvement in the success of the program (Wulandari & Rafiq, 2024). However, there are also inhibiting factors, such as parents who have not established the dhuha prayer habit at home, thus providing less reinforcement to the children (Hasanah et al., 2024).

This study used a qualitative approach with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that regular dhuha prayer habituation contributes to building discipline in early childhood. Children become more organized in their daily routines, show responsibility, and have a strong spiritual awareness (Khofi, 2024).

The implementation of dhuha prayer also contributes to the development of religious and moral values in children. They learn gratitude, respect for time, and politeness toward others (Juwa Abdul et al., 2024). This is in line with studies that suggest religious routines practiced from early childhood foster positive character development.

In addition, regular dhuha prayer enhances children's spiritual intelligence. They become more sensitive to their environment, show empathy, and develop a strong sense of self-awareness. This balance between intellectual and spiritual aspects is crucial for holistic child development (Widyawati et al., 2024).

Teachers play a key role in guiding and directing children in performing the dhuha prayer. As role models, they demonstrate proper prayer practices and provide motivation and support for students (Widyawati et al., 2024). Active teacher involvement significantly increases the effectiveness of dhuha prayer habituation in shaping children's character.

Parental involvement is also vital in supporting the dhuha prayer habituation. Parents are expected to continue this practice at home, provide moral support, and create a spiritually conducive environment for their children (Hasanah et al., 2024). Collaboration between school and home strengthens the dhuha prayer program and character development in children.

Thus, the implementation of dhuha prayer discipline habituation at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah, Lampung Timur has proven effective in building religious and disciplined character in early childhood. This practice can serve as a model for character education in other early childhood institutions. Support from teachers, parents, and the surrounding environment is essential to achieve these goals.

## **METHOD**

This research is a qualitative field research, which means it is based on field data directly related to the research topic. The method used by the researcher is descriptive, expressed in words and language within a specific natural context and utilizing various natural objects.

According to Creswell (2008), qualitative research is defined as a method or inquiry to explore or understand a central phenomenon. This method treats participants genuinely as subjects rather than objects. Qualitative research aims to explore meaning, perspectives, and contextual experiences of individuals or groups.

Based on the Research Design Module (2019) published by Ristekdikti, qualitative research can be understood as a research procedure that uses descriptive data, conducted in the form of written or spoken words from people and behaviors observed in natural settings. Qualitative research is conducted to explain and analyze phenomena, events, social dynamics, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of an individual or group.

The objects of qualitative research include all aspects or fields of human life, that is, human beings and everything influenced by them. The type of qualitative method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. The location of this study is TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah. The subjects of this research are 37 students consisting of Group A and Group B.

For data collection, the researcher used observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires as supporting data in this study. In analyzing the data, the researcher employed data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The research results show that the regular practice of dhuha prayer at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah is carried out consistently every morning before the learning activities begin. The dhuha prayer is performed in congregation at the school mosque, involving all students from both group A and group B. Teachers actively guide the children, ensuring they learn both the movements and the recitations of the prayer, thus creating a religious atmosphere that supports the early formation of character (Rahmanisa, 2024). This activity aligns with the findings of Hidayat & Purwowododo (2020), who stated that the routine practice of prayer in children can increase their religious awareness, laying the foundation for positive character development.

This practice is met with enthusiasm by the students. The children show a keen interest in participating in the dhuha prayer, especially since the methods used are enjoyable and educational. The teachers employ a storytelling approach before the prayer, embedding values of faith and discipline, and offering simple praise after the children perform the prayer correctly (Putri & Pratiwi, 2023). This finding is consistent with Ahmad (2018), who emphasized that the story-based approach in religious education can enhance children's engagement in the learning activities.

Interviews with the teachers and the school principal revealed that the primary objective of this practice is not only to teach the ritual of prayer but more importantly to build character traits such as discipline, responsibility, patience, and a love for worship. Teachers noted that children who regularly perform dhuha prayer tend to be calmer, more focused during lessons, and display respectful behavior toward both teachers and peers (Hidayat & Purwowododo, 2020). This is in line with the research by Faiqoh et al. (2021), which found that worship habits in early childhood contribute to the development of social and emotional aspects.

Based on field observations, it was found that most children have memorized short prayers, such as the iftitah prayer, Al-Fatihah, and several short Surahs. This indicates that the implementation of this practice is effective in enhancing the children's spiritual abilities from an early age. This practice indirectly strengthens their memory and language skills (Sholicha & Aliyah, 2019). Additionally, this practice has a positive

impact on children's cognitive development, as noted by Saryadi et al. (2020), who explained that ritual activities such as prayer can improve cognitive abilities and concentration in children.

Factors supporting the success of this program include the teachers' role as good role models who also perform dhuha prayer with devotion, the availability of adequate prayer facilities such as prayer mats, veils, and clean ablution areas, and parental involvement in supporting this practice at home. Some parents mentioned that their children began to practice dhuha prayer at home during school holidays as well (Rusdiani et al., 2020). According to Harahap et al. (2020), parental support is crucial in the success of religious habit formation in children, as children tend to imitate behaviors they observe at home.

However, the research also identified some obstacles. One of the challenges was the lack of continuity at home. Some parents have not yet made dhuha prayer a routine with their children. Additionally, some children arrive late to school and miss the opportunity to join the dhuha prayer in congregation. These issues affect the consistency of the habit being built (Ahmad, 2018). This finding is consistent with Sholicha & Aliyah (2019), who observed that irregularity in the practice of worship between school and home can hinder the achievement of character education goals for children.

A questionnaire distributed to parents revealed that 78% of parents consider the dhuha prayer practice at school to be very beneficial, while 15% support it but with less enthusiasm, and the remaining respondents did not see a significant impact. Several parents stated that after their children became accustomed to performing dhuha prayer at school, they became more willing to pray at home, showed more discipline, and were less prone to anger (Hidayat & Purwowododo, 2020). A study by Putri & Pratiwi (2023) also revealed that prayer routines in school play a role in increasing children's discipline, especially in managing their time.

Teachers have developed creative methods to ensure that children do not become bored. In addition to performing the prayer in congregation, the children are also taught to perform the prayer individually to foster independence and concentration in their worship. Teachers offer simple rewards, such as stickers or verbal praise, to further motivate the children (Faiqoh et al., 2021). The use of reward-based methods in this habit-forming activity has been proven effective in increasing children's motivation, as highlighted by Hidayat & Purwowododo (2020), who emphasized the importance of praise in promoting positive behavior in children.

The positive impact of this practice is also evident in the children's daily interactions. They exhibit respectful behavior, help one another, and maintain cleanliness. This indicates that the dhuha prayer habit not only affects their spiritual development but also contributes to their social and emotional growth (Saryadi et al., 2020). According to Rusdiani et al. (2020), worship habits can foster social skills in children as they learn to cooperate, share, and appreciate differences.

Overall, the implementation of the dhuha prayer routine at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah has made a significant contribution to the formation of character in early childhood. Although there are challenges, with the commitment of the educators and the involvement of parents, this practice has the potential to shape a generation that is religious, morally upright, and strong in character (Harahap et al., 2020). This finding aligns with the research of Faiqoh et al. (2021), which emphasized that discipline in worship serves as a key foundation in shaping positive character traits in children.

In addition, the regular dhuha prayer practice fosters a sense of discipline among the children. This can be seen in the way they manage their time, as they learn to prioritize their prayers before engaging in any other activities. The practice also provides children with a sense of responsibility, as they are expected to prepare themselves for the prayer session (Putri & Pratiwi, 2023). These attributes are important for children to develop in order to succeed in both their academic and social lives.

Another positive aspect of the dhuha prayer practice is that it allows children to experience a sense of community and togetherness. By praying in congregation, children learn the value of unity and cooperation. This communal experience is essential for the development of social skills, as children become more accustomed to being part of a group, sharing experiences, and learning how to work together harmoniously (Sholicha & Aliyah, 2019). This is consistent with the research by Faiqoh et al. (2021), which found that regular participation in group activities can enhance social interaction and collaborative skills among children.

The teachers also report that the children who engage in regular dhuha prayer tend to show more empathy toward others. This is reflected in their willingness to help their peers and to demonstrate kindness, even outside the context of the prayer sessions. This behavior indicates that the religious and moral lessons learned during prayer time are being integrated into their everyday actions (Harahap et al., 2020). Studies by Saryadi et al. (2020) also support this observation, noting that early religious education can help cultivate prosocial behaviors in young children.

Despite the overall success of the dhuha prayer program, the research suggests that additional efforts could be made to address the irregularity of participation, particularly for those students who miss the prayer due to tardiness or inconsistent home support. Strategies such as early reminders or additional involvement from parents could help address these issues (Ahmad, 2018). This finding is in line with the study by Hidayat & Purwowidodo (2020), which highlighted the importance of consistency and collaboration between home and school in character-building activities.

Lastly, it is essential to recognize that the dhuha prayer program is just one aspect of the broader effort to develop character and discipline in children at TK Ma'arif Al-Hidayah. While the program has shown great promise in shaping positive behaviors, it should be seen as part of a comprehensive approach to character education, which includes other activities such as moral lessons, storytelling, and group discussions (Putri & Pratiwi, 2023). This holistic approach, combined with regular spiritual practices, is essential for nurturing well-rounded and responsible individuals in the future.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We would like to express my gratitude to Institut Agama Islam Ma'arif NU (IAIMNU) Lampung, Indonesia.

## **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT**

The authorship contributions for this research are as follows: Author 1 conceived and designed the study, conducted data collection and analysis, and drafted the manuscript. Author 2 provided guidance on the research methodology, contributed to the interpretation of the results, and reviewed the manuscript. Both authors participated in the final revision of the manuscript and approved the submitted version.

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