Building Student Disciplinary Character through the Atomic Habits Method at ICC Pahang

Asep Hermawan¹, Danang Dwi Gusti Fajar Yanto², Muhammad Awalun Nur Rahmat³, Beni Suhendra Winarso⁴, Rafika Rabba Farah⁵

¹ Department of Islamic Education, Muhammadiyah University of Tangerang, Indonesia
² Department of Informatics Engineering, Muhammadiyah University of Jember, Indonesia
³ Department of Environmental Engineering, Muhammadiyah University of Kendari, Indonesia
⁴ Department of Accounting, University of Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
⁵ Department of English Education, Muhammadiyah University of Malang, Indonesia

Fajardanangdwi@gmail.com, aseppokpokcoy15@gmail.com, awalunrahmat@gmail.com, benisuhendra@gmail.com, rafikarabbafarah@umm.ac.id

Abstract. This article discusses community service initiatives conducted at ICC Pahang, a learning center for Indonesian immigrant children in Malaysia, with the aim of developing discipline and character through the application of the Atomic habits method. The initiative is targeted at 20 students and involves activities such as habitually reading prayers before lessons, physical fitness exercises, and classroom neatness. The implementation method uses a structured approach which includes the stages of observation, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Observation of the learning environment and student behavior is used as the basis for program design, which also includes additional elements such as creative classes and physical exercise routines. The successful application of the Atomic habits method is reflected in the positive transformation of student behavior, which results in increased discipline, responsibility, and character development. The effectiveness of this program emphasizes the importance of small habits in shaping individual character. This initiative not only improves discipline among students, but also contributes to a broader conversation about education and character building. The results show the value of applying the Atomic habits approach to create sustainable positive habits, forming a culture of discipline, responsibility, and personal growth among students. The implications are beneficial for educational institutions that want to implement similar strategies for character development and student empowerment. By addressing the importance of routine practices and habits, the initiative contributes to the advancement of education that emphasizes holistic personal development.

Keywords: Atomic habits, discipline, character development, education, community service, habit formation, immigrant children.
1 Introduction

In the Law on the National Education System No. 20 of 2003 explains that, education is "a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and learning so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character and skills needed by themselves and society." The notion of "education" is rooted in the root word "educate," then added with the prefix "pe" and the suffix "an," which produces the meaning of a method, way, or action in guiding (1). Teaching, on the other hand, is a method of changing the ethics and behavior of individuals or groups in an effort to achieve independence, with the aim of developing human maturity through a series of efforts such as education, learning, guidance, and coaching (2,3).

The notion of education can be broadly interpreted as life. This means that education involves the entire process of learning and knowledge that continues throughout the course of life (long life education), in various places and situations, which positively contributes to the development of each individual (4). Education in essence is an obligation for each individual to shape changes in that individual for the better. Because in essence man is born ignorant and in a state of purity. This is in line with the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Which reads:


"From Abu Hurayrah, he said; 'The Prophet salallahu 'alaihi wasallam said: 'A baby is not born (into this world) but he is in purity (fitrah). Then it was his parents who would make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magi." (H.R. Muslim : 4803)

In the Hadith, it is explained that the future of the child depends on what and how the person is doing and how to educate him. This hadith tells us how important the role of parents is in education and the role of children in the family (5,6). Parents have an obligation to direct, care for, and guide their children to reach a mature level of development to prepare them for life in society (7).

Education is a process of change in individuals that takes a long time. In this process, individuals can go through several ways including through formal and non-formal education. Formal education refers to education organized through school institutions. This path has a regular and detailed order of educational levels. Starting from the elementary level, formal education continues its journey through the secondary level to the higher education level (8). On the other hand, non-formal education is an alternative to education that occurs outside the formal system. This type of education can be held with an organized structure and progress (9). Some examples of non-formal education include activities in mosques, pesantren, Sunday schools, churches, and so on (10,11). Through a long educational process, it can form a disciplinary character in students.

The objectives of education according to the National Education System Law number 20 of 2003 are: The development of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledge-
able, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Ideally, the educational objectives listed in the law already reflect three main domains, namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (12). However, according to the author, the disciplinary aspect is one of the important educational goals to achieve. Discipline in students can be in the form of compliance with rules and regulations listed in one institution or school (13). Disciplined behavior in order can cause order in society (14). Disciplinary behavior in students can be formed in several ways including: Education, Training, Habituation (habits), and so on (15).

One form of how to form student discipline is the habituation method (habits). In a Journal article entitled "To Investigate the Process of Habit Formation in Everyday Life" published in 2009 in The European Journal of Social Psychology, it is explained that the process of forming habits takes approximately 76 days on average (16), this means that a continuous process of training and habituation is needed.

Charles Duhigg, author of "The Power of Habit," explains that habits can last a long time because of a psychological pattern called a "habit loop." This habit loop consists of four stages that explain how a habit can be formed. These stages are first, Trigger: This is the first stage in the habit loop. Triggers are certain stimuli or situations that trigger the emergence of habits. These triggers can be anything, such as location, time, mood, or other actions that stimulate the brain to start a certain habit. Second, Routine: This is the second stage, where the actions or behaviors that become habitual are performed. These routines can be physical actions, thoughts, or emotions that occur consistently after a trigger. Third, Reward: The third stage is the reward linked to the routine. After carrying out the routine, the brain feels satisfied or gets a certain satisfaction. This creates a bond between routine and a sense of enjoyment, so the brain becomes more inclined to repeat this habit in the future. Fourth, Imperative: This is the fourth stage that appears over time. Compulsion is a growing psychological urge to feel "hungry" for the reward or satisfaction provided by habit. This craving reinforces the cycle of habit, because the stronger the craving, the more likely a person will perform the routine again (17).

This long process must be carried out continuously or in Japanese culture and tradition known as Kaizen principles (18). Therefore, with this principle, Japan can become a developed country and have a high level of discipline, because this principle means the basis of going and continuing Improvement (19).

One theory that is developing at this time is the theory of atomic habits. This theory explains that small habits can have an impact on very large changes. The assumption is like breaking an ice cube using a hammer. Where there are several beats that are done continuously. In the first knock James Clear explains that there is no destruction in the ice cubes, but in the knocks that several times can only be seen the results of the destruction of the ice cubes (20,21).

The application of atomic habits according to the author can be seen in ICC Pahang. The continuous application of small habit-building methods yields remarkable results. This can be seen based on our observations and shows that the level
of discipline here is quite good. ICC Pahang is one of the learning studios in Malaysia. This learning center is under the auspices of the Indonesian Consulate General in Johor Bahru. This learning center is intended as a learning medium for Indonesian immigrant children in Kuantan Pahang, Malaysia (21).

Based on the author’s observations, it shows that the ICC Pahang learning center is located on Jalan Seri Damai Perdana Batu 6, Jalan Gambang 25150 Kuantan Pahang. In the studio there is one manager and also concurrently as a teacher who guides approximately 20 students who are divided into several rombels. There is one additional teacher, namely for the recitation class which is held on Saturdays. Students consist of grade 1 to grade 6. Learning activities start at 08:00 to 13.00 Malaysia time for Monday-Thursday. As for Friday, they enter at 08:00 and leave at 11:00.

Based on the results of the author’s interview with the manager, there are still many Indonesian citizens who work in Pahang and do not have official records of residence permit documents in Malaysia (22). Because of its illegal existence, the children of those born here do not have an official civil registry. They were forced to study at this study studio at ICC Pahang (23).

This complex problem in Malaysia makes it difficult to access education for the children of migrant workers born here (24). Deviant behavior and outside Islamic law often occurs in migrant workers from Indonesia (25). It happens because of the distant existence of the family and less strict control (26,27). Free sex behavior is rife here. The result is that children born in addition to not having official document records, they also do not receive religious recognition and even more harshly they are labeled as illegitimate children (28). This is very sad and has a long-term impact on the child’s psychology (29).

Life phenomena that occur at this time such as moral degradation boil down to bad habits that are always repeated in the family, environment, and society in general (30). This is a concern because the pattern of bad habits in their families and neighborhoods will have a long impact if improvements are not made. So with this atomic habits pattern, the author tries to help managers in the application of good habituation. In reality, Atomic habits have been applied in this ICC Pahang learning center, the author here helps perfect the atomic habits pattern (21).

The purpose of this Indonesian-owned learning center in Malaysia is certainly a form of concern from the state to provide good education to all children born in Malaysia to break the chain of ignorance that has occurred for years. This is in line with the Preamble Constitution of the 1945 Constitution which commands to educate the life of the nation. And of course, the hope of the establishment of this learning center is as the basic capital to repatriate the nation’s children born here to return to their homeland so that they can get a better education to university (31).
2 Implementation Method

This Community Service was held at ICC Pahang which is located at No, B21, Second Floor, Jalan Seri Damai Perdana Batu 6, Jalan Gambang 25150 Kuantan Pahang. The purpose of this service is to improve students' ability to get used to forming good and consistent habit patterns in their implementation. The output target of this service is to shape the disciplinary character of students through habituation of small things. This activity was attended by 20 ICC Pahang students.

The steps of the implementation method in this activity consist of planning, implementation, and evaluation. A detailed planning stage helps in identifying goals, objectives, and steps to be taken. At the implementation stage, the use of structured and organized methods ensures that the course of activities is in accordance with the initial plan, while efficiently managing time and resources. A thorough evaluation allows us to recognize positive aspects and shortcomings, learn from mistakes, and make improvements for a better future.

2.1 Planning

Field Observation

The method of observation and analysis known as community environmental observation centers on human interaction with their environment. The main purpose of this observation is to understand people's behavior patterns, habits, traditions, and values towards their environment (32). We can find out how people adapt to their natural and social environment by observing the environment of the local community (33).

Target Student Setting

Looking at the results of observations in the field, the selection of all students is the right decision, because basically they have been trained to get used to small things and routinely implemented. It is hoped that with this program the consistency of their discipline through atomic habits can be carried out well (21).

Program Development

In this case, the program that is prepared is adjusted to the needs in the field, according to the observations made, the program that suits the needs is physical fitness (34).
Implementation and Socialization Permit to the Manager

The next stage is to ask permission and also socialize to the Pahang ICC manager, this is very important because this can avoid conflicts or discrepancies. It can also improve existing ideas and ideas plus innovations that will be implemented. In this case, the manager also has the power to allow or not this service to be carried out (35).

2.2 Evaluation

In research methodology, evaluation is a term that refers to the process of collecting and analyzing data to evaluate the success, effectiveness, and suitability of research (36). Evaluation is very important in the learning process because it serves as a valid source of data about students' abilities, which will help teachers make decisions about learning (37). In addition, evaluation helps educators better manage classes and improve themselves (38). Furthermore, the devotees compared the results of students' habits after being given creative classes and physical fitness classes and before, this was done to find out if there was an improvement in their discipline (34).

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Implementation

The application of existing programs plus several initiated programs such as gymnastics before learning and also providing creative classes to students can give students new experiences. In its implementation, the author is given flexibility by the manager to provide additional programs. Among the technicalities of its implementation are the following:

Reading Prayers before Learning

Before learning, they were taught to regularly read prayers while standing. The custom is to read Surah Al-Fatiyah and pray before studying together. This activity is a routine activity carried out by ICC Pahang and the result is that children have the ability to memorize daily prayers.
Fig. 1. Students read a prayer before class.

**Physical Fitness Gymnastics**

This physical fitness gymnastics is an additional program of the author. Providing a good experience to students through moderate exercise can form a healthy lifestyle (39,40).

Fig. 2. Students do physical fitness gymnastics.
Learning

After doing gymnastics, they began to enter their respective classes. Learning according to a predetermined schedule. The uniqueness of ICC Pahang is that it always reviews some light lessons that have been given. Such as memorizing Pancasila, the names of the Prophet, the names of Angels, the pillars of faith, the pillars of Islam, and several other memorizations. This is done consistently every day so that this pattern is closely related to the theory of atomic habits.

Fig. 3. Students Conduct Learning.
Rest

After doing the learning is the hour of rest. They are given about 40 minutes to rest.

Creative Class

This creative class program is given 3 times a month. They are taught to make toy cars from old bottles. They are very enthusiastic in participating in this creative class. This class gives students experience new things to increase the level of creativity in the brain (41).
**Tidying Up the Class**

After finishing the lesson, they tidy up the class together while being supervised by the teacher (42). The bench table used was tidied back to its original place and then neatly arranged. Some of them sweep and mop the floor and some throw plastic garbage into a larger trash can (43). This activity is routine and has become a habit before returning home at ICC Pahang.
Pray Before Going Home

After tidying up the classroom, they lined up and prayed before returning home. When in line, teachers motivate students to continue to develop their potential well (44). After that, they walked out of the classroom in an orderly manner while shaking hands with the teacher (45).
3.2 Results of Implementation and Analysis

The results of the implementation of the Atomic habits method in shaping the disciplinary character of students at ICC Pahang produced a significant impact. Through this program, students successfully form positive habits such as reading prayers before lessons, participating in physical fitness exercises, and tidying up their skills (21). Consistency in implementing these habits helps create a positive routine and provides structure in students’ lives. The applied habituation method leads to discipline, responsibility, and hard work (46). The repetition of these positive habits allows students to internalize those values, thus forming a strong disciplinary character. In addition, students are also actively involved in additional programs such as creative classes, which give them opportunities to express their creativity and develop new skills outside the academic curriculum (43). The results of this study have far-reaching implications in the context of education and character building. The use of the Atomic habits approach can be adopted by other educational institutions to help students form a disciplined and positive character. By paying attention to the formation of small habits, schools can play an active role in helping students achieve independence and balanced personal development. Furthermore, the program demonstrates that a supportive and structured environment and efficient time management are key in maintaining activity consistency and forming positive habits. The success of this program also confirms the importance of the habituation approach in shaping student character, as well as its relevance to broader national educational goals. Thus, the implementation of the Atomic habits method at ICC Pahang provides valuable insights on how to shape the disciplinary character of students through continuous small habituation.
4 Conclusion

In the context of efforts to shape the disciplinary character of students at ICC Pahang, the implementation of the Atomic habits method has brought meaningful results. This program has proven that the formation of small habits has a big impact on students' discipline, responsibility, and character development. Through regular habituation such as reading prayers before lessons, participating in physical fitness gymnastics, and tying up classes, students have been able to create a more regular and positive lifestyle. The key to success in this implementation is the repetition of positive habits, which are in line with the principles of the Atomic habits method. By paying attention to the small details of everyday life, students have succeeded in forming a disciplined character based on good habits. In addition, additional programs such as creative classes have also enriched students' experiences and provided them with opportunities to develop creativity and skills beyond academics. The positive results of this service have important implications for the world of education as a whole. The habituation approach in shaping character has proven effective and can be adopted by other educational institutions. A supportive and structured environment, as well as efficient time management, play a central role in maintaining consistency and continuity of positive habits. In conclusion, the programme was not only successful in shaping the disciplinary character of students at ICC Pahang, but also made a valuable contribution to the view on wider education. The implementation of the atomic habits method has paved the way for a more focused approach to the formation of positive habits in order to build strong student character and integrity.

References

43. Prasetyarini A, Hikmat MH, Thoyibi M. Strategies to Cope With Students’ Discipline


Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.