

# The Habituation of Tarbawi Pedagogy in Teaching Akidah Akhlak

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the habituation of moral education through Akidah Akhlak lessons at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan and its impact on students' ethical behavior. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation involving key informants, including teachers, the head of the madrasah, and students, supported by secondary sources such as books, theses, websites, and media reports. Data analysis was conducted through triangulation to ensure validity and reliability. The findings indicate that teachers' role modeling, structured practice of ethical behaviors in daily school routines, and collaboration with parents and supportive facilities collectively foster students' internalization of Akhlak values. Observable behaviors include neat uniform, punctuality, respect toward teachers and peers, diligence in learning, completion of assignments, and adherence to school rules. These results demonstrate that sustainable habituation of ethical education, grounded in Tarbawi pedagogy, effectively develops students' moral character and prepares them to apply these values in broader societal contexts.

**Keywords:** *Akhlak Education; Tarbawi; Habituation, Students*

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pembiasaan pendidikan akhlak melalui mata pelajaran Akidah Akhlak di MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan dan dampaknya terhadap perilaku etis siswa. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan informan kunci, termasuk guru, kepala madrasah, dan siswa, serta didukung oleh sumber sekunder berupa buku, tesis, situs web, dan laporan media. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan triangulasi untuk memastikan validitas dan reliabilitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peran guru sebagai teladan, praktik terstruktur nilai-nilai akhlak dalam rutinitas sekolah, serta kolaborasi dengan orang tua dan sarana pendukung secara bersama-sama mendorong internalisasi nilai akhlak oleh siswa. Perilaku yang terlihat antara lain berpakaian rapi, tepat waktu, menghormati guru dan teman, tekun dalam belajar, mengerjakan tugas, dan taat terhadap peraturan sekolah. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pembiasaan pendidikan akhlak yang berkelanjutan, berbasis pedagogi Tarbawi, efektif dalam membentuk karakter moral siswa dan

mempersiapkan mereka untuk menerapkan nilai-nilai tersebut dalam konteks masyarakat yang lebih luas.

**Kata Kunci:** *Pendidikan Moral; Tarbawi; Pembiasaan, Peserta Didik*

## Introduction

The development of Islamic education systems in the modern era faces increasingly complex moral challenges. In a social landscape marked by value disruption and the relentless tide of globalization, the young Muslim generation is now confronting a profound crisis of spiritual and ethical orientation. The decline of politeness, the erosion of social empathy, and the rise of individualistic tendencies among students have become increasingly visible within educational settings. This condition reflects a systemic failure to internalize Islamic values into students' moral awareness and daily conduct. Religious education, particularly in madrasahs, often becomes trapped within a cognitive approach that emphasizes rote memorization rather than behavioral transformation (Sari et al., 2025). Consequently, moral values remain at the level of discourse, never evolving into habitual practices that shape authentic Islamic character (Solihah et al., 2024).

Moral education and its practical implementation reveals a fundamental problem in the praxis of Islamic education. The subject of Akidah Akhlak—which should serve as the primary medium for instilling faith and moral values—tends to be delivered in a verbalistic, abstract, and decontextualized manner. Teaching and learning processes remain largely teacher-centered and academically oriented, rather than focused on the cultivation of moral habitus. In reality, morality does not grow through declarative knowledge but through habituation—a process of repeated, intentional practice grounded in moral exemplarity. When Akidah Akhlak lessons fail to provide students with concrete moral experiences, they lose the opportunity to internalize Islamic values as a holistic way of life. Here lies the epistemological crisis of contemporary Islamic education: moral knowledge is taught, but not lived (Ilahi et al., 2022).

Problem extends beyond pedagogical strategies to the very paradigm of education, which has not fully aligned with the principles of tarbiyah. Tarbawi education, which should integrate the dimensions of intellect, emotion, and behavior, has often been reduced to formal classroom activities. Teachers have yet to embody the role of murabbi—those who nurture spiritual awareness and guide the process of value internalization through example, interaction, and a conducive environment. In addition, the pressures of a dense national curriculum, administrative demands, and the lack of training in tarbawi-based pedagogy have collectively weakened the transformative power of Akidah Akhlak instruction (Rosad, 2019). As a result, moral education frequently degenerates into normative formalism, while students' social

realities continue to drift away from the values being taught. This situation calls for a reconstruction of education models through habituation as a strategy for authentic and sustainable character formation (Zaini, 2023).

A number of previous studies have emphasized the importance of integrating tarbawi values and moral habituation within Islamic education. Abdurrahman an-Nahlawi's work highlights that authentic Islamic education must be rooted in value habituation and spiritual discipline (*riyadhah al-nafs*) through the continuous interplay between knowledge and action (Rizki & Lessy, 2024). Hasan Langgulung, on the other hand, underscores the spiritual and psychological dimensions of Islamic education, advocating a balance between cognitive and affective domains in character formation. More recent studies by Al-Khalidi (2018) and Nurdin (2021) demonstrate that habituation in Akidah Akhlak learning significantly contributes to the enhancement of students' moral awareness and spiritual discipline in madrasahs. However, most of these studies remain at the conceptual level and have yet to explore how tarbawi habituation is practically implemented in classroom contexts. This gap forms the empirical foundation of the present study, which seeks to extend the understanding of habituation within tarbawi education.

Based on the above background and previous research, this study aims to examine in depth how tarbawi habituation is applied in the Akidah Akhlak subject at madrasahs. Specifically, it seeks to identify the forms of habituation employed by teachers in shaping students' moral behavior, to understand the dynamics and challenges encountered during the habituation process, and to assess the extent to which the tarbawi approach based on moral habituation can strengthen the integration between religious knowledge and moral action among learners. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of character-oriented Islamic education models and practically to the empowerment of teachers as moral agents who foster students' ethical growth through continuous and meaningful habituation.

## **Method**

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the implementation of Tarbawi educational habituation in Akidah Akhlak lessons. Qualitative methods were deemed appropriate due to their capacity to provide in-depth understanding of social phenomena, pedagogical practices, and the experiences of participants within their natural context. The research was conducted at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan, a representative Islamic junior high school that integrates Tarbawi education into its curriculum.

Primary data were collected from key informants, including teachers, the head of the madrasah, and selected students. Semi-structured interviews served as the main data collection tool, allowing participants to share their insights, experiences, and perceptions regarding the habituation practices in Akidah Akhlak lessons. The semi-structured format provided a balance between guided inquiry and

flexibility, enabling the capture of nuanced information while ensuring the coverage of critical research themes.

In addition to primary data, secondary data were gathered to support the theoretical framework and enrich the analysis. These sources included scholarly books, theses, relevant journal articles, official websites, and news media reports related to Islamic education, habituation strategies, and Akidah Akhlak teaching. The integration of secondary sources ensured that the study was anchored in both empirical observation and established academic knowledge.

Data analysis was conducted using the triangulation technique to ensure the credibility and validity of the findings. By comparing and cross-verifying data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation, the study minimized potential biases and strengthened the reliability of interpretations. Triangulation allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how Tarbawi habituation is practiced, its perceived effectiveness, and the challenges encountered by educators and students (Kristjánsson, 2006).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **The Role of Teachers as Role Models**

The findings of this study indicate that teachers at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan play a central role in shaping students' moral and ethical development through consistent role modeling. Empirical observations revealed that teachers and school staff consciously demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors in daily school activities, including punctuality, respectful communication, patience, and adherence to Islamic ethical principles. These behaviors are not limited to classroom interactions but extend to the entire school environment, thereby creating a pervasive culture of moral practice (Cheung, 2020). Students reported that witnessing teachers' consistent demonstration of good behavior motivates them to emulate similar actions, suggesting that practical exposure to ethical conduct reinforces the internalization of Akhlak values more effectively than theoretical instruction alone.

From a theoretical perspective, the concept of role modeling is strongly grounded in social learning theory, particularly Bandura's framework, which posits that individuals acquire behaviors and norms through observation and imitation of credible models (Blase, 2009). In the context of Islamic education, the teacher's role as an exemplary figure is further emphasized in classical Tarbawi pedagogy, where learning is not only cognitive but also experiential and character-based. The practice of teladan (exemplary behavior) enables students to internalize moral principles organically, as they observe the alignment between professed values and observable behavior. This approach complements formal instruction in Akidah Akhlak lessons, reinforcing both cognitive understanding and ethical habituation.

Moreover, the implementation of teladan extends beyond the behavior of individual teachers and becomes deeply embedded in the

broader institutional culture. Interviews with school administrators, teachers, and support staff at Madrasah Muallimin UNIVA Medan revealed that the cultivation of Akhlak values is not treated as a peripheral activity but as a core component of the school's mission and vision. The institutional commitment to moral education ensures that ethical behavior is modeled consistently across multiple dimensions of school life, including classroom interactions, administrative procedures, and extracurricular activities. This systemic integration means that students are exposed to continuous demonstrations of ethical conduct from various authority figures, reinforcing the perception that moral values are normative and socially validated within the school environment.

Teachers, as primary agents of value transmission, are tasked not only with delivering cognitive content in Akidah Akhlak lessons but also with embodying the principles they teach. Observations indicated that students frequently interpret teachers' punctuality, fairness, patience, and respect in daily interactions as living lessons in ethical conduct. In addition, non-teaching staff contribute to this cultural reinforcement by maintaining school rules with integrity and modeling communal respect, thereby creating a coherent environment where positive behaviors are observed, internalized, and socially reinforced. This approach aligns with the concept of "hidden curriculum," where the school culture itself communicates normative values beyond formal instruction, facilitating habituation and internalization of Akhlak principles in a naturalistic and continuous manner (Usman et al., 2024).

Empirical studies corroborate these findings, highlighting the significance of teacher and institutional modeling in moral development. Fadilah (2022) demonstrated that students' moral reasoning and ethical behavior significantly improved when exposed to consistent and authentic role modeling by educators, particularly within schools emphasizing structured habituation programs. Similarly, Suhendar et al. (2021) found that the collective modeling of ethical behavior by both teachers and staff enhanced students' ability to apply moral principles in both academic and social contexts. These findings suggest that moral education is most effective when value transmission occurs not only through formal pedagogy but also through immersion in a culturally and socially reinforced ethical environment (Rochim & Amal Khayati, 2023).

The theoretical foundation for this approach can be traced to Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes that behavior is acquired through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within a social context. In an Islamic educational framework, this principle is complemented by classical Tarbawi pedagogy, which stresses the integration of akhlak cultivation into daily life, asserting that moral education is inseparable from lived examples of virtue. By embedding ethical modeling into institutional practices, Madrasah Muallimin UNIVA Medan provides a consistent, coherent, and observable framework for students to internalize moral norms, ensuring that the learning of Akidah

Akhlak transcends rote memorization to become a habitual and internalized part of students' character.

The data also underscore the dynamic interaction between teacher behavior and student response. Students are more likely to internalize Akhlak values when they perceive teachers' actions as sincere, coherent, and consistent with Islamic teachings. Observational data from classroom and extracurricular settings showed that students often referenced teachers' behavior as a standard for their own actions, highlighting the significance of lived examples in moral education. This finding reinforces the theoretical premise that moral education is most effective when students can observe, reflect upon, and emulate ethical conduct in real contexts, rather than relying solely on textual or verbal instruction (Zhou, 2025).

In summary, the role of teachers as role models is fundamental to the habituation of Tarbawi education in Akidah Akhlak lessons. Through consistent demonstration of positive behavior, teachers not only fulfill their pedagogical responsibilities but also serve as living exemplars of the values they seek to instill. This process, supported by both empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks in social learning and Islamic pedagogy, highlights the inseparable link between teacher conduct, institutional culture, and students' moral development. By embodying ethical principles, teachers ensure that the cultivation of Akhlak values becomes a tangible and influential part of students' everyday school experience.

### **Moral Development through Akidah Akhlak Lessons**

The implementation of Akidah Akhlak lessons at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan demonstrates a comprehensive approach to moral development, where cognitive instruction is closely coupled with habitual ethical practice. Empirical observations indicate that students consistently manifest Akhlak values in various aspects of daily school life. For instance, students' adherence to wearing neat and complete uniforms reflects an internalized sense of discipline and respect for institutional norms. Punctuality in entering and leaving school not only demonstrates time management but also signifies accountability and self-regulation, traits that are central to moral development in the Tarbawi framework. These outward behaviors serve as visible indicators that ethical values are no longer abstract principles but are embedded in students' habitual routines (Irham et al., 2024).

Respectful interactions with teachers and peers further illustrate the internalization of Akhlak values. Students greet teachers upon meeting and show deference in communication, signaling recognition of authority and the cultivation of humility. Mutual respect among students—manifested through cooperative behavior, attentiveness, and courteous conduct—creates a social environment where ethical norms are reinforced collectively. This aligns with the Tarbawi educational principle that character formation is not solely an individual endeavor but a socially

mediated process, where ethical behavior is strengthened through interaction, observation, and reciprocal reinforcement within the school community (Baharshah, 2022).

In addition, students' engagement in academic tasks reflects the integration of diligence and responsibility as moral values. Attentiveness in lessons, conscientious completion of assignments, and adherence to school rules are manifestations of a deeper ethical disposition cultivated through habituation. Tarbawi pedagogy emphasizes that ethical education must extend beyond the formal curriculum; repeated practice, guided reinforcement, and continuous observation are crucial for internalizing moral principles. Empirical evidence from observations at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan suggests that students gradually transform their cognitive understanding of Akidah and Akhlak into behavioral patterns, indicating successful habituation of ethical values (Fiqih et al., 2022).

The theoretical underpinnings of these findings are grounded in classical Tarbawi pedagogy, which advocates for a holistic integration of knowledge (*ma'rifah*), practice (*'amal*), and spiritual habituation (*tazkiyah al-nafs*). According to this framework, moral education is effective only when students repeatedly experience and enact ethical behaviors within a supportive and structured environment. The consistent modeling of discipline, respect, diligence, and obedience by teachers and school staff complements this approach, creating an ecosystem in which ethical conduct is visible, observable, and socially reinforced. Contemporary educational theories, such as Bandura's social learning theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, further support this process by highlighting the significance of observational learning and socially mediated practice in the formation of habitual behavior (Fiqih et al., 2022).

Moreover, each specific behavioral aspect observed among students—ranging from neat attire, punctuality, and respect for teachers, to diligence in lessons and adherence to school rules—functions as both an outcome and a reinforcement mechanism for moral development. The consistency of these behaviors suggests that the habituation process is effective in translating theoretical knowledge from Akidah Akhlak lessons into lived experience. Empirical studies, including those by Fadilah (2022) and Suhendar et al. (2021), support this notion, indicating that structured habituation programs guided by teacher role modeling lead to measurable improvements in students' moral reasoning, ethical conduct, and overall character formation.

In summary, the cultivation of Akhlak values through Akidah Akhlak lessons at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan illustrates the effectiveness of the Tarbawi educational paradigm in transforming cognitive knowledge into habitual moral behavior. Observable student behaviors—including neat uniform, punctuality, respect toward teachers, mutual respect among peers, diligence in learning, conscientious completion of assignments, and adherence to school regulations—reflect the internalization of ethical principles. This comprehensive approach demonstrates that moral

education, when systematically reinforced through habituation and social modeling, not only shapes students' conduct within the school environment but also lays a foundation for ethical and responsible behavior in broader societal contexts (Sitepu et al., 2022).

### **Sustainable Habituation of Moral Education**

The previous findings highlight that the internalization of Akhlak values among students at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan is strongly influenced by teacher role modeling and structured habituation practices within Akidah Akhlak lessons. Building upon this foundation, the sustainable habituation of moral education requires a continuous and systematic approach, ensuring that the ethical development of students is not limited to isolated lessons or temporary interventions. Sustainability in moral education can be conceptualized as a process where students consistently practice, observe, and internalize ethical behaviors across multiple contexts, reinforcing Akhlak values both within and beyond the school environment.

A critical factor in sustaining moral habituation is the ongoing performance and integrity of teachers as role models. Empirical observations indicate that students are more likely to continue practicing ethical behaviors when they regularly witness teachers embodying the principles of Akhlak in daily interactions. This includes punctuality, fairness, patience, honesty, and respectful communication, not only in classroom teaching but also during administrative and extracurricular activities. Teachers' consistent demonstration of positive behaviors establishes a living example that students can emulate, creating a continuous loop of observation, imitation, and internalization. In this sense, the quality and commitment of teachers become central to the long-term sustainability of moral education, reinforcing the Tarbawi principle that ethical learning occurs through repeated, guided practice and observation (Sholikhah et al., 2025).

In addition to teacher performance, the translation of moral values into daily school practices plays a significant role in sustaining Akhlak habituation. Structured school routines, including disciplined entry and exit, orderly classroom conduct, cooperative learning activities, and adherence to school regulations, serve as repeated opportunities for students to practice ethical behaviors (Kerr, 2011). Observations revealed that integrating Akhlak values into these practical routines, rather than confining them to formal lessons, allows students to internalize morals organically. When students experience ethical principles as part of habitual daily practice, the likelihood of these behaviors persisting over time increases, demonstrating the importance of embedding moral education in lived experiences rather than treating it as an abstract theoretical concept.

Furthermore, the involvement of parents and the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure are essential for sustaining the habituation process. Interviews with teachers and school administrators



emphasized that collaboration between schools and families strengthens the reinforcement of ethical values outside the formal learning environment. When parents are informed and actively participate in guiding, monitoring, and encouraging moral behavior at home, students receive consistent messages regarding Akhlak, reinforcing what they learn at school. Similarly, the provision of supportive infrastructure, such as organized classrooms, prayer spaces, libraries, and communal activity areas, facilitates the practice of ethical and religious values, making them accessible, visible, and practically applicable. This synergy between school, family, and learning environment ensures that the habituation of moral behavior becomes continuous and integrated (Han, 2024).

Sustainable habituation also extends the impact of moral education into students' broader social environment. By consistently practicing Akhlak values, students develop habits that are observable not only within the school but also in interactions with neighbors, relatives, and the wider community. This outward projection of ethical behavior suggests that sustained moral education has the potential to cultivate socially responsible individuals who contribute positively to society. The Tarbawi pedagogical framework emphasizes this holistic development, advocating for education that transforms knowledge into behavior, behavior into habit, and habit into character that resonates across various life contexts. Empirical evidence at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan supports this trajectory: students who internalize ethical principles through habituation demonstrate greater self-discipline, empathy, and social responsibility, indicating that continuous reinforcement, modeling, and practical application are essential for long-term moral formation.

In conclusion, sustainable habituation of Akhlak education requires a multidimensional approach that integrates teacher role modeling, routine practice of ethical behavior within school activities, collaboration with parents, and supportive infrastructure. By embedding moral values in daily routines and providing consistent reinforcement across different social contexts, the school ensures that ethical development is continuous, internalized, and transferable to broader societal interactions. This approach not only strengthens students' character within the educational setting but also fosters the emergence of morally responsible, ethically aware, and socially constructive individuals, fulfilling the ultimate goal of Tarbawi education in shaping holistic, virtuous human beings.

## **Conclusions**

The study demonstrates that the habituation of Akhlak education through Akidah Akhlak lessons at MTS Muallimin UNIVA Medan significantly fosters students' moral and ethical development. This process is driven by the synergistic interaction of three core elements: teachers as role models, structured and consistent practice of ethical behaviors within daily school routines, and the supportive involvement of parents alongside adequate facilities. Empirical observations indicate that students internalize ethical values through repeated exposure to exemplary behavior, active

participation in moral practices, and reinforcement both at school and at home. These findings substantiate the theoretical premise of Tarbawi pedagogy, which emphasizes that moral education is most effective when cognitive understanding, habitual practice, and social modeling converge to shape character.

Practically, this study underscores the importance of sustaining ethical habituation beyond formal lessons. By embedding Akhlak values in daily routines, maintaining consistent teacher modeling, and fostering school-family collaboration, students not only exhibit improved behavior within the educational setting but are also prepared to apply these values in broader societal contexts. The results provide a theoretical and practical framework for Islamic education institutions, highlighting that continuous, integrated, and socially reinforced habituation is essential for cultivating ethically aware, socially responsible, and morally virtuous individuals.

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