Systematic Literature Review

Worship Habituation as a Manifestation of Spiritual Foundations in Islamic Schools

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Abstract

Objective: This study seeks to identify, analyze, and synthesize the results of research on worship habituation in Islamic schools to understand how the practice reflects the spiritual foundation as the main pillar of Islamic education. This study addresses a research gap in previous studies which is generally descriptive and has not integrated systematic analysis of the spiritual dimension in worship habits.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This study uses a qualitative approach with the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on the guidelines of PRISMA 2020. Data were collected from the databases of Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, DOAJ, SINTA, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar for publication in 2020–2025, then analyzed thematically with four main dimensions: form, strategy, meaning, and impact of worship habits.

Results/Findings: Of the 35 articles that met the inclusion criteria, it was found that worship habits such as congregational prayers, dhuha prayers, Qur'anic tadarus, and joint prayers contributed significantly to the formation of the character, religiosity, and spiritual climate of the school. The integration of activities in the curriculum and the modeling by teachers were is the most effective strategy.

Originality/Value: This study offers a new contribution by interpreting the worship habituation not just as a religious practice, but as a tangible manifestation of the spiritual foundation of Islamic education that forms   the spiritual habitus   of students in an ongoing manner.

Keywords: worship habituation; Islamic schools; spirituality; character education; Systematic Literature Review

1. Introduction

Education is a deliberate and systematic effort to create an environment and learning process in which students actively develop their potential to become people who possess religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills necessary for themselves, society, nation, and state. The purpose of national education as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith and piety, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. In addition, national education also aims to educate the life of the nation. According to the statement, education aims not merely to impart knowledge and skills but to cultivate the emotional and spiritual aspects of students.

A spiritual foundation (often also called a spiritualistic foundation or a religious foundation) in the context of education is a philosophical foundation or foothold that places religious values, ethics, and a transcendent relationship (with God or the Almighty) as the primary foundation in formulating educational goals, policies, and practices (Kasman, 2024). Within the framework of Islamic education, spirituality is one of the essential foundations that directs all educational activities to be in line with the goals of human beings as believing beings. Islamic education is understood as a process that integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions so that students not merely know religious teachings theoretically, but are also able to live and practice them in daily life. In line with this, various studies affirm that effective Islamic education must include spiritual aspects in addition to intellectual and emotional development so that students grow as a whole person of faith and character (Isnaeni et al., 2024).

Islamic schools have a distinctive characteristic of integrating religious values into the culture in the school. These Islamic values are internalized through Islamic rituals (e.g. greetings and prayers before lessons) as well as daily worship routines such as recitation of the Qur'an, congregational prayers, joint prayers, and morning dhikr as part of character education (Abdul Latif et al., 2024). Various studies show that the worship habituation in school is effective in shaping the character of students. For example Damayanti et al. (2025) found a significant positive correlation between the frequency of congregational prayer and the discipline of elementary school students. Hasan and Kirana (2024) reported that the implementation of congregational prayers in madrasas (by madrasah heads and teachers through examples, lectures, and attendance) succeeded in fostering the discipline character of students. Mastur et al. (2022) added that the daily Qur'an recitation program structured at the pesantren teaches students to be present on time, study neatly, and help each other, as well as foster the spirit of togetherness in the group. The habit of morning dhikr is also reported to increase students' discipline, inner calm, and religious awareness (Yuniarti et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the habit of praying regularly before school activities gives students a sense of calm, confidence, and optimism in going through the day (Rosyadah et al., 2024). Thus, the integration of religious values through school culture and daily worship routines not merely strengthens students' religious identity but instills their character of discipline and psychological well-being.

Based on the results of an initial review of several previous literature and research, it was found that numerous research on the worship habituation in Islamic schools has been conducted, especially those that discuss practices such as dhuha prayer, joint prayer, or tadarus Al-Qur'an. However, most of the research is descriptive and focuses on the implementation of activities alone. There have not been many studies that examine the spiritual foundation that underlies the worship habituation as the main foundation of Islamic education.

In addition, the results of existing research are still fragmentary and have not been systematically synthesized to provide a comprehensive overview of how the worship habituation in Islamic schools reflects the spiritual values of education. Until now, there has also been no study that specifically uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach with the PRISMA model to identify and conclude research results related to this topic. This condition indicates that there is an important research gap to be filled through systematic

studies to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the spiritual foundation in the worship habituation in Islamic schools.

The purpose of this SLR is to identify, analyze, and synthesize the results of research on the worship habituation in Islamic schools to understand how the practice reflects the spiritual foundation as the main pillar of Islamic education.

2. Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, compiled based on the guidelines of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020). This approach was chosen to synthesize the findings of published research on *worship habituation* as a manifestation of the spiritual foundation in Islamic schools, as well as to identify the patterns, strategies, and implications of such practices within the context of formal Islamic education.

The literature search was conducted systematically on September 12, 2025, covering publications from 2020 to 2025. The databases used included Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), ERIC, DOAJ, SINTA, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar. The search was performed using the following combination of keywords and Boolean operators: ("habituation of worship" OR "religious habituation" OR "worship habit" OR "spiritual practice") AND ("Islamic school" OR "madrasah" OR "pesantren") AND ("character education" OR "spiritual values" OR "spiritual formation").

The selection process is carried out in four stages according to the PRISMA guidelines: (1) Identification: collecting all relevant articles from selected databases. (2) Screening: removing duplicate records and conducting an initial selection based on titles and abstracts. (3) Eligibility: evaluating the full text of each article to ensure relevance to the study focus (4) Inclusion: finalizing the selection of articles that met all criteria for thematic synthesis.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Aspects	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Publication Year Range	Articles published between 2020 and 2025.	Articles published before 2020.
Research Focus	Discusses worship habituation, religious practices, or spiritual strengthening in the context of Islamic education.	Does not focus on educational institutions (e.g., individual worship in the general public).
Research Approach	Employs an empirical approach (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods).	Conceptual or opinion-based articles without empirical data.
Journal Quality	Published in SINTA 1–5 accredited national journals or reputable international journals (Q1–Q4).	Published in non-reputable or non-indexed journals.
Article Accessibility	Articles available in full-text and publicly accessible.	Articles unavailable in full-text or not publicly accessible.
Methodological Quality	Clearly and systematically explains the research process.	Fails to meet methodological standards or lacks a clear methodological description.

Search results from Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC yielded several thematically relevant international publications. However, most did not meet the inclusion criteria because (1) they did not specifically address *worship habituation* within the context of Islamic

schools, (2) they were theoretical without empirical data, or (3) they focused on general religiosity outside the educational context. Therefore, articles from non-reputable international journals were excluded from the final analysis to maintain academic validity and source credibility.

Conversely, articles published in SINTA 1–5 accredited national journals were prioritized because of their contextual relevance and rigorous peer-review process. The final selection resulted in 35 articles that met the inclusion criteria—comprising five from reputable international journals (Q1–Q4) and thirty from national SINTA-accredited journals (SINTA 1–5). This combination reflects a balance between global insight and local context while reinforcing the conceptual validity and thematic relevance of *worship habituation* practices in Islamic education.

Quality assessment was carried out manually, taking into account the thematic relevance, methodological clarity, and empirical robustness of each article that passed the selection process. Articles that met the criteria were then coded and grouped into four main dimensions: (1) the forms and frequency of worship, (2) the strategies and implementation of habituation, (3) the meaning and spiritual experience, and (4) the impact of worship habituation on students' character and spirituality formation.

The data synthesis process was conducted qualitatively by tracing patterns, themes, and linkages across the articles to identify conceptual trends and empirical contributions from each study. This approach enabled a deeper understanding of the practice of *worship habituation* within Islamic educational environments at both national and international levels.

This study did not involve human or animal participants; therefore, ethical approval from a research ethics committee was not required. All data were obtained from open-access publications available in the public domain.

3. Results

To provide a clearer overview of the literature selection process, Figure 1 illustrates the flow of identification, screening, and inclusion of articles based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. This diagram outlines the search stages across various databases, the process of removing duplicates, and the reasons for exclusion at each stage. Out of the 732 articles identified, only 35 met all the inclusion criteria and were further analyzed.
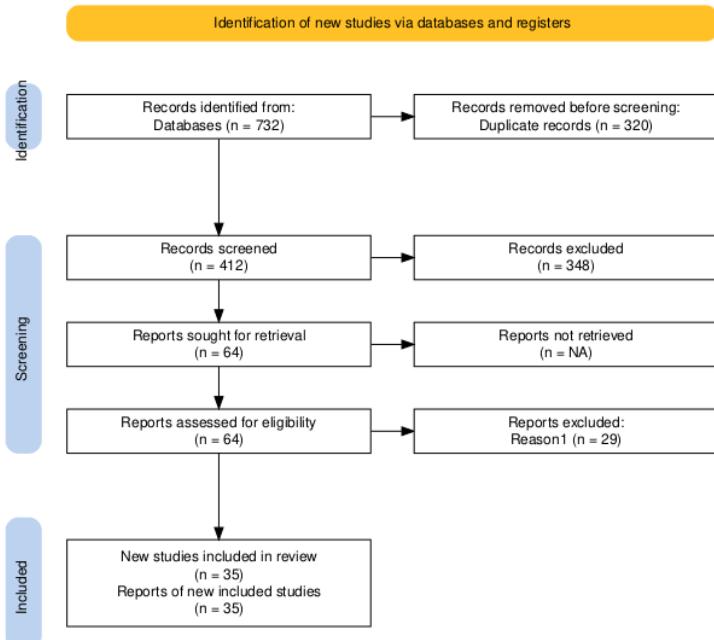
Figure 1. Prisma Flow Diagram

Based on the analysis of the 35 included articles, it was found that Islamic educational institutions, both schools and Islamic boarding schools, generally implement various forms and strategies of worship habituation as part of efforts to strengthen the spiritual dimension of education. Worship activities function not merely as a complement to academic learning but as an integral component of the school's cultural system, shaping students' religious character and spiritual personality.

3.1. Forms and Frequency of Worship Habituation

The most commonly implemented forms of worship in Islamic educational institutions include dhuha prayer and congregational dhuhr prayer, followed by tadarus or tahfidz of the Qur'an, collective prayers and dhikr, as well as other sunnah prayers such as tahajjud, witir, qabliyah, and ba'diyah. The frequency of implementation shows a consistent pattern. Daily activities include dhuha prayers, congregational prayers, tadarus before lessons, and joint prayers at the beginning and end of learning. Other activities such as istighotsah, Yasinan, Friday alms, and religious studies are usually held weekly or monthly, while tahajjud prayers and intensive spiritual activities are carried out in pesantren or dormitory environments under the supervision of teachers and administrators.

Table 2. Forms and Frequency of Worship Habituation in Islamic Schools and Islamic Boarding Schools

Number	Forms of Worship Habit	Number of Studies	Percentage (%)	Frequency of Execution	Impact Found
1	Congregational prayers (Dzuhur, Asr, Friday, Fajr, Maghrib)	17	49%	Daily / Weekly	Time discipline, collective responsibility, spiritual solidarity

2	Dhuha Prayer	20	57%	Daily	Inner peace, study concentration, mental readiness
3	Tadarus / Tahfidz Al-Qur'an	14	40%	Daily	Perseverance, consistency, morality, self-control
4	Prayer and Dhikr together	11	31%	Daily	Emotional calmness, religiosity, social empathy
5	Istighotsah / Yasinan / Religious studies	8	23%	Weekly / Monthly	Togetherness, social solidarity, religious climate
6	Sunnah fasting (Monday–Thursday)	2	6%	Downloads	Empathy, simplicity, social solidarity
7	Night Prayer (Tahajud / Witir / Qiyamul Lail)	4	11%	Specifically for Islamic Boarding Schools / Dormitory	Motivation to learn, perseverance in memorizing, deep spirituality

Table 2 indicates that congregational and dhuha prayers are the most frequently implemented practices, followed by Qur'anic tadarus and collective prayer. This pattern reflects how worship practices have become embedded within the school's learning culture, contributing to students' discipline, spiritual tranquility, and sense of community.

3.2. Implementation Strategies for Worship Habituation

The implementation strategies for worship habituation reveal strong integration between religious activities and the school management system. Most educational institutions incorporate worship activities into their daily schedules and curricula. For example, dhuha prayer, tadarus, and morning prayers form part of the school routine. Principals and institutional leaders play vital roles in policy formulation, facility provision, and periodic supervision, while teachers serve both as role models and direct facilitators in implementing these activities.

Monitoring and reinforcement mechanisms are applied through worship control books, reward and sanction systems, and regular evaluations by teachers or dormitory supervisors. In Islamic boarding schools, a culture of worship is strengthened through intensive mentoring, worship reminders such as alarms, and the enforcement of dormitory regulations. Policy support, leadership commitment, and adequate infrastructure are the key factors ensuring the consistency and sustainability of worship habituation practices.

Table 3. Implementation Strategies for Worship Habituation in Islamic Schools

Number	Implementation Strategies	Number of Studies	Percentage (%)	Examples of Practices / Key Findings
1	Integration of activities into the school's schedule and curriculum	19	54%	Daily worship activities are made part of the curriculum (dhuha prayer, morning prayer, tadarus)
2	Religious leadership and school policy	16	46%	The principal sets a policy of mandatory congregational worship, provides means of worship

3	Role modeling	17	49%	Teachers participate in congregational prayers and guide students' prayers
4	Monitoring system and worship control book	10	29%	Evaluation of worship through a journal or student monitoring sheet
5	Strengthening the culture of dormitories/pesantren	11	31%	Collective worship schedule, direct supervision, pesantren rules
6	Reward and sanctions system	7	20%	Appreciation for students who are disciplined in worship
7	Parental and community involvement	5	14%	Collaboration of joint prayer, family religious activities

Table 3 shows that integrating worship activities into the curriculum (54%) and teacher role modeling (49%) are the most effective strategies. Leadership, monitoring systems, and pesantren culture further reinforce program continuity. These findings confirm that worship habituation functions not merely as spiritual activity but as a value-based Islamic education management system.

3.3. Meaning and Experience of Worship Habituation

In terms of meaning and experience, worship habituation is understood through three main orientations:

1. Spiritual orientation: viewing worship as a means of strengthening one's relationship with God and fostering religious awareness.
2. Moral and character orientation: perceiving activities such as congregational prayers, tadarus, and collective prayers as media for instilling discipline, responsibility, and good manners.
3. Socio-cultural orientation: recognizing worship habituation as part of the school or pesantren culture that strengthens institutional religious identity and community solidarity.

A summary of the meanings and experiences found in the literature is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The Meaning and Experience of Worship Habituation in Islamic Schools

Number	Meaning Orientation	Number of Studies	Percentage (%)	Description of Dominant Experience
1	Spiritual	23	66%	Strengthening of a relationship with God, inner peace, religious awareness
2	Morals and Character	18	51%	Formation of discipline, responsibility, manners, and social empathy
3	Socio-cultural	15	43%	Community solidarity, religious identity of institutions, religious culture of schools

Table 4 indicates that spiritual orientation is the most dominant, followed by moral and socio-cultural orientations. Most students and teachers interpret worship habituation not merely as a formal routine but as a shared spiritual experience that nurtures self-awareness, discipline, and collective harmony.

3.4. The Impact of Worship Habituation

The impacts of worship habituation can be categorized into four major aspects:

1. Behavior and character: improved discipline, responsibility, manners, and social empathy.
2. Spirituality and religiosity: increased faith, inner peace, and spiritual awareness.
3. Academic and cognitive: enhanced study concentration and academic achievement.
4. School environment: creation of a religious atmosphere, harmonious teacher and student relations, and stronger community solidarity.

Table 5. The Impact of Worship Habituation in Islamic Schools

Number	Impact Categories	Number of Studies	Percentage (%)	Impact Indicators	Examples of Supporting Studies
1	Spirituality and Religiosity	26	74%	Increased faith, inner peace	Measure (2024); Nursobah et al. (2025)
2	Character and morals	22	63%	Discipline, responsibility, social empathy	Ajizah et al. (2024); Anshory et al. (2023)
3	Social and emotional	17	49%	Solidarity, social care	Rohmah (2025); Squirting (2024)
4	Academic and cognitive	9	26%	Concentration, motivation to learn	Fathur Rozi and Rahmawati (2023); Hambali and Wangi (2024)
5	School environment and religious culture	15	43%	Religious climate and community harmony	Suyatno et al. (2019); Habibur Rahman et al. (2025)

Table 5 demonstrates that spiritual impact (74%) and moral character development (63%) are the most prominent outcomes, followed by social, academic, and environmental aspects. These results affirm that worship habituation serves a dual role: as a means of fostering individual spirituality and as a mechanism for strengthening institutional religious identity.

Overall, the synthesis of 35 articles reveals that worship habituation in Islamic schools and boarding schools functions not merely as a religious routine but as a structured and sustainable system for spiritual character formation. Through curriculum-integrated activities, this habituation promotes balance among students' spiritual, moral, social, and academic dimensions. Institutional policies, teacher role modeling, and the living religious culture within educational environments are key to ensuring the sustainability of these practices.

Findings across the dimensions of form, strategy, and meaning indicate a consistent pattern between religious rituals and the formation of spiritual habitus in Islamic educational settings. Repetitive and meaningful worship activities not only cultivate external discipline but also instill internal religious awareness, which forms the foundation of students' spiritual character.

Thus, worship habituation can be regarded as a tangible representation of value internalization through daily practice within Islamic educational institutions.

4. Discussion

An analysis of 35 articles indicates that Islamic educational institutions, both schools and Islamic boarding schools, generally employ a variety of strategies to habituate worship as part of their efforts to strengthen the spiritual dimension of education. Activities such as congregational prayers (Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Fajr), dhuha prayers, tadarus or tahfidz of the Qur'an, collective prayers and dhikr, as well as weekly religious routines such as

Yasinan, istighotsah, and Friday alms, are widely integrated into the school's daily and weekly schedules. This pattern suggests that religious practices are not regarded merely as supplementary activities but as integral components of the cultural and pedagogical structure of Islamic education.

These findings align with those of Scale (2024), Uswah et al. (2023)and Nursobah et al. (2025), who assert that worship habituation contributes significantly to the formation of students' religious character, time discipline, and social responsibility. Key determinants of program success include institutional policy support, teacher role modeling, and the availability of worship facilities such as mosques, ablution areas, and spiritual support infrastructure (Ajizah et al., 2024; Setyawan et al., 2023). Collectively, these findings highlight the strategic role of worship habituation in fostering balance among the spiritual, moral, and social dimensions of Islamic education.

Of the 35 studies analyzed, 17 (49%) reported that the implementation of congregational prayers, including Dhuhr, Asr, and Friday prayers, was closely associated with improved discipline, punctuality, and behavioral regularity among students. Congregational prayer programs implemented at MTs NU Tirto Pekalongan and SDIT Al Azhar Gandusari not only foster collective worship routines but also cultivate mutual responsibility and spiritual solidarity (Anshory et al., 2023; Fruit, 2024). Meanwhile, 20 studies (57%) emphasized dhuha prayer as a daily morning activity that enhances students' concentration and mental readiness (Uswah et al., 2023; Fathur Rozi and Rahmawati, 2023; Hambali and Wangi, 2024). This practice is often interpreted as a form of self-regulation that helps students manage focus and emotional stability before academic learning begins.

This perspective is consistent with the Habit Training Theory proposed by Lally and Gardner (2017), which posits that habits are formed through repeated behaviors within consistent social contexts, eventually becoming stable automatic actions. Furthermore, 14 studies (40%) highlighted Qur'anic reading, tadarus, and memorization programs such as Juz Amma and BTQ as practices that strengthen students' moral integrity and behavioral consistency. These activities cultivate perseverance, discipline, and self-control in learning processes (Haq et al., 2024; Ajizah et al., 2024).

Dhikr, wirid, and prayer recitations reported in five studies (14%) were shown to enhance inner peace, emotional balance, and courteous social behavior (Eriyanto and Zakariya, 2024; Nur Fajri et al., 2024). Night worship practices, including tahajjud, were found to increase motivation to learn, diligence in memorization, and profound spiritual awareness (Wahyudin, 2024; Fadli and Rois, 2021). Additionally, two studies (6%) highlighted sunnah fasting on Mondays and Thursdays as a means of cultivating empathy and social solidarity among students (Rohmah, 2025; Nursobah et al., 2025). These findings demonstrate that worship activities in Islamic schools are not solely aimed at strengthening the spiritual dimension of individuals but also integrate emotional, moral, and social development.

The synthesis of these results reinforces Al Attas (1999) concept of ta'dib, which defines education as the process of instilling values through meaningful and repetitive practices. Within this context, worship habituation in Islamic schools serves not merely as ritual activity but as the internalization of adab, namely self-control, order, and spiritual awareness developed through consistent behavior in a supportive environment. This approach

aligns with Hay and Nye (2006) Theory of Spiritual Education, which emphasizes that a child's spiritual growth develops through reflective and relational practice rather than cognitive instruction alone.

Accordingly, worship habituation can be understood as the formation of what Bourdieu (1990) terms spiritual habitus, wherein religious values become embedded in the internal structure of a student's personality and are expressed through daily behavior.

Beyond individual character development, worship habituation also reflects the spiritual foundation of Islamic educational institutions themselves. Suyatno et al. (2019) and Habibur Rahman et al. (2025) emphasize that daily worship activities, reward and sanction systems with religious nuances, and worship monitoring mechanisms help establish a religious and sustainable school culture. Supported by leadership commitment and institutional policies, worship habituation becomes a tangible manifestation of the spiritual foundation of education, positioning worship not merely as a means of character formation but as an intrinsic institutional identity embedded in the daily lives of teachers and students.

The novelty of this study lies in its interpretive approach, which views worship habituation not merely as a character education tool but as a direct manifestation of the spiritual foundation of Islamic educational institutions. Thus, routines such as congregational prayers, tadarus, and dhikr are not simply symbolic or ritualistic, but represent collectively lived values embedded in school culture.

When these practices are reinforced through policy support, leadership commitment, and parental involvement, worship habituation evolves into a sustainable spirituality based education system. Nevertheless, this study acknowledges its limitations, as the findings are derived from literature and depend on the contexts and designs of previous research. Aspects such as the role of the family, the influence of digital technology on students' spirituality, and the adaptation of worship practices in non boarding schools remain underexplored.

Therefore, future studies are recommended to employ case study approaches, longitudinal designs, or mixed methods research to examine more deeply the influence of worship habituation on character formation and the spiritual foundations of students in modern Islamic educational settings.

5. Conclusions

This study collected and synthesized empirical evidence from 35 articles on the practice of worship habituation in Islamic schools and Islamic boarding schools. The synthesis results show that worship practices such as congregational prayers, dhuha prayers, tadarus or tahfidz of the Qur'an, daily prayers and dhikr, as well as periodic religious activities, are the most consistently implemented forms of worship across different levels of Islamic education. The implementation patterns are generally integrated into school schedules and curricula, supported by institutional policies, teacher role modeling, and continuous monitoring mechanisms. Overall, these activities not only foster student discipline, responsibility, and social ethics but also strengthen the spiritual dimension and religious climate of schools.

The findings confirm that worship habituation serves a dual function: first, as a direct manifestation of the spiritual foundation of Islamic educational institutions, and second, as a habit formation based pedagogical strategy that shapes religious behavior through routine practice and social modeling. Thus, worship habituation does not merely function as ritual activity, but as a process of value internalization that integrates the cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of students.

Theoretically, this study expands the understanding of al-Attas (1999) concept of ta'dib and Lally dan Gardner (2017) theory of habit formation by demonstrating that religious habits in schools can be understood as a form of spiritual habitus, a collectively lived value system manifested through institutional structures, school culture, and the roles of educational actors such as teachers, students, and school leaders.

The practical implication is that Islamic schools should strengthen policies supporting the integration of worship within the curriculum, provide adequate facilities and supervision systems, and enhance teacher role modeling as the main pillar of spiritual habit formation.

The main limitation of this study lies in its literary and conceptual nature, so the empirical context and variations of implementation in the field have not been fully revealed. Further research is recommended to use an empirical approach, either through case studies, longitudinal surveys, or mixed methods, to assess the long-term effectiveness of worship habits on the formation of character, religiosity, and spiritual balance of students in various Islamic education settings.

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