



Development of a guidebook for implementing the seven habits of great Indonesian children in early childhood education

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Abstract. Character habituation in early childhood frequently breaks down at home, so the seven habits promoted by the Indonesian Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education are internalized inconsistently. This study aimed to develop a school–family collaborative guidebook for implementing the seven habits in early childhood education and to determine its validity, practicality, and implementation outcomes. The ADDIE model was applied at Rajawali Kindergarten, Juwana, from February to May 2025. Six experts and practitioners assessed the product using a 16-item, four-point questionnaire, while implementation with 46 children aged 3–6 years was studied qualitatively through observation, interviews, and daily journals, with trustworthiness established through triangulation and peer checking. Validation reached 97.7% overall content 97.5%, language 96.9%, presentation and design 96.9%, and 100% for practicality, placing the guidebook in the very feasible category. During implementation, positive responses ranged from 58% to 88%

among parents and from 70% to 98% among teachers, the school–home gap reaching 38 percentage points for eating healthy food. The guidebook and its journal are therefore feasible for sustaining habituation across both settings, although habits governed by household routines change more slowly. Schools should pair the guidebook with parenting sessions and periodic journal review.

Introduction

Holistic-integrative education emphasizes child-centered learning processes that simultaneously nurture the cognitive, affective, social, and physical dimensions of the child (Suarta & Rahayu, 2018). This perspective is especially relevant in the earliest years of life. Yusuf et al. (2023) explain that the ages of 0–6, often referred to as the golden age, constitute a sensitive period during which children are exceptionally receptive to environmental stimuli. During this phase, the brain develops rapidly, and the foundations of personality, values, and behavior begin to take shape. At this stage, children respond to various forms of stimulation, including intentional and unintentional educational efforts (Yusuf et al., 2023). Because the experiences absorbed during this period tend to persist into later life, early childhood represents a strategic window for cultivating positive character. Any intervention intended to shape children's habits should therefore be introduced early, delivered consistently, and reinforced across the environments where children grow and learn.

One of the most effective ways to nurture character in early childhood is habituation. Habituation practices in schools are structured, consistent activities deliberately designed to develop students' positive, high-quality character (Maela et al., 2023). Through repetition and routine, desirable behaviors are gradually internalized until they become part of a child's natural disposition. Positive habituation shapes character and influences students' perspectives and ways of thinking as they apply noble moral values (Ristiyanto et al., 2023; Liska & Suastra, 2024). However, school is not the only environment in which children learn and form habits. Parental involvement in children's education is essential to ensure shared perceptions and alignment in educational content, thereby supporting continuity between learning experiences at home and at school (Suliaswati et al., 2024). When the values taught at school are mirrored and reinforced at home, children receive a coherent, uninterrupted learning experience that accelerates the formation of good habits and deepens their understanding of why those habits matter.

In practice, however, this continuity is frequently disrupted. The research background reveals that many parents believe education is entirely the school's responsibility, while supervision at home receives comparatively little attention. A preliminary study at the research site supports this: parents reported that they did not monitor the seven habits at home daily and regarded character education as primarily the school's responsibility. As a consequence, the habits nurtured during school hours are often not sustained once children return home. Compounding this problem, children today increasingly feel more comfortable interacting with gadgets than with family members or neighborhood peers. This situation creates confusion in children's understanding and weakens the consistency of habituation, ultimately producing suboptimal outcomes for the very practices introduced at school. The gap between school-based and home-based habituation therefore emerges as a central obstacle to effective character education in the early years, and it points to the need for an instrument that connects the two environments around a shared set of practices and expectations.

The growing presence of technology in children's daily lives further underscores the need for active parental guidance. A study indicates that intrinsic enjoyment of physical and recreational activities remains important despite rapid technological advancement. Technology-based character education must therefore be paired with parental guidance so children understand the meaning behind their actions rather than merely imitating them. Encouragingly, evidence shows that many children actively enjoy and independently choose to engage in sports, dancing, swimming, or outdoor play (Beech et al., 2021; Muliadi et., 2025). This suggests that, with appropriate direction from both parents and teachers, children's natural inclinations can be channeled into healthy, meaningful, and lasting habits that counterbalance excessive screen time and passive forms of entertainment.

The family, as the first and most enduring environment in a child's life, plays an irreplaceable role in this process. Lestaringtyas (2024) states that parents are one of the key groups contributing to the success of school programmes. Epstein (2018) framework of overlapping spheres of influence positions school, family, and community as partly shared environments whose alignment determines the coherence of a child's learning experience, while Ma et al. (2026) and Ristić Dedić & Jokić (2023) research show that involvement depends on parents' role construction and sense of efficacy two conditions that a shared, explicit guide can address directly. In line with this, expert said, education within the family environment constitutes the most fundamental form of education for children Şahİn (2023), shaping their character Alazemi et al. (2024), personality Lone & Albotuaiba (2022), and intellectual development Pereira et al. (2021) as preparation for meaningful participation in society in the future. Students spend intensive learning time at school, where teachers' habituation practices provide meaningful experiences to apply in daily life. Parents, on the other hand, spend considerably more time with their children and therefore have greater

opportunities to reinforce habituation and consolidate character (Shubert et al., 2022). For this reason, continuity between habituation practices at school and at home is not merely beneficial but essential.

The benefits of strong character extend well beyond the classroom. Character strengthening is positively associated with various aspects of children's well-being, particularly life satisfaction, happiness, and positive environmental influences (Karris Bachik et al., 2021). Moreover, a collaborative and interactive learning environment for today's learners requires the development of self-directed learning skills, creative thinking, problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration (Perez & Montoya, 2022). Sustained continuity between habituation at school and at home fosters aligned understanding in children, enabling them to consistently apply positive character values across every setting they inhabit (Kim & Sheridan, 2015). In this sense, school–family collaboration is not only a strategy for character formation but also a foundation for the broader competencies children will need throughout their education and lives.

Despite the widely recognized importance of school–family collaboration Gerdes et al., (2022), practical instruments that explicitly bridge habituation between the two environments remain limited, particularly within the context of the Indonesian Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education's Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children program. Existing efforts often address either the school or the home in isolation, leaving teachers and parents without a shared, structured reference to guide consistent practice (Lorence et al., 2024). The available resources differ from the present product in three ways. *First*, partnership frameworks and meta-analytic evidence establish that involvement matters without supplying a joint daily tool Asrifan et al. (2025); Epstein (2018). *Second*, canonical character-education resources treat the school as the unit of implementation and parents as recipients of information LaBrot et al., (2026); and *third*, Indonesian collaboration models emphasize managerial coordination rather than the behavioral continuity of specific habits (Bariroh et al., 2025; Suliaswati et al., 2024).

The novelty of this guidebook therefore lies in being a single dual-audience artifact: parallel school and home chapters for the same seven habits, a daily journal that makes home practice auditable, and shared developmental rubrics. Accordingly, this research aims to develop a book that inspires the implementation of the “Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children” in early childhood by involving systematic collaboration between parents and schools in cultivating habituation practices. This research is urgent because it develops the Book Project of the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children to deepen understanding and strengthen implementation through structured collaboration between schools and parents. Equipped with daily journals and sample activities as practical references, the book is designed to help and encourage readers to apply the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children with their own children, ensuring the continuity of character habituation in the early years.

This study therefore aims to (1) analyse existing habituation practices for the seven habits at school and at home; (2) develop the school–family collaborative guidebook through the ADDIE model; (3) determine its validity and practicality on the aspects of content, language, presentation and design, and practicality; and (4) evaluate its implementation through teacher and parent responses and children's behavioural change across the seven habits.

Method

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach operationalized through the ADDIE instructional design model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) to systematically produce, validate, and evaluate an educational product: a school–

family collaborative guidebook for habituating the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children in early childhood. The development process was iterative: outputs from each stage informed revisions in subsequent stages, and evaluation findings were fed back to the analysis stage. The final product was assessed against two developmental criteria, namely validity and practicality, consistent with established standards for educational design research.

Participants

Two groups of participants were involved, both selected through purposive sampling. The first group comprised six experts and practitioners (R1–R6) who validated the product, chosen for their relevant qualifications and experience, including two academicians from Universitas Muria Kudus, three kindergarten principals holding master’s degrees in Early Childhood Education, and one kindergarten teacher with a master’s in Early Childhood Education. This composition ensured coverage of both academic substance and field practicality. The second group consisted of the intended end-users involved in the implementation stage: 46 early childhood learners aged 3–6 years, together with their parents and classroom teachers at Rajawali Kindergarten, Juwana. The researchers used total sampling for this group, as all enrolled children and their associated parents and teachers participated in the field trial. Experts and practitioners assessed the product and provided revision input; teachers facilitated habituation at school and completed the observation records; parents implemented habituation at home and filled in the daily journal; and the children were the subjects whose behavioral indicators were observed. Participants are cited below by code (R = validator, T = teacher, P = parent, FN = observation field note) to preserve anonymity.

Research Setting and Timeline

The study was conducted at Rajawali Kindergarten in Juwana, Pati Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. This institution was selected because it implements the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education’s Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children programme and provided an authentic context in which the continuity of character habituation between school and home could be examined. The setting encompassed both the school environment, where teachers facilitated structured habituation activities, and the home environment, where parents reinforced the same habits using the guidebook and daily journal. The research was carried out over approximately four months, from February to May 2025.

Research Procedures

The product was developed through the five sequential yet iterative stages of the ADDIE model shown in Image 1, as follows:

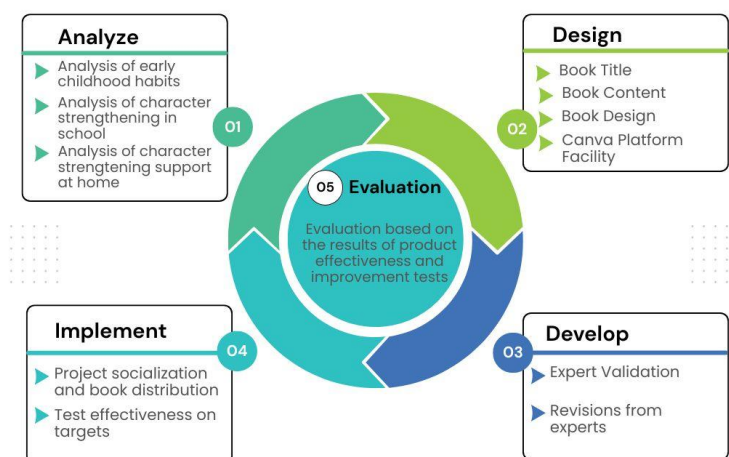


Image 1. ADDIE Design

Analysis

At this stage the analysis examined field conditions relating to the manifestation of good habits in early childhood, covering three matters: the positive habits already displayed by children in their daily behaviour; the forms of character strengthening implemented by the early childhood education (ECE/PAUD) institution for its students; and the forms and effectiveness of the habituation practices carried out by parents in fostering good habits at home.

Design

The book is entitled “Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children: A School–Family Collaborative Guide.” It consists of five chapters: Chapter I, School–Parent Collaboration; Chapter II, The Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children; Chapter III, The Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at School; Chapter IV, The Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at Home; and Chapter V, Conclusion. The book also includes a user guide to help readers understand the content and apply it effectively. In addition, it includes supplementary documents for school-based activities (parenting programs) and a daily journal for implementing the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at home.

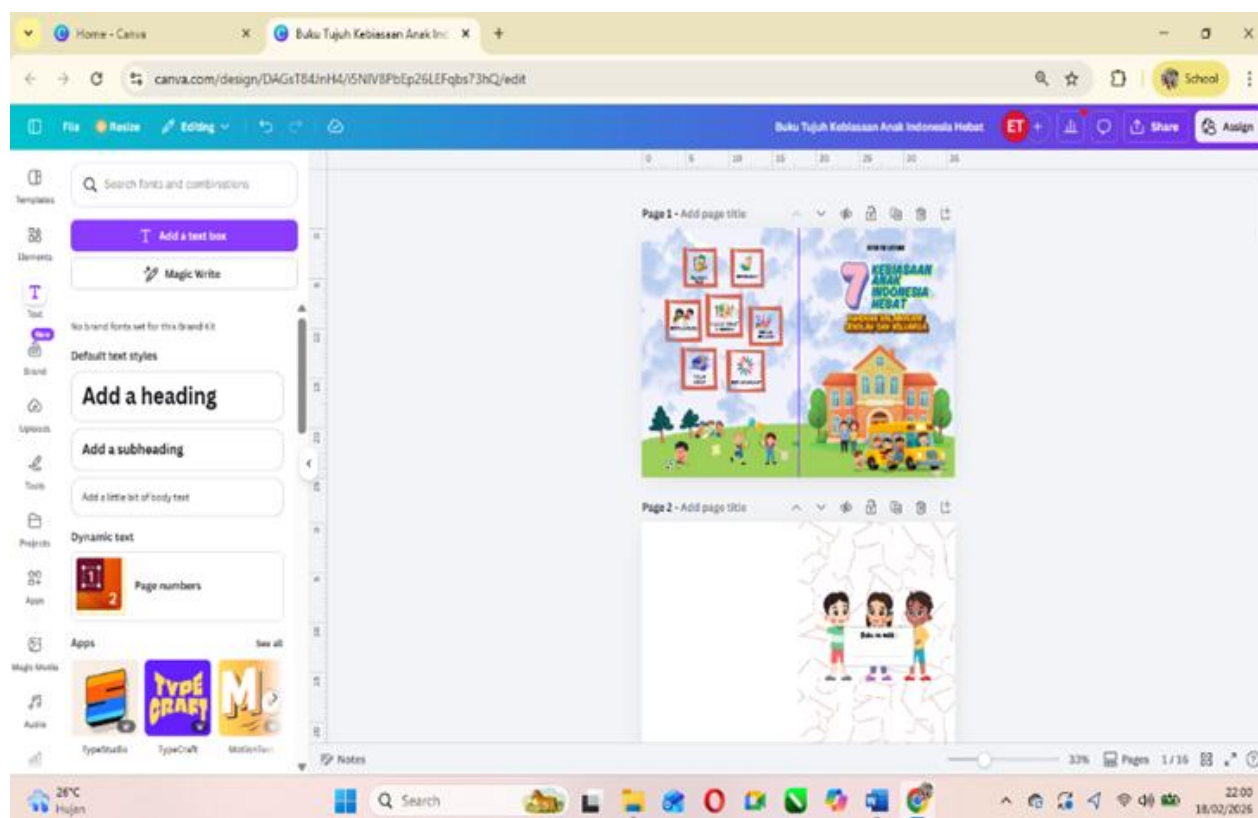


Image 2. Book Development Using Canva Platform

The product specifications are as follows. The guidebook is a 44-page work produced on the Canva platform and available in printed and PDF form, comprising a title page, an owner identity page, a preface, a table of contents, a user guide, five chapters, and appendices containing the parenting-programme documents and the daily habituation journal. It is set in [insert paper size] format with an early childhood visual theme, and is intended for teachers and parents of children aged 3–6 years.

Development

To ensure that the resulting book product is valid and meets standards, the researcher conducted expert validation. The researcher further developed the book by revising it based on the validation results and expert feedback.

Table 1. Expert's Background

Respondent	Gender	Background
R1	M	Lecturer, Master of Primary Education, Muria Kudus University
R2	M	Lecturer, Master of Primary Education, Muria Kudus University
R3	F	Kindergarten Principal, Master of Early Childhood Education, Muria Kudus University
R4	F	Kindergarten Principal, Master of Early Childhood Education, Semarang State University
R5	F	Kindergarten Principal, Master of Early Childhood Education, Open University
R6	F	Kindergarten Teacher, Master of Early Childhood Education, Semarang State University

Implementation

The validated guidebook and daily journal were distributed and applied in a real setting at the kindergarten, involving 46 children, their parents, and teachers. We monitored usage through classroom observation, while teachers and parents documented home habituation in the journals.



Image 3. Distribution of the Book and Journal

Evaluation

Product quality, target suitability, and user response were assessed using data from the implementation stage. Findings were used to refine the product by returning to the analysis stage, closing the iterative development loop.

Data Collection Techniques and Research Instruments

Data were gathered using three complementary techniques: expert validation, observation, and semi-structured interviews, supported by the instruments mapped in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Grid of Data Collection Techniques and Research Instruments

No.	Instrument / Technique	Aspect & Indicators	Respondent	Items
1	Expert validation questionnaire (4-point Likert scale)	Content/substance: alignment with the seven habits, accuracy, completeness, age-appropriateness	6 experts / practitioners (R1–R6)	5
2	Expert validation questionnaire (4-point Likert scale)	Language: clarity, readability, consistency of terms	6 experts / practitioners (R1–R6)	4
3	Expert validation questionnaire (4-point Likert scale)	Presentation & design: layout, colour contrast, illustration, typography	6 experts / practitioners (R1–R6)	4
4	Expert validation questionnaire (4-point Likert scale)	Practicality/usability: ease of use, applicability at school and home, usefulness of the daily journal	6 experts / practitioners (R1–R6)	3
5	Observation sheet (checklist + field notes)	Children's behavioural indicators across the seven habits during school activities	46 children (aged 3–6)	7
6	Semi-structured interview guide	Practicality, perceived benefit, and barriers to implementing the seven habits at school and home	Teachers & parents	10

Instrument

Three instruments were used. The expert validation questionnaire contained 16 items on a four-point Likert scale (1 = not appropriate to 4 = very appropriate), distributed across content/substance (5 items), language (4), presentation and design (4), and practicality (3), each item accompanied by an open column in which the validator recorded a written judgement. The observation sheet carried seven indicators, one for each habit, together with a space for field notes. The semi-structured interview guide contained ten questions. This combination was chosen because the product required expert judgement of quality, behavioural evidence of use in the setting, and user perceptions of practicality.

The trustworthiness of its data was established through triangulation and peer checking. Source triangulation compared the accounts given by teachers, by parents, and by the children's observed behaviour; technique triangulation compared expert validation, observation, interview, and daily journal entries addressing the same seven habits; and time triangulation compared observations made at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the four-month period. A finding was retained only where at least two sources converged, and points of divergence were reported rather than reconciled.

Peer checking took two forms. A written summary of each interview and observation record was returned to the teacher or parent concerned for confirmation or correction before analysis, and the coded findings were then discussed with two early childhood education lecturers who took no part in the validation, whose questions were used to test alternative readings of the data before the themes were settled. For the product itself, which still required formal assessment, each of the six validators scored all 16 items; the achieved score for an aspect was the sum of the ratings given to its items by all validators, and the maximum was the number of items multiplied by four and by six, so that $P = (\text{achieved} \div \text{maximum}) \times 100\%$ could be interpreted against Table 3.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the expert validation were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Scores were converted into percentages and mean values, then interpreted against the feasibility criteria in Table

3 to determine product validity and practicality. Qualitative data from interviews and observation were analyzed thematically following the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Effectiveness was examined by calculating the percentage of positive responses for each of the seven habits among teachers and parents, complemented by observed behavioral change. A product was deemed feasible when it attained at least the “feasible” category as described in Table 3 ($\geq 61\%$) on all validation aspects and was supported by positive user responses during implementation. Interview transcripts, observation field notes, and journal entries were open-coded, categorized, and grouped into three themes: practicality, perceived benefit, and barriers, with each theme retained only after it had survived source and technique triangulation and the two rounds of peer checking described above.

Table 3. Feasibility Interpretation Criteria

Score range (%)	Category	Decision
81 – 100	Very feasible/very valid	Usable without revision
61 – 80	Feasible/valid	Usable with minor revision
41 – 60	Fairly feasible	Major revision required
21 – 40	Less feasible	Not usable, revise
0 – 20	Not feasible	Replace product

Results and Discussion

Analysis Stage

At the analysis stage, habituation was found to be structured at school but weakly sustained at home, with character education regarded as primarily the school’s responsibility; teachers also reported no shared reference for aligning home practice with classroom routines. These findings established the requirement for a dual-audience guide equipped with a home monitoring instrument.

Design and Development Stage

The book, created using the Canva application, is 44 pages long. It consists of a Title Page, Book Owner Identity Page, Author’s Preface, Table of Contents, User Guide, Chapter I: School and Parent Collaboration, Chapter II: The Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children, Chapter III: The Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at School, Chapter IV: The Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at Home, Chapter V: Conclusion, and Appendices (supporting documents for parenting activities at school and a daily journal for implementing the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at home).

The book materials were developed based on the guidelines of the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children issued by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024, character education theory by [Thomas Lickona \(1991\)](#); [Lickona \(2004\)](#), school management principles, and other relevant research. Each section is concise and simple, making it accessible to users from diverse backgrounds. The book’s layout and design are tailored to its target audience and feature an early childhood education theme.

Experts and practitioners with backgrounds in early childhood education (ECE) validated the book. The evaluation covered content/substance, language, presentation and design, and usability (practicality). Table 4 reports the achieved score, mean, percentage, and category for each aspect. Overall, the validation results indicate that the book falls within the feasible to highly feasible category for use as a guiding medium for fostering character habits in early childhood, both at school and at home. The book meets the criteria for content appropriateness, language clarity,

design quality, and practicality, with minor recommendations to improve visual aspects (color contrast) and refine the language in several sections. With these revisions, the book is recommended for use as an applicable and sustainable guide for developing character habits in early childhood.

Table 4. Expert Validation Results by Evaluation Aspect (n = 6 validators)

Evaluation aspect	Items	Score/Max	Mean (1–4)	P (%)	Category
Content/substance	5	117/120	3.90	97.5	Very feasible
Language	4	93/96	3.88	96.9	Very feasible
Presentation and design	4	93/96	3.88	96.9	Very feasible
Practicality/usability	3	72/72	4.00	100.0	Very feasible
Overall	16	375/384	3.91	97.7	Very feasible

Practicality achieved the highest achievement (100%), with all six validators awarding the maximum to each of its three items, followed by content/substance (97.5%) and language and presentation and design (96.9% each). Individual validator totals ranged from 93.8% to 100%, and every aspect fell within the “very feasible” band ($\geq 81\%$), so the product was declared usable with minor revision. Two items accounted for most of the shortfall, each at 91.7%: the adequacy of the illustrations, which carried the single lowest rating in the matrix, and the appeal of the language style. The written comments identified the corresponding revisions, lightening the background behind body text so that the type remains legible (R3), adding interrogative sentences and warm openings to build rapport with the reader (R6), and refining spelling consistency in several sections (R4), and all three were addressed before the implementation stage.

Implementation Stage

The implementation aimed to determine the product's success and benefits so it can function effectively in real-world settings. In line with the practical and applicative nature of this book, it is intended to be implemented according to field conditions (pragmatic), which have their own unique characteristics. By conducting this effectiveness test, the book is expected to achieve its intended impact: ensuring consistent implementation of the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children at school and at home.

In this project, the effectiveness test was conducted with teachers, parents, and students of TK Rajawali Juwana, involving 46 children. The study used interviews and direct observation during classroom learning activities. Both teachers and parents responded positively to the book's presence. They considered it beneficial for strengthening character development in line with the characteristics of early childhood learners.

Overall, the interview results indicate that most teachers consider the habituation book project effective in helping schools implement the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children in a more structured and well-documented manner. Teachers feel supported by journals and guidelines that make it easier to monitor children's habit development. Positive teacher responses ranged from 70% to 98%, compared with 58% to 88% for parents, with the gap reaching 38 percentage points for eating healthy food and 12 for going to bed on time. From the parents' perspective, most stated that the project book is practical, easy to understand, and helps them guide their children more consistently at home. The main challenges identified in the global data are consistent with previous studies like [Bekelman et al. \(2019\)](#); [Knobl et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Schuler et al. \(2020\)](#), including limited time for parental assistance and differences in family environmental conditions, which affect the consistency of implementing certain habits, especially healthy eating and going to bed early.

The three themes were expressed consistently across sources. On practicality, a teacher observed that *“before this, each of us explained the seven habits in her own way; now the school chapter and the home chapter say the same thing, so what I tell a parent at the gate matches what she reads at home”* (T02), while another valued the rubric at parent meetings: *“I no longer just say the child is good, I can show which indicator has developed and which has not”* (T04). On perceived benefit, a parent reported that *“the journal is what makes the difference; before, I only reminded him, but now there is a column to fill in every night, so I can see which habit is often left empty”* (P07), and another linked the parenting session to a change in household rules: *“I did not know that going to bed early was also a school programme; after the meeting my husband and I agreed on nine o’clock”* (P21). On barriers, the accounts converged on the two habits with the lowest parent ratings: *“I work until five, so in the evening the child is with his grandmother, and the journal is often filled in the next morning from memory”* (P14), and *“at school he eats what is provided, but at home he asks for instant noodles and I give in because I am tired”* (P33).

Evaluation Stage

The implementation of the project shows that the habituation project book can gradually encourage changes in children’s behavior and strengthen collaboration between schools and families. Although not all habits have shown uniform improvement among all students, the project has provided a strong foundation for strengthening early childhood character education through structured, contextual, and meaningful daily practices. This book serves as a catalyst for schools and parents, fostering awareness and commitment to consistently carry out positive practices.

The implementation of the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children book project shows that structured collaboration between schools and parents positively affects the consistency of character habituation in early childhood. This collaboration was carried out through program socialization and perception alignment, the use of daily habituation journals at home, regular communication via WhatsApp groups and parenting meetings, and joint evaluation of children’s development.

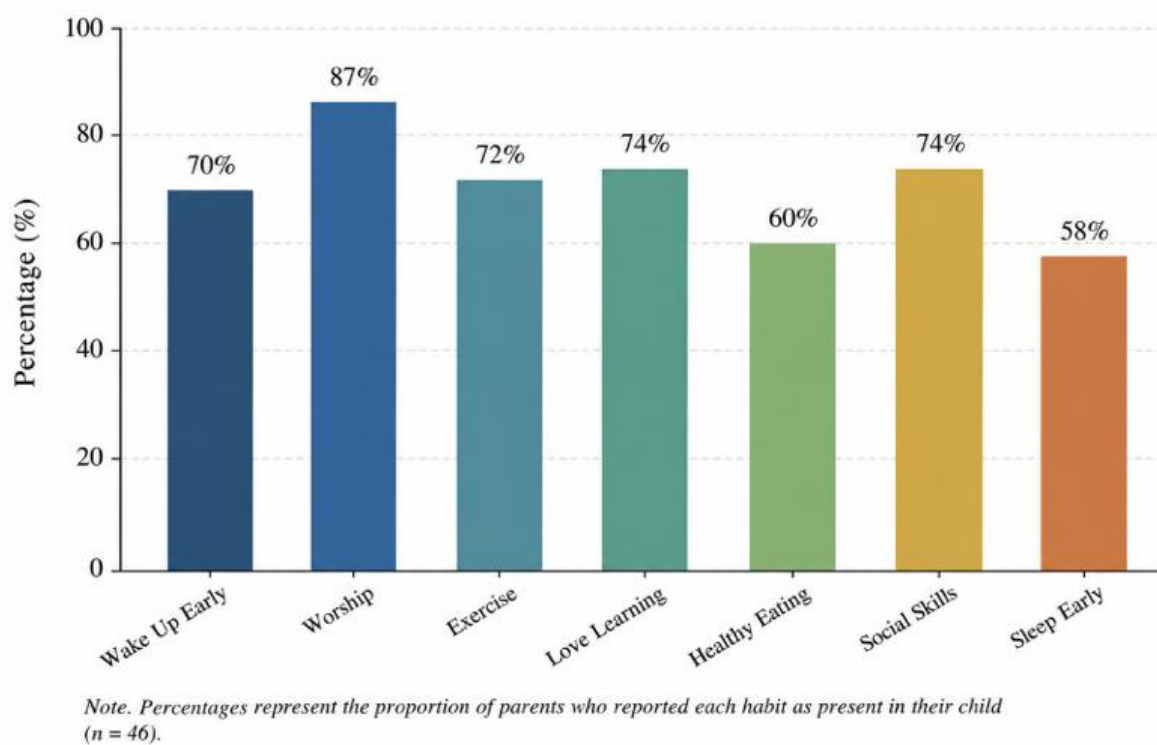
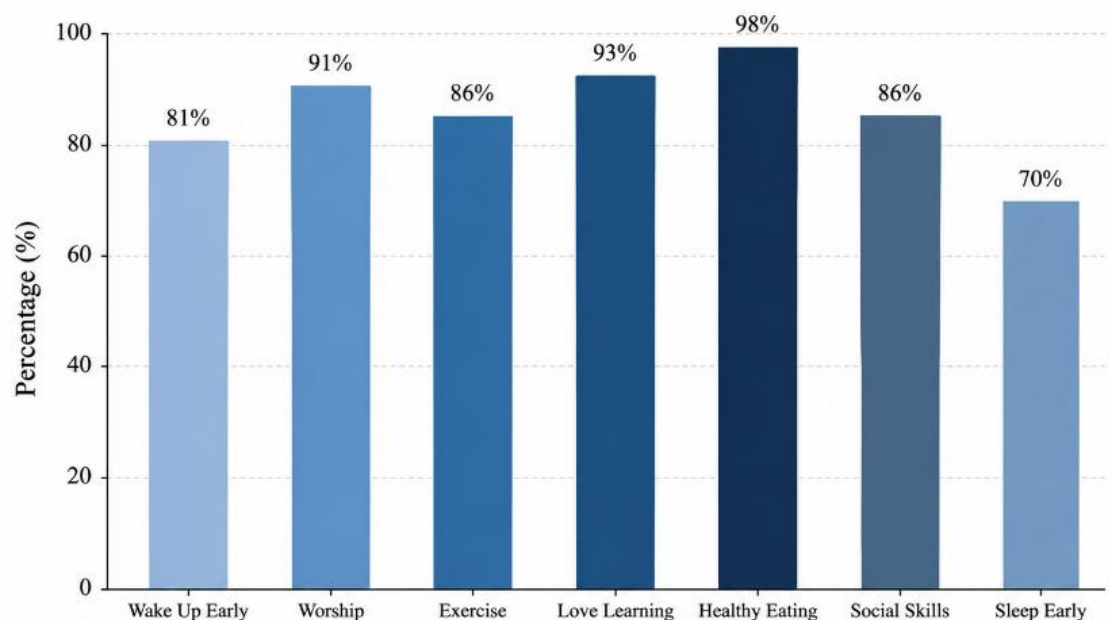


Image 4. Parent’s Interview Results



Note. Percentages represent the proportion of teachers who reported each habit as present in their students ($n = 46$).

Image 5. Teacher's Interview Results

Based on the results of the parent interviews ($n = 46$), the highest percentage of positive responses was found in the habit of worship (88%), followed by a love of learning and social engagement (each at 74%), as well as exercising (72%). The lowest positive responses were found in the habits of going to bed early (58%) and eating healthy and nutritious food (60%). Meanwhile, the results of the teacher interviews show relatively higher percentages of positive responses across almost all habits, with the highest achievements in the habits of eating healthy and nutritious food (98%), a love of learning (93%), and worship (90%). The habit of going to bed early showed the lowest achievement (70%).

The observation records show the same pattern developing over time. The greeting and prayer routine improve better, while tidying up after free play still required repeated verbal reminders from the teacher (FN-02). Children were reminding one another to wash their hands before the snack, and lunch boxes containing fruit were opened and commented on, although packaged snacks remained common (FN-09). Children arriving before the bell placed their bags and shoes on the racks without instruction, and the tidying routine that had needed repeated reminders in week 2 was completed after a single cue (FN-15). The convergence of interview, observation, and journal evidence consistent with recent findings on the school-anchored habits, and their divergence on the home-anchored ones, was confirmed by the class teachers during member checking (Redondo, 2019; Rüdiger et al., 2026).

This difference in perception indicates that implementation at school is considered more consistent than practices at home, particularly for habits that are strongly influenced by family routines (Walker et al., 2025). Strengthening the synergy between schools and parents is closely interconnected in ensuring that the habits developed in the school environment can continue and be reinforced at home (Collier-Meek & Sanetti, 2019; Wong, 2012). Through intensive communication, guided support, and shared commitment, the consistency of implementing positive habits in children can be more sustainably maintained.

The interview data from teachers and parents show that habits closely tied to school routines (such as worship, a love of learning, and exercising) tend to demonstrate more stable outcomes compared to habits that are strongly influenced by family routines (such as going to bed early and eating healthy). The implementation of the habituation project book indicates gradual yet consistent behavioral changes in children across most habit indicators.

Teachers' responses regarding the effectiveness of the book were relatively higher compared to those of parents. Teachers assessed that the book helps structure the daily habituation program in the classroom through activity guidelines, monitoring rubrics, and journals that facilitate documentation of children's behavioral development. On the other hand, parents acknowledged that the book provides clear practical steps for guiding children at home; however, consistency in implementation is still influenced by time constraints, family habits, and home environmental conditions.

The discussion on the implementation of the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Habituation Book project shows that a written guideline-based intervention combined with school-parent collaboration is able to strengthen the consistency of character habituation practices in early childhood. These findings are consistent with the literature emphasizing that habit formation in children requires a consistent environment, clear behavioral models, and repeated reinforcement within the child's daily context (Lally et al., 2010; Wood & R nger, 2016; Widana et al., 2023). In the context of early childhood education (ECE), habituation will be more effective when carried out both at school and at home. This means there must be continuity between school and home practices so that children gain a coherent learning experience.

In general, the achievement of positive responses particularly in the habits of eating healthy and nutritious food and having a love of learning from teachers tends to be higher than that of parents. This difference may be influenced by the fact that schools have stronger structures, schedules, and control over children's routines. Findings from previous studies by Landon & Pope (2026);  sterberg & Olsson (2021) and Sheldon (2015) indicate that institutional settings such as schools allow for more standardized implementation of behavioral interventions, whereas practices at home are strongly influenced by socioeconomic factors, parenting styles, parents' time availability, and family habits (Li et al., 2020a). This strengthens the argument that the guidebook developed in this project serves an important function as a "pedagogical bridge" to align perceptions and practices between school and home.

Some findings diverge from previous work. Eating healthy food scored highest among teachers (98%) but among the lowest for parents (60%), whereas Pearson et al. (2021) identify the home as the primary determinant; the teacher figure therefore reflects compliance with an enforceable lunchbox policy rather than internalised habit, as P33 makes explicit. Castro et al. (2015a) report the strongest involvement effects for academic support, while worship (88%) and social engagement (74%) led here, reflecting the visibility of ritualised routines in this context. The modest sleep-related result (58%) falls below interventions that use direct parent coaching rather than a written guide Hale & Guan (2015); Mindell et al. (2017), marking a boundary condition of guidebook-based intervention. Finally, Li et al. (2020b) attribute variation mainly to socioeconomic status, whereas parents here cited time and family routine; socioeconomic data were not collected, so this contrast remains a limitation.

Children's behavioral changes showed more moderate results in the habits of waking up early and going to bed early compared to other habits. These two habits are part of children's self-regulation, which is strongly influenced by family parenting patterns and the home environment. Longitudinal research indicates that consistent sleep routines are positively correlated with school readiness,

emotional regulation, and cognitive functioning in early childhood [Mindell et al. \(2017\)](#). Exposure to digital devices at night, family activities, and differences in parents' working hours are often major barriers to the consistent implementation of early bedtime routines [\(Hale & Guan, 2015\)](#). Therefore, the findings of this project suggest that interventions aimed at developing healthy sleep habits require additional strategies, such as parent education on bedtime preparation and the impact of nighttime screen exposure on children.

The habits of worship and social engagement, which showed relatively high improvement, reflect the strong role of values and role modeling in children's character development. Modeling by adults and peers as part of social learning has been proven effective in instilling prosocial values in early childhood [\(Bandura, 1991\)](#). Activities such as praying together, sharing, and helping friends at school function as rich social contexts for the internalization of moral values [\(Noor et al., 2026\)](#). Reinforcing similar practices at home allows children to gain consistent experiences, making these values easier to internalize. Other studies state that family involvement in character education strengthens the transfer of values from school to children's daily lives .

Furthermore, regarding the habit of exercising, the increased participation of children in physical activities indicates that integrating motor activities into daily routines at school and at home can promote an active lifestyle from an early age. Literature studies emphasize that physical activity habits formed in early childhood contribute to physical health, motor development, and long-term healthy living behaviors [\(Zeng et al., 2017\)](#). On the other hand, limited play space and parents' time constraints for supervision become inhibiting factors in the home environment. Therefore, the guidebook developed in this project plays a strategic role in providing examples of simple physical activities that can be carried out at home with minimal resources.

The implementation of healthy and nutritious eating habits presents a fairly complex challenge. Schools are able to control the types of food consumed by children through healthy lunchbox policies; however, practices at home are strongly influenced by children's preferences, family habits, and economic conditions. Research shows that nutritional interventions in early childhood become more effective when they involve parent education, the availability of healthy food, and repeated habituation through real-life modeling by adults [\(Rusmimpong et al., 2022\)](#). Based on this, the habituation book can be complemented with practical guidance on simple, affordable, and contextual menus to make it more applicable for families from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

In the habit of developing a love of learning, the increase in children's interest in enjoyable learning activities aligns with the Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) approach. Early childhood learners develop their abilities optimally through play, exploration, and social interaction. Meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences in early childhood are positively correlated with positive attitudes toward learning at subsequent levels of education [\(Bariroh et al., 2025\)](#). The project book, which includes a daily journal, has proven helpful for parents in facilitating simple learning activities at home, so that children do not perceive learning as something separate from their everyday lives.

The use of the ADDIE model in developing the book provided a systematic framework that allowed the product to be tailored to the needs of its users (teachers and parents) as well as to the school's local context. Research in educational development indicates that products designed through user needs analysis and validated by experts tend to have higher levels of acceptability and usability [\(Branch, 2009\)](#). This is reflected in the positive responses from teachers and parents regarding the clarity of the guidelines, the ease of using the journal, and the relevance of the activity examples presented in the book.

Conceptually, children's character development is the result of dynamic interactions among various systems (family, school, and the social environment), reinforcing the ecological approach in early childhood education. The synergistic role of these two parties is crucial in supporting the success of various learning activities for children, whether conducted at school or at home (Ramandhini et al., 2023). Thus, the habituation project book can function as a micro-policy instrument at the educational unit level to align character education practices between school and family.

Collaboration facilitated through the guidebook and daily journal strengthened the continuity of values between school and home. Parents were no longer merely recipients of information but became active partners in character education. Research by (Castro et al., 2015b), published in Educational Research Review, indicates that parental involvement has a significant positive correlation with children's academic and behavioral development. The habituation journal functioned as both a reflective and monitoring tool, clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of each party.

Existing models describe parental involvement as a set of roles or as a correlate of outcomes (Castro et al. (2015); Epstein (2011); Li et al. (2020), and Indonesian syntheses stress managerial coordination Bariroh et al. (2025), but none specifies the artefact through which alignment is enacted. This guidebook supplies that artefact: one shared text addressed to both parties, a journal that converts collaboration into a recorded and auditable routine, rubrics that make home and school judgements commensurable, and a programme anchoring that allows the product to work as a unit-level micro-policy instrument rather than an optional supplement.

Titze et al. (2026) emphasize that the social environment plays a crucial role in determining the stability of children's habits. The project findings indicate that when schools and families provide consistent stimuli such as praying before learning, maintaining regular wake-up schedules, and reinforcing positive behavior children internalize these habits more quickly. Conversely, inconsistencies (for example, differing bedtime rules between home and school) result in lower achievement on certain behavioral indicators.

The impact of these results is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, they specify the mechanism through which continuity operates: habit strength in early childhood depends less on the intensity of instruction in any one setting than on the consistency of cues and reinforcement across settings, which extends habit-formation accounts Lally et al. (2010); Wood & R nger (2016) into the school-family interface and gives empirical content to the ecological premise that development is shaped by interaction between microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Practically, the guidebook turns a national programme into a usable unit-level instrument, giving teachers a monitoring structure, parents an explicit script, and schools a low-cost means of making home practice visible.

Overall, the project demonstrates that structured collaboration between schools and families enhances the consistency of habituation practices in early childhood. The guidebook and journal serve as effective tools for value alignment, while a consistent environment accelerates the formation of positive habits. Family factors strongly influence the success of self-regulation-based habits, and regular communication strengthens trust and partnership between schools and parents. Variations in outcomes across habits highlight the need for differentiated intervention strategies tailored to each habit and family context. Strengthening parenting literacy, using supportive digital media, and conducting continuous monitoring could further improve the program's overall effectiveness (Widana & Ratnaya, 2021).

For wider implementation, the guidebook can be adopted where a national habituation programme is already in place, provided the introductory parenting session and the journal-review cycle are retained, since these mechanisms rather than the printed text sustained practice at home. Transfer to other sites requires re-contextualising food examples to local menus and prices, adjusting activity examples where play space is limited, and replacing the rubrics with age-appropriate indicators at higher levels; a condensed one-page or digital journal lowers the participation cost for time-poor families. Three limitations bound these claims: the trial involved a single kindergarten and 46 children over four months, no control group was used, and socioeconomic data were not collected. It is therefore recommended that schools pair the guidebook with parent education on sleep and nutrition, where achievement was weakest, and that further research test the product across multiple institutions with a comparison group and a longer follow-up.

Conclusion

The structured use of guidebooks and habituation journals significantly strengthens the early childhood character education ecosystem through synergistic collaboration between schools and parents. The implementation of this program, which encompasses seven habituation dimensions ranging from waking up early to going to bed on time has proven effective in bridging the gap between parenting practices at home and at school, while fostering positive behavioral changes in the majority of children. Although success rates varied due to the strong influence of home environments and family parenting styles where habits tied to school routines tended to be more consistent than domestic routines this project successfully equipped teachers with systematic monitoring tools and provided parents with practical guidance to maintain the continuity of values in children's character development. Two recommendations follow from these findings. Schools should combine the guidebook with an introductory parenting session and a monthly journal review, and add parent education on sleep and nutrition where those habits lag; further research should test the guidebook across several institutions with a comparison group and a longer follow-up to establish whether the behavioural gains persist once the journal is withdrawn.

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