



Strengthening Students' Religious Discipline through School Environmental Conditioning: A Behaviorist Perspective

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Abstract

Purpose – This study examines how school environmental conditioning strengthens students' religious discipline through a behaviorist perspective, focusing on environmental stimuli, behavioral responses, positive reinforcement, and religious habituation.

Design/methods/approach – This qualitative descriptive case study was conducted at SD Negeri Suger Lor 3 Bondowoso, Indonesia. Data were collected through observations, semi-structured interviews with nine purposively selected informants, and document analysis. Data analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model, supported by source and methodological triangulation.

Findings – Religious discipline was supported through structured school routines, including morning greetings, collective prayers, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and Qur'an memorization. These activities provided recurring environmental cues that encouraged religious behavior, reinforced through teacher guidance, praise, motivation, and social recognition. School leadership, teacher commitment, and parental involvement supported habituation, while inconsistent participation, peer influences, and differences between school and home environments presented challenges.

Research implications/limitations – The findings emphasize the importance of consistent school routines, teacher involvement, and positive reinforcement in supporting religious discipline. However, the single-school setting, nine informants, and short observation period limit transferability and prevent causal conclusions regarding long-term behavioral changes.

Originality/value – This study offers an integrated behavioral interpretation of school environmental conditioning by connecting antecedent conditions, student responses, reinforcement consequences, and repeated religious practices. It extends the contextual application of Skinner's operant conditioning principles to Islamic Religious Education by conceptualizing religious habituation as an interconnected behavioral process rather than a collection of isolated educational strategies.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in shaping students' personalities, character, and religious behavior. IRE is not merely concerned with the acquisition of Islamic knowledge but also emphasizes the development of attitudes, habits, and the practical application of Islamic teachings in everyday life. Therefore, the effectiveness of IRE should be evaluated not only through cognitive achievement but also through behavioral changes reflected in the consistent and disciplined performance of religious practices. Majid and Suyadi (2020) explained that behaviorist learning theory can be applied in IRE to promote behavioral changes through appropriate environmental stimuli. Similarly, Ma'arif et al. (2024) demonstrated that the internalization of Islamic character values through habituation contributes to the development of students' behavior and sense of responsibility. Dian et al. (2026) further identified religious habituation, teacher modeling, positive reinforcement, and socio-religious experiences as important mechanisms for internalizing religious values.

Religious discipline refers to students' ability to perform religious practices consistently, systematically, and in accordance with established religious norms and ethical principles. Such discipline does not develop instantaneously but emerges through continuous habituation and repeated behavioral experiences. At the elementary school level, the educational environment plays a particularly important role because children remain highly responsive to examples, instructions, and recurring patterns of behavior. Consequently, religious habituation requires consistent teacher modeling, supervision, and behavioral reinforcement. Solihah et al. (2024) found that religious character education in elementary schools can be implemented through repeated religious activities, teacher guidance, prayer habituation, and worship practices. These findings are consistent with Nadiyah et al. (2026), who emphasized the complementary roles of habituation, exemplary behavior, and positive reinforcement in Islamic Religious Education.

Nevertheless, students' religious discipline does not always develop consistently. Some students continue to perform religious activities primarily in response to teachers' instructions or school regulations, indicating that such behavior has not necessarily become an independent personal habit. This situation suggests that religious behavior formation requires repeated practice within a supportive and structured environment. School environmental conditioning is therefore important because daily routines can provide recurring opportunities for stimuli that encourage desired behaviors. Rosadi et al. (2025) demonstrated that discipline constitutes an important mechanism linking school culture with religious character formation. Meanwhile, Dian et al. (2025) emphasized the importance of systematic and comprehensive character education management in developing students' socio-religious attitudes. These studies suggest that successful character formation depends not only on the implementation of religious activities but also on the consistency of the educational environment in which those activities occur.

Behaviorist learning theory provides a relevant analytical perspective for understanding this process. Behaviorism conceptualizes learning in terms of observable behavioral changes associated with environmental conditions and their consequences. In B. F. Skinner's theory of operant conditioning, behavior can be strengthened or maintained through consequences following a response, while recurring environmental conditions can

influence the likelihood of particular behaviors occurring. Within Islamic Religious Education, these principles can be implemented through environmental arrangements, repeated religious practices, praise, encouragement, and consistent reinforcement. Agustin et al. (2025) examined the application of Skinner's behaviorist principles in elementary education, while Ridwani and Mukhibat (2022) discussed operant conditioning as a strategy for developing school quality culture. Rafly and Sholichah (2026) investigated the effectiveness of positive reinforcement in improving elementary school students' behavior, whereas Tantu and Marina (2023) highlighted its relevance to strengthening student learning discipline.

Previous research provides empirical support for the application of behaviorist principles in developing student discipline and religious behavior through habituation, environmental stimuli, responses, and reinforcement. Rohmaniyah and Rohmani (2025) found that behaviorism in Islamic Religious Education can be implemented through habituation, rewards, and disciplinary consequences to support character development among elementary school students. Nadiyah et al. (2026) demonstrated that habituation, teacher modeling, and positive reinforcement can be integrated into Islamic Religious Education practices. Rafly and Sholichah (2026) examined the effectiveness of positive reinforcement in improving elementary school students' behavior. Furthermore, Solihah et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of repeated religious activities and teacher guidance in religious character education, while Rosadi et al. (2025) explored the relationship between school culture, discipline, and religious character development. Collectively, these studies indicate that religious discipline and character formation involve multiple educational strategies, including behavioral interventions, religious routines, exemplary conduct, and school culture management.

Despite these contributions, previous studies have emphasized different dimensions of behavioral and religious character formation. Rohmaniyah and Rohmani (2025) primarily examined the implementation of behaviorist principles in Islamic Religious Education, whereas Rafly and Sholichah (2026) focused on the effectiveness of positive reinforcement in shaping student behavior. Solihah et al. (2024) investigated religious habituation practices, while Rosadi et al. (2025) explored discipline as a mechanism connecting school culture with religious character. Nadiyah et al. (2026) have already demonstrated the complementary relationship among habituation, teacher modeling, and positive reinforcement. Therefore, the integration of various behavioral strategies is not entirely unexplored. However, these studies provide different analytical emphases from an examination of how antecedent environmental conditions, student responses, reinforcement consequences, and behavioral repetition interact across the broader system of daily religious routines in elementary schools.

Accordingly, the research gap addressed in this study concerns the need for a more contextually grounded understanding of how behaviorist principles operate through the interconnected relationships among environmental antecedents, student responses, reinforcement consequences, and habituation within everyday elementary school activities. Rather than simply revisiting religious habituation or positive reinforcement as separate educational strategies, this study examines their relationships within an integrated process of school environmental conditioning. Its contextual and analytical novelty lies in interpreting school environmental conditioning as an interconnected behavioral mechanism in which the school establishes consistent antecedent conditions, students exhibit particular responses,

teachers provide reinforcement for desired behaviors, and repeated opportunities support the maintenance of those behaviors. This framework enables an examination of how behaviorist elements interact within school religious culture without claiming to introduce an entirely new theory of behaviorism.

SD Negeri Suger Lor 3 Bondowoso provides a relevant context for investigating these relationships because the school implements a series of religious activities across different situations throughout the school day. These activities include greeting and shaking hands with teachers upon arrival, reciting prayers before and after classroom learning, praying before participating in the Free Nutritious Meals (*Makan Bergizi Gratis*, MBG) program, performing congregational Dhuhr prayers, and participating in extracurricular Qur'an memorization activities. These routines provide opportunities to examine how environmental stimuli, student responses, social reinforcement, and habituation interact in everyday school life. Thus, the contribution of this study extends beyond describing the implementation of school religious activities to examining how these activities function collectively as environmental conditions that may support the development of religious discipline.

Based on this background, this study aims to describe and analyze the strengthening of students' religious discipline through school environmental conditioning, with particular attention to environmental planning, the implementation of stimulus-response mechanisms and positive reinforcement, and the factors supporting or hindering the maintenance of religious behavior. Conceptually, the study seeks to contribute to the application of behaviorist learning theory in Islamic Religious Education by extending the analytical focus from individual behavioral strategies to the interconnected relationships among environmental conditioning, student responses, reinforcement, and habituation within the broader context of school culture.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive case study design to investigate how school environmental conditioning contributes to strengthening students' religious discipline from a behaviorist perspective. The qualitative approach was selected to obtain an in-depth understanding of the relationships among environmental stimuli, students' behavioral responses, reinforcement practices, and religious habituation within everyday school activities. The study was conducted at SD Negeri Suger Lor 3 Bondowoso, Indonesia, during the 2025/2026 academic year. The school was selected because it implemented structured religious routines, including morning greetings, daily prayers, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and Qur'an memorization activities. These practices provided a relevant context for examining how behaviorist principles operate within the school environment.

The study involved nine informants selected through purposive sampling based on their knowledge, experiences, and direct involvement in implementing religious habituation programs. The informants consisted of one school principal, one Islamic Religious Education teacher, one classroom teacher, two Qur'an memorization instructors, two students, and two parents. These categories were selected to obtain perspectives from school management, educational practitioners, students, and families. The inclusion of different informant groups enabled the researcher to examine the consistency of religious conditioning practices across school activities and their perceived continuation within the home environment.

Data were collected through passive participant observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations focused on religious routines and environmental conditioning practices, including student reception at the school entrance, collective prayers before and after learning activities, prayers associated with the Free Nutritious Meals (*Makan Bergizi Gratis*, MBG) program, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and Qur'an memorization activities. Particular attention was given to antecedent environmental conditions, observable student responses, forms of teacher reinforcement, and repeated behavioral patterns. Semi-structured interviews explored the planning and implementation of religious habituation, reinforcement strategies, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the perceived continuity of religious practices outside school. Documentary evidence included photographs of religious activities, habituation schedules, Islamic Religious Education teaching modules, and available school communication records. These documents were examined to complement and corroborate the observational and interview findings.

Data analysis followed the interactive qualitative analysis model developed by Miles et al. (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During data condensation, observation notes, interview responses, and documentary evidence were selected, organized, and categorized according to the research focus. The analytical categories included environmental antecedents, student responses, positive reinforcement, behavioral repetition, and religious habituation. During data display, the categorized information was organized into narrative descriptions and analytical tables to identify relationships among the behavioral components. Conclusions were subsequently developed by interpreting recurring patterns and comparing evidence obtained from different sources. The analysis was conducted iteratively to ensure that interpretations remained consistent with the available empirical data and the behaviorist framework.

The trustworthiness of the findings was addressed through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from the principal, teachers, Qur'an memorization instructors, students, and parents. Methodological triangulation was conducted by examining the consistency of findings across interviews, observations, and documents. These procedures were used to assess the credibility of interpretations concerning school environmental conditioning, reinforcement practices, and the maintenance of students' religious behavior. Given the descriptive case study design, the findings were interpreted as context-specific patterns rather than evidence of causal relationships between environmental conditioning and behavioral change.

The study was conducted with permission from the relevant school authorities. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from adult participants. For student participants, parental or guardian consent and age-appropriate student assent were obtained before data collection. Participants' identities were protected through confidentiality measures, and the collected information was used exclusively for research purposes. To ensure participant confidentiality, all informants were assigned identification codes according to their respective categories. These codes were consistently used when presenting interview findings, and participants' real names were omitted from the manuscript.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that strengthening students' religious discipline at SD Negeri Suger Lor 3 Bondowoso involves structured, repeated, and interconnected environmental conditioning practices embedded in everyday school activities. Religious habituation is not limited to Islamic Religious Education (IRE) lessons but extends to broader school routines, including morning greetings, collective prayers, prayers before the Free Nutritious Meals (*Makan Bergizi Gratis*, MBG) program, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and Qur'an memorization activities. Based on interviews, observations, and documentation, the findings are organized into three interconnected themes: (1) strengthening religious discipline through school environmental conditioning, (2) implementing behavioral reinforcement in the formation of religious discipline, and (3) identifying supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the continuity of religious habituation. These findings are subsequently synthesized to explain the theoretical contribution of environmental conditioning to the development of religious discipline from a behaviorist perspective.

Strengthening Students' Religious Discipline through School Environmental Conditioning

The findings indicate that strengthening students' religious discipline begins with the deliberate organization of the school environment through structured religious routines. The school does not assign responsibility for religious discipline exclusively to Islamic Religious Education teachers. Instead, the principal, classroom teachers, and Qur'an memorization instructors collectively contribute to creating an environment that encourages students to engage in religious practices consistently. These activities are integrated into the school's daily schedule, beginning when students arrive and continuing throughout classroom learning and religious programs.

Environmental conditioning is implemented through morning greetings and handshakes, prayers before and after learning activities, prayers before the MBG program, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and Qur'an memorization activities. These routines provide recurring situations in which students are expected to demonstrate specific religious behaviors. The school principal (SP1) explained:

"The planning of religious programs at school is designed to ensure that all teachers share responsibility for developing students' religious character. Through daily habituation activities, we hope that religious discipline will become an integral part of students' behavior."

This statement indicates that religious activities are organized not merely as supplementary programs but as part of the school's broader efforts to establish a supportive religious environment. Teachers contribute by providing instructions, reminders, supervision, and positive responses to students' behavior. Consequently, religious discipline is encouraged through interactions that occur repeatedly throughout the school day.

These findings correspond with Lestari and Minsih (2023), who examined teachers' efforts and habituation practices in religious character education. Their study emphasized the role of teachers in maintaining religious routines through consistent educational activities. Similarly, Febriyanti and Supriyadi (2023) investigated religious character formation in elementary schools through various habituation activities. These studies support the view that religious character formation requires consistent educational environments rather than isolated classroom instruction.

From Skinner's behaviorist perspective, school environmental conditioning can be interpreted through the relationship between antecedent conditions, behavioral responses, and consequences. Skinner (1965) explained that operant behavior is influenced by the consequences following its occurrence, while environmental conditions provide contexts in which particular responses are more likely to emerge. In the present study, daily religious routines represent recurring antecedent conditions that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate expected religious behaviors.

During morning greetings, teachers stand at the school entrance and welcome students. This situation provides an environmental cue encouraging students to respond by greeting teachers and shaking hands. During collective prayers, instructions from teachers or class leaders precede students' responses of sitting attentively and reciting prayers. Similarly, the call to prayer and teachers' reminders provide conditions encouraging students to perform ablution and participate in congregational Dhuhr prayers. Qur'an memorization activities provide structured opportunities for students to repeat, review, and present memorized passages under instructor supervision.

The relationships among environmental conditions, behavioral responses, and reinforcement practices are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Forms of School Environmental Conditioning and Students' Behavioral Responses

Religious activities	Environmental antecedents	Students' behavioral responses	Reinforcement and habituation practices
Morning greetings	Teachers welcome students at the school entrance	Greeting teachers and shaking hands	Positive greetings, smiles, and verbal praise; repeated practice of respectful behavior
Collective prayers and MBG activities	Instructions from teachers or class leaders and scheduled activity cues	Sitting attentively and reciting prayers	Verbal appreciation and consistent repetition of prayer routines
Congregational Dhuhr prayers	Call to prayer, iqamah, and teacher guidance	Performing ablution, proceeding to the prayer area, and praying together	Teacher supervision, guidance, and positive encouragement
Qur'an memorization	Collective recitation, memorization review, and instructor guidance	Repeating and presenting memorized Qur'anic passages	Motivation, recognition, and encouragement to maintain memorization routines

Source: Organized by the authors based on the reported field observations and interviews.

Table 1 illustrates that environmental conditioning operates through recurring relationships among antecedent conditions, student responses, and reinforcement practices. Each activity provides a relatively predictable situation in which particular behaviors are encouraged. Teachers subsequently respond through guidance, appreciation, and encouragement, while repeated routines provide opportunities for students to practice similar behaviors consistently.

The findings are consistent with Arinda et al. (2023), who examined religious character development through school-based religious practices. Their findings highlight the relevance

of repeated religious activities within elementary school culture. The present study supports this perspective while emphasizing how such activities can be interpreted as interconnected environmental conditions within a behaviorist framework.

Afifah et al. (2024) provide another relevant perspective through their evaluation of a Dhuha prayer habituation program using the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model. Their research highlights the importance of examining religious habituation as an organized educational program whose implementation requires systematic evaluation. Unlike their evaluation-oriented approach, the present study focuses on the behavioral relationships connecting environmental conditions, student responses, and reinforcement across multiple religious activities.

This distinction is important because religious habituation should not be understood merely as the mechanical repetition of worship activities. Repeated activities provide opportunities for behavior to occur, but the educational process also involves behavioral expectations, teacher responses, and environmental consistency. In this context, the school environment functions as an organizational structure that encourages religious discipline through recurring experiences.

Accordingly, the contribution of this finding lies in interpreting school religious routines as interconnected behavioral contexts. Rather than examining greetings, collective prayers, congregational worship, and Qur'an memorization as independent programs, the study considers how these activities collectively establish environmental conditions that support expected religious behavior. This interpretation extends the application of behaviorist principles in Islamic Religious Education from individual behavioral techniques toward a broader analysis of school environmental conditioning.

Behavioral Reinforcement in the Formation of Students' Religious Discipline

Environmental conditioning was accompanied by reinforcement practices intended to encourage and maintain desirable religious behaviors. Based on the interviews and observations, the reinforcement strategies most frequently reported included verbal praise, motivation, positive greetings, teacher guidance, and recognition of exemplary students at the end of each semester. These findings suggest that the school emphasized social reinforcement rather than relying exclusively on material rewards.

The Islamic Religious Education teacher (IRE1) explained:

"We prioritize daily habituation. Students who demonstrate discipline in prayer, show respect toward teachers, and exhibit positive behavior are consistently given praise and encouragement. At the end of each semester, the school also recognizes exemplary students who demonstrate discipline, responsibility, and good manners to motivate other students."

This statement demonstrates that reinforcement practices operate at different levels. Verbal praise and encouragement occur during everyday interactions, whereas formal recognition is provided periodically. Such practices indicate that positive reinforcement is incorporated into the school's daily social environment rather than being limited to structured reward programs.

In Skinner's theory of operant conditioning, reinforcement is determined by its effect on subsequent behavior rather than merely by the type of consequence provided. A

consequence functions as reinforcement when it increases or maintains the future probability of the behavior it follows (Skinner, 1953). Therefore, teacher praise can be understood as a potential positive reinforcer when it contributes to the continuation of desirable religious behavior.

Pansu et al. (2024) investigated the application of differential reinforcement in kindergarten and primary school classrooms. Their study provides an empirical perspective on the use of reinforcement strategies to manage classroom behavior. Although their research focused on behavioral management rather than religious discipline, it supports the relevance of examining consistent reinforcement in educational environments. The present study differs by exploring naturally occurring teacher reinforcement within everyday religious activities rather than evaluating a structured behavioral intervention.

Similarly, Rosyida et al. (2025) examined token economy interventions through a systematic review of positive behavior development in early childhood. Their research provides a perspective on structured reinforcement and behavioral development. However, token economy interventions involve explicit reward systems, whereas the present study identified verbal praise, encouragement, and everyday social recognition as the predominant reinforcement practices. This comparison suggests that reinforcement strategies may take different forms depending on educational objectives and institutional contexts.

The relationship between reinforcement and religious practices is further illustrated by Nasution and Sa'diyah (2024), who examined rewards as motivational mechanisms in Qur'an memorization from a Skinnerian perspective. Their study provides a conceptual basis for understanding how recognition and behavioral consequences may support students' engagement in repeated memorization activities. The present findings complement this perspective by showing that Qur'an memorization activities are supported not only through recognition but also through scheduled practice, instructor guidance, collective recitation, and repeated opportunities to review memorized passages.

These comparisons indicate that reinforcement cannot be separated from the environmental conditions in which behavior occurs. Students first encounter recurring situations that encourage particular actions. Teachers subsequently provide responses intended to reinforce desirable conduct. These interactions are repeated across different school activities, creating opportunities for students to practice religious discipline consistently.

The behavioral relationship identified in this study illustrates an interconnected process in which environmental conditioning establishes consistent situations that encourage students to demonstrate expected religious behaviors. These environmental conditions stimulate behavioral responses, which are subsequently strengthened through positive reinforcement, including teacher praise, encouragement, guidance, and social recognition. The repeated occurrence of these interactions within daily school routines provides opportunities for students to practice religious behaviors consistently, thereby supporting the gradual development of religious habituation. From a behaviorist perspective, this process demonstrates how environmental conditions, behavioral responses, reinforcement, and repeated practice interact in strengthening students' religious discipline. However, this relationship represents an interpretive synthesis of the qualitative findings rather than an experimentally established causal mechanism.

This sequence represents an interpretive synthesis of the qualitative findings rather than an experimentally verified causal pathway. It illustrates how environmental conditions and reinforcement practices may operate together within structured religious routines.

The importance of repetition is particularly evident in daily prayers, congregational worship, and Qur'an memorization activities. Students repeatedly encounter similar expectations within relatively consistent school schedules. At the beginning of an activity, teachers provide instructions and reminders; through continued participation, students may become increasingly familiar with the expected routines.

Nevertheless, repeated participation should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of independent religious discipline. Students may perform religious activities consistently while remaining dependent on teacher instructions or institutional regulations. Establishing whether religious behavior becomes self-maintained requires evidence that students continue performing expected practices with reduced external prompting over time.

This distinction is important when comparing the findings with studies emphasizing the effectiveness of reinforcement-based interventions. While Pansu et al. (2024) examined classroom behavioral responses in an intervention setting, the present study relied on qualitative observations and participants' accounts. Accordingly, the findings identify reinforcement practices and their perceived contributions rather than statistically demonstrating their effectiveness.

An additional finding concerns the potential continuation of school-based religious habits within family environments. Interviews with parents indicated that some religious behaviors practiced at school were also reported in students' home routines. One parent (P1) described the perceived changes in her child's religious practices at home:

"Alhamdulillah, since the school introduced regular habituation and monitoring, my child has become more disciplined at home. Previously, I had to remind my child repeatedly to perform the Maghrib prayer or recite the Qur'an. Now, when the call to prayer is heard, my child immediately performs ablution independently. My child also frequently reviews the short Qur'anic chapters assigned by the memorization instructor."

This statement provides an example of a parent's perception that religious habituation at school was accompanied by greater independence in certain religious activities at home. The reported behavior suggests that students may demonstrate religious practices beyond situations involving direct teacher supervision.

However, the account should not be interpreted as conclusive evidence that school environmental conditioning caused the reported changes. The home environment, parental guidance, individual motivation, and previous religious experiences may also influence students' behavior. The findings therefore indicate perceived behavioral continuity rather than a verified causal relationship (Aidil et al., 2026). In this context, behavioral generalization and maintenance provide useful interpretive concepts. Behaviors practiced in one environment may also occur in another when relevant antecedent conditions and reinforcing consequences are present. The school provides structured opportunities for religious behavior, while the family may support its continuation through compatible routines and expectations.

Overall, the findings indicate that religious discipline is supported through the interaction of structured environmental conditions, repeated religious practices, teacher encouragement, and social reinforcement. The distinctive contribution of this study is its emphasis on reinforcement as part of a broader school environmental system rather than an isolated instructional strategy.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Strengthening Religious Discipline

The findings identified several factors supporting the implementation of religious habituation, including the commitment of school leaders and teachers, teacher modeling, the availability of religious facilities, consistent implementation of habituation activities, and parental support. These factors contributed to the establishment of an educational environment in which students repeatedly encountered expectations concerning religious discipline.

School leadership played an important role in organizing religious routines and encouraging teachers' participation. Religious habituation was not treated solely as the responsibility of Islamic Religious Education teachers. Classroom teachers and Qur'an memorization instructors also contributed to supervising activities, reminding students of expected conduct, and providing encouragement. This shared responsibility helped establish relatively consistent behavioral expectations across different school settings.

Teacher modeling represented another supporting factor. Students did not merely receive verbal instructions concerning appropriate behavior but also observed teachers demonstrating politeness, discipline, and participation in religious activities. Such practices provided examples of expected conduct alongside direct instructional cues (Khoirunissa and Jinan, 2025; Lativani and Fadhil, 2026). Although modeling is more directly associated with observational learning than with operant conditioning, it remains relevant to the wider social environment in which behavioral expectations are communicated. However, modeling and reinforcement should be analytically distinguished. Observing a teacher's behavior provides a behavioral example, whereas reinforcement refers to a consequence that increases or maintains the likelihood of a preceding response.

Rahmawaty and Supriyadi (2025) examined religious character formation through worship habituation and the involvement of educational and family environments. Their research provides a relevant perspective on the role of institutional support and cooperation in maintaining religious routines. Similarly, the present study indicates that teacher commitment, institutional consistency, and parental participation may support the continuity of students' religious practices.

The availability of worship facilities and organized schedules also supported the implementation of religious routines. Congregational prayer activities required suitable spaces and coordinated schedules, while Qur'an memorization activities depended on instructor guidance and repeated opportunities for recitation (Hadian, 2026; Mudhar et al., 2026). These arrangements demonstrate that environmental conditioning involves not only social interactions but also the organization of physical and institutional resources.

Tiwuk et al. (2025) examined habituation through short-surah memorization in early childhood education. Their research offers a relevant comparison concerning the relationship between structured memorization activities and discipline development. Although their study involved younger children and a different educational setting, it provides a useful perspective

on the importance of consistent memorization routines. The present study extends the discussion to elementary school activities that include congregational prayer, daily supplication, and Qur'an memorization.

Wijayanti and Kurniawan (2025) similarly examined religious character formation through a Qur'an memorization program. Their work provides an additional comparison for understanding the educational role of structured memorization activities. However, the present study interprets Qur'an memorization as one component of a broader environmental conditioning process rather than as an independent character education intervention.

Conversely, the study identified several factors inhibiting the continuity of religious discipline, including inconsistencies in student participation, peer influences, and differences between school and home religious routines. These challenges suggest that religious behavior is influenced by environmental conditions beyond the direct control of teachers.

Some students may participate consistently in religious activities under teacher supervision but encounter different expectations outside school. Similarly, peer interactions may encourage or distract students from participating in established religious routines. These differences indicate that the maintenance of religious behavior cannot be explained exclusively through the consistency of school-based programs.

Amini and Hidayat (2023), through a systematic literature review, examined strategies and challenges associated with developing discipline through congregational prayer habituation in elementary schools. Their study provides a relevant perspective on the importance of institutional strategies and the practical challenges of implementing religious habituation. The present findings correspond with this broader understanding, particularly regarding the significance of consistent activities and support from the educational environment.

The relationship between school and family environments is especially important. Students who practice religious activities under structured school supervision may encounter different cues and consequences at home. When families provide similar reminders, encouragement, and opportunities for religious practices, school-based routines may be reinforced. Conversely, inconsistent expectations may make it more difficult for students to maintain similar behaviors outside the school environment.

Rahmawaty and Supriyadi (2025) and Tiwuk et al. (2025) provide relevant perspectives on the roles of educational environments and habituation in supporting religious character and discipline. The present study complements these perspectives through the parent interview indicating that certain prayer and Qur'an memorization practices were also reported in the home environment.

From a behaviorist perspective, these circumstances can be interpreted through variations in antecedent conditions and reinforcement contingencies across environments. Students encounter different behavioral cues, expectations, and consequences depending on whether they are at school, at home, or interacting with peers. These variations may influence whether behaviors performed consistently in one setting are maintained in another.

To address these challenges, the school maintained communication with parents, provided additional guidance and motivation, and recognized exemplary students at the end of each semester. These practices indicate an effort to maintain supportive behavioral

conditions, although the available qualitative evidence does not establish their long-term effectiveness.

The findings therefore emphasize the importance of coordination among school leaders, teachers, and families. Religious habituation may be strengthened when educational environments provide consistent behavioral expectations and repeated opportunities for religious practice. Nevertheless, its continuity remains dependent on individual and contextual conditions that warrant further investigation.

Theoretical Contribution: Environmental Conditioning as an Integrated Behavioral Mechanism

The central theoretical contribution of this study lies in interpreting students' religious discipline through an integrated mechanism of school environmental conditioning. Rather than examining antecedent stimuli, behavioral responses, reinforcement, and habituation as separate instructional strategies, the study considers their interconnected roles across daily religious routines.

The findings illustrate how the school provides antecedent conditions through scheduled religious activities, students respond by participating in expected practices, teachers provide encouragement and recognition, and repeated activities create opportunities for students to continue demonstrating similar behaviors. This interpretation reflects established principles of operant conditioning while situating them within the social and institutional context of Islamic Religious Education.

Previous studies provide important foundations for this interpretation. Arinda et al. (2023) examined how religious practices contribute to religious character development in elementary schools, while Febriyanti and Supriyadi (2023) investigated religious habituation activities within school-based character formation. Lestari and Minsih (2023) emphasized teachers' roles in religious character education through habituation, and Afifah et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of evaluating structured religious programs. Together, these studies suggest that religious character education is associated with institutional routines, teacher participation, and program organization.

Meanwhile, behavioral research offers complementary perspectives. Pansu et al. (2024) investigated differential reinforcement in classroom behavioral management, while Rosyida et al. (2025) reviewed token economy interventions for positive behavior development. Nasution and Sa'diyah (2024) further examined reinforcement principles in relation to Qur'an memorization motivation. These studies illustrate different applications of reinforcement in educational settings, although they do not directly establish the effectiveness of the environmental conditioning practices examined in the present study.

Research on religious habituation also highlights the importance of continuity across activities and environments. Rahmawaty and Supriyadi (2025) examined religious character formation through worship habituation, Tiwuk et al. (2025) investigated short-surah memorization and discipline development, and Wijayanti and Kurniawan (2025) examined Qur'an memorization in relation to religious character. Amini and Hidayat (2023) likewise considered strategies and challenges associated with congregational prayer habituation.

Building on these perspectives, the present study offers an interpretive understanding of school environmental conditioning as an interconnected relationship among four behavioral components: antecedent conditions, student responses, reinforcement

consequences, and repeated opportunities for religious practice. These components are not treated as independent educational techniques but as interacting elements within the school's daily religious routines.

This interpretation does not constitute a new behaviorist theory, nor does it establish a causal model of religious discipline formation. Instead, it represents a contextual application of established behavioral concepts to explain how school religious activities are organized and experienced. Its contribution is primarily analytical, providing a coherent perspective for examining the relationship between institutional routines and students' observable religious behavior.

The findings also demonstrate that religious habituation is context-dependent. School routines can establish relatively consistent opportunities for students to perform expected religious practices, but the continuation of these practices outside school depends on additional environmental conditions. Parental guidance, peer interactions, and individual circumstances may strengthen or weaken the maintenance of religious routines.

Furthermore, religious discipline should not be reduced entirely to observable compliance. While behaviorist analysis helps explain the conditions under which religious behaviors are performed and maintained, it does not directly establish students' spiritual understanding, sincerity, or internal religious motivation. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as an analysis of observable religious discipline rather than a comprehensive explanation of religious internalization.

Taken together, the findings suggest that school environmental conditioning provides a useful analytical perspective for understanding how religious discipline is encouraged through consistent routines, teacher involvement, social reinforcement, and repeated participation in religious activities. The study contributes to the application of behaviorist learning theory in Islamic Religious Education by highlighting the interconnected relationships among environmental conditions, behavioral responses, and reinforcement practices within school culture. Nevertheless, further longitudinal and intervention-based studies are required to examine whether these relationships contribute to sustained behavioral changes across educational and family environments.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening students' religious discipline through school environmental conditioning involves interconnected processes of environmental stimuli, behavioral responses, positive reinforcement, and repeated religious practices. At SD Negeri Suger Lor 3 Bondowoso, environmental conditioning was implemented through structured religious routines, including morning greetings, collective prayers, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and Qur'an memorization activities. These practices established recurring opportunities for students to demonstrate expected religious behaviors, supported by teacher guidance, verbal praise, encouragement, and social recognition. The findings indicate that religious discipline is not cultivated solely through formal rewards or religious instruction but also through the consistency of school routines and everyday interactions. Supporting factors included school leadership, teacher commitment, religious facilities, and parental involvement, while inconsistent student participation, peer influences, and differences between school and home environments presented challenges to maintaining religious habits.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in interpreting school environmental conditioning as an integrated behavioral mechanism connecting antecedent conditions, student responses, reinforcement, and habituation within Islamic Religious Education. Rather than proposing a new behaviorist theory, the study provides a contextual application of Skinner's operant conditioning principles to explain how religious routines may support observable behavioral discipline. However, the study is limited by its single-school case study design, nine informants, and relatively short observation period. Consequently, the findings cannot establish causal relationships or determine whether religious discipline is maintained independently over time. Future research should employ longitudinal or comparative designs involving multiple schools, incorporate systematic behavioral observations, and examine the influence of family environments and students' internal religious motivation. Such investigations would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how environmental conditioning contributes to sustained religious discipline across educational and social contexts.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to assist with academic language refinement, manuscript drafting, organization of ideas, literature organization, and editorial revision. All AI-assisted content was subsequently reviewed, verified, and revised by the authors to ensure consistency with the original research data, theoretical framework, and scientific interpretation. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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