

Model of Internalization of Akhlakul Karimah Values through Habituation of Islamic Manners in Early Childhood Education

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood education plays a strategic role in shaping the foundation of character and Islamic morals from an early age, especially amid the challenges of moral degradation and the tendency for learning to be solely cognitive-oriented. Therefore, a character education model that emphasizes the contextual and continuous habituation of spiritual values is needed. This study aims to identify and analyze models of internalizing akhlaq al-karimah values through the habit formation of Islamic manners in early childhood. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation techniques. The data were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and interactive conclusion drawing techniques. The results showed that the process of internalizing values was carried out through the habit formation of daily activities integrated with teacher role modeling, value reflection, and a religious and conducive learning environment. This pattern of habit formation is effective in fostering discipline, politeness, empathy, and responsibility in children. The resulting conceptual model consists of three main components, namely input in the form of the values of faith, honesty, responsibility, empathy, and cleanliness; process in the form of habit formation of Islamic manners through role modeling and value reflection; and output in the form of the formation of children's character with Islamic morals. This study confirms that systematic habituation of Islamic manners based on spiritual values is an effective strategy in Islamic character education for early childhood.

Keywords: Character Education, Habituation, Islamic Manners, Moral Values.

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (PAUD) is the main foundation in shaping a person's character and personality. It is at this stage that all basic human potentials begin to be directed and developed in an integrated manner between the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Birhan, Shiferaw, Amsalu, Tamiru, & Tiruye, 2021). From an Islamic educational perspective, the main objective of education is not only to produce intellectually intelligent generations, but also to shape individuals who are faithful, pious, and have noble character (*akhlaq al-karimah*) (Mei-Ju, Chen-Hsin, & Pin-Chen, 2014). This is in line with Allah's words in QS. Al-Qalam [68]: 4, which emphasizes that the Prophet Muhammad SAW was sent as an example of noble character. Thus, moral education is at the core of the entire Islamic education process, especially at the early childhood level, which is the most effective period for instilling moral and spiritual values (Railton, 2017).

The reality of early childhood education in Indonesia shows that many institutions still focus on basic academic skills, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, while the dimensions of character and moral formation are often neglected (Mentari, 2019). The phenomenon of moral degradation in modern society, consumptive behavior, and declining social empathy among children are indicators that character education has not touched on the substance of shaping daily behavior. Amidst the increasingly massive currents of globalization and digitalization, children are exposed to various influences of values and lifestyles that are not always in line with Islamic teachings. Therefore, Islamic education needs to be present with a strategy of internalizing values that are not only cognitive in nature but also shape habits and real behavior through a process of habituation (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020).

In Islamic education, habituation is known through the concept of *ta'wīd*, which is training children to do good deeds repeatedly so that they become part of their personality (Sakti, Endraswara, & Rohman, 2024). The Prophet Muhammad SAW exemplified that morals are not enough to be taught through words, but must be instilled through example, habituation, and life experience (Brownlee et al., 2012). Thus, the strategy of moral habituation becomes an effective method in internalizing Islamic values naturally. One institution that applies this principle is PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang, an Islamic-based educational institution that seeks to develop a model for internalizing *akhlaq al-karimah* values through the habit formation of Islamic manners in everyday school life.

PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang practices various forms of Islamic habits such as saying greetings, being grateful, maintaining cleanliness, being punctual, and fostering empathy and responsibility in learning activities. These habits are not merely routines, but are oriented as an effort to build children's moral awareness from an early age. Teachers and educators at this institution not only serve as teachers but also as role models (*uswah hasanah*) who demonstrate Islamic behavior in every interaction. The school environment is designed so that every activity contains character education values, both through formal learning activities and non-formal activities such as praying together, mutual cooperation, and educational games with moral nuances (Blasi Ribera et al., 2025; d'Aiglepierre & Bauer, 2018).

There is still a gap between the ideal concept of moral education and its implementation in practice. Many Islamic early childhood education institutions emphasize memorizing prayers and ritual behavior, but have not been able to contextualize the moral meaning of these activities in everyday life (Dahl, 2019). Previous studies, such as those conducted by (Baker & Jambon, 2025; Lipponen, Rajala, Hilppö, & Pursi, 2024) show that moral education at the early childhood education level is often ceremonial, unsystematic, and poorly integrated with the curriculum and school culture. This is where *the research gap* of this study lies, namely that

there have not been many studies that examine in depth how a model for the internalization of *akhlaq al-karimah* values can be systematically developed through the habit of Islamic manners in early childhood education institutions.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative and contextual approach. Unlike previous studies that emphasized the curriculum or verbal moral teaching, this study developed an *internalization model* that combines value theory, habit formation practices, and behavior evaluation into a comprehensive education system. This model does not only view habit formation as a behavioral routine, but as a pedagogical process that involves value awareness (*knowing*), moral feelings (*feeling*), and concrete actions (*doing*). This approach is in line with Islamic character education theory, which emphasizes a balance between knowledge, attitude, and action (*al-‘ilm, al-hal, wa al-‘amal*).

This study also introduces the concept of *ta‘wīd al-adab* as a form of moral habituation rooted in the classical Islamic educational tradition. In this context, adab habituation is not only aimed at shaping good social behavior, but also as spiritual training (*riyadhah nafsīyyah*) to foster self-awareness and closeness to Allah SWT. Every small action, such as saying greetings, sharing, or helping friends, is seen as a form of worship that has both moral and spiritual educational value. This approach makes habituation not just a behavioral technique, but a process of purification of the soul (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) that produces an authentic Islamic character (Hafidz Khusnadin & Shihab, 2025).

Empirically, PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang shows interesting characteristics because this institution has integrated Islamic manners into all aspects of school life. Values such as politeness, responsibility, and caring are not only taught but also brought to life through a consistent school culture. Children are accustomed to greeting others when entering the classroom, helping friends, cleaning toys after use, and thanking teachers and parents. Teachers, as central figures, play a key role in ensuring that these habits are carried out with meaning, not just as a formality.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study type, as it aims to deeply understand the process, context, and meaning behind the practice of internalizing *akhlaq al-karimah* values through the habit of Islamic manners at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang (Moleong, 2019). This approach was chosen because it is in line with the characteristics of the research problem, which emphasizes complex, dynamic, and value-laden educational phenomena, where the researcher acts as the main instrument in gathering data holistically. Through case studies, the researcher attempts to comprehensively describe the models, strategies, and supporting and inhibiting factors that occur in the practice of moral habituation in the institution.

The research location was set at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang, an Islamic early childhood education institution that has a program of Islamic manners in teaching and learning activities. The location was selected *purposively*, considering that this institution has an education system relevant to the research focus, namely the internalization of moral values through habituation. The researcher conducted direct observations of the institution's daily activities, such as learning activities, prayer habits, greetings, discipline, and social interactions between teachers and students, to obtain an authentic empirical picture of the internalization model applied.

The research subjects included the principal, teachers, students, and parents as key informants who were considered to understand and be directly involved in the process of habit formation. The technique for determining informants was snowball sampling, starting with the principal as the main source of information, then expanding to teachers and other parties who were considered to have in-depth knowledge about the implementation of moral habit formation at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang.

Research data was collected through three main techniques, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Kuntowijoyo, 2018). Observations were made to directly observe children's behavior, teacher interactions, and the learning atmosphere that contained Islamic values. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal and teachers to explore their views on the concept, objectives, and strategies of moral habits applied. Meanwhile, documentation was used to collect written data such as the curriculum, school work programs, activity records, photos of habit-forming activities, and Islamic manners guidebooks that serve as references for the institution.

The data analysis process followed the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification (Ghony & Almansur, 2019). In the data reduction stage, researchers select, simplify, and focus on data from observations and interviews relevant to the research focus. Next, the reduced data was presented in the form of descriptive narratives that described patterns, relationships, and key findings. The final stage was the inductive drawing of conclusions to formulate a model of internalization of *akhlaq al-karimah* values that emerged from the practice of habituation at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang.

The validity of the data in this study is ensured through the application of source and method triangulation techniques (Sugiyono, 2019). Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from various informants such as the principal, teachers, and parents. Meanwhile, method triangulation is carried out by combining the results of observations, interviews, and documentation to obtain mutually reinforcing data. The validity of the research results was also maintained through *member checks*, which involved reconfirming preliminary findings with informants to ensure that the researchers' interpretations were consistent with the reality in the field.

This study also applies the principle of reflexivity, which is to be aware of the researcher's position and subjectivity during the data collection and analysis process, so that the research results remain objective and scientifically accountable. Research ethics are maintained by obtaining official permission from the school, ensuring the confidentiality of informants' identities, and explaining the purpose of the research to all parties involved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang

PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang is an Islamic-based early childhood education institution established in 2018 under the auspices of the Khalifah Learning Center Foundation. This institution has a vision of "Shaping a Qur'anic generation that is intelligent and has noble character". Based on observations and interviews with the principal, PAUDQu Khalifah implements a thematic learning model combined with the habit of practicing Islamic values. There are 75 students divided into three age groups, namely 3–4 years, 4–5 years, and 5–6 years.

Every morning, the school day begins with routine activities that are rich in moral values, such as lining up neatly, greeting teachers, praying together, and listening to *the recitation of*

the Qur'an. The children are accustomed to putting their shoes on the rack, storing their bags in their place, and organizing their toys before use. This habit is integrated into a *learning corner* themed "*Daily Manners*," where each corner of the classroom has visual symbols such as "Pious Children Say Greetings," "Love Cleanliness," and "A Smile is Charity."

Field data shows that all these activities are not just mechanical routines, but are also accompanied by explanations of their moral and spiritual meanings by the teacher. For example, when a child greets his friend, the teacher explains the meaning of "assalamu'alaikum" as a prayer for safety, not just a greeting. This pattern of communication shows that the habit of manners at PAUDQu Khalifah serves as a means of internalizing meaningful *akhlaq al-karimah* values.

Forms and Patterns of Islamic Manners Habituation

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation, the cultivation of Islamic manners at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang is structured systematically and integrated into all of the children's daily learning activities. The five main forms of Islamic manners cultivation applied, as summarized in Table 1, show that moral education is not narrowly understood as teaching norms, but rather as a process of character building that encompasses the spiritual, social, and personal relationships of children.

Table 1. Forms of Islamic Manners Cultivation at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang

No	Type of Habit Formation	Activity Description	Values of Akhlakul Karimah Instilled
1	Manners towards Allah	Morning prayer, memorization of short surahs, gratitude dhikr	Faith, gratitude, trust in God
2	Etiquette towards teachers	Greetings, listening respectfully, kissing the teacher's hand	Respect, politeness
3	Etiquette towards friends	Sharing with each other, asking permission, helping friends	Empathy, helping each other
4	Etiquette towards the environment	Maintaining cleanliness, disposing of trash properly	Responsibility, love of cleanliness
5	Etiquette in learning	Sit neatly, focus on listening, do not interrupt the conversation	Discipline, patience

Conceptually, Table 1 shows that the habit of Islamic manners includes two main dimensions, namely the vertical dimension (the relationship between children and Allah) and the horizontal dimension (the relationship between children and teachers, friends, the environment, and the learning process). This division shows that the habit formation model at PAUDQu Khalifah is in line with the principle of balance in Islamic education between *hablun min Allah* and *hablun min al-nas*, both of which are the foundations for the formation of *akhlaq al-karimah*.

In terms of manners towards Allah (Table 1, row 1), habits are formed through morning prayers, memorization of short surahs, and gratitude prayers. These activities not only serve as spiritual routines but also as a means of forming an awareness of God from an early age. Children are guided to understand that every learning activity begins and ends with remembering Allah, so that the values of faith, gratitude, and trust in Allah are instilled as an inner orientation. The results of the observation show that children are beginning to associate their successes and activities with gratitude, which indicates a gradual process of internalizing spiritual values.

The aspect of manners towards teachers (Table 1, row 2) is manifested through the habits of greeting, listening politely, and kissing the teacher's hand. This practice affirms the role of teachers as role models (*uswah hasanah*) in moral education. Children are not only instructed

to be polite, but also witness firsthand the teacher's polite behavior in interacting with others. Thus, the values of respect and politeness are formed through imitation and positive emotional relationships, not through coercion or punishment.

In terms of manners towards friends (Table 1, row 3), habituation is carried out through activities such as sharing, asking permission, and helping friends. These activities show that moral education at PAUDQu Khalifah emphasizes the development of empathy and social awareness from an early age. Children are trained to understand other people's feelings and respond positively. Interviews with teachers show that children who are accustomed to sharing and helping tend to be better able to manage simple social conflicts, such as taking turns playing or resolving minor disputes.

The aspect of manners towards the environment (Table 1, row 4) is realized through the habit of maintaining cleanliness and disposing of trash in its proper place. The values of responsibility and love of cleanliness are instilled through concrete actions that are carried out repeatedly. The classroom and school environment are positioned as educational spaces that support character building, not just a physical backdrop for learning. This habit shows that moral education also includes an ecological dimension, where children are introduced to their responsibility as little caliphs in caring for the environment.

The last aspect, manners in learning (Table 1, row 5), includes the habits of sitting neatly, listening attentively, and not interrupting conversations. This habit serves as the foundation for building children's discipline and patience. Teachers do not only demand obedience but also create a learning atmosphere that allows children to learn to control themselves in a gradual and manner. Thus, discipline is understood as internal awareness, not merely obedience to external rules.

Analysis of the Model of Internalization of Akhlakul Karimah Values

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation, the researcher found that the model of internalizing *akhlaq al-karimah* values at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang follows a three-layered and interconnected pattern. At the cognitive layer (knowing the good), children are introduced to value concepts through Islamic stories, stories of the prophets, and educational games that emphasize the meaning of goodness. For instance, the story of Prophet Ibrahim is used to instill values such as honesty and courage.

At the affective layer (feeling the good), teachers cultivate empathy and positive feelings toward these values through social activities, such as feeding school cats or sharing lunch with friends. Through these activities, children are encouraged to experience and feel happiness when performing good deeds.

At the psychomotor layer (doing the good), values that have been understood and emotionally internalized are expressed through concrete actions that are repeated consistently until they become habits. This process of habit formation is strengthened through appreciation in the form of praise, star stickers, or warm gestures such as hugs from teachers.

This model is in line with the theory of *value internalization* proposed by (Connors et al., 2013), which states that effective character education must involve three dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. On the other hand, the PAUDQu Khalifah model enriches this framework with Islamic values through the concept of *ta'dib* (formation of manners) as proposed by (Syafa'ati & Muamanah, 2020), which is the integration of knowledge, manners, and morals in the formation of civilized individuals.

The synthesis between Western theory (Lickona) and Islamic theory (Al-Attas) shows that the process of moral internalization in PAUDQu Khalifah is integrative, combining rational moral awareness and divine spiritual awareness. Thus, the internalization of values is not only aimed at shaping good social behavior but also at building an awareness of God, which is the source of true morality.

Supporting and Hindering Factors

Based on interviews with the principal and teachers, several supporting factors contribute to the success of this internalization model. One important factor is teacher role modeling and consistency in habit formation, where all educators demonstrate the same manners in their daily interactions so that children have clear and concrete moral figures to imitate. Another factor is the Islamic school culture, reflected in a learning environment decorated with tauhid quotes, daily prayers, and moral symbols that continuously strengthen the religious atmosphere. Parental involvement also plays a significant role, particularly through the monthly Qur'anic Parenting program, which functions as a medium for synergy between home and school in instilling values. In addition, the use of visual media and positive evaluation, such as behavior charts and simple forms of appreciation, helps increase children's motivation to behave well.

However, several obstacles were also identified in the implementation of this model. Differences in family backgrounds become a challenge, as not all parents apply the same values at home, resulting in inconsistencies in children's behavior. Limited time for habit formation is another constraint, since short learning periods reduce opportunities for deeper value reflection. Furthermore, there is a dependence on certain teacher figures; when a teacher is replaced, children often lose a familiar role model, which can affect the continuity of value internalization.

These obstacles are overcome through reflective strategies such as regular teacher training, collaboration with parents, and a "weekly manners" program that reinforces continuity of habit formation. Field data analysis shows that the process of internalizing *akhlaq al-karimah* values at PAUDQu Khalifah takes place through four main stages: (1) socialization of values, (2) internalization through habituation, (3) reinforcement through role modeling, and (4) reflective evaluation.

The first stage, socialization of values, is carried out through activities that introduce basic manners such as how to speak politely, help friends, and maintain cleanliness. *The second stage*, internalization, is carried out through repetition of behavior accompanied by the instillation of moral meaning. *The third stage*, reinforcement, is carried out through teacher role modeling and positive appreciation. *The final stage*, reflective evaluation, is carried out every weekend to foster children's self-awareness of the values that have been practiced.

These findings reinforce the concept of *learning by doing* (Lonergan, Cumming, & O'Neill, 2022), which states that direct experience is an effective means of character building. However, unlike the secular approach (Kim, Choe, & Kaufman, 2019), which emphasizes empirical experience alone, the PAUDQu Khalifah model adds a spiritual dimension that places every good deed as a form of worship and a manifestation of the value of monotheism.

This synthesis shows that the habit of Islamic manners is not merely a behavioral strategy, but a method of *holistic character formation*. Thus, the Khalifah PAUDQu internalization model can be described as an integrative spiritual model, where cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects are combined in a value-based Islamic learning system.

Compared to research (Burde, Middleton, & Wahl, 2015), that emphasizes the importance of a values-based curriculum in Islamic early childhood education, PAUDQu Khalifah goes

further by transforming the curriculum into a real living culture. Similarly to the findings (Maknun & Annisa, 2024), that highlight the role of teachers as moral facilitators, this study shows that teachers are not only facilitators but also *role models* who are central to the habit formation process.

This study also confirms the theory of *value internalization through habituation* from (Raniya & Waharjani, 2023), which emphasizes the importance of the social environment as a medium for learning values. However, this study adds a spiritual dimension that places God as the source of values, in line with the views of (Wardati & Ridha, 2024), on *tauhid-based character education*. Therefore, the PAUDQu Khalifah model can be referred to as a form of actualization of *integrative Islamic character education*, namely education that instills values through daily spiritual practices.

Theoretically, this study broadens the understanding of value internalization by integrating Western theory and classical Islamic concepts. The model found confirms that conscious and meaningful habituation can form *habits of the heart*, which are moral habits that originate from inner awareness, not from external pressure.

Practically, this study provides guidelines for Islamic early childhood education institutions to develop a consistent and value-oriented habit formation system. Teachers need to be encouraged to be role models, while parents are involved as partners in maintaining the continuity of values at home. Schools can also use visual media such as *adab charts* or *good deed notebooks* as tools to monitor children's character development.

Conceptual Model of Internalization

The synthesis of the research results produced a conceptual model of the internalization of akhlaq al-karimah values, which can be visualized in Figure 1.

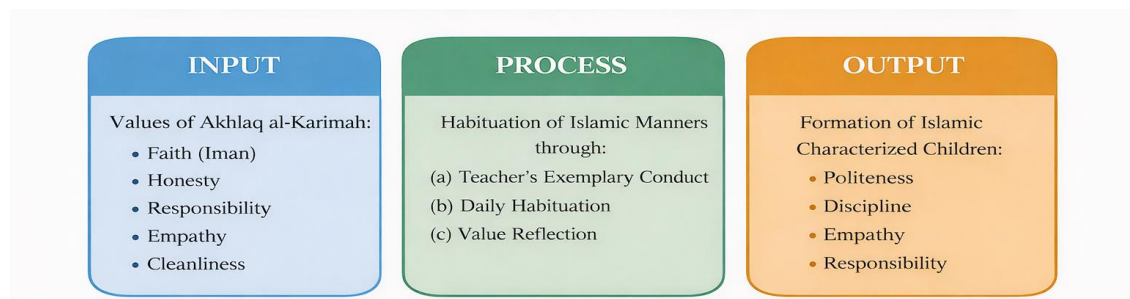


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Internalization of Akhlaq al-Karimah Values through Habituation of Islamic Manners at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang

This model is designed to systematically describe how moral and spiritual values are internalized in early childhood through a planned, continuous, and meaningful process of habit formation of Islamic manners. This conceptual model is not only descriptive but also explains the pedagogical and spiritual mechanisms underlying the formation of Islamic character in early childhood.

Structurally, this model consists of three main components that are interrelated, namely input, process, and output, which form a cyclical and continuous flow of value internalization. These three components do not stand linearly, but influence and reinforce each other in the context of Islamic-based character education.

Input: Akhlaq al-Karimah Values as a Moral-Spiritual Foundation

The input component in this model consists of akhlaq al-karimah values that form the basis of character building in children, namely faith, honesty, responsibility, empathy, and cleanliness. These values were chosen because they represent the main dimensions of Islamic morals that are relevant to the developmental stage of early childhood. In the perspective of Islamic education, these values are not merely social norms, but manifestations of the teachings of monotheism that govern human relationships with Allah, fellow human beings, and the environment.

The value of faith serves as a spiritual foundation that fosters awareness of God from an early age, while honesty and responsibility shape children's moral integrity. Empathy develops social sensitivity and concern for others, while cleanliness reflects awareness of the mandate as caliphs in caring for the environment. Thus, the input of values in this model is holistic, covering integrated spiritual, moral, social, and ecological aspects.

Process: Habituation of Islamic Manners as a Mechanism of Internalization

Process components are at the core of this conceptual model, which explains how akhlaq al-karimah values are internalized through the habit of Islamic manners. This process consists of three main elements, namely teacher role modeling, daily habits, and value reflection.

Teacher role modeling is the main gateway to value internalization, because early childhood learners learn primarily through imitation and direct interaction. Teachers are positioned not only as educators, but also as moral figures who embody moral values in their actions. Through this role modeling, values are not conveyed abstractly, but are manifested in concrete behaviors that can be observed and imitated by children.

Daily habits serve as a means of reinforcing values through consistent repetition of behavior. Islamic activities carried out every day, such as saying greetings, praying, sharing, and maintaining cleanliness, create a pattern of behavior that is repetitive and stable. Repetition in this model is not interpreted mechanically, but as a pedagogical process that fosters meaningful habits (*meaningful habituation*).

Value reflection complements the habit formation process by bringing about moral awareness in children. Through simple reflections tailored to the child's age, students are invited to recognize and interpret the good behavior they have exhibited. This element of reflection is the main distinction between behavioristic habit formation and substantive value internalization, because values are not only practiced but also understood and felt.

Output: The Formation of Children's Islamic Character

The output component of this model is the formation of children's character with Islamic morals, which is reflected in polite, disciplined, empathetic, and responsible behavior. This character does not appear instantly, but is the result of a gradual and continuous process of value internalization.

Field observations show that children who are consistently involved in Islamic manners show relatively stable behavioral changes, both in the context of learning and social interaction. This behavior does not only appear under the supervision of teachers, but begins to develop as the child's internal awareness. This indicates that the values of akhlaq al-karimah have been internalized as part of the child's personality, not just situational obedience.

This conceptual model can be understood as a "cycle of Islamic value internalization," in which every good behavior performed by children is reinforced through meaningful repetition

and spiritual explanation. This cycle allows moral values to develop into *habitualized virtues*, namely virtues that have become integrated into children's habits and self-awareness (Oldham & McLoughlin, 2025).

From an Islamic educational perspective, this cycle is in line with the concept of *ta'dib*, which is the process of forming civilized human beings who integrate knowledge, morals, and spiritual awareness. The habit of Islamic manners in this model not only functions as a pedagogical technique, but also as spiritual training (*riyadhah nafsyyah*) that fosters awareness of worship in every action (Ulum & Slamet, 2025).

Theoretically, the PAUDQu Khalifah model integrates modern character education theory, particularly the concepts of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*, with the concept of Islamic education based on *ta'dib*. This integration results in a character education approach that is not only rational and humanistic but also transcendental and spiritual.

Unlike secular character education models that emphasize social norms and universal ethics, this model places moral values within the framework of *tauhid*, so that every good behavior has a meaning of worship. This approach is relevant to the context of Islamic early childhood education, where character building cannot be separated from the formation of divine consciousness.

Overall, the conceptual model of internalizing *akhlaq al-karimah* values at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang offers an Islamic-based character education paradigm that places habituation as a simultaneous pedagogical and spiritual process. This model is contextual, applicable, and relatively easy to replicate by other Islamic early childhood education institutions by adjusting to the school's environmental and cultural conditions.

The practical implications of this model emphasize the importance of the role of teachers as moral role models, consistency in habit formation within the school culture, and the strengthening of spiritual meaning in every learning activity. Thus, the results of this study not only contribute to the development of Islamic education theory but also provide a conceptual and practical model relevant to the development of Islamic character education for early childhood in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the model of internalizing *akhlaq al-karimah* values through the habit of Islamic manners at PAUDQu Khalifah Karawang has succeeded in creating a comprehensive and contextual character education pattern for early childhood. The main findings of the study confirm that the formation of Islamic character cannot be achieved through cognitive instruction alone, but must be done through a process of habit formation that consistently touches on the affective and psychomotor aspects of children. The habit formation carried out at this institution includes manners towards Allah, teachers, friends, the environment, and in the learning process, all of which are supported by the exemplary behavior of teachers and regular reflection on values. This process results in tangible changes in children's behavior, such as increased discipline, politeness, empathy, and responsibility, reflecting the successful internalization of *akhlaq al-karimah* values in the daily lives of students.

The theoretical implications of these findings reinforce al-Attas' view that true education is a process of *ta'dib*, namely the instillation of manners and the correct value system in humans. This study also expands the theory of moral habit formation from an Islamic perspective, in which the spiritual dimension is central to the process of behavior formation. Meanwhile, the practical implications provide direction for the development of Islamic character education that

not only emphasizes moral knowledge but also role modeling and habituation in children's real lives. In this context, early childhood teachers have a strategic role as *uswah hasanah* who guide children with real role modeling, not just verbal instructions.

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