CHARACTER STRENGTHENING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 7 HABITS OF GREAT INDONESIAN CHILDREN TOWARDS THE GOLDEN GENERATION

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Abstract

Character strengthening is an important foundation for early childhood towards Indonesia's golden generation in 2045. The purpose of this study is to analyze character strengthening in the implementation of the 7 habits of great Indonesian children in the educational and family environment. This research used a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method at Babus Salam Kindergarten in Bandilan Prajekan. Data triangulation was conducted to strengthen the analysis results by observing educators, parents, and the surrounding environment. Interviews were conducted not only with educators and parents but also with class associations and the school committee, which spearheads school activities. Thus, the collected documentation can support the recording and strengthening of data. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the 7 habits of great Indonesian children in daily habits, both at school and at home, has a significant impact on strengthening children's character. This is further enhanced by the support and collaboration between educators, parents, and the surrounding community. It is recommended that the synergy between educators, parents, and the community be continuously enhanced by creating programs involving all relevant stakeholders and parenting activities to strengthen collaboration between educators and parents in educating children, conducting seminars or mentoring sessions with child psychologists, and other activities that support character building. This will enable Indonesia to move towards a more focused Golden Generation, with strong character, and be ready to face future challenges.

Keywords: Character, 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children, Golden Generation Abstract.

A. Introduction

It's crucial to instill the fundamentals of life in children from an early age. This is because 80% of a child's brain develops rapidly during their golden years. The character values embedded in these fundamentals can shape a child's

behavior, allowing their attitudes and behaviors to become ingrained habits and shape their character throughout life. However, recent research shows that children tend to be less sensitive and concerned about their surroundings, become easily angered, have difficulty collaborating, and struggle to adapt to others in social settings. This occurs because they experience a character crisis caused by unsupervised use of gadgets and the influx of foreign cultures that often conflict with local values and religious beliefs. Therefore, strong character building is necessary so that children can sort out external influences and maintain their identity (Ruwaida et al., 2025).

Character values in children don't develop overnight but are built through positive habits practiced daily through games programmed into daily learning. If this character education is delayed until adolescence or adulthood, we have missed the most optimal time to shape their personalities (Sinulingga, 2025). When children are accustomed to telling the truth, being disciplined, helping friends, responsibly packing away toys, and caring for their surroundings, these positive values will stick and become habits into adulthood. Therefore, to prepare children ready to welcome the Golden Generation of 2045, character strengthening is the most appropriate program. It not only prepares children for academic excellence but also for mental resilience, honesty, patience, caring for friends, and responsibility. Therefore, character strengthening, starting from an early age, is an urgent need to produce an intelligent and noble golden generation in 2045 through enjoyable play activities (Amini & Mariyati, 2021).

In line with character strengthening, character education should be carried out by creating sustainable planning in the 7 habits of Great Indonesian Children that are practiced every day starting from waking up early, praying, exercising, eating nutritious food, enjoying learning, socializing and going to bed early. Previous research (Ruwaida et al., 2025) explains that character education has an important role in shaping a child's personality. This is also in line with (Cusmawati et al., 2025) that children's morals are formed from a religious culture that is instilled every day through habituation. Therefore, children who are accustomed to waking up early and continuing with worship will have a religious culture that can shape Islamic character. The benefits and objectives of this research are to strengthen character strengthening from an early age which is implemented in the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children towards the Golden Generation of 2045.

B. Research Methods

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques included data triangulation, including direct observation of the school environment, interviews with educators, education staff, and parents, and documentation, both directly and through previous documentation such as reports, notes, photos, and videos. The research, conducted at Babus Salam

Kindergarten in Bandilan Prajekan, lasted for one month, from April to May. This was done to ensure more in-depth and comprehensive data collection.



C. Results and Discussion

Character Strengthening

Various studies and analyses on early childhood character show that children aged 0-8 years are strongly influenced by those around them, including parents, educators, and their social environment (Rozikan, 2018). Character formation, such as waking up early in the morning, praying and worshiping according to their beliefs, exercising, eating nutritious food, studying, playing with friends, and going to bed early, are habits that are inseparable from the role of parents and the environment. This is in line with (Harti, 2023) in her research, which states that parents are role models for children. In developing morality, parents play a significant role in providing exemplary examples, both directly and through words. Behaviors displayed by those around them will immediately be adopted by children as daily habits in behavior because for them, parents are true role models. Therefore, children are a reflection of their parents because parental exemplary attitudes and behaviors serve as a reference for children in developing their morals and character from an early age. Behaviors that parents can cultivate include daily activities such as speaking, treating peers, respecting elders, religious obedience, good morals, and thinking. Therefore, parents have a significant influence in shaping children's character, which is instilled in them from an early age. Lickona explains that traits that should be instilled in early childhood include sincerity, honesty, compassion, courage, emotional self-control, cooperation, and a willingness to work hard (Darwanti et al., 2025).

Unfortunately, many parents still believe that children's character is formed solely through school, with guidance from educators. Consequently, when children make mistakes, misbehave, or experience bullying, the blame falls on the school's education (Rahayuningtyas, 2020). Yet, parents play a crucial role in character education. Therefore, it is necessary to establish activities that become habits at school and implement them in daily life through the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children.

7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children

The government program through the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children has begun to be actively implemented in schools. The implementation of the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children is in line with the character building carried out by the Indonesian nation towards the Golden Generation 2045. In the

7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children, there are characters from Thomas Lickona that are often used, namely moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action (Zuliana, Reni 2025). According to Lickona, character formation in children cannot be done instantly but is gradual and consistent. Starting from socialization, teaching, being an example as a role model and practicing in everyday life. This is where the role of parents and educators is needed to collaborate in shaping children's character, starting with communication to build closeness, being a good role model and consistently making character into everyday attitudes and behaviors.

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation of the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children, children are beginning to develop the habit of waking up early, starting with going to bed earlier at night. The benefits include a more refreshed body ready for morning activities, improved blood circulation and metabolism. Getting enough sunlight before school helps maintain stamina and prepares children for learning activities. This, in turn, helps children stay physically and emotionally alert. Waking up early can also reduce stress, as they are more prepared for activities, and they are more disciplined and responsible because they have more free time to complete tasks. According to (Astuti, 2016), a person is said to have healthy living habits if they care about their own health and prevent illness, eat healthy, nutritious food, exercise, get enough rest, and maintain personal hygiene.

The next habit is morning worship, which is an important part of character building for children, namely congregational morning prayer. Although children may not yet understand the meaning and significance of morning prayer, the habit established by parents and children will make it easier for children to pray on time when they are adults. Unknowingly, there are many character developments in congregational morning prayers, including discipline and responsibility. Furthermore, the benefits of congregational morning prayers include instilling a love for God, the Creator, from an early age, and strengthening the affection and emotional bonds between parents and children. (Yuliwati et al., 2024)

Next, exercise is highly favored by young children. This is because many children enjoy engaging in physical motor activities outdoors in the sunshine (Sinulingga, 2025). These activities include playing ball, jumping rope, climbing ladders, swings and slides, running and carrying bottles, and other physical motor activities. Regular exercise not only improves physical health but also builds character, positively influencing children's thinking patterns. Instilling exercise in schools can be achieved by making physical motor activities a habit in the morning before the start of the day and the main activities begin. This can be seen in children's enthusiasm when playing catch and throwing a ball or doing morning exercises together in the yard. Exercising is not only done by children at school, but can also be done together with educators collaborating with parents

to create outbound activities together in the city square or just a casual walk (JJS) around the local area.

Eating healthy, balanced, and nutritious food is the next of the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children. This initiative is being implemented by the government with the aim of accustoming children to eating healthy, balanced meals from an early age. Parents and educators play a crucial role in providing healthy, balanced meals (Jatmikowati et al., 2023). Introducing healthy foods through images, educational videos, songs, or cooking classes can help reduce children's consumption of less nutritious foods and encourage them to bring nutritious, healthy food from home. Even before mentoring with local health officials, such as community health center counselors, some children were still brought packed lunches by their parents, who paid little attention to the nutritional needs of young children. However, the growth and development of children during the Golden Age is determined by the variety of nutrients contained in their food. The goal of accustoming children to eating healthy, balanced meals is to introduce them to a variety of foods, including vegetables and fruits, and to stimulate children about the importance of eating vegetables, fish, and fruit. This also encourages children to live a healthier lifestyle by having breakfast before school and avoiding sugary and fast food. The benefits of eating a healthy, balanced diet include maintaining a healthy immune system, preventing stunting, reducing disease susceptibility, and promoting bone growth (Putri & Maemunah, 2017).

The next habit of Great Indonesian Children is a love of learning. Motivating early childhood learning is different from that of adolescents and adults. This is because early childhood still enjoys play. Therefore, every lesson, material, meaning, and motivation must be delivered through play. By using engaging learning tools and materials, children will be more stimulated to experiment, develop a strong curiosity, and be willing to experiment. This is especially true for children entering their Golden Age, where they readily absorb knowledge through enjoyable stimulation from educators and parents. The benefits of a love of learning for early childhood include developing critical and creative thinking, problem-solving skills, developing self-confidence, initiative and responsibility, honing skills, and enhancing social and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, children will develop positive habits such as enjoying reading simple books, writing and doodling, asking questions, and exploring objects around them. Thus, educators and parents should collaborate to provide story books, create simple experiments, and engage children in more educational activities (Belajar & Dini, 2024)..

Being social is a habit of great Indonesian children that can be practiced at school through activities such as playing with peers, caring for friends, and respecting each other. These social habits can be instilled not only at school but also at home, with family and the surrounding community. At school, children can greet, say hello, and smile at friends and teachers. Habits of helping each other,

speaking kindly and politely, keeping the classroom clean, being fair, and actively working together on group projects are social activities that can be implemented in the classroom. The goal is for children to adapt well, be responsible, and develop their social-emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills. Educators stimulate children through role-playing, helping teachers clean the classroom, visiting sick friends, and respecting friends of other religions (Gustina et al., 2022).

Furthermore, going to bed early is a habit that Great Indonesian Children should practice. According to Walker (2017), to strengthen memory, regulate patterns, and maintain stamina, sleep should be prioritized. This allows the brain to refresh and regenerate body functions after activities. Meanwhile, in early childhood, going to bed early can stimulate memory, improve concentration, and increase energy. In this regard, educators can collaborate with parents. The benefits of going to bed early for early childhood include limiting children's use of gadgets and replacing them with stories read by parents, motivating children to wake up early the next morning, saying prayers before bed, and being able to wake up early for worship. This pattern promotes healthy child development, fostering discipline and increased enthusiasm for learning in the morning.

According to interviews with parents and teachers, data shows that children who are accustomed to going to bed early are less cranky in the morning. They are more enthusiastic about waking up early, able to prepare lunch with their parents, and are easier to work with. For example, children are less prone to tantrums and emotional outbursts, are calmer and more focused, have a greater willingness to eat breakfast because they are not rushed, and are more enthusiastic and cheerful about going to school. Remember, educators and parents should also praise children for their ability to go to bed early and wake up early..

Strengthening Character in the Implementation of the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children

Character Strengthening	7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children
Discipline, Responsibility	Wake Up Early
Religious, Responsibility, Discipline	Pray
Healthy, Discipline	Exercise
Health Care, Independence, Responsibility, Discipline	Eat Nutritious Food
Discipline, Diligence, Perseverance, Independence, Responsibility	Loves to Learn
Caring, Tolerance, Mutual Cooperation, Active, Communicative	Community
Health, Discipline	Sleep early

D. Conclusion

From the results of discussions and activities conducted at Babussalam Bandilan Prajekan Kindergarten, the following data was obtained, indicating an

increase in good character in students through the implementation of the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children. This can be seen through observations, interviews, documentation, and the distribution of questionnaires given to educators and parents. According to parents, children who are accustomed to going to bed early no longer have difficulty waking up in the morning and tantrums when woken up. They tend to be obedient, compliant, and easy to work with in the morning. Even children who usually have difficulty eating breakfast are starting to try sitting at the dining table with their families before carrying out activities at school. Some children are starting to accept being invited to pray the morning prayer in congregation with their parents. Although initially difficult, they eventually get used to performing ablution and following the prayer movements. Information from educators also states that children are more refreshed and enthusiastic about playing and learning at school. They are more focused, confident, and willing to share their experiences when telling stories in front of the class. This is the result of parents getting into the habit of accompanying their children before bed and sharing stories using picture books, so that in the morning the children have the initiative and imagination to share when meeting friends and teachers. This is very encouraging for parents and educators. They feel the impact of implementing character strengthening in the 7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children, namely children who are more religious, compassionate, respectful, cheerful, enthusiastic, healthy, and full of self-confidence.

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