



The Role of Teachers in Shaping Students' Character through Enforcement of Discipline and Habituation in Madrasah

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran guru dalam membentuk karakter siswa melalui penegakan tata tertib dan pembiasaan di madrasah. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Provinsi Banten. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penegakan tata tertib memberikan pedoman perilaku yang jelas untuk menumbuhkan disiplin dan tanggung jawab, sedangkan pembiasaan membentuk pola perilaku positif seperti kejujuran dan kerja sama. Guru berperan tidak hanya sebagai penegak aturan tetapi juga teladan yang menerapkan pendekatan humanis. Integrasi kedua strategi ini efektif dalam membentuk karakter moral siswa sesuai nilai-nilai Islam. Disarankan agar madrasah meningkatkan pelatihan guru dalam integrasi pendidikan karakter guna memaksimalkan implementasi strategi ini dalam praktik sehari-hari.

Kata Kunci: Guru, Karakter Siswa, Tata Tertib, Pembiasaan, Madrasah

Abstract

This research aims to examine the role of teachers in shaping student character through rules enforcement and habituation at madrasah. Using a qualitative approach with descriptive methods, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation at Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Banten Province. The results showed that rules enforcement provided clear behavioral guidelines fostering discipline and responsibility, while habituation established positive behavioral patterns such as honesty and cooperation. Teachers acted not only as enforcers but also as role models implementing humanistic approaches. Integration of both strategies effectively shaped students' moral character aligned with Islamic values. It is recommended that madrasah enhance teacher training on character education integration to maximize these approaches in daily practice.

Keywords: Teacher, Student Character, Rules Enforcement, Habituation, Madrasah

Introduction

Character education has become one of the main focuses in the national education system in Indonesia. In the context of madrasahs, character education has a deeper dimension because it includes the integration between science and Islamic religious values (Perdana, 2018). Madrasah not only aims to produce individuals who are intellectually intelligent, but also have noble character (Mulyadi et al., 2022; Pratama et al., 2022), so that students are

expected to be able to face the challenges of the times without losing their moral and spiritual identity (Dinal, 2022). Character education in madrasahs is an important foundation in forming a generation that is not only oriented towards worldly success, but also able to make a positive contribution to society based on Islamic principles.

Teachers play a central role in the implementation of character education in madrasahs. They are not only teachers who

deliver learning materials, but also supervisors who help students internalize Islamic values in daily life (Alim & Munib, 2021). The existence of teachers as role models (*uswah hasanah*) has a great influence on the formation of students' character. Teachers' attitudes and behaviors, both inside and outside the classroom, are a tangible reflection of the values taught (Ghazali et al., 2025). Teachers are expected to be able to demonstrate discipline, honesty, patience, and care, which students will imitate as part of their personality formation process (Faridah & Zuhro, 2023).

Enforcement of discipline is one of the main strategies implemented in madrassas to create a conducive learning environment. Discipline in madrassas usually includes various aspects, such as discipline in dressing, adherence to activity schedules, and regular worship (Muhairira, 2024). With discipline, students learn to obey rules and respect authority, which ultimately forms an attitude of discipline and responsibility. Enforcement of discipline is not only carried out through the provision of sanctions for violations, but also through an educational approach (Mariyah et al., 2021). The teacher plays a role in explaining the reasons behind these rules, so that students understand the benefits and do not feel forced to comply (Mujiati & Yoenanto, 2023).

In addition to discipline, habituation is also a key element in character education in madrasahs. Habituation is carried out through repetitive and consistent activities, so that noble values are slowly internalized in students (Hamsah & Nurchamidah, 2019). For example, the reading of prayers before and after lessons, memorization of verses of the Qur'an, and the implementation of congregational prayers.

These activities not only teach religious values, but also instill good habits that will continue to be attached to adulthood. Through habituation, students learn to practice these values spontaneously without feeling burdened. Enforcement of discipline and habituation have a close relationship in character education (Julfian et al., 2023). Discipline aims to create a clear framework of rules to guide student behavior, while habituation serves to reinforce those values through repetitive practice.

For example, rules about punctual attendance aim not only to discipline students, but also to build awareness of the importance of respecting time (Romlah et al., 2024). Habituation, such as starting a lesson with a joint

prayer, complements the rule by building a positive spiritual atmosphere. This article is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of madrasah-based character education in facing the challenges of moral crisis in the modern era.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design to explore how teachers cultivate student character through disciplined routines and habituation at a Tsanawiyah madrasah in Banten. Purposely selected for its structured character-education program, strict code of conduct, and regular religious-habit activities, the site offers an ideal context for understanding complex, contextualized educational phenomena. Participants include thirty teachers and students, with the principal and homeroom teachers as key informants, ensuring multifaceted perspectives on policy and daily practice.

Data were gathered through non-participant observation of classroom and routine activities (e.g., punctuality, dress code, congregational prayer), semi-structured interviews with educators and learners to elicit strategies and perceived impacts, and documentation of regulations, schedules, and policy papers. This triangulation yields rich, contextually grounded insights intended to illuminate best practices in discipline-based character education and to inform the ongoing development of madrasah education in Indonesia.

Result and Discussion

Results

Enforcement of Discipline in Madrasah

Enforcement of discipline in madrassas is a crucial first step to create an orderly and disciplined learning environment. Discipline serves as a guide for student behavior, covering aspects such as punctuality, neatness of dress, the implementation of worship, and mutual respect between students and teachers. With discipline that is consistently applied, madrasahs can build a conducive atmosphere that encourages students' academic and spiritual development.

Teachers are the main implementers in ensuring that rules are followed. As an example, teachers must first demonstrate compliance with the applicable rules so that students feel motivated to follow them.

For example, when the rules stipulate time discipline, teachers who come to class on time indirectly teach students the value of discipline. It also creates students' respect for the teacher's authority. However, the enforcement of rules must be carried out humanistically and dialogically. When students break rules, teachers can approach students personally, ask the reason

for the violation, and provide an understanding of the importance of following discipline. This approach prevents students from feeling unfairly punished, while encouraging the learning process from the experience. The following table shows the key steps in effective enforcement of the rules:

Table 1. Steps to Enforce Discipline in Madrasah

Rules of Conduct Enforcement Steps	Explanation
Socialization of Rules	The teacher explained the rules in language that was easy for students to understand.
Teacher Example	Teachers show compliance with the rules as a model for students.
Awards	Students who obey the rules are given appreciation for motivating others.
A Dialogical Approach to Violations	The teacher dialogues with the students to understand the reason for the violation and provide guidance.
Consistency of Enforcement	Rules are applied consistently so that students understand the importance of rules.

Source: Compiled by researchers

Habituation as a Character Building Approach

Habituation is a long-term strategy in shaping students' character through the repetition of positive behavior. In madrasahs, habituation aims to instill noble values such as honesty, responsibility, independence, and cooperation. This process is carried out consistently so that the behaviors taught become part of the student's habits. Teachers play an important role in creating daily routines that support habituation. For example, students are taught to read prayers together before and after studying, maintain the cleanliness of the

classroom, and participate in religious activities such as congregational prayers. These activities not only instill Islamic values, but also build habits of discipline and a sense of responsibility.

The habituation process requires collaboration between teachers, students, and parents. Teachers must actively monitor students' progress in implementing these values. Parents, on the other hand, need to support this habituation at home, for example by ensuring that children continue the same practice in the family environment. Examples of habituation that are often applied in madrasahs are described in the following table:

Table 2. Examples of Habituation in Shaping Students' Character in Madrasah

Type of Habituation	Purpose	Example Activities
Religious	Foster students' spirituality	Reciting prayers, performing congregational prayer, and Qur'an recitation (tadarus).
Cleanliness	Enhance sense of responsibility	Keeping classrooms and the school environment clean.
Discipline	Develop awareness of time	Arriving to class on time and following the schedule.
Social	Build empathy and cooperation	Group work in social or religious activities.

Source: Compiled by researchers

Integration of Enforcement of Rules and Habituation

A holistic approach in the formation of student character in madrasahs involves a combination of the enforcement of discipline and habituation. Enforcement of discipline

provides clear structure and boundaries, while habituation reinforces these values through repetition and consistency in daily life. This combination allows students to understand the importance of rules while internalizing positive values.

Teachers need to adopt an adaptive approach in integrating these two strategies. One effective way is to reward students who adhere to discipline and show positive behavior. This award does not have to be material, but can be a compliment or recognition in front of his friends. Conversely, students who are experiencing difficulties can be given personalized guidance to understand and apply the expected values.

A concrete example of this integration is in daily activities in madrasas. For example, the rules about the punctuality of student attendance can be strengthened by the habit of reading prayers together every morning. In this way, students not only adhere to the rules of arriving on time, but also begin to appreciate the benefits of the habit. This creates a positive cycle that supports character building.

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Table 3. Integration of Enforcement of Rules and Habituation

Integration Component	Rule Enforcement	Habituation
Time Discipline	Punctual attendance as the primary rule.	Habit of reciting morning prayers together.
Neatness & Cleanliness	Obligation to wear a neat and clean uniform.	Habit of jointly maintaining classroom cleanliness.
Religious Observance	Mandatory participation in congregational prayer at the madrasah.	Habit of post-prayer supplication with the teacher.
Social Cooperation	Active participation in group activities.	Habit of teamwork in religious projects.

Source: Compiled by researcher

Discussion

Discipline enforcement constitutes the indispensable cornerstone of an effective learning environment. Findings from Wulandari

et al (2023) reveal that clearly articulated rules governing punctuality, dress, worship, and mutual respect serve as daily behavioral anchors; when these rules are applied without exception they produce the stable, orderly climate that both

academic mastery and spiritual development require. Teachers translate these rules into lived experience by embodying the very standards they expect: a teacher who consistently arrives on time silently instructs students in the value of punctuality while simultaneously strengthening their respect for authority (Amirulloh, 2018; Mardiani, 2021). Should a rule be breached, the most productive response is not punitive but dialogical—teachers approach the learner privately, explore the reason for the lapse, and guide the student toward a renewed commitment (Setiawan et al., 2024). This humanistic correction is embedded within a five-step cycle—rule socialisation, teacher exemplarity, non-material rewards, dialogical guidance, and relentless consistency—that the study identifies as the core mechanism for sustainable discipline (Table 1).

Yet rules alone cannot shape character; they must be woven into the fabric of daily life through systematic habituation. Febriansyah (2021) frames habituation as a long-term strategy in which honesty, responsibility, independence, and cooperation are cultivated by the deliberate repetition of targeted behaviours. Teachers therefore choreograph routines—collective prayer before and after lessons, scheduled classroom cleaning, and congregational *ṣalāh*—that gradually transform prescribed actions into automatic habits (Yunan et al., 2023). The effectiveness of these routines multiplies when school and home reinforce one another: parents are encouraged to mirror classroom practices so that values are rehearsed in the family context as well (Bakara, 2023; Pujianto et al., 2020). The study catalogues four recurring domains of habituation—religious, cleanliness, discipline, and social—and pairs each domain with concrete activities that embed Islamic values while simultaneously reinforcing school rules (Table 2).

The decisive advance occurs when rule enforcement and habituation are treated not as parallel tracks but as an integrated system. Habibah et al (2024) and Wijaya et al (2022) argue that rules provide the necessary external scaffold, whereas habituation internalises the same values through daily embodiment; together they create a self-reinforcing cycle in which compliance evolves into commitment. Teachers operationalise this integration through adaptive strategies: immediate verbal praise or public

recognition for students who exemplify the desired conduct, and individual coaching for those who struggle. A practical illustration is the pairing of the punctuality rule with a morning prayer routine; students arrive on time not merely to avoid sanctions but because the communal prayer has become the valued gateway to their day.

Successful implementation rests on three interlocking conditions. First, every rule must be synchronised with a daily habit so that the desired behaviour is rehearsed until it becomes effortless. Second, reinforcement must be swift and symbolic—words of appreciation, certificates, or public acknowledgement—rather than material, ensuring that motivation remains intrinsic. Third, the process requires active tripartite collaboration: teachers monitor progress at school, parents replicate routines at home, and students themselves become peer models within a supportive moral community. The integration matrix (Table 3) codifies this synergy for four critical areas—time discipline, neatness and cleanliness, religious observance, and social cooperation—demonstrating how each regulatory requirement is simultaneously a daily habit. Executed with consistency and compassion, this integrated model graduates learners who are intellectually competent and ethically grounded in enduring Islamic values.

Conclusion

Teachers stand at the heart of character formation in the madrasah, acting not merely as purveyors of knowledge but as living exemplars who guide learners to grasp and enact noble values. Within this Islamic educational setting, the twin strategies of rule enforcement and habituation operate in concert rather than in isolation. Rule enforcement supplies a transparent framework of expectations, constantly reminding students why discipline, responsibility and order matter in everyday life. Habituation then weaves those expectations into daily routine through deliberate repetition: when students sweep the classroom before dawn, line up for congregational prayer, or pause to recite a brief supplication before lessons, the behaviours gradually crystallise into lifelong character traits.

Crucially, both strategies demand a humanistic approach. Teachers are not distant disciplinarians; they are the first to model the

very standards they set. When learners observe their teacher consistently arriving on time, greeting everyone respectfully and joining the communal prayer, the rules cease to be abstract directives and become lived values worth emulating. This modelling is reinforced by gentle correction: a quiet conversation after a missed prayer, a guiding question when uniform regulations slip, an encouraging word when responsibility is shown.

Madrasahs possess a distinctive advantage in this endeavour because Islamic teachings provide a coherent moral vocabulary—cleanliness as an extension of faith, punctuality as reverence for time gifted by Allah, cooperation as an expression of *ukhuwah*. By anchoring classroom routines in these teachings, the institution nurtures graduates who excel academically while carrying a resilient Islamic moral compass. In an era saturated with ethical ambiguity, such character education is no longer optional; it is imperative.

Therefore, the teacher's role is decisive but not solitary. Sustainable character growth hinges on a triadic partnership: teachers who exemplify and coach, students who practise and reflect, and parents who reinforce at home the same habits rehearsed at school. When this alliance remains consistent and compassionate, the madrasah fulfils its mission of producing young people who are intellectually capable, spiritually grounded and ethically equipped to navigate the moral and social complexities of the future.

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