

Implementing the Practice of Dhuha Prayer Among Early Childhood Students to Foster Religious Attitudes at RA Al Choeriyah Plus

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Abstrac

This study was motivated by the importance of instilling religious attitudes in early childhood through consistent practice. The study aimed to examine the implementation of the Dhuha prayer practice, its supporting and inhibiting factors, and its impact on the development of children's religious attitudes at RA Al Choeriyah Plus. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, with the principal, teachers, and parents as subjects, and the children as the objects of observation. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results showed that the Dhuha prayer is routinely performed before classes through preparation, wudu, recitation review, congregational prayer, supplication and dhikr, and organizing prayer items. Supporting factors include a religious environment, teachers' exemplary behavior, consistency, parental support, facilities, and motivation. Barriers include tardiness, lack of concentration, boredom, limited time and resources, difficulties with wudu as well as prayer movements and recitations, and a lack of practice at home. This practice demonstrates the development of religious attitudes in the cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social domains.

Keywords: Developing the Habit of Performing the Dhuha Prayer; Religious Attitudes; Early Childhood

Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi pentingnya penanaman sikap religius anak usia dini melalui pembiasaan yang dilakukan secara konsisten. Penelitian bertujuan mengetahui implementasi pembiasaan shalat dhuha, faktor pendukung dan penghambat, serta hasilnya terhadap perkembangan sikap religius anak di RA Al Choeriyah Plus. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan subjek kepala sekolah, guru, dan orang tua, serta anak sebagai objek pengamatan. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa shalat dhuha dilaksanakan rutin sebelum pembelajaran melalui persiapan, wudhu, murojaah, shalat berjamaah, doa dan dzikir, serta merapikan perlengkapan. Faktor pendukung meliputi lingkungan religius, keteladanan guru, konsistensi, dukungan orang tua, fasilitas, dan motivasi. Hambatan meliputi keterlambatan, konsentrasi, kebosanan, keterbatasan waktu dan sarana, kesulitan wudhu serta gerakan dan bacaan shalat, dan kurangnya pembiasaan di rumah. Pembiasaan ini menunjukkan perkembangan sikap religius pada aspek kognitif, afektif, psikomotorik, dan sosial.

Kata Kunci: Pembiasaan Shalat Dhuha; Sikap Religius; Anak Usia Dini.

Introduction

Early childhood education is the cornerstone of shaping a child's character and personality. Early childhood is often referred to as the "golden age" – a period of rapid development that determines the direction of a child's future growth and development, including the formation of spiritual values through religious activities such as prayer. One of

the most important values to instill from an early age is a religious attitude, as religious values serve as the foundation for shaping individuals who are faithful, possess noble character, and are responsible (Khoiriyah & Elhady, 2025). Young children have a natural tendency to imitate and quickly absorb experiences from their environment; therefore, the family and school environments play a crucial role in shaping a child's religious values.(Antoni, 2025)

The development of religious attitudes in early childhood is an important part of the educational process because, at this stage, children begin to learn about, imitate, and internalize various behaviors related to religious values in their daily lives(Milah et al., 2023). At RA Al Choeriyah Plus, religious attitudes are instilled through various religious activities, one of which is the practice of the Dhuha prayer. This activity is not only designed to help children follow the proper procedures for worship but also serves as a means to introduce discipline, order, responsibility, prayer, and social behavior consistent with religious values. Thus, the Dhuha prayer in the context of early childhood education can be understood not merely as a ritual activity but as an educational experience that allows children to directly learn about and practice religious values.

Religious attitudes are a reflection of behavior that encompasses belief, obedience, and the practice of religious values in daily life. Religiosity itself is multidimensional, encompassing ideological, ritualistic, subjective experiential, intellectual, and consequential dimensions in daily life; thus, prayer serves as a unifying element that harmoniously integrates all these dimensions (Juwita & Purnama, 2025). In early childhood, religious attitudes can be developed through the habit of engaging in acts of worship, one of which is the Dhuha prayer. The Dhuha prayer is a recommended (sunnah) prayer that offers many benefits, including instilling a sense of gratitude, fostering discipline, and nurturing a child's spiritual closeness to Allah SWT. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated that every morning, every joint in a person's body is obligated to give charity, and this obligation can be fulfilled by performing two rak'ahs of Dhuha prayer (Nisa et al., 2025; Pauzah et al., 2025). This hadith underscores the significance of Dhuha prayer as a means of drawing closer to Allah while simultaneously cultivating discipline in worship from an early age. Children with a religious disposition tend to be more honest, disciplined, and empathetic, whereas children without such a disposition will find it difficult to distinguish between actions that are accepted or rejected by society and are easily influenced by the outside world.

The practice of Dhuha prayer is important because young children primarily learn through concrete experiences, repetition, modeling, and interaction with their environment. Children are not yet fully capable of understanding abstract religious concepts, so religious values need to be introduced through activities that can be observed, imitated, and performed repeatedly(Neli Lutfiyati, 2025). During the Dhuha prayer, children gain direct experience through the process of preparation, performing wudu, following the prayer movements, reciting prayers and dhikr, and organizing their prayer items. This series of activities provides children with the opportunity to learn about rules, responsibility, order, and togetherness while becoming familiar with the practice of worship(Dewi Pusparini et al., 2025). Research by (Paujiah et al., 2022) indicates that establishing the habit of performing the Dhuha prayer among kindergarten children may be associated with the development of discipline, leadership, patience while waiting for their turn to perform wudu, and care for the environment.

This phenomenon indicates that instilling religious habits in children is not sufficient if it is done solely through the transmission of religious knowledge. Religious values must be translated into consistent behavior so that children have the opportunity to recognize and practice them(Ashari & Masfufah, 2025). A study by (Milah et al., 2023) on religious character education in early childhood found that religious character development can be fostered through the practice of prayer, reading the Qur'an, performing the dhuha prayer, and various activities that integrate religious values into children's daily routines. These findings

demonstrate that habit formation is a key mechanism in translating religious values from the realm of knowledge into everyday behavior.

In the current context of early childhood education, the need for religious character development is becoming increasingly important as children grow up in a rapidly changing social environment. Children not only gain educational experiences from their families and schools but also interact with their social environment and various forms of information and digital media (Husin Husin et al., 2022). These conditions provide positive opportunities for children's cognitive development but simultaneously require guidance to ensure that their behavioral development and moral values continue to receive attention (Loka & Sabila, 2024). Research by (Rahmawaty & Supriyadi, 2025) identifies religious character education as crucial for navigating the overwhelming flow of information in the digital age and demonstrates that the regular practice of religious rituals can be used to strengthen the internalization of religious character. Therefore, early childhood education institutions need to provide a consistent environment for introducing and practicing religious values.

Habit formation is also inextricably linked to the teacher's role as a behavioral model for children. In early childhood, children tend to learn by observing and imitating the behavior of the adults around them. When performing the Dhuha prayer, teachers are not only responsible for guiding children through the sequence of movements and recitations but also for setting an example of discipline, calmness, cleanliness, politeness, and sincerity in worship (Sari et al., 2025; Siti Nuraisyah et al., 2025). (Ali Masran, 2025) research shows that instilling religious and moral values in young children is carried out through the planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities supported by the roles of teachers and parents. The study also emphasizes that habit formation is a repetitive process aimed at shaping children's religious behavior. This indicates that the success of habit formation is closely linked to the consistency of the educational environment and the exemplary behavior of adults.

In addition to teachers, the family is a crucial environment that can determine the sustainability of the religious habits children acquire at school. Habits formed solely at school may not develop optimally if they are not reinforced within the family setting. Conversely, continuity between school and home can help children receive consistent educational messages. (Shobicha, 2025) research shows that religious habit-forming programs for early childhood can take place through the involvement of schools, families, and the social environment. The study describes a process of habit formation that evolves from external compliance toward internalization and the development of more automatic habits. Thus, the development of religious attitudes is not solely the responsibility of educational institutions but requires the involvement of a broader environment.

At RA Al Choeriyah Plus, the practice of performing the Dhuha prayer has been one of the flagship programs for strengthening religious character since around 2018. The children are guided, mentored, and encouraged to perform the Dhuha prayer in congregation every morning before starting their lessons. Based on initial observations, the school has 70 students who actively participate in classes, and the Dhuha prayer program has been a regular part of the school's daily routine for the past several years.

A number of previous studies have specifically examined the practice of Dhuha prayer as part of religious character education. (Paujiah et al., 2022) found that the practice of Dhuha prayer can support the development of discipline, leadership, patience, and environmental awareness. More recent research on character development through the Dhuha prayer also indicates that this practice is linked to the development of discipline, responsibility, and religiosity in young children. (Azzahra et al., 2025), for example, found that the habit of performing Dhuha prayer routinely through hands-on practice can help children understand the procedures of worship and internalize religious values in their daily lives, even though its implementation faces challenges due to children's limited attention spans. These findings

underscore the importance of examining the habit of performing Dhuha prayer in the context of early childhood education.

Recent research also shows that the effectiveness of habit formation is determined not only by the existence of a program, but by how the program is designed and implemented. (Purbo et al., 2025) found that the habit formation of Dhuha prayer supported by teachers' exemplary behavior, structured religious routines, and parental involvement may be associated with increased spiritual awareness, discipline, emotional regulation, and positive social behavior in children. The study also identified that children's developmental characteristics and diverse family backgrounds can pose challenges in implementing habit formation. This highlights that research on the habit formation of Dhuha prayer needs to examine the process holistically, including activity practices, the role of teachers, parental support, enabling factors, and emerging barriers.

Although research on the habit-forming process of Dhuha prayer and children's religious character has expanded, there is still room to deepen our understanding of how this habit-forming process is concretely implemented within the context of a specific educational institution, how teachers guide children through each stage of the activity, what factors support and hinder its implementation, and the forms of religious attitude development that emerge in children's behavior. Some previous studies have focused on the impact or outcomes of this practice, whereas this study aims to provide a more in-depth understanding of the process of implementing the Dhuha prayer practice at RA Al Choeriyah Plus. A qualitative approach is necessary because this phenomenon relates not only to observable outcomes but also to the experiences, strategies, habits, interactions, and social context underlying its implementation. Recent research on instilling religious values in children also highlights the importance of examining planning, implementation, evaluation, and the simultaneous involvement of teachers and parents.

Based on the above discussion, research on the practice of Dhuha prayer in fostering religious attitudes among early childhood students at RA Al Choeriyah Plus is relevant both academically and practically. This study aims to examine and describe the implementation of the Dhuha prayer practice among early childhood students, identify factors that support and hinder its implementation, and analyze the effects of this practice on the development of the children's religious attitudes. Academically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of research on Early Childhood Islamic Education, particularly regarding strategies for fostering religious attitudes through the practice of worship. Practically, the research findings are expected to provide guidance for schools and teachers in designing religious practices that align with children's developmental characteristics, as well as serve as a basis for parents to strengthen the continuity of religious education between the school and family environments.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. The qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of this study is to deeply understand and describe the implementation of the Dhuha prayer habit among early childhood students at RA Al Choeriyah Plus, including how this activity is experienced and interpreted by the children, teachers, and parents. (Janashak Cadena, 2019) explain that a qualitative approach is used to explore and understand the meanings generated by individuals or groups regarding a social or humanitarian issue. This approach is considered appropriate for explaining complex social and educational phenomena, including the practice of fostering religious habits, which requires contextual understanding, as it is more interpretive of data collected in the field compared to statistical measurements (Sugiyono, 2021). The researcher plays a direct role in the data collection process to capture the dynamics occurring in the field, with a focus on exploring the meanings and spiritual values instilled through this habit-forming process.

The research was conducted at RA Al Choeriyah Plus, Kp. Kadumanggu, Babakan Madang Subdistrict, Bogor Regency, West Java Province, which was selected through purposive sampling because it has a structured Dhuha prayer habit-forming program that is carried out routinely. The research took place from August 4 to 30, 2025, covering the preparation, data collection, and preliminary analysis stages.

The data in this study were categorized into primary data data obtained directly from school principals, teachers, and parents through interviews, observations, and direct participation and secondary data in the form of official school documents such as the Daily Lesson Plan (RPPH), photos of activities, and student progress reports. Data sources were selected purposively that is, informants who truly understood and played an active role in the process of instilling the habit of performing the Dhuha prayer while adhering to ethical considerations regarding early childhood research through written consent from the school and parents.

The data collection techniques used observation, interviews, and documentation complemented one another to ensure comprehensive and valid data. Observations were conducted directly during the Dhuha prayer sessions, covering the entire process from preparation and execution to the conclusion of the activity (Nurrisa & Hermina, 2025). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with classroom teachers, the school principal, and several parents to explore the informants' perspectives on the benefits, challenges, and strategies for implementing the Dhuha prayer habit (Sugiyono, 2021). Documentation was used as supporting evidence in the form of activity photos, videos, daily activity logs, and lesson plans.

To verify the validity of the data, the researcher used triangulation, a technique for verifying data validity by utilizing sources outside the data itself to check or compare the data. This study employed three types of triangulation: source triangulation, which involved comparing information from the principal, teachers, and parents; methodological triangulation, which involved comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation; and temporal triangulation, which involved conducting observations on different days and weeks throughout the research period, ensuring that the data captured not just a momentary snapshot but a consistent reality. (Meydan & Akkas, 2024; Morgan, 2024)

Data analysis in this study employed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of four stages: data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation; data reduction by selecting and simplifying information relevant to the research focus; data presentation in the form of narrative descriptions, tables, or charts; and drawing conclusions that are verified through triangulation until valid, accurate, and accountable final conclusions are reached. (Ridwan et al., 2024)

Results and Discussion

Based on observations, the Dhuha prayer at RA Al Choeriyah Plus is held regularly on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays every morning before the main learning activities begin. The activity begins with the children lining up orderly in front of the classroom, after which the teacher directs them to perform wudu in turns by class. The boys take their skullcaps and prayer mats, while the girls take their prayer shawls and prayer mats, before the teacher straightens the rows and separates the boys' and girls' lines. The rest of the session consists of reviewing short surahs, hadiths, daily prayers, the Arabic alphabet, and the Beautiful Names of Allah, followed by performing two raka'at of Dhuha prayer in congregation led by the teacher, and concluding with a collective prayer and dhikr before the children put away their prayer items. The entire sequence of activities takes about 30 to 35 minutes: approximately 10 minutes for preparation (lining up, performing wudu, and straightening the rows), 7-10 minutes for review, 8-10 minutes for the prayer and supplication, and about 5 minutes for putting away the prayer items.

This program has been running since around 2018 and has become one of the school's flagship programs. Ms. Didah Saadatullaillah, a teacher at RA Al Choeriyah Plus, described the initial stages of implementing the program:

"This program to instill the habit of performing the Dhuha prayer has been in place since around 2018. At first, the school wanted to establish a routine activity that could instill religious values starting in early childhood education. Of course, it didn't go smoothly right away—since they're children, they still needed constant guidance and direction. But, Alhamdulillah, as time went on, the children got used to it—in fact, they're the ones who now remind their friends when it's time for Dhuha prayer. So, to this day, this activity has become a daily routine at school." (Interview with Ms. Didah, June 12, 2025)

Ms. Didah also explained that the main goal of this program is not merely for children to memorize the prayers, but rather to help them get used to worshiping sincerely and mindfully, so that they not only understand religious theory but also put it into practice. Regarding the children's response to performing the Dhuha prayer, she said:

"Alhamdulillah, the children's response to performing the Dhuha prayer has been quite good. At first, there were indeed some children who seemed a bit unfocused; some were joking around with the friend next to them, and some were even a bit reluctant when asked to perform wudu. But after doing it routinely every day, they started to get used to it and actually began looking forward to this activity. Now the children seem happy and enthusiastic when it's time for the Dhuha prayer; they enjoy the recitation before prayer, join in the supplications, and some have even started reminding their friends to join the prayer right away." (Interview with Mrs. Didah, June 12, 2025)

The key factor in fostering the habit of performing the Dhuha prayer among young children at RA Al Choeriyah Plus lies primarily in the school's supportive and Islamic-oriented environment, which makes it easier for children to embrace this positive religious routine. In addition, the exemplary behavior of teachers who consistently guide and join the children in performing the prayer is another key factor. Rena Puspa Dewi, Principal of RA Al Choeriyah Plus, emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role as a role model:

"In my opinion, the teacher's role is very important. After all, young children still tend to imitate what their teachers do. So if the teacher diligently encourages them to pray the Dhuha prayer, demonstrates the correct movements, and continues to guide them patiently, eventually the children will get used to it. The important thing is not just to tell them to do it, but for the teacher to also pray together with the children so they can see a direct example." (Interview with Ms. Rena, June 15, 2025)

Other contributing factors include parental support in fostering a habit of worship at home, as well as the availability of adequate prayer facilities—such as a prayer room, prayer mats, prayer veils, and prayer caps—which make children feel more comfortable while praying. Consistency in implementing the program and providing motivation to the children—for example, through praise or small rewards—also helps reinforce the success of this habit-forming process.

The inhibiting factors found include delays in children coming to school so that they lose the opportunity to follow duha prayers in congregation, limited concentration and boredom in children because the series of movements and prayer readings are considered monotonous, technical difficulties such as not being able to perform ablution alone or still making mistakes in prayer movements, limited time and facilities such as ablution places, and lack of continuity of habituation at home due to not all parents actively continuing the habituation. The tendency of early childhood that is easily distracted and quickly bored is in line with Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which explains that children at the pre-operational stage have a short concentration range so that teachers are required to be creative in guiding (in Sujiono, 2009). Related barriers and solutions applied, Mrs. Didah explained:

“There are many obstacles, especially since they are still children. For example, children sometimes find it difficult to focus when praying, some are still joking, some are quickly bored, there are also children who have not memorized prayer readings well so they must really continue to be guided slowly. Sometimes there are also time limitations, for example, if the school has additional activities so that the Duha prayer time is rather short. But all those obstacles we overcome in a gradual way. If the child is difficult to focus, we usually give a gentle approach, while motivating with praise or small gifts such as stickers. For prayer readings, teachers guide slowly and repeatedly, so that children memorize faster. If it's a matter of time, we usually set a more flexible schedule, still making sure duha prayers can be carried out even though there are other activities. We also try to work with parents so that at home, children are accustomed to prayer and murojaah prayer, so children are not only accustomed to school, but also at home.” (Interview with Didah's mother, June 12, 2025)

Based on the results of research, the habituation of Duha prayer proved to have a real impact on the development of early childhood religious attitudes that are reflected in four aspects, namely Cognitive, Affective, psychomotor, and social religious(1) cognitive aspects, children recognize reading, prayer, and short letters and understand the meaning of worship; (2) affective aspects, children become more disciplined, orderly, calm, and have; and (4) religious social aspects, children learn togetherness, remind each other, and care about the worship environment. Thus, Duha prayer is not only an additional worship routine, but also a means of holistic character education,

The findings regarding the habituation of Dhuha prayer in developing the religious attitudes of early childhood learners at RA Al Choeriyah Plus indicate that Dhuha prayer is not merely positioned as a routine religious activity, but has become an integral part of an educational process implemented systematically and continuously. The habituation is conducted before learning activities through several stages, including preparation, performing ablution, murojaah (reviewing memorized prayers or Qur’anic passages), performing Dhuha prayer in congregation, reciting prayers and dhikr, and arranging the worship equipment after the activity. This sequence demonstrates that the development of religious attitudes in early childhood is fostered through direct experience and repeated engagement in religious activities in everyday school life. These findings suggest that religious values are more readily introduced to young children when they are not merely provided with explanations about religious teachings, but are given opportunities to experience, imitate, and practice religious activities directly.

These findings are consistent with the study by (Nafsaka Sajidin, 2025), which demonstrates that systematic daily habituation in early childhood education can support the development of religious character. The study found that habituation of religious rituals, moral routines, Islamic social ethics, Qur’anic literacy, and teacher modeling constitute important patterns in the formation of children’s religious character. Thus, the findings at RA Al Choeriyah Plus reinforce the view that the development of religious attitudes does not occur instantaneously, but develops through a consistent process involving religious activities, the educational environment, teacher role modeling, and family involvement. Similarly, (Siti Mariam & Aslamiah, 2026) found that the habituation of Islamic values incorporated into daily activities and supported by a religious school environment constitutes an important component in fostering children’s religious character.

Within the context of this study, teachers occupy a particularly important position because early childhood learners are still at a developmental stage in which concrete examples are essential for understanding religious behavior. Teachers do not merely instruct children to perform Dhuha prayer; they also serve as role models in demonstrating prayer movements, recitations, discipline, orderly behavior, and appropriate manners during worship. When teachers guide children in performing ablution, arranging the prayer formation, performing the prayer movements, reciting prayers, and maintaining order after worship, children obtain

behavioral models that can be observed and imitated. This process demonstrates that the habituation of Dhuha prayer occurs through the interaction of modeling, guidance, repetition, and direct experience. These findings are consistent with (Andie et al., 2021), who found that teacher modeling and consistent habituation of religious activities are important elements in developing religious values among young children.

The repeated implementation of Dhuha prayer also appears to be associated with changes in children's behavior within the school environment. Based on the research findings, children gradually demonstrate an increased ability to participate in the sequence of religious activities in an orderly manner, recognize the prayers used during the activities, understand prayer movements, and demonstrate concern for their peers, including reminding friends when their behavior is inappropriate. These findings indicate that the development of religious attitudes is not limited to the cognitive dimension of knowing about religious practices, but is increasingly reflected in affective and behavioral dimensions. In other words, habituation of Dhuha prayer provides opportunities for children to integrate religious knowledge with experience and actual behavior. (Azzahra et al., 2025) similarly found that the habituation of Dhuha prayer among young children is associated with the development of discipline, responsibility, and religiosity, although children's limited concentration remains one of the challenges in its implementation.

These developments can be understood through the characteristics of early childhood education, which emphasize concrete experiences as an important component of the learning process. Children cannot sufficiently be taught merely that prayer is an obligation or that they should behave religiously; rather, they need experiences that enable them to translate these values into action. When children routinely perform ablution, stand together with their peers, follow the imam, recite prayers, engage in dhikr, and organize worship equipment, these activities gradually establish behavioral patterns that become familiar and are subsequently repeated. Therefore, the findings demonstrate that Dhuha prayer habituation can serve as a pedagogical medium for connecting religious knowledge with the development of religious habits and behavior.

In addition to religious attitudes, the findings also indicate developments in children's discipline and behavioral regulation. Children learn to follow the scheduled prayer time, prepare themselves before the activity, comply with rules during ablution, maintain order while performing congregational prayer, and complete the activity by organizing the worship equipment. This process demonstrates that religious activities have a broader educational dimension because they provide behavioral structures that children are expected to follow. (Laela Lutfiana Rachmah et al., 2026), through a qualitative study of Dhuha prayer habituation among children aged 5–6 years, identified patterns of behavioral regularity, emotional calmness, attentional engagement, and the emergence of initiative within structured ritual activities. However, the study also emphasized that these patterns are contextual and should not be interpreted directly as causal relationships.

The findings concerning discipline are also supported by (Sarwini et al., 2025), who demonstrated that habituating children to prayer, including consistent participation in religious worship, can serve as a means of cultivating religiosity and discipline. Likewise, (Novi Dyah Ayu Putri & Eka Saptaning Pratiwi, 2024) found that routine implementation of Dhuha prayer can contribute to the development of children's religious character through the introduction of prayers and short Qur'anic passages and through repeated religious practices. Thus, the research at RA Al Choeriyah Plus demonstrates a pattern consistent with previous studies while providing a more specific description of how Dhuha prayer habituation is implemented as an integrated sequence involving preparation, implementation, and closure of the religious activity.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that the habituation of Dhuha prayer does not occur without challenges. Several obstacles identified in the study include children arriving

late, limited concentration, boredom, constraints related to time and facilities, and difficulties experienced by some children in performing prayer movements and memorizing recitations. In addition, the continuity of religious habituation at home is not always consistent with the practices implemented at school. These findings are significant because they demonstrate that the development of children's religious attitudes is not determined solely by the existence of a habituation program at school, but also by the consistency of the environments surrounding the child. (Andie et al., 2021) similarly found that limitations in instructional media and inconsistencies in reinforcing religious values at home can constitute challenges in developing children's religious character.

Parental involvement is therefore an important component in understanding the findings of this study. Parental support enables the values and habits acquired at school to receive reinforcement within the family environment. When children experience relatively consistent religious practices at school and at home, religious behavior has greater opportunities to become part of their everyday routines (Fadil et al., 2025; FADIL et al., 2025). Conversely, when habituation takes place only at school without reinforcement at home, the consistency of children's behavior may vary. (Nafsaka Sajidin, 2025) also emphasizes the importance of school-family partnerships in developing children's religious character. Thus, the findings indicate that Dhuha prayer habituation should not be understood as an isolated school program, but as part of a broader religious educational ecosystem involving teachers, children, schools, and families.

The practical implications of this study suggest that Dhuha prayer habituation programs in early childhood education should be designed not merely as routine worship activities, but as educational experiences with clearly defined developmental objectives. Teachers need to provide consistent examples, guide children according to their developmental levels, use simple and comprehensible language, provide positive reinforcement, and create an enjoyable atmosphere during worship. Children who continue to experience difficulties in maintaining concentration or memorizing recitations should not simply be regarded as unable to participate in the activity; rather, they require gradual and developmentally appropriate support. Variation in instructional approaches, the use of supporting media, and opportunities for children to learn through repetition may help sustain their engagement in religious activities.

Another implication concerns strengthening the relationship between schools and families. The findings indicate that continuity of habituation is an important factor in the development of children's religious attitudes. Therefore, schools can establish more intensive communication with parents concerning the religious activities undertaken by children, forms of support that can be provided at home, and the development of children's religious habits. Such an approach does not imply transferring responsibility for religious education to families, but rather establishing continuity between educational environments so that the values acquired by children are reinforced across both school and family contexts. Previous studies likewise support the importance of parental involvement and consistent reinforcement of values in developing religious character during early childhood.

Nevertheless, the interpretation of these findings should take several limitations into consideration. The study was conducted within a single educational institution; therefore, the findings are strongly influenced by the characteristics of RA Al Choeriyah Plus, its school culture, teacher development practices, facilities, children's characteristics, and parental involvement. Consequently, the findings cannot be directly generalized to all early childhood education institutions. Furthermore, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, meaning that the development of religious attitudes primarily reflects behaviors and experiences observable within the research context. The study also did not employ a comparison group and was not conducted longitudinally. Therefore, it cannot

determine whether the observed behavioral developments persist over the long term or whether they can be specifically attributed to Dhuha prayer habituation.

These limitations simultaneously provide opportunities for future research. Future studies could employ mixed-methods approaches to combine the depth of qualitative data with more structured measurements of religious attitude development. Longitudinal research is also needed to examine the sustainability of religious habits after children have participated in such programs over an extended period. In addition, multi-site studies could be conducted across several RA or kindergarten institutions with different environmental characteristics and religious programs to examine variations in the implementation of Dhuha prayer habituation. Future research could also investigate the relationship between prayer habituation and other developmental aspects, such as self-regulation, discipline, prosociality, social-emotional development, and independence, while employing research designs that allow relationships or causal effects to be examined appropriately.

More broadly, the contribution of this study to the development of early childhood education lies in its understanding that the formation of religious attitudes is not merely a matter of transferring religious knowledge, but is a process of habit formation through repeated, purposeful experiences supported by role modeling. The study demonstrates that Dhuha prayer has a pedagogical function when its implementation is situated within a structured educational environment. Children learn not only about the procedures of worship, but also about order, responsibility, adherence to rules, togetherness, concern for peers, and the development of positive habits. Thus, religious habituation can be understood as one of the character education strategies that integrates the religious dimension with children's behavioral and social development.

Ultimately, the findings at RA Al Choeriyah Plus demonstrate that Dhuha prayer habituation constitutes an educational process facilitated by regularity of activities, teacher modeling, guidance, repetition, a supportive school environment, and parental involvement. The developments observed among children—including their ability to recognize prayers and procedures of worship, increased orderliness and discipline, ability to follow prayer movements, and growing concern for peers—indicate that religious experiences can become an integral part of the development of religious attitudes in a comprehensive manner. These findings are generally consistent with recent studies on the habituation of religious values in early childhood, while also providing a contextual contribution by demonstrating how Dhuha prayer habituation is implemented and how the development of religious attitudes becomes visible in children's everyday behavior. Therefore, the primary contribution of this study lies not merely in stating that Dhuha prayer is associated with religious attitudes, but in explaining the educational process through which religious habituation can develop into meaningful experiences, established habits, and religious behavior in early childhood.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of Dhuha prayer habituation at RA Al Choeriyah Plus is conducted routinely every morning before teaching and learning activities begin through a structured sequence of activities, including lining up, performing ablution, reviewing short Qur'anic chapters, hadiths, and Asmaul Husna, followed by the performance of two-rak'ah Dhuha prayer in congregation under the guidance and role modeling of teachers, and concluded with collective prayers and dhikr as well as arranging the worship equipment. This habituation process not only provides children with direct practical experiences of religious worship but also develops religious habits that can be practiced in their daily lives, both at school and at home. The successful implementation of the program is supported by consistent teacher role modeling, a conducive and Islamic school environment, parental support, adequate worship facilities, and motivation provided

to children, while the inhibiting factors include children arriving late, limited concentration and boredom, difficulties in understanding prayer recitations and movements, limited time and facilities, and the lack of continuity in religious habituation at home. These obstacles can be minimized through gradual guidance, motivational support, flexible scheduling, and strengthened cooperation between the school and parents. The habituation process demonstrates the development of children's religious attitudes across cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and socio-religious dimensions, as reflected in their ability to recognize and understand prayers, prayer recitations, and short Qur'anic chapters; the development of disciplined, orderly, calm, and increasingly conscious attitudes toward worship; improved ability to perform prayer movements accurately; and the emergence of togetherness, mutual reminders, and concern for peers during religious activities. Therefore, the habituation of Dhuha prayer at RA Al Choeriyah Plus can be understood as an educational process that not only develops children's skills in performing religious worship but also contributes to the comprehensive development of their religious attitudes through direct experience, role modeling, repetition, and a supportive educational environment.

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