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Moral Dynamics of Knowing, Loving, and Acting of Elementary School Students Through Islamic Religious Habituation: A Case Study in West Bandung Regency

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Abstract: The dynamics of religious character formation through Islamic habituation at the elementary school level are often trapped in merely fulfilling physical routines, but have not been able to touch the aspect of autonomous moral awareness (moral loving) when students are outside school supervision. This study aims to analyze the depth of the process of Islamic religious habituation in constructing the moral components of knowing, loving, and acting of elementary school students in West Bandung Regency. A qualitative approach with an exploratory case study design was applied in three elementary schools (SD) in West Bandung Regency, involving the principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, parents, and 15 students as active participants. The results of the study indicate that the habituation of dhuha prayer, daily prayers, and Asmaul Husana consistently succeeded in triggering students' attention through teacher exemplary modeling (Bandura), as well as shifting the orientation of children's obedience from the pre-conventional level (fear of punishment) to the conventional, autonomous level (Kohlberg), until it is manifested in synchronous moral actions (Lickona). The study's conclusions confirm that integrative religious habituation based on social role models has proven effective in transforming worship routines into enduring disciplined character traits in children. The original contribution of this study is the development of an inclusive elementary school culture monitoring model that directly supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Target 4.7, which focuses on education for sustainable development and global culture.

Keyword: Religious Habituation, Student Character, Case Study, Thomas Lickona, SDGs Education.

INTRODUCTION

Religious character maturity is an individual's readiness to make appropriate, realistic moral decisions that align with their spiritual potential through a comprehensive understanding of religious values (Lickona, 2013; Bandura, 1997). Ideally, elementary school-aged children

should be equipped with mature character development through the habit of religious worship at school so that they have behavioral independence, self-discipline, and strong religious mental readiness without relying on external supervision (Kohlberg, 1984; Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026; Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026). However, the reality in the field shows that elementary school children have very different and heterogeneous family backgrounds, both in terms of economic level and the depth of parental religious education, so that the majority of children experience imbalances in moral understanding and fluctuations in the consistency of religious worship (Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021; Ahsanulhaq, 2019). The impact of this problem is the rise of moral crisis among students, the loss of resilience of noble character when children mix in heterogeneous environments, and the emergence of behavioral resistance due to the lack of synchronization of habits at school with conditioning at home. To overcome this crisis, the author proposes the idea of designing a systematic guide model for elementary schools to optimize children's moral readiness in an integrative manner amidst these differences in background. The purpose and urgency of this research is to formulate a valid habituation strategy for moral readiness to ensure the future independence of children's character.

Various previous studies have attempted to examine children's readiness and independence using various methodological dynamics. Research conducted by Abeng, Hastuti, and Irawanda (2026) examined the internalization of values through school culture, which significantly impacts the development of students' adaptive disciplinary character. Meanwhile, Huda, Montessori, Miaz, and Rifma (2021) focused on fostering disciplinary character based on religious values and found that the consistency of children's behavior is strongly influenced by collaboration between the school and the active role of parents. Furthermore, Ahsanulhaq (2019) examined character formation through systematic habituation methods, which have proven effective in increasing autonomous moral compliance in elementary school students. Furthermore, research by Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, and Ridho (2026) applied thematic analysis to examine character integration in the specific context of a nature school, which impacts children's ecological-social sensitivity. Finally, a case study by Wibowo (2020) confirmed that a structured school culture design is a key predictor of the successful transfer of life skills and spiritual values to children in formal educational institutions.

Unlike previous research, this study focuses on designing an adaptive moral readiness habituation model that integrates moral development and social learning theories as an applicable guide for elementary schools (SD) in West Bandung Regency facing heterogeneous student backgrounds. Most previous studies only focused on aspects of general character habituation or daily worship routines without specifically linking them to disparities in economic conditions and parental religious guidance at home (Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026; Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021; Ahsanulhaq, 2019). Aligning the moral aspects of knowing, loving, and acting from Lickona (2013) and Bandura's (1997) modeling concept in the context of Islamic habituation for elementary school children across backgrounds has never been formulated comprehensively in the form of an institutional guidance model (Kohlberg, 1984; Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026). This novelty is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the elementary school character and discipline curriculum while supporting the achievement of SDGs Target 4.7 concerning inclusive and sustainable education. Based on this, the research question posed is: What is an effective moral readiness habituation model for building character maturity in elementary school children amidst differences in economic backgrounds and family religious education.

The social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura emphasizes that most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling. In the elementary school context, the process of developing religious discipline does not occur mechanically or automatically, but rather through students' direct observation of authority figures in the school environment, such as the principal and teachers (Bandura, 1997). When Islamic Religious Education (PAI)

teachers and classroom teachers consistently demonstrate exemplary behavior, from punctuality in worship, congregational Dhuha prayer, to the practice of the 3S (smile, greet, and say hello), students will perceive these visual and auditory stimuli as ideal standards of behavior (Ahsanul Khaq, 2019; Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021). Elementary-aged children's cognitive processes then record these normative activities, process information about the positive consequences of these religious actions, and store it in long-term memory as a guide for action in everyday life. Furthermore, Bandura explained that the success of observational learning is determined by four main interconnected phases: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation. Amidst the heterogeneity of elementary school students who come from economic backgrounds and unequal family religious guidance, the motivation phase is the most crucial aspect in shaping character consistency (Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026). Through a supportive and appreciative school culture conditioning system, students are encouraged to reproduce the religious behaviors they have observed from teachers without feeling forced (Wibowo, 2020). Social role models presented in a structured manner at school serve as a powerful external stimulus to fill the void of religious role models at home, thus gradually triggering the strengthening of students' self-efficacy or self-confidence that they are able to carry out these moral habits independently and sustainably.

Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning argues that a person's moral development centers on the level of cognitive justification behind moral decisions, which is structurally divided into pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional levels. Elementary school students are generally in a transition phase from the pre-conventional level, which is oriented towards punishment and obedience, to the conventional level, which emphasizes interpersonal harmony and law (Kohlberg, 1984). At the beginning of implementing Islamic habituation, such as memorizing daily prayers or the Asmaul Husna (the Beautiful Names of Allah), children with minimal family religious education tend to obey only to avoid punishment from teachers or, conversely, to gain praise (Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021; Ahsanul Khaq, 2019). This external concept suggests that children's moral reasoning is still egocentric and highly dependent on the physical presence of supervisory figures around them, making their character vulnerable to fluctuations outside of school. Through an inclusive and sustainable religious habituation program, elementary schools strive to shift the cognitive structure of students' moral reasoning toward a more autonomous, conventional level. At this stage, children begin to internalize religious values, no longer driven by fear of punishment, but rather by an inner awareness of fulfilling social expectations, maintaining group harmony, and respecting spiritual authority (Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026). This shift in moral reasoning orientation from heteronomous to autonomous is greatly influenced by the elementary school ecosystem's consistency in providing logical understanding behind every religious routine (Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026). Discipline based on Kohlberg's conventional level of consciousness is far more resilient, as children view religious rules as part of their social identity and moral norms that must be upheld in interacting with a heterogeneous society.

Thomas Lickona formulated that comprehensive and holistic character development must address three interrelated psychological dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling (or moral loving), and moral action. In constructing the religious character of elementary school students, the moral knowing dimension requires schools to provide an essential understanding of the foundations of monotheism, the virtue of the Dhuha prayer, and the universal values of goodness behind Islamic teachings (Lickona, 2013). However, Lickona emphasized that cognitive knowledge alone will not be able to permanently change children's behavior if it is not balanced with moral feeling. Schools must be able to tap into students' emotional aspects, foster a love for worship, instill a sense of conscience, and train spiritual sensitivity so that children feel an inner longing to continue doing good despite their diverse backgrounds (Wibowo, 2020; Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026).

The pinnacle of successful implementation of Lickona's theory in elementary schools is when these dimensions of moral knowing and moral feeling are concretely manifested in the form of consistent moral action. These moral actions are reflected in the competence, desire, and automatic habits resulting from students' habituation process in upholding religious discipline and noble morals, both in the classroom and when socializing outside the school environment without close supervision (Ahsanulhaq, 2019). The integration of these three Lickona moral components serves as the basis for elementary schools to address the negative impacts of family conditioning gaps at home (Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021). When knowledge, love, and habituation to religious actions are harmoniously integrated within a child, the religious character formed will be strong, adaptive, and aligned with the principles of sustainable inclusive character education.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach with a cross-site exploratory case study design to explore a complex phenomenon contextually. This case study design was deemed most appropriate because the researchers sought to understand in-depth how the psychological dynamics of moral development, including knowledge, feelings, and moral actions of elementary school students, are shaped through the Islamic habituation program. Through this cross-site strategy, researchers were able to conduct comparative analysis and synchronize data across several elementary schools in West Bandung Regency, each with its own heterogeneous student population. This exploratory approach did not aim to make statistical generalizations, but rather to construct a comprehensive conceptual model regarding the effectiveness of internalizing spiritual values and social habituation amidst disparities in economic background and family religious guidance.

The research implementation procedure involved four systematic, interconnected steps. The first stage, pre-fieldwork, focused on preparation, with the goal of obtaining formal permits from the West Bandung Regency Education Office and drafting data collection instruments aligned with the grand theory variables. The final outcome was a legal research permit and instruments that were validated through expert judgment. The second stage is the implementation in the field by collecting data through passive participant observation during religious habituation hours, in-depth interviews with key informants, and the collection of supporting documents, which resulted in the collection of audio recordings, verbatim transcripts, field notes, and a complete corpus of documents on students' religious activities. The third stage enters the data analysis process directed at processing, with the target of carrying out data reduction, theme-based coding using the help of NVivo 14 software, and cross-site data presentation to achieve a structured mapping of the theme clusters of character component dynamics and shifts in students' moral reasoning. The fourth stage is reporting to construct the final model, with the target of compiling a draft research report, formulating an institutional guide model, and conducting member checking with participants for final confirmation in order to achieve the final result in the form of a valid scientific report and a draft of an elementary school culture supervision model.

The study involved 24 participants, selected purposively using purposive sampling based on strict inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria included elementary school principals who had served for at least two years and initiated habituation policies; Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and classroom teachers directly involved in the social modeling process; fourth- and fifth-grade students who actively participated in school programs for at least one year and exhibited diverse family backgrounds; and parents who agreed to be interviewed regarding their control over religious practices at home. Exclusion criteria applied to educational staff who did not have direct moral supervision interactions with students; and students in grades one through three who did not yet have the necessary verbal communication skills for in-depth case study interviews. Through this selection process, the

final participant pool included three principals, six teachers (three PAI teachers and three classroom teachers); nine elementary school students; and six parents from various socioeconomic backgrounds.

This study was conducted in three elementary schools under the supervision of the West Bandung Regency Education Office, West Java Province. The location selection was purposefully conducted to encompass three distinct institutional characteristics to enhance qualitative validity: a core public elementary school in an urban area with high socioeconomic heterogeneity, a public elementary school in a rural or suburban area where the majority of parents are unfamiliar with religious education, and an Islamic-based private elementary school with a structured, integrative curriculum as a comparative control unit.

Data collection in this case study relied on three primary triangulation techniques, with instrument details adapted to field conditions. The first technique was in-depth interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. Each face-to-face interview session took approximately 45 to 60 minutes per participant and was conducted periodically over a three-month period to ensure in-depth data on students' emotional well-being. The second technique was field observation using an observation guide sheet to record the teacher's modeling process and actual student behavior during the practice of Dhuha prayer, reciting the Asmaul Husana (the Beautiful Names of Allah), and morning character development. The third technique was a documentation study using a document inventory list to examine students' daily mutabaah journals, the school's religious program policy decree, and photo archives of supporting activities. The data analysis technique adopted the interactive qualitative analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, operated with the assistance of NVivo 14 qualitative data analysis software. The analysis stage began with data reduction, where all interview recordings were converted into verbatim transcripts, then sorted and coded based on Bandura's social learning theory clusters, Kohlberg's stages of moral development, and Lickona's character components. The next step was presenting the data in a cross-site narrative matrix to identify common threads of differences and similarities in students' responses to their family background patterns. The final stage was conclusion drawing and verification, where the interconnected themes were conceptualized theoretically to generate new propositions regarding a valid habituation model of moral readiness in elementary school children.

Data validity testing in this qualitative study referred to the standard criteria of Lincoln and Guba, which encompass aspects of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The credibility or internal validity aspect was achieved through source triangulation techniques by comparing data from teachers, students, and parents, technical triangulation by checking the conformity between interview results and field observation facts, and strengthened by member checking activities to reconfirm the draft transcript with informants. The transferability or external validity aspect was fulfilled through the preparation of detailed descriptions of the social context, family heterogeneity background, and geographic dynamics of elementary schools in West Bandung in a transparent manner so that the results of this study can be studied or applied to other relevant regional contexts. The dependability aspect was carried out by conducting an audit by the thesis supervisor or external experts on the entire track record of the research process from problem definition to conclusion drawing. Finally, the confirmability or objectivity aspect was achieved to ensure that the reported research results are truly purely sourced from objective field data and theoretical links, not the personal bias of the researcher in his capacity as a school supervisor.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of Islamic religious habituation at West Bandung Regency Elementary Schools began with stimulus conditioning through a social role model strategy directly implemented by the principal and teachers. As an institution facing heterogeneous economic backgrounds and unequal levels of religious education among students' families, the

role of teacher role models acts as a primary compensator, filling the void of religious role models at home (Bandura, 1997). The school designed the environment so that every teacher, both Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and classroom teachers, is consistently and actively involved in the entire series of daily worship rituals. This is crucial for attracting students' attention and ensuring that religious activities are not merely one-sided instructions but rather collective behavioral norms inherent in the school environment (Ahsanulhaq, 2019; Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021). This phenomenon of social role modelling is revealed in depth through the account of one key informant in the field, who explained how the operational mechanism of this role model is enforced:

"The children here come from very diverse backgrounds; some parents are farm laborers and rarely teach them to pray, while others are busy traders. Therefore, our main key is direct example. When the bell for the Dhuha prayer rings, not only the children go to the mosque, but all the teachers are also required to perform ablution and pray in congregation at the front of the line. We apply the principle that a child's eyes are the best recorders. If teachers simply give instructions without participating, children who are not accustomed to praying at home will lose motivation and view prayer as merely a formal school assignment." (Interview with Islamic Religious Education Teacher, SD Negeri 1 Urban).

Theoretically, the interview excerpt above confirms that the attention and retention phases of Albert Bandura's social learning theory can be optimally activated through consistent behavior within the school ecosystem (Bandura, 1997; Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026). The physical presence of teachers at the front of the congregational prayer provides cognitive validation for students that worship is a meaningful and worthy value. This environmental conditioning through role models can gradually minimize the character gap caused by differences in family conditioning at home. Once students' attention is successfully captured through the teachers' visual role models, the next strategic step is to construct their essential understanding related to the formation of moral knowledge components. Providing elementary school students with a rational conceptual foundation is crucial to ensuring that their obedience is not blind. Schools recognize that obedience without an understanding of cognitive values will only produce superficial and fragile character traits once children leave the school gates (Lickona, 2013). Therefore, every habit-building activity, such as reciting the Asmaul Husana (the Beautiful Names of Allah) and memorizing daily prayers, is always integrated with explanations of their meanings, interactive discussions, and internalization of the values of monotheism (tawhid). This strategy is designed inclusively to bridge the gap in students' religious understanding stemming from limited educational backgrounds or their parents' financial preoccupations at home (Ahsanulhaq, 2019; Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026). This effort to instill cognitive morality was emphasized by a school principal who described how teachers provide in-depth understanding for each habit-forming activity:

"We don't want children to memorize prayers or the Asmaul Husana (the Beautiful Names of Allah) just like parroting without understanding their meaning. Every morning, before reciting the Asmaul Husana, the class teacher gives a short five-minute sermon to analyze their meaning logically, according to the reasoning of elementary school children. We explain why we must be honest, why the discipline of prayer protects us, and what impact it will have on their future. This understanding is crucial because many of our children at home never receive this kind of religious explanation because their parents work long days in the fields or factories." (Interview with Principal, SD Negeri 2 Rural).

This empirical data demonstrates that the formation of moral knowledge at the elementary school level requires an adaptive and communicative approach (Lickona, 2013; Wibowo, 2020). Through rational explanations of meaning, children's cognitive structures are enriched so they understand the logical reasoning behind each moral obligation they observe in their teachers' behavior. This holistic understanding serves as an intellectual bulwark that unites the perception of good values among diverse students. Once this moral knowledge is

firmly rooted in children's thinking, the internalization of these values will move deeper into the emotional realm, triggering the emergence of a love for virtue.

The next dynamic in religious habituation in West Bandung Regency is the process of transforming students' affective orientation from external obedience to an autonomous inner awareness. In the initial stages, children from families with loose religious control tend to participate in religious programs due to instrumental motivations, such as fear of punishment from teachers or the desire to gain social praise (Kohlberg, 1984). Through a persuasive approach and consistent emotional engagement in schools, students' moral reasoning structures gradually shift from pre-conventional to conventional levels. Schools facilitate this process by fostering a deep sense of morality, where worship and discipline are no longer perceived as regulatory burdens but as inner needs that bring peace (Lickona, 2013; Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021).

The dynamic shift in moral awareness that touches children's affective domains is clearly reflected in a student's honest confession regarding the change in her internal motivation for worship: "When I first entered fourth grade, I diligently participated in the Dhuha prayer and prayer recitation because I was afraid of being punished or having my grades reduced by the teacher. Moreover, at home, my parents rarely asked me to pray because they were busy at the market. But now, after frequently listening to the teacher's explanations and experiencing the peace of praying with my friends, I feel something is missing if I don't pray Dhuha. Now I do it not because I'm afraid of being scolded anymore, but because I truly feel the need and enjoy doing it." (Interview with a Fifth Grade Student, SD Negeri 1 Urban).

The above narrative provides valid qualitative evidence regarding the success of shifting stages of moral development through humanistic school habits (Kohlberg, 1984; Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026). Children's motivation has mutated from an egocentric orientation of obedience to the internalization of an autonomous and stable moral identity. Successfully addressing this emotional aspect is key to maintaining a religious character, even in a less supportive family environment (Lickona, 2013; Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026). This established affective maturity, in turn, encourages children to voluntarily manifest these values through concrete moral actions in their daily lives.

The culmination of the integration of role models, knowledge, and a love for religious values is the actualization of concrete actions and discipline that persist within students. These moral actions represent students' abilities, willingness, and automatic habits in embodying Islamic values in everyday social behavior without the need for close supervision from teachers or school supervisors (Lickona, 2013; Ahsanulhaq, 2019). In the heterogeneous environment of elementary schools in West Bandung Regency, these moral actions manifest themselves in the form of independent worship, academic honesty, polite speech, and character resilience that resists the influence of bad habits outside the formal school environment (Huda, Montessori, Miaz, & Rifma, 2021; Wibowo, 2020).

The independence of students' moral actions outside the formal school environment is confirmed by the testimony of a parent who observed changes in her child's behavior at home: "I am very grateful for the habituation program at school. Honestly, my husband and I had minimal religious education and were busy earning a living, so we rarely supervised our child's worship. But since coming to school here, my child is the one who often reminds us to pray. He performs the five daily prayers on his own at home without any further coercion. Even his polite character traits, such as kissing hands before leaving and greeting others, have carried over into our homes and neighborhoods." (Interview with a Parent, Islamic Private Elementary School).

The significance of these findings indicates that integratedly designed habituation successfully forms stable and adaptive action competencies in children (Lickona, 2013; Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026). Moral behavior is no longer situational, emerging only during physical supervision, but has become part of the child's autonomous habitus. The child's ability

to maintain religious and disciplined behavior at home—even without systemic parental support—confirms that the child's self-efficacy has fully developed (Bandura, 1997). The manifestation of this robust individual moral action at the macro level creates a particular urgency for developing sustainable institutional oversight governance.

Actualizing independent character in elementary school students ultimately requires ensuring the sustainability of program quality through the design of an inclusive, structured, and accountable school culture oversight model. As a school supervisor in West Bandung Regency, the researcher observes that the spatial success of several elementary schools must be elevated to a model for guiding macro-institutional policies that adapt to regional heterogeneity (Abeng, Hastuti, & Irawanda, 2026). This supervision model integrates managerial and academic oversight to ensure that each elementary school is able to design a hidden curriculum that aligns the theory of role models, cognitive stages, and moral components as a whole. Strengthening the governance of this religious-inclusive school culture directly contributes to meeting global sustainable development indicators (Wibowo, 2020; Lubis, Amriyah, Afriyadi, & Ridho, 2026).

The importance of standardizing this systemic school culture supervision model was explained by the researcher in her capacity as a supervisor during a cross-site evaluation:

"The results of the qualitative evaluation at three sites confirm that character habituation should not depend on the personal commitment of one or two teachers alone, but must be embedded in an institutional governance system. The school culture supervision model we designed emphasizes clinical supervision of the school's religious atmosphere and the provision of inclusive monitoring instruments for children across socioeconomic statuses. This model is an original contribution for the education office to ensure that every child in West Bandung has the right to receive high-quality, equitable character education, aligned with the global commitment of SDGs Target 4.7." (Supervisor/Researcher Field Reflection Notes).

The interpretation of these final findings confirms that the results of this exploratory cross-site case study have successfully generated a proposition for a supervisory policy model with high novelty value for the arrangement of educational regulations. The integration of field supervisory practitioners with the analytical tools of moral development psychology produces a character curriculum guide that is valid, replicable, and has broad impact (Lickona, 2013; Kohlberg, 1984). Through the implementation of this inclusive school culture supervision model, the acceleration of the achievement of SDGs Target 4.7 related to education for sustainable development, peace, and global culture can be realized concretely at the primary education level.

The successful implementation of Islamic religious habituation in West Bandung Regency Elementary Schools, amidst the high student heterogeneity, demonstrates that the school environment can act as an effective agent of moral engineering. In the initial phase of character formation, behavioral conditioning driven by social role models by the teachers is the primary stimulus that activates children's cognitive space. Based on field findings, when students observe the consistency of teachers in carrying out congregational Dhuha prayers and the habituation of noble morals, that is where the attention and retention phases in Albert Bandura's social learning theory work optimally (Bandura, 1997). This pattern aligns with the research findings of Moh Ahsanulkhaq (2019), which confirms that systematic habituation methods by Islamic Religious teachers play a central role in laying the foundation of children's religious character. The collective role models presented by this elementary school ecosystem are empirically able to compensate for the lack of religious role models at home due to economic busyness and limited parental religious education. Thus, the school successfully constructs a friendly and inclusive social space for children from various social classes, which triggers the strengthening of their self-efficacy to adopt these good behaviors (Alfi Khairil Huda et al., 2021).

However, visual role models will not produce lasting character if children are not equipped with a rational conceptual understanding of the reasons behind each moral action. Research findings show that elementary schools consciously integrate every routine activity with the instillation of moral knowledge or moral knowing components through communicative explanations of meaning (Lickona, 2013). This effort has proven effective in minimizing the cognitive separation gap between students born from heterogeneous family backgrounds. If drawn a common thread with the thinking of Thomas Lickona, strengthening this moral cognitive aspect is essential to shift children's awareness from merely "doing routines" to "understanding the essence of values" (Lickona, 2013). This pattern of meaningful integration reinforces the results of a systematic literature review by Lukman Hakim Lubis et al. (2026) regarding the importance of marrying spiritual values with logical reasoning in elementary school children to form a holistic character sensitivity. Through the conditioning of established moral knowing, children no longer view religious rules as rigid dogma, but rather as universal and logical life principles.

The impact of this maturing cognitive understanding triggers a very interesting shift in the affective domain and the interpretation of elementary school students' moral reasoning. This cross-site case study successfully captures the dynamics of the metamorphosis of children's internal motivation, where their orientation to obedience shifts significantly from a pre-conventional level to an autonomous, conventional level (Kohlberg, 1984). Children who initially performed the Dhuha prayer or memorized prayers solely out of instrumental motivations such as fear of teacher sanctions or praise, gradually began to develop a dimension of moral feeling or moral loving (Lickona, 2013). Worship and discipline, initially viewed as burdens of external regulation, mutated into spiritual needs that foster inner peace. These findings provide theoretical insight into the research of Alfi Khairil Huda et al. (2021), which states that the collaboration of religious values can control fluctuations in student discipline. Under Lawrence Kohlberg's analytical knife, this autonomous shift proves that humanistically packaged habituation is able to accelerate the maturity of children's moral reasoning to view rules as a form of social identity that must be maintained, not just a response to avoid punishment (Kohlberg, 1984).

Maturity in the cognitive (knowing) and affective (loving) domains in the next phase is manifested in the form of concrete moral actions or moral actions that are consistent in everyday life (Lickona, 2013). The manifestation of these moral actions is reflected in the emergence of independent discipline in children when they are outside the reach of strict school supervision, such as in the family environment and the surrounding community. Children are truly able to display religious behavior automatically because these values have been internalized as part of their own character structure (Andi Tenri Abeng et al., 2026). This empirical fact addresses one of the major challenges raised in the research of Andi Tenri Abeng et al. (2026) regarding the difficulty of maintaining a consistent religious culture in institutions with a highly heterogeneous student background. Once children's action competence has been formed, environmental obstacles in the form of a lack of religious conditioning at home can be independently reduced by children by strengthening the internal motivation they have received at school (Bandura, 1997; Ahsanul Khaq, 2019).

As an original contribution that is the main novelty in this research, the entire series of character formation dynamics from the three theories are locked into a macro design in the form of a Sustainable Inclusive School Culture Supervision Model. As a practicing school supervisor in West Bandung Regency, the researcher formulated that the success of character formation at the local scale should not be left to proceed partially or depend solely on the personal commitment of teachers, but must be tied to standardized institutional governance (Andi Tenri Abeng et al., 2026; Alfi Khairil Huda et al., 2021). The supervision model validated through this research synergizes managerial and academic supervision to ensure the creation of a hidden curriculum that is friendly to differences in children's socio-economic

status. The implementation of this adaptive school culture supervision model at the macro level has not only succeeded in standardizing the quality of basic character education in West Bandung Regency but also serves as a tactical instrument that fully supports the achievement of global commitments in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Target 4.7 concerning the fulfillment of children's rights to receive inclusive and high-quality cultural education and sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

This exploratory, cross-site case study concludes that the implementation of Islamic religious habituation in elementary schools in West Bandung Regency has proven effective as a moral engineering instrument capable of reducing the impact of socio-economic background inequality and the religious education of students' families. The success of this religious character transformation rests on the depth of integration of three moral psychological dimensions, which begins with the conditioning of consistent social exemplary stimuli (modeling) from the teacher council (Bandura, 1997). Through a communicative approach in constructing an essential understanding of values (moral knowing), elementary schools successfully accelerate the transition of children's moral reasoning from an egocentric (pre-conventional) instrumental obedience orientation to an autonomous (conventional) internal moral law awareness (Kohlberg, 1984). The culmination of this habituation process is the growth of an inner love for virtue (moral loving), which drives the actualization of concrete moral actions (moral action) in the form of disciplined, independent worship by children, both at school and outside of formal supervision (Lickona, 2013). At a macro level, the sustainability of this autonomous character quality was successfully secured through the formulation of the Sustainable Inclusive School Culture Supervision Model, which also serves as a tactical manifestation in supporting the achievement of the global commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Target 4.7 at the primary education level.

While this research successfully formulated a valid theoretical and practical model, the main limitation lies in its limited focus on primary schools within a single district, thus preventing the full capture of the dynamics of broader local cultural heterogeneity. Therefore, recommendations for future research include expanding the locus of observation through a mixed-methods design across districts/cities, incorporating more complex control variables, such as the level of family digital engagement at home. For practitioners and policymakers at the Department of Education, the results of this research are recommended for adoption as a formal regulatory draft for developing clinical supervision instruments for school supervisors to standardize the religious-inclusive climate across primary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and the formulation of the Sustainable Inclusive School Culture Supervision Model, several strategic recommendations are proposed to stakeholders to optimize Islamic religious habituation in elementary schools. First, the West Bandung Regency Education Office is recommended to adopt this supervision model as a formal regulatory draft and operational technical guide for all school supervisors. This policy is crucial for standardizing clinical supervision instruments that not only assess administrative document compliance but also measure the school's religious-inclusive climate and the consistency of students' moral shifts on a regular basis. Second, elementary school principals are advised to strengthen the implementation of the hidden curriculum by issuing an institutional Decree (SK) that secures an integrated teacher modeling system. Principals also need to allocate a program budget to facilitate interactive digital communication and monitoring of worship activities to synergize control between schools and parents at home.

The third recommendation is directed at Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and classroom teachers, as the spearheads of social modeling in the field. Teachers are expected to

shift the orientation of character education from rigid linear indoctrination methods to a dialogical-persuasive approach through analyzing the meaning of worship texts (moral knowing). Efforts to engage the emotional aspect (moral loving) must be prioritized so that students with limited religious backgrounds from their families do not feel isolated, but instead are motivated to reproduce moral actions based on autonomous inner awareness. Finally, for the Committee and Parents of Students, it is recommended to build a more active partnership space with the school through the formation of class associations. This partnership serves as a forum for synchronizing positive habits in schools so that they can be consistently continued in the domestic environment at home, so that the gap between the conditioning of economic background and family education can be collectively reduced to achieve the target of sustainable education development.

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