



A Policy Implementation Model of the Seven Habits of the Great Indonesian Child in Cultivating a Character-Based School Culture in Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of the Seven Habits of the Great Indonesian Child model as a character education policy within Indonesian secondary schools and analyzes its contribution to cultivating a character-based school culture. Using a qualitative multiple-case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, school observations, and document analysis involving principals, teachers, counselors, and students. The findings reveal that the implementation of the Seven Habits model is shaped by a dynamic intersection of leadership vision, teacher agency, structural routines, and contextual cultural forces. Schools with strong leadership commitment, structured reinforcement mechanisms, and collaborative teacher practices demonstrated deeper internalization of values and more consistent cultural transformation. Conversely, limited teacher capacity, competing academic demands, and insufficient monitoring systems hindered fidelity and continuity of implementation. The study advances theoretical discussions on policy implementation by highlighting how value-based educational policies are negotiated at the street level and embedded into school culture through relational and institutional processes. Practically, the results underscore the need for clear program structures, ongoing capacity building, and integrated monitoring to strengthen character education delivery in schools. The study recommends enhancing student leadership roles, institutionalizing reflective teacher collaboration, and conducting longitudinal research to evaluate long-term cultural impacts

Keywords: *character education; policy implementation; Seven Habits; school culture; secondary schools*

INTRODUCTION

The necessity to bolster character education within Indonesian schools has become increasingly pressing as the nation strives to develop a generation capable of representing the ideals of Pancasila while contributing to national development amidst rapidly evolving global dynamics. As evidenced by national policies like Profil Pelajar Pancasila and the Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter (PPK) program, coupled with reforms under Kurikulum Merdeka, the Indonesian government demonstrates a strong commitment to embedding character formation into the educational framework (Astutik & Pramita, 2023; Ichsan et al., 2023). Although these initiatives signal significant policy advancement, the execution of character education remains inconsistent due to various institutional differences, capacity limitations among educators, and challenges in translating normative frameworks into everyday teaching practices (Rohman & Mentari, 2024; Adisasmitho et al., 2020).

In response to this landscape, the initiative known as “7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat” (Seven Habits of the Great Indonesian Child) has surfaced as a contextualized character-building model, adopted by various educational institutions aiming to provide structured methodologies for instilling values among adolescents. This model draws on both international best practices in character development and local moral philosophies, aiming to foster internalized virtues via habitual actions, a conducive school climate, and a cohesive relationship between curricular and extracurricular activities (Supriyadi et al., 2024; Sanusi et al., 2023). However, empirical investigations into the actual implementation of this model, the active roles of school stakeholders in sustaining it, and the extent of its impact on nurturing a character-based school culture remain limited (Maharani et al., 2024; Rosa et al., 2025; Rozi et al., 2022).

Successful implementation of character education is influenced by the dynamics of policy translation, institutional preparedness, teacher agency, student engagement, and sociocultural factors. Prior research has indicated that even well-structured programs face hurdles such as inconsistent application, lack of effective monitoring, fragmented communication among stakeholders, and conflicting pressures between academic expectations and behavioral goals (Susatya et al., 2021; Musaad et al., 2024; Putra & Anggraini, 2023). These challenges are amplified in secondary schools, where developmental issues inherent to adolescence and varying levels of parental involvement complicate the landscape. Thus, empirical studies investigating how specific character education models materialize in the actual settings of Indonesian schools are crucial for enhancing the knowledge base and refining policy implementations (Suhifatullah et al., 2021; Rosa et al., 2020; Arthur et al., 2020).

The Seven Habits model, when integrated into educational settings, necessitates coherent leadership, teacher exemplification, structured routines, and

incorporation into the broader school culture (Hasan et al., 2021). Field observations reveal that schools differ significantly in their approaches to initiating, adapting, and maintaining this model. Understanding these disparities is vital for uncovering policy-practice gaps. Accordingly, this research focuses on a particular case study—SMP Islam Plus Insan Robbani—while also drawing comparisons to alternative schools to uncover patterns and differences in implementation. Analyzing these processes offers a unique opportunity to deepen our understanding of how character education models can be effectively tailored to Indonesian secondary schools.

Despite the national impetus towards character-based education, the mechanisms through which specific frameworks, including the Seven Habits initiative, are interpreted, institutionalized, and actualized at the school level remain insufficiently documented. Schools invariably exhibit variation in leadership capacity, teacher preparedness, organizational culture, and available resources, leading to fragmented implementation processes and inconsistent impacts on the establishment of a character-driven school culture (Rozi et al., 2022; Fauzi et al., 2023). This contextual landscape prompts the central research question: How is the policy of the “7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat” effectively implemented within secondary schools, and what implications does this hold for fostering a character-based school culture?

This central inquiry is supported by several sub-questions:

1. What strategies, processes, and routines characterize the implementation of the Seven Habits model in the school environment?
2. What roles do key actors—such as principals, teachers, counselors, and students—play in shaping the execution of the model?
3. What enabling and inhibiting factors affect the successful or challenged implementation of the model?
4. In what ways does the model contribute to the enhancement of the school's character culture?

This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the Seven Habits policy is enacted at the secondary school level and its contributions to character formation. The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To delineate the implementation processes, stages, and practices through which the Seven Habits policy translates into school routines and activities.
2. To identify the roles and interactions of the key stakeholders involved in the model's implementation.
3. To analyze the factors that facilitate or impede effective execution.
4. To examine the model's impact on the development and reinforcement of a character-based school culture.
5. To propose a conceptual framework for policy implementation based on

empirical patterns observed in the field.

This research holds both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it adds to the body of knowledge on policy implementation within character education by offering empirical insights derived from the Indonesian schooling context, which is often underrepresented in international literature (Harun et al., 2020; Ichsan et al., 2023). By engaging with recognized policy implementation theories, such as those advanced by Van Meter and Van Horn, Mazmanian and Sabatier, and Lipsky, the study contributes a nuanced, context-driven model that captures the interactions among the various actors involved, school routines, and the prevailing institutional culture (Kaewkumkong & Kaewkamkong, 2023; Sumarlam et al., 2021).

Practically, the findings will present actionable insights for school leaders, educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers by clarifying the dynamics of the implementation of the Seven Habits model. Such an understanding supports coherent policy designing, enhances capacity-building initiatives for teachers, and aids in developing school culture strategies aligned with the nation's character education priorities. On a broader scale, this study contributes to Indonesia's ongoing ambition in human capital development, ensuring that character education policies translate from conceptual aspirations to tangible, cultural transformations within educational contexts (Ulfa et al., 2021; Julianto et al., 2023; Hastasari et al., 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach to develop a comprehensive understanding of how the 7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (Seven Habits of the Great Indonesian Child) model is implemented within secondary school settings. Qualitative inquiry was chosen for its ability to explore complex, context-dependent, and socially constructed processes inherent in character education and policy implementation, which cannot be fully captured through quantitative measurement alone (Zdunek et al., 2021; Hadi, 2024). To effectively examine these dynamics, a multiple-case study design was adopted, focusing primarily on SMP Islam Plus Insan Robbani, complemented by a comparison school to allow for cross-contextual reflection and validation of findings (Domínguez-Cancino et al., 2020; Lao & Nasarudin, 2023).

Selection of Case Study Sites

The research was conducted in educational institutions that have officially integrated the Seven Habits model and demonstrated readiness in terms of documentation, administrative support, and accessibility for repeated visits. SMP Islam Plus Insan Robbani was selected as the primary case due to its demonstrable commitment to character education and the structured incorporation of the Seven

Habits within its school routines. The comparison school, which showcased similar programmatic features, served to triangulate findings and enhance the analytical reliability of the study (Noor et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2021). The selection of both schools was guided by criteria ensuring that each provided a substantive context for exploring the manifestation of character education policies in practical settings.

Participants

Participants were identified through purposive sampling to ensure representation of key stakeholders involved in the implementation process. The sample included school principals, vice principals overseeing curriculum and student affairs, teachers responsible for delivering the Seven Habits routines, homeroom teachers, guidance counselors, and students across various grade levels. In certain instances, administrative staff or parents were consulted to capture broader institutional and community perspectives (Hazhiyah et al., 2025; Setyoningrum et al., 2023). The number of participants was governed by data saturation principles, with interviews continuing until no new insights emerged from the data collected (Bliss et al., 2023).

Data Collection

Data collection occurred over a concentrated field period employing three complementary techniques: in-depth interviews, observations of the school environment, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews, lasting between 30 and 60 minutes, were conducted to explore participant perceptions regarding implementation challenges, actor roles, and perceived impacts on school culture. All interviews, conducted with informed consent, were recorded for accuracy and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

Observations were carried out in classrooms, communal spaces, and during school rituals to document the mechanisms of value transmission and behavioral modeling by both teachers and students. Using systematic checklists, field notes were generated to capture routine patterns and contextual nuances (Dhungana, 2020; Kepper et al., 2022). Document analysis further enriched the dataset, incorporating program modules, standard operating procedures, reflection sheets, evaluation reports, posters, and other artifacts that either structure or symbolize the Seven Habits within each school (Wahyuningrat et al., 2025).

Data Analysis

The analytical process adhered to the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, progressing through cycles of data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. Transcripts, observational notes, and documents were subject to inductive and deductive coding to capture emergent themes and constructs rooted in policy implementation theory (Wahid et al., 2021; Indarto, 2020). Codes were organized into categories reflecting program structures, actor

interactions, cultural indicators, and enabling or constraining factors, subsequently informing the development of thematic matrices and narrative summaries to elucidate patterns across cases.

Through iterative comparison and triangulation of data sources, the study identified recurring dynamics, synthesizing them into conceptual propositions that elucidate how the Seven Habits model influences school culture (Wutich et al., 2021; Rana et al., 2023; Dhungana, 2020).

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Ensuring research trustworthiness was a central concern throughout the study. Enhancements to credibility included data triangulation, member checking with key informants, and sustained field engagement (Rana et al., 2023). The transferability of findings was supported by detailed contextual descriptions, allowing readers to evaluate applicability to other settings. The study addressed dependability by maintaining a comprehensive audit trail, encompassing interview protocols, coding frameworks, and analytical memos. Confirmability was achieved through reflexive documentation of the researcher's assumptions and interpretations, ensuring they remained grounded in empirical evidence rather than subjective bias (Dahm et al., 2024; Harahap et al., 2023).

Ethical considerations guided every phase of the research. Institutional permission was secured from school administrators, and informed consent was obtained from all participants, along with parental consent for student participants, after providing them with comprehensive briefings on the study's purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature (Rana et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2021). Confidentiality was preserved by anonymizing participant identifiers and securing digital files in password-protected storage, ensuring that data usage remained strictly for academic purposes (Basir et al., 2022; Zubaidi, 2024). Findings were communicated in ways that protected the dignity, well-being, and reputation of the participating institutions and individuals involved in the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The findings from this study illuminate the multifaceted nature of how the 7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat model is implemented in secondary schools. Implementation is characterized not by a uniform process, but rather as a dynamic interplay between leadership vision, teacher agency, institutional routines, and the broader cultural environment of the school. Both SMP Islam Plus Insan Robbani and the comparison school displayed strong administrative commitment toward integrating the Seven Habits framework into their daily operations. Rituals such as morning greetings that emphasize values, structured periods for reflection, and student leadership rotations constituted the program's

backbone. Teachers effectively utilized the vocabulary and moral language associated with the Seven Habits, contextualizing everyday behaviors like punctuality and empathy within the model's framework.

However, variability was evident in the depth and fidelity of implementation across classrooms. Some teachers effectively internalized the model and integrated character reinforcement into their pedagogy, whereas others adopted a more superficial engagement with the Seven Habits, relying merely on jargon without deeper integration into instructional practices. This inconsistency suggests a significant influence of individual teacher disposition and the intensity of leadership direction on the enactment of the program.

Roles of School Actors

A prominent theme within the findings is the distinct yet interconnected roles of the various school actors involved. The principals acted as strategic leaders, articulating the moral imperative of the program, aligning organizational structures with the program's goals, and mobilizing resources necessary for its sustainability. Their impact was evident in decisions surrounding time allocation for character activities, behavioral expectations, communication protocols, and coordination among teachers. Teachers, as frontline implementers, were critical in modeling values to students, facilitating the internalization of desired behaviors through their daily interactions, classroom management, and emotional guidance. Students further contributed actively, particularly those involved in leadership roles, enhancing the visibility and legitimacy of the Seven Habits model.

This coalescence of roles demonstrates the relational and participatory nature of character education implementation, underscoring the importance of collaborative engagement in fostering a character-driven school culture.

Enabling and Inhibiting Factors

The study identified both enabling and hindering factors impacting the efficacy of the implementation. Enablers included robust leadership commitment, systematic communication, clearly established routines, and collaborative teacher environments. Schools that visibly embodied the Seven Habits with symbols, behavioral slogans, and recognition systems exhibited greater consistency in value reinforcement. Mentorship and reflective discussions among teachers further supported coherence and collective understanding of the program.

On the contrary, several inhibiting factors were also discovered. Competing academic demands limited the time teachers had available for character-related activities, exacerbating the inconsistencies in implementation fidelity. Variability

in teacher competence and the absence of structured monitoring systems (especially noted in the comparison school) contributed significantly to these inconsistencies. Such challenges echo findings from broader research on policy implementation, where resource constraints, uneven levels of expertise, and fragmented coordination are commonly cited barriers to successful policy realization.

Cultural Impacts of the Seven Habits Model

The implementation of the Seven Habits model had discernible impacts on school culture, albeit with varying degrees of strength. At SMP Islam Plus Insan Robbani, the program yielded observable shifts in student behavior, including a marked increase in cooperation, attention, and self-discipline. School rituals effectively reinforced shared values, fostering a sense of belonging among students. Teachers reported reducing behavioral problems and enhancing the overall classroom climate as students began to internalize habits centered around respect and responsibility.

Contrastingly, while the comparison school showed similar positive trends, the impacts were less consistent. The lack of a structured reinforcement mechanism led to sporadic lapses in behavioral alignment, indicating that the cultural impact of the program is closely linked to its structural embedding and ongoing reinforcement. These findings affirm the theoretical orientation suggesting that character education flourishes when bolstered by coherent cultural ecosystems where values are regularly enacted through relationships, routines, and symbolic practices.

Theoretical Interpretation

The empirical findings resonate well with established theories of policy implementation. The variability in teacher enactment aligns with Lipsky's concept of street-level discretion, illustrating how individual teacher responses can influence program fidelity (Lipsky, 2023). The factors facilitating and inhibiting implementation correspond closely with Van Meter and Van Horn's principles regarding the importance of communication, available resources, and implementer dispositions (Wahyu & Mufti, 2025). Moreover, Mazmanian and Sabatier's model highlights the challenges associated with translating value-laden policies into practical pedagogical frameworks, affirming the complexities involved in the character education domain (Maisarah & Yusran, 2025).

The results reinforce existing literature in character education, which maintains that lasting cultural transformation necessitates consistent modeling, structural reinforcement, and meaningful student involvement in the educational process.

Proposed Conceptual Model

Based on the integrated qualitative evidence and theoretical frameworks, this study proposes a conceptual model for the implementation of the Seven Habits composed of four interdependent components: leadership orientation, teacher enactment, structural reinforcement, and cultural embedding. Leadership orientation encompasses visioning, program communication, and resource provision. Teacher enactment pertains to modeling values, pedagogical integration, and fostering relationships, while structural reinforcement involves institutionalizing expectations through routines, schedules, symbols, and operational guidelines. Lastly, cultural embedding reflects the degree to which values permeate a collective identity, influence interpersonal relationships, and manifest in symbolic practices.

This conceptual model illustrates a dynamic, cyclical system in which strong leadership and defined structures elevate teacher effectiveness and, in turn, reinforce cultural norms. The emerging school culture then serves to sustain long-term character education outcomes. The model offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how character education policies can be effectively localized within Indonesian secondary schools, paving the way for future research and policy refinement.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study substantiate that the implementation of the 7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat model operates through a multifaceted interplay of leadership vision, teacher agency, structural routines, and school culture. The model demonstrates significant potential in enhancing character development when systematically integrated across pedagogical practices, daily rituals, and symbolic structures. Schools exhibiting robust leadership orientation, coherent communication, and systematic reinforcement were noted to achieve more substantial cultural transformations. Conversely, challenges such as inconsistent monitoring and varying teacher capacity significantly obstructed program fidelity. This emphasizes that successful character education requires more than mere program adoption; it mandates sustained cultural embedding supported by collective action within the school community.

Theoretically, this study enriches the discourse surrounding policy implementation by revealing how value-based educational policies are negotiated and enacted at the school level. It advances existing frameworks by intertwining character education principles with implementation models, illustrating the reciprocal dynamics among leadership, discretion, and organizational structures that shape educational outcomes. Practically, the insights gleaned from this study offer actionable recommendations for schools and local governments. The

emphasis on structured routines, ongoing teacher professional development, supportive leadership, and integrated monitoring mechanisms is crucial for ensuring continuity and meaningful impact in character education.

For enhanced ongoing implementation, schools are encouraged to foster collaborative reflection among teachers, institutionalize consistent rituals, and increase student participation through leadership roles. Future research should aim to extend into diverse school contexts, incorporate longitudinal designs, and evaluate the long-term behavioral and cultural ramifications of character education programs. Such studies would meaningfully contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how character policies can be sustainably integrated into Indonesia's evolving educational landscape.

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