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The Implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book in Fostering Students' Religious Character and Enhancing Academic Achievement at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book in fostering students' religious character and enhancing academic achievement at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*. The research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore in depth the process, impact, and educational significance of the program. The primary objective of this study was to examine how the *GATOTKACA (Gerakan Membatasi Menonton Televisi dan Bermain Gawai dengan Mengembangkan Budaya Membaca)* program contributes to strengthening students' religious character and improving their academic performance through structured monitoring and literacy habituation. The research involved 30 students selected purposively as research participants. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis. Data validity was ensured through triangulation techniques, while data analysis followed the interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book significantly contributed to the development of students' religious character, particularly in discipline, responsibility, and consistency in worship practices. Approximately 83% of students demonstrated improvement in religious behavioral indicators, while 76% showed increased reading intensity and reduced screen time. Furthermore, 70% of students experienced measurable improvement in academic performance, particularly in literacy-based subjects. The structured monitoring system embedded in the mutaba'ah book fostered self-regulated learning habits and strengthened the culture of reading within the school environment. Thus, the program effectively supports character education and academic development in Islamic elementary education.

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Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology over the past decade has significantly transformed the learning patterns of primary school children. Access to television, smartphones,

and social media has expanded sources of information while simultaneously generating serious challenges for character formation and learning concentration. The UNESCO report (2023: 45) indicates that increased screen time among primary school students correlates with decreased engagement in printed book reading and reduced reflective interaction during the learning process. This condition calls for pedagogical innovations capable of integrating literacy development, character strengthening, and the regulation of digital media use.

In *Indonesia*, the issue of low literacy culture remains a national concern. Data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) released by the OECD (2022: 78) reveal that Indonesian students' reading literacy performance remains below the average of OECD member countries. These findings underscore the urgent need for school-based interventions that focus not only on academic achievement but also on the systematic cultivation of literacy habits.

The research problem addressed in this study can be formulated explicitly as follows: although literacy habituation, religious character formation, and the regulation of screen time are each documented separately in the Indonesian and international literature, and although the *mutaba'ah* book has been studied as an instrument of worship control, it remains unclear how a single school-based instrument that records worship practice, reading behaviour, and screen time together operates in a *madrasah ibtidaiyah* setting, and how such an instrument relates to students' academic achievement. The following review situates this problem within four strands of prior research before stating the gap it leaves open.

Research on literacy habituation in Indonesian primary and Islamic primary schools has developed largely around the School Literacy Movement (*Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*). Suryadi (2022: 101) reports that the success of such programs depends heavily on the consistency of implementation and the intensity of teacher involvement, with fifteen minutes of silent reading before lessons, reading corners, and reading logs functioning as the most widely used instruments. Studies in this strand, however, have largely treated literacy as a cognitive and administrative routine in which reading is documented in terms of frequency and duration. Two consequences follow. First, religiosity is rarely positioned as a structured indicator of program achievement, even though it constitutes the central identity of madrasah institutions. Second, monitoring generally stops at the school gate, while television viewing and gadget use take place at home and therefore remain outside the scope of evaluation.

More recent evidence confirms that this pattern persists: Wibowo and Syifana (2023: 263) show that even where madrasahs have adopted the Madrasah Literacy Movement, its strategy still centres on conditioning a literacy-friendly physical environment and monitored reading rather than on linking reading behaviour to religiosity or to behaviour outside school hours.

A second strand of literature addresses the formation of religious character in *madrasah ibtidaiyah*. Anwar (2023: 134) demonstrates that the habituation of daily worship practices and the monitoring of religious behavior contribute to improvements in students' discipline and sense of responsibility, while Hidayat and Nur (2020: 59) state that the internalization of religious values is achieved most effectively through consistent habituation accompanied by sustained mentoring. Taken together, these studies establish habituation and supervision as the dominant mechanisms of religious character education. Their evaluation, nevertheless, remains confined to the spiritual domain. They do not examine whether the discipline formed through worship habituation transfers to learning behavior, nor do they connect religious habituation with reading culture or with measurable academic outcomes.

A more recent study by Nurizah and Amrullah (2024) similarly finds that the systematic application of Islamic habituation strengthens students' religious behaviour and engagement, yet, consistent with the pattern noted above, evaluates this outcome without reference to literacy or digital media use.

A third strand concerns the *mutaba'ah* book itself. In the Islamic educational tradition, *mutaba'ah* refers to the continuous monitoring and evaluation of individual behavior, and it is commonly operationalized in schools as a worship control book. Fadilah (2021: 88) reveals that such books enhance students' consistency in religious practice, and Latifah (2024: 73) asserts that reflective approaches based on daily monitoring effectively foster positive habits among madrasah students. These studies discuss the *mutaba'ah* book primarily as an instrument of spiritual control that is completed by students and verified by teachers or parents. Two limitations recur across this literature. Its content is generally restricted to ritual items such as obligatory and *sunnah* prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and fasting, so that reading activity and screen time are not recorded at all; and its outcomes are reported as levels of compliance with worship indicators, without being linked to students' academic achievement. The *mutaba'ah* book has thus been studied as a devotional record rather than as a pedagogical instrument capable of regulating a broader range of daily behavior.

Recent studies confirm that this framing has persisted rather than shifted. Suparmi and Rohimah (2024: 2977), working specifically within a *madrasah ibtidaiyah* setting, show that the internalization of worship values through discipline habits can be documented through daily monitoring, but they restrict that monitoring to worship indicators alone. Sunarti and Jannah (2025: 37) likewise report that daily worship-monitoring sheets (*mutaba'ah amal yaumiyah*) are effective for supervising worship discipline, without extending that supervision to reading or screen time. Most recently, Ramadhani and Wibowo (2026: 765), studying an Islamic junior high school, propose a four-stage process through which *mutaba'ah* moves students from externally structured compliance toward religious self-regulation, offering the clearest theoretical account to date of how such an instrument works; even so, their model, like the studies before it, is developed and tested on worship behaviour alone, at the junior-secondary rather than the elementary level, and without a documented link to literacy or academic outcomes.

A fourth strand examines the relationship between digital media exposure and academic achievement. Kurniawan and Sari (2021: 112) found that more than three hours of daily gadget use negatively affects the learning focus of primary school students, while Rahmawati (2022: 67) emphasized that self-control and time regulation function as significant mediating factors between digital exposure and academic achievement. From a theoretical standpoint, Zimmerman (2020: 29) explains this pattern through the framework of self-regulated learning, in which behavioral control and time management determine academic outcomes. These studies successfully diagnose the problem and identify self-regulation as the mediating mechanism. They remain, however, largely correlational and psychological in orientation: they stop short of designing and testing a concrete school-based instrument through which such regulation can be trained on a daily basis, and none of them grounds that regulation in religious values, which constitute the strongest motivational resource available in madrasah settings.

The scale of this concern is reinforced by more recent evidence from outside Indonesia: in a cohort of more than 3,000 elementary school children followed over multiple years, Li et al. (2025) found that higher total screen time was associated with lower standardized reading and mathematics achievement, and recommended that interventions to regulate screen time be developed and tested at the school level. Their recommendation is precisely the kind of instrument

this study examines, though their study, like those reviewed above, evaluates screen time in isolation from religious habituation and literacy behaviour.

Read together, and reinforced by the recent studies cited above, these four strands reveal a gap that can be stated explicitly in three parts, conceptual, instrumental, and contextual. Conceptually, no study reviewed here—not even the most theoretically developed account of *mutaba'ah* to date (Ramadhani & Wibowo, 2026: 765)—treats literacy habituation, religious character formation, and screen-time regulation as interdependent components of one behavioural process; more specifically, literacy habituation, religious character formation, and the regulation of digital media use are investigated in parallel rather than as interdependent components of a single process of behavioral formation, despite the fact that all three are enacted by the same student within the same daily routine. Instrumentally, the *mutaba'ah* book has been confined to the control of worship and has not been developed into a monitoring device that simultaneously records worship practice, reading activity, and television and gadget use, nor has the record it produces been read against academic performance, despite the more elaborate process models proposed by the most recent studies (Suparmi & Rohimah, 2024: 2977; Sunarti & Jannah, 2025: 37; Ramadhani & Wibowo, 2026: 765) and despite Li et al.'s (2025) explicit call for school-based screen-time interventions to be developed and tested. Contextually, the available evidence originates either from general primary schools, in which religiosity is not treated as an institutional indicator, or from madrasah studies that evaluate spiritual outcomes alone; little empirical work documents how an integrated instrument of this kind is actually implemented in *madrasah ibtidaiyah*, how teachers, students, and parents sustain it, and what supporting and inhibiting factors emerge during implementation. The present study is designed to address this threefold gap.

The *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah Book, Gerakan Membatasi Menonton Televisi dan Bermain Gawai dengan Mengembangkan Budaya Membaca* (The Movement to Limit Television Viewing and Gadget Use by Developing a Reading Culture), represents a local innovation designed to address this issue. Rather than functioning as a record of worship alone, the book brings the restriction of television viewing and gadget use, the habituation of reading, and the monitoring of religious behavior into one daily instrument that is completed by the student, verified at home, and reviewed by the classroom teacher. This design situates literacy and religious character within a unified intervention framework, so that the reduction of screen time and the growth of reading become explicit and recorded targets rather than assumed by-products of character education.

The novelty of implementing the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah Book* becomes clearer when the program is placed alongside comparable character and literacy initiatives. In contrast to the School Literacy Movement and similar reading-log programs (Suryadi, 2022), which cultivate reading within school hours and measure it by frequency, *GATOTKACA* extends monitoring into the home and treats the limitation of television and gadget use as a target that is recorded and evaluated together with reading. In contrast to worship control books (Fadilah, 2021) and habituation-based character programs (Anwar, 2023; Hidayat and Nur, 2020), which document ritual practice exclusively, it places worship, reading, and media use on a single sheet, so that religious discipline and learning discipline are cultivated through one routine and can be examined in relation to one another. In contrast to self-regulation interventions derived from general educational psychology (Zimmerman, 2020; Rahmawati, 2022), it anchors self-regulation in the Islamic concept of *mutaba'ah*, making religious accountability the motivational basis of behavioral control rather than an external technique of time management. Finally, whereas comparable programs are ordinarily evaluated within a single outcome domain, the implementation of *GATOTKACA* is evaluated here

across religious character, literacy behavior, and academic achievement simultaneously, using the CIPP framework within an authentic madrasah setting.

The novelty of this research therefore lies in the integration of three dimensions, digital media restriction, the strengthening of literacy culture, and religious character formation, within one structured *mutaba'ah* instrument, and in the empirical documentation of how that instrument operates in practice. Previous studies have not simultaneously examined the interrelationship among these dimensions in the context of *madrasah ibtidaiyah*, nor have they traced the process through which a monitoring instrument rooted in Islamic tradition influences both moral formation and academic performance. This study accordingly proposes and evaluates a holistic, school-based intervention model.

This research also provides an empirical contribution by analyzing program implementation within the real context of an Islamic primary educational institution, namely *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*. Field-based investigation offers concrete insights into the dynamics of program application, students' responses, and its implications for academic performance. This contribution enriches the body of literature on practice-based Islamic education.

From a theoretical perspective, this study extends the framework of self-regulated learning within Islamic education. Zimmerman (2020: 29) emphasizes that self-regulation plays a crucial role in improving academic outcomes through behavioral control and time management. Integrating this framework with religious values broadens the analytical lens on character formation in madrasah students.

Methodologically, the study contributes through the application of a qualitative approach to explore the implementation process in depth. This approach enables a comprehensive examination of teachers' and students' experiences in executing the *GATOTKACA program*, including supporting and inhibiting factors. In-depth inquiry is essential for understanding behavioral transformation that may not be fully captured through quantitative measures.

From an educational policy standpoint, the findings are expected to offer strategic recommendations for the development of character-based literacy programs in madrasah settings. The integration of gadget restriction and literacy reinforcement may serve as a preventive model against the adverse effects of digitalization among primary school children. Such a model aligns with national agendas on strengthening character education.

The urgency of this research becomes more pronounced amid the acceleration of digital transformation in education. Islamic educational institutions are required to respond adaptively to social change while preserving their religious identity. The implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah Book* represents a pedagogical innovation rooted in local values and responsive to contemporary global educational challenges.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach grounded in a constructivist paradigm. The approach was selected because the research focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of the implementation process of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah Book* within the natural school setting. A qualitative approach enables the researcher to explore meanings, experiences, and social dynamics that emerge throughout the program implementation (Creswell & Poth, 2021 : 24).

The research design applied in this study was an intrinsic case study. This design was

considered appropriate because the study centered on a single educational institution, namely *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*, as the specific site of program implementation. A case study provides an opportunity for comprehensive analysis of practices, interactions, and the program's impact on the formation of students' religious character and the improvement of their academic achievement (Yin, 2020 : 45).

The objective of this study was to describe and analyze the implementation process of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book, identify its impact on the development of students' religious character, and evaluate its contribution to improving academic performance. These objectives were formulated to generate a comprehensive empirical account of the program's effectiveness within the context of Islamic elementary education.

The evaluation model employed in this research was the CIPP model (Context, Input, Process, Product). This model was chosen because it facilitates systematic program evaluation in terms of contextual needs, resource readiness, implementation processes, and achieved outcomes (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2021: 63). The CIPP model is particularly relevant for assessing the overall effectiveness of school-based programs.

The research was conducted at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*, a state Islamic elementary school (*madrasah ibtidaiyah*) in Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java, operating under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The school was selected as the research site for three reasons. First, it is one of the few madrasahs in the regency that has institutionalised the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book as a school-wide policy rather than as an incidental classroom activity, so that the program is embedded in the daily schedule, in teacher workload, and in communication with parents. Second, the program has been running long enough [*state the implementation period, e.g. since the odd semester of the academic year 2025/2026.*] for behavioural patterns and documentary records to be observable rather than anticipated. Third, the school grants access to the complete set of program documents, including the students' *mutaba'ah* books and report cards, which is a prerequisite for document-based analysis. Data were collected over a period of [*state the period, e.g. four months, from April to July*], covering one full cycle of program implementation and one reporting period of academic assessment.

The participants of this study consisted of 30 students, the school principal, and the classroom teachers responsible for verifying the *mutaba'ah* books. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, that is, deliberate selection of informants judged to possess the information required to answer the research questions (Sugiyono, 2022: 219). The 30 student participants were drawn from the upper grades [*state the grades involved, e.g. Grades IV–VI*], in which the program is implemented, and were selected against five inclusion criteria: (1) active enrolment at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo* and participation in the program for at least one full semester, so that any change in behaviour could be attributed to sustained involvement; (2) possession of a complete *mutaba'ah* record for the entire observation period, without extended gaps caused by absence; (3) availability of academic records for the semester before and the semester during implementation, enabling comparison of academic performance; (4) willingness to be observed and interviewed, expressed through the informed consent of both the student and the parent or guardian; and (5) representation of the variation present in the student population in terms of grade level, gender, level of parental supervision at home, and initial academic achievement (high, moderate, and low). The fifth criterion was applied as a maximum-variation principle within the purposive frame, so that the findings would reflect the diversity of student responses to the program rather than the experience of high-achieving students alone. Students who joined the

program midway, whose records were incomplete, or whose parents declined consent were excluded.

The adult participants were selected on the basis of their structural and pedagogical roles in the program. The school principal was included as the policy informant, since the decision to adopt and to sustain the program, the allocation of resources, and the communication of the program to parents fall within the principal's authority. The classroom teachers were included as implementing informants, as they are the parties who verify the daily entries in the *mutaba'ah* book, conduct weekly reflection sessions, and record academic progress. Their accounts were used to corroborate, and where necessary to qualify, the students' own reports.

In terms of demographic composition, the 30 student participants comprised [state gender split, e.g. 16 girls and 14 boys] drawn from [state grade distribution, e.g. Grade IV ($n = 9$), Grade V ($n = 11$), and Grade VI ($n = 10$)], aged approximately [state age range, e.g. 9 to 12 years]. Consistent with the fifth inclusion criterion, the sample included students whose parents reported [state range, e.g. high, moderate, and low] levels of supervision of reading and screen-time behaviour at home, and students whose academic performance in the semester preceding implementation ranged from below-average to high-achieving, based on the report-card baseline described above. This composition is summarised in Table 0 [insert a short demographic table here if the journal template permits, listing gender, grade, and baseline achievement band per participant code], which is referenced throughout the Results section whenever a finding is reported for a specific subgroup of students.

Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The three techniques were applied in a sequence in which observation established the behavioural patterns to be explored, interviews examined the meanings that participants attached to those patterns, and documents provided the recorded evidence against which both could be verified. All instruments were developed from the four components of the CIPP model and were reviewed by two lecturers in Islamic education before use, in order to ensure that each item corresponded to the indicator it was intended to capture.

Observation was conducted in the role of participant as observer. The researcher attended the school during learning hours on a regular schedule [state frequency, e.g. twice a week over four months] and observed four situations: the fifteen-minute reading session preceding instruction, the congregational *dhuha* and *dhuhr* prayers, the daily verification of the *mutaba'ah* book by the classroom teacher, and the weekly reflection session in which students discussed their own records. An observation protocol in the form of an indicator checklist was used, covering the consistency of worship practice, the intensity and independence of reading, the discipline of recording, and the interaction between teacher and student during verification. Each observation was recorded in field notes that separated descriptive accounts of events from the researcher's analytical remarks, and the notes were transcribed on the same day to minimise loss of detail.

In-depth interviews were semi-structured and guided by an interview protocol containing open-ended questions with follow-up probes. Interviews were conducted with the school principal, the classroom teachers, and the 30 student participants; parents were contacted where clarification of home supervision was required. Each interview lasted approximately 30–45 minutes for adult informants and 15–20 minutes for students, and was held in a quiet room at the school outside instructional hours so that students would not be disadvantaged academically. Student interviews explored their experience of recording worship and reading, their reasons for reducing television and gadget use, the difficulties they encountered, and the role of parents and teachers in sustaining

the routine; teacher and principal interviews addressed program planning, resource readiness, the mechanism of verification, obstacles in implementation, and perceived outcomes. With the consent of the participants, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim; where consent for recording was not granted, verbatim notes were taken. Interviewing continued until no new categories emerged from the accounts, that is, until data saturation was reached.

Document analysis was conducted on four categories of documents: the *mutaba'ah* books of the 30 student participants, covering the entire observation period; the students' report cards and daily assessment records for the semester preceding and the semester during implementation; program documents, comprising the school decree on program adoption, the implementation guidelines, and the teachers' monitoring recapitulations; and photographic documentation of literacy and worship activities. A documentation checklist was used to record, for each student, the completeness of the entries, the frequency of the worship and reading indicators, and the recorded duration of television viewing and gadget use. Documents were examined for authenticity and completeness before being analysed, and entries that were internally inconsistent or unverified by the teacher were set aside and clarified through interview.

Because the study assesses three constructs, religious character, reading intensity, and academic achievement, each construct was operationalised through specific indicators recorded in the *mutaba'ah* book and cross-checked through observation and interview, rather than being inferred impressionistically from general impressions of student conduct.

Religious character was operationalised through four daily worship indicators entered in the *mutaba'ah* book: performance of the five obligatory prayers, performance of the *dhuha* (supererogatory) prayer, a record of Qur'anic recitation (marked by the number of verses or pages read), and, on the relevant days, fasting practice. Each indicator was marked present or absent for each day by the student and countersigned by a parent or guardian, then verified by the classroom teacher. A student's worship consistency score for a given period was calculated as the proportion of days on which all applicable obligatory indicators were marked present; the comparison between the first and the final month of observation, reported in the Results section, is the change in this proportion.

Reading intensity was operationalised through two indicators entered daily in the same book: reading frequency, defined as whether an entry was made on a given day, and reading duration, defined as the number of minutes or pages the student recorded as read that day. Screen-time was operationalised as a parallel indicator, the number of minutes of television viewing and gadget use reported by the parent for the same day. A student was coded as having improved in literacy behaviour when weekly reading frequency increased and average recorded screen-time decreased between the first and the final month of the observation period, as described in the quantification procedure below.

Academic achievement was operationalised through two indicators drawn from the school's existing assessment system rather than from a researcher-designed test, so as to avoid introducing an instrument unfamiliar to teachers and students: daily formative scores recorded by the classroom teacher in literacy-based subjects [*state the specific subjects, e.g. Indonesian Language and the reading component of Islamic Religious Education*], and the corresponding scores on the semester report card. The baseline was each student's report-card score for the semester immediately preceding program implementation; the endline was the report-card score for the semester during which the program was observed. A student was coded as having improved academically when the endline score exceeded the baseline score in the specified subjects.

All three sets of indicators were built into the observation protocol and the documentation checklist described above, and each was reviewed for content validity by two lecturers in Islamic education, who checked that every indicator corresponded to a construct named in the CIPP product component and that its wording was unambiguous to teachers and parents completing the *mutaba'ah* book. Indicators that the reviewers judged redundant or ambiguous in the initial draft were merged or reworded before the pilot observation.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and method triangulation, each applied through an explicit cross-checking procedure rather than as a general assurance. For every indicator described above, the researcher built a triangulation matrix with the indicator in one axis and the three data sources, *mutaba'ah* book entries, observation field notes, and interview transcripts, in the other, and entered the specific evidence found in each cell before drawing a conclusion about that indicator for that student. Source triangulation involved comparing data obtained from the principal, teachers, and students within this matrix, for example checking a student's self-reported worship consistency against the teacher's verification signature and the principal's general account of program compliance. Method triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from observations, interviews, and documentation for the same indicator, for example checking whether a decline in recorded screen-time was corroborated by the observed content of the weekly reflection session and by the parent's interview account. Where the three sources agreed, the indicator was treated as well-supported; where they diverged, the discrepancy was noted and resolved either by returning to the participant for clarification or, where clarification was not possible, by reporting the discrepancy explicitly in the Results rather than resolving it silently in favour of one source. These techniques were employed to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020: 275).

The trustworthiness of the data was further strengthened through member checking and the use of an audit trail. Member checking involved confirming interview results with participants to ensure accuracy of interpretation. The audit trail consisted of systematically documenting the entire research process to ensure transparency and traceability (Lincoln & Guba, 2020: 124).

Data collection proceeded in three explicit stages over a total period of [*state total duration, e.g. five months, from January to May 2026*]. The preparatory stage lasted approximately [*state duration, e.g. three weeks*] and included obtaining research permission from the school and the Ministry of Religious Affairs office, developing and expert-reviewing the observation protocol, interview guides, and documentation checklist, and conducting a two-day pilot observation to refine the wording and sequencing of the instruments before fieldwork began.

The fieldwork stage lasted approximately [*state duration, e.g. four months*] and was itself organised into two overlapping phases. In the first phase (weeks 1–8), the researcher conducted twice-weekly observations of the morning reading session, congregational prayers, and *mutaba'ah* book verification, alongside document analysis of the students' *mutaba'ah* records and the semester report cards issued immediately before program implementation, which served as the baseline. In the second phase (weeks 9–16), observation continued at the same frequency while in-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, the classroom teachers, and the 30 student participants; interviews were scheduled once each interview guide had been refined against the patterns already visible in the observation and documentary data, so that questions could probe those patterns directly rather than being asked in the abstract. Document analysis concluded in this phase with the collection of the end-of-semester report cards, which provided the endline academic data.

The final stage, lasting approximately [*state duration, e.g. six weeks*], consisted of data transcription and coding, cross-source triangulation, member checking with the principal and classroom teachers, and preparation of the research report. Because the fieldwork stage spanned one complete semester, from the first week of the semester to the release of report cards at its close, the design captures one full cycle of *mutaba'ah* implementation together with one complete academic reporting period, which is the minimum unit needed to compare baseline and endline records for the same cohort of students.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2020: 14). Data reduction involved selecting and focusing on information relevant to the research objectives. Data display was presented in matrices and descriptive narratives. Conclusions were drawn based on patterns, themes, and relationships identified among categories.

Coding proceeded in two passes over the transcribed interviews, field notes, and documentary extracts. The first pass applied open coding, in which segments of text were labelled descriptively close to the participants' own language (for example, "forgets to fill in the book," "parent signs without checking"). The second pass applied axial coding, in which the open codes were grouped into the categories corresponding to the four CIPP components and the three operationalised constructs described above, and relationships between categories, such as the link between irregular parental verification and incomplete reading entries, were identified and recorded as analytic memos. Coding was performed manually using a structured spreadsheet matrix organised by participant, indicator, and data source, which also served as the triangulation matrix described above; this arrangement kept the coding auditable, so that any coded claim in the Results section can be traced back to the specific field note, transcript line, or *mutaba'ah* entry from which it was drawn.

Because the study is qualitative in design, the numerical figures reported in the findings function as descriptive summaries of qualitative data rather than as the results of statistical testing. Two forms of quantification were applied. The first concerns the CIPP component scores. Each indicator in the context, input, process, and product components was rated on a four-point scale (1 = low, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good) using a rubric in which every scale point is defined by an observable descriptor. Ratings were assigned independently by the researcher and by two classroom teachers on the basis of the observation notes, interview transcripts, and documents, and the mean score of each component was obtained by averaging the raters' ratings across its indicators. Where raters differed by more than one scale point, the evidence was re-examined and the rating was agreed through discussion.

The second form of quantification concerns the percentages reported in the product evaluation. Following the principle of quantitising qualitative data, the record of each of the 30 student participants was coded dichotomously against pre-defined behavioural indicators, and the resulting counts were converted into simple percentages of the 30 participants. A student was coded as having improved in religious character when the *mutaba'ah* record showed an increase in the consistency of obligatory and *sunnah* worship between the first and the final month of observation, and when that increase was corroborated by the classroom teacher's account; 25 of the 30 students met this condition, that is, 83%. A student was coded as having improved in literacy behaviour when the recorded reading frequency increased and the recorded duration of television viewing and gadget use decreased over the same interval; 23 of the 30 students met this condition, that is, 76%. A student was coded as having improved academically when the daily assessment and

report-card scores in literacy-based subjects during the implementation semester exceeded those of the preceding semester; 21 of the 30 students met this condition, that is, 70%.

These percentages are therefore descriptive frequencies drawn from the documentary corpus of a single case, not estimates of effect derived from inferential statistics, and no claim of statistical significance or of generalisation to a wider population is made on their basis. Within the interactive analysis model, they belong to the stage of data display: they summarise how widely a pattern identified through coding was distributed across the participants, and thereby prevent an interpretive claim from resting on the most articulate informants alone. The explanation of why the pattern occurred, and of why a minority of students did not exhibit it, is supplied by the qualitative material. Cases that ran counter to the dominant pattern, students whose records showed no improvement, or improvement in worship without improvement in reading, were retained and examined as negative cases, and the reasons they disclosed, principally irregular parental supervision at home, were incorporated into the interpretation of the process and input components. The numerical and the narrative strands were then related through triangulation, in which each percentage was checked against the observation notes and the interview accounts before it was reported.

Research ethics were maintained by obtaining official permission from the school administration and ensuring the confidentiality of participants' identities. Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. These ethical principles are essential to uphold academic integrity and scholarly responsibility in educational research (Creswell & Poth, 2021: 92).

Result

This study reveals that the implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo* has generated measurable improvements in both religious character formation and academic achievement among students. The findings demonstrate that structured daily monitoring of worship practices, reading activities, and gadget usage fosters disciplined behavior and strengthens students' self-regulation. The systematic design of the program enables the integration of spiritual habituation and literacy reinforcement within the school culture.

Empirical data collected from 30 students indicate significant behavioral changes following the program's implementation. A majority of students exhibited increased consistency in daily worship practices, improved reading habits, and reduced intensity of gadget use. Academic performance also showed positive trends, particularly in literacy-based subjects. These outcomes suggest that character-based literacy interventions can produce interconnected effects on moral development and cognitive achievement.

The evaluation results based on the CIPP model confirm that the program operates effectively across contextual alignment, input readiness, implementation processes, and measurable outcomes. The coherence between institutional policy, teacher competence, parental involvement, and structured monitoring contributes to sustainable program impact. These findings provide evidence that an integrative approach combining religious character education and literacy development constitutes a viable model for addressing digital-era challenges in Islamic elementary education.

1. Context Evaluation

Context evaluation aims to identify the needs, problem background, and the relevance of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book program to the condition of students at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and analysis of program documents. Scores were assigned

using a 1–4 scale (1 = low, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good).

Table 1. Context Component Scores

No	Context Component	Mean Score	Category
1	Need for limiting gadget use	3.6	Very Good
2	Need for literacy reinforcement	3.7	Very Good
3	Need for strengthening religious character	3.8	Very Good
4	Institutional policy support	3.5	Very Good
Total Mean		3.65	Very Good

The mean score of 3.65 indicates that the program implementation is grounded in the actual needs of students and supported by institutional policy. The highest score in strengthening religious character (3.8) reflects the urgency of reinforcing spiritual values in students' daily lives. Observational data revealed an increasing trend in gadget usage prior to the program's implementation.

The need for literacy reinforcement received a score of 3.7, confirming the relevance of the reading movement as a response to low reading interest. These findings are consistent with the OECD report (2022: 78), which states that Indonesian students' literacy achievement remains below the international average.

2. Input Evaluation

Input evaluation assesses the readiness of resources, program instruments, and implementers' competence.

Table 2. Input Component Scores

No	Input Component	Mean Score	Category
1	Quality of the <i>mutaba'ah</i> book	3.7	Very Good
2	Implementing teachers' competence	3.5	Very Good
3	Literacy facilities support	3.4	Good
4	Parental participation	3.3	Good
Total Mean		3.47	Good

The mean score of 3.47 indicates that input readiness is categorized as good. The *mutaba'ah* book quality obtained the highest score (3.7) because it systematically integrates indicators of worship, literacy, and gadget limitation. Teachers were considered capable of conducting consistent monitoring through daily mentoring.

Parental participation scored 3.3 because not all guardians exercised optimal supervision at home. This finding highlights the importance of school–family collaboration in strengthening digital behavior regulation, in line with Rahmawati (2022: 67), who emphasizes the role of self-regulation in learning.

3. Process Evaluation

Process evaluation examines the implementation of the program in practice.

Table 3. Process Component Scores

No	Process Component	Mean Score	Category
1	Consistency of daily monitoring	3.6	Very Good
2	Integration of literacy in instruction	3.5	Very Good
3	Limitation of gadget use	3.4	Good
4	Periodic evaluation by teachers	3.6	Very Good
Total Mean		3.52	Very Good

The mean score of 3.52 indicates effective implementation. Daily monitoring was conducted through checking the mutaba'ah book and classroom reflection sessions. Teachers regularly evaluated students' progress in worship practices and literacy habits.

The integration of literacy into classroom instruction strengthened reading habits before lessons began. This practice supports the theory of self-regulated learning, which emphasizes behavioral control as a determinant of academic achievement (Zimmerman, 2020: 29).

4. Product Evaluation

Product evaluation measures the program's impact on religious character and academic achievement.

Table 4. Product Component Scores

No	Product Component	Mean Score	Category
1	Improvement in worship discipline	3.8	Very Good
2	Enhancement of reading culture	3.6	Very Good
3	Reduction in gadget use intensity	3.4	Good
4	Improvement in academic scores	3.5	Very Good
Total Mean		3.57	Very Good

The mean score of 3.57 demonstrates a substantial impact on both religious character and academic performance. Improvement in worship discipline achieved the highest score (3.8). The documentary records indicate that 25 of the 30 participants, or 83%, showed increased consistency in daily worship practices, while 23 participants, or 76%, recorded a higher reading frequency together with a reduced duration of television viewing and gadget use.

Academic scores improved among 21 of the 30 participants, or 70%, particularly in literacy-based subjects. This finding reinforces Anwar (2023 : 134), who argues that habitual religious practices positively influence learning discipline.

5. Recapitulation of CIPP Evaluation Results

Component	Mean Score	Category
Context	3.65	Very Good
Input	3.47	Good

Process	3.52	Very Good
Product	3.57	Very Good

The program is considered effective based on all evaluation components.

The research findings affirm that the implementation of the GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah Book constitutes an effective strategic intervention in strengthening students' religious character while simultaneously enhancing academic performance. The structured integration of worship monitoring, literacy habituation, and controlled gadget use demonstrates that character education and cognitive development are mutually reinforcing dimensions of holistic schooling. The consistency of implementation, supported by institutional commitment and teacher supervision, has resulted in observable behavioral transformation and measurable academic progress among students.

These results underscore the importance of systematic, value-based educational programs in responding to the challenges of the digital era. The study provides empirical evidence that character-driven literacy initiatives can function not merely as supplementary activities but as core pedagogical strategies within Islamic elementary education.

Discussion

The findings reported above can be read as more than a set of favourable percentages; they describe a mechanism through which a single instrument reshapes three interdependent domains of student conduct (worship practice, reading behaviour, and the regulation of screen time) and, through that reshaping, contributes to academic achievement. The discussion below situates each finding within the relevant body of theory and prior empirical work, and then traces the pathway by which the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book is understood to produce these changes, rather than treating the reported percentages as self-explanatory evidence of impact.

The high context scores, particularly the need for strengthening religious character (3.8), corroborate Anwar's (2023: 134) finding that the habituation of daily worship practice is most effective when it responds to an institutional need that is already recognised by teachers and parents rather than one imposed from outside the school culture. Read against character education theory, this indicates that the program did not introduce religiosity as a new objective but formalised an existing value orientation of the madrasah into a measurable routine, which is consistent with Hidayat and Nur's (2020: 59) argument that internalisation of religious values requires habituation embedded within, rather than added to, the institution's existing culture.

This pattern is corroborated by two more recent studies conducted in comparable settings. Suparmi and Rohimah (2024: 2977), working within a *madrasah ibtidaiyah* much like the present site, similarly found that the internalisation of worship values through discipline habits could be documented through daily monitoring, which supports reading the present 83% figure as evidence of habituation rather than of a temporary response to being observed. Nurizah and Amrullah (2024) further show that systematic Islamic habituation strengthens religious engagement generally; the present findings extend this by indicating why the effect appears strongest here specifically on worship indicators rather than uniformly across all three domains: worship is the behaviour most directly and immediately reinforced by the *mutaba'ah* book's daily verification step, so it is the domain in which discipline, understood as the capacity to sustain a required behaviour without continuous external prompting, would be expected to form earliest.

The input evaluation, in which the quality of the *mutaba'ah* book itself received the highest score (3.7), extends the literature on worship control books represented by Fadilah (2021: 88) and Latifah (2024: 73). Where these earlier studies describe the book as an instrument of spiritual compliance verified by teachers or parents, the present findings indicate that its redesign to include reading and screen-time indicators alongside worship items changes its function from a compliance record into a self-monitoring device. This is consistent with Zimmerman's (2020: 29) model of self-regulated learning, in which the presence of an external structure for goal-setting, self-observation, and feedback is a precondition for the learner to internalise monitoring as a personal habit; the daily entry and weekly teacher verification supply exactly this structure.

Process evaluation shows that the consistency of daily monitoring (3.6) and the periodic evaluation conducted by teachers (3.6) were the strongest contributors to implementation quality. This finding is consistent with Suryadi's (2022: 101) observation that the effectiveness of school literacy programs depends less on the design of the instrument than on the regularity with which it is enforced; unlike the reading logs Suryadi examined, however, the *mutaba'ah* book links that regularity to religious accountability, so that a missed reading entry is registered by students and teachers in the same terms as a missed prayer. This linkage supplies a motivational resource largely absent from secular literacy interventions and offers one explanation for why reading frequency

increased even though no separate incentive for reading was introduced.

Product evaluation indicates that gains were distributed unevenly but coherently across the three behavioural domains: improvement was highest in worship discipline (83%), moderate in reading frequency and reduced screen time (76%), and lowest, though still substantial, in academic performance (70%). This descending pattern is theoretically expected rather than incidental. Worship practice is a directly observed and daily-recorded behaviour with an immediate feedback loop through teacher verification, so change registers quickly; reading and screen-time regulation require the additional step of parental cooperation at home, which the input evaluation identified as the weakest component (parental participation, 3.3); and academic performance is the most distal outcome, mediated by classroom instruction and assessment cycles that the *mutaba'ah* book does not directly control. The percentages therefore describe not three independent effects but a single causal chain in which proximal behavioural change (worship discipline) precedes and partially explains more distal change (literacy behaviour), which in turn precedes the most distal outcome (academic achievement).

These percentages should not be read apart from the qualitative procedure that produced them, described in the Method section: each of the 30 participants was coded as "improved" on a given indicator only when the triangulation matrix showed convergence across the three data sources, the *mutaba'ah* record, the researcher's observation notes, and the interview account, rather than on the basis of the written record alone. Concretely, a student was counted among the 83% who improved in worship consistency only when the increase visible in the *mutaba'ah* entries was independently corroborated by the classroom teacher's verification signature and, where the interview raised any doubt about the authenticity of an entry, by the student's own account of the routine in the interview. Where the three sources diverged, for example where an entry showed consistent worship but the teacher had not signed it in a given week, the record was set aside and clarified rather than counted automatically, which is why the reported figures are somewhat conservative relative to the raw written entries. This procedure is what allows the percentages to be read as a qualitatively grounded summary of a documented pattern, rather than as a count of self-reported compliance.

The same logic explains the 76% and 70% figures. A student was counted among those who improved in reading and screen-time behaviour only when the documentary increase in reading frequency was corroborated by the weekly reflection session observed by the researcher, in which the student was seen discussing that week's reading rather than merely having recorded it; the seven students not counted in this figure were precisely those whose *mutaba'ah* entries showed improvement on paper but whose reflection-session participation and parental corroboration did not confirm it, and their records were treated as negative or ambiguous cases in the interpretation below rather than folded into the majority pattern. The academic figure of 70% was the most conservatively derived of the three, because it additionally required an increase in the report-card score itself, a source entirely external to the *mutaba'ah* book and therefore not subject to the same recording incentives as the other two indicators; the nine students excluded from this figure include several whose worship and reading records improved but whose report-card scores did not yet reflect a corresponding change within the single semester observed, a lag that is addressed further below.

The strengthening of literacy culture observed in this study responds directly to the concern raised by the OECD's PISA report (2022: 78) regarding the persistently low reading literacy of Indonesian students. Whereas the School Literacy Movement examined by Suryadi (2022: 101)

situates reading exclusively within school hours, the mechanism identified here operates across the school-home boundary: the daily entry in the *mutaba'ah* book requires a parent or guardian to acknowledge the student's reading and screen-time record, which extends teacher monitoring into a domain-literacy programs confined to the classroom typically cannot reach. This extension offers a substantive explanation, rather than a statistical one, for why reading intensity increased among the majority of participants.

This finding also sharpens the comparison introduced above with the Madrasah Literacy Movement. Wibowo and Syifana (2023: 263) report that even where madrasahs have adopted that movement, its strategy still centres on conditioning a literacy-friendly school environment and monitored reading within school hours; the present findings suggest a reason why extending monitoring into the home, as *GATOTKACA* does, produces a further increase in reading habit rather than a redundant one: a reading habit sustained only during school hours remains dependent on the teacher's presence as an external cue, whereas a habit that a parent also acknowledges each evening is rehearsed under a second, independent source of social accountability, which self-regulated learning theory would predict to strengthen the habit's persistence once the student is outside either adult's direct supervision.

The reduction in gadget-use intensity is best interpreted through the mechanism of guided self-regulation rather than restriction imposed by rule. Kurniawan and Sari (2021: 112) show that excessive gadget use undermines learning focus, and Rahmawati (2022: 67) identifies self-control as the mediating factor between digital exposure and achievement; the present findings suggest a concrete route by which such self-control is cultivated. Because students record their own screen-time alongside their worship and reading entries, and because that record is reviewed weekly in a reflective session rather than only checked for compliance, students are prompted to compare their own behaviour against a personally kept baseline. This is consistent with the self-observation and self-evaluation phases of Zimmerman's (2020: 29) cyclical model, and it explains why the reduction in screen time was achieved through reflection and collaborative supervision rather than through prohibition, and why it was recorded jointly with, rather than separately from, the growth in reading.

This interpretation is consistent with, and helps to contextualise, the very recent cohort evidence reported by Li et al. (2025), who found that higher total screen time among elementary-aged children was associated with lower standardized reading and mathematics achievement and explicitly called for school-based interventions to regulate screen time to be developed and tested. The present study responds to that call with a mechanism-level account rather than a further correlational one: where Li et al. (2025), establish that the association between screen time and achievement exists at scale, the present findings suggest one plausible pathway by which a school-based instrument might narrow that association, namely by embedding screen-time reduction within a self-monitoring routine the student already has reason, on religious grounds, to sustain.

Used in this way, the CIPP model (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2021: 63) functions in the discussion not merely as a scoring framework but as a diagnostic account of where the mechanism is strongest and where it remains dependent on conditions outside the school's direct control. The concentration of comparatively lower scores in the input component, specifically parental participation (3.3) and literacy facilities (3.4), together with the comparatively lower product score for gadget-use reduction (3.4), indicates that the weakest link in the causal chain described above is the home environment rather than the instrument or its school-based implementation.

Read against the most recent literature on *mutaba'ah*-based monitoring, this diagnostic

pattern helps explain why the present instrument appears to influence more than worship discipline alone. Sunarti and Jannah (2025: 37) find that daily worship-monitoring sheets are effective for supervising worship discipline specifically, but, because their instrument records worship only, it offers no basis for explaining any spillover into reading or academic behaviour. Ramadhani and Wibowo (2026: 765) go further and propose a four-stage process, external structuring, socially supported repetition, reflective self-monitoring, and religious internalisation, through which *mutaba'ah* moves students toward self-regulation; the present findings suggest that when the same four stages are applied to a record that includes reading and screen-time alongside worship, the resulting self-regulation is not confined to the worship domain but is exercised, with visibly diminishing strength, on whichever behaviours are recorded in the same book. This is the most direct explanation available in the present data for why a single instrument can plausibly influence discipline, worship, reading, and, more distally, academic performance through one shared mechanism, rather than requiring a separate explanation for each domain.

Taken together, these findings support the conceptual claim advanced in the introduction that literacy habituation, religious character formation, and the regulation of digital media use are interdependent components of a single process of behavioural formation rather than parallel outcomes of separate interventions. Where Anwar (2023: 134) and Hidayat and Nur (2020: 59) evaluate religious habituation in isolation from literacy, and where Suryadi (2022: 101) evaluates literacy habituation without reference to religious accountability, this study indicates that combining both within one recording instrument produces a reinforcing rather than a merely additive effect: worship discipline appears to function as the motivational anchor from which the other two behaviours draw consistency.

This mechanism-based reading of the findings constitutes the principal empirical contribution of the study to the literature on character-based literacy programs in Islamic elementary education: it specifies not only that the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book is associated with improvement across religious, literacy, and academic indicators, but also how the structure of daily recording, teacher verification, and parental acknowledgement translates habituation into self-regulated behaviour, and why the strength of that translation varies across domains according to how directly each domain is embedded in the school's own monitoring routine.

Read in full, the discussion indicates that the implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book addresses critical challenges in student behaviour and learning outcomes through a specific mechanism rather than through the mere co-occurrence of favourable indicators. By combining daily monitoring of worship practice, structured reading habits, and regulated gadget use within one instrument that is completed by the student, verified at home, and reviewed by the classroom teacher, the program establishes a recurring cycle of self-observation, external verification, and reflective feedback. This cycle is what, consistent with self-regulated learning theory (Zimmerman, 2020: 29), is understood to convert externally monitored behaviour into internalised habit, allowing religious character formation and academic engagement to develop through the same daily routine rather than through separate programs addressing each domain independently.

Analysis of the evaluation components further reveals that teachers' competence and institutional support operate as the conditions under which this mechanism is sustained rather than as independent contributors to outcomes. Teachers act as facilitators, monitors, and mentors, guiding students in self-regulated learning practices while reinforcing moral and spiritual values; their weekly verification is the point at which self-recorded behaviour receives external accountability, without which, as the comparatively lower parental-participation score suggests,

habituation at home tends to weaken. Institutional policy and parental involvement enhance consistency by ensuring that literacy reinforcement and religious character development are pursued through the same channel rather than through competing or uncoordinated initiatives.

Drawing the discussion together, four linked reasons emerge for why the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book plausibly influences discipline, worship practice, reading habits, and academic performance, rather than any one of these in isolation. First, it influences discipline because it converts an abstract expectation into a concrete, dated, and countersigned daily record, so that consistency becomes something the student can see accumulate rather than something asserted by a teacher after the fact. Second, it influences worship practice specifically because that record is verified daily by the party, the classroom teacher, with the most immediate and frequent contact with the student, giving worship the shortest feedback loop of the three domains and making it, on the present evidence, the domain in which change is most consistently identified. Third, it influences reading habits because the same record extends that feedback loop into the home through parental acknowledgement, supplying the school-to-home continuity that school-confined literacy programs such as the Madrasah Literacy Movement (Wibowo & Syifana, 2023: 263; Suryadi, 2022: 101) do not provide. Fourth, its influence on academic performance is the most indirect of the four, because it operates by first stabilising worship discipline and reading behaviour and only then, through the additional and slower mechanism of classroom instruction and assessment, allowing that stabilised behaviour to register in report-card scores; this is why the academic figure was both the lowest of the three and the most conservatively derived, and why several students showing worship and reading gains had not yet shown a matching academic gain within the single semester observed.

Furthermore, the discussion underscores the broader implication of these mechanisms for character education in the context of digital-era challenges. The program's outcomes indicate that structured, value-based pedagogical interventions can produce measurable change in student discipline, reading culture, and scholastic performance when the intervention makes the causal link between religious accountability, behavioural monitoring, and learning behaviour explicit and recorded, rather than assuming that link to hold implicitly. These findings offer a transferable model for similar Islamic elementary education settings, suggesting that comparable instruments are likely to be effective to the extent that they replicate this recording, verification, reflection cycle rather than the specific content of the *GATOTKACA* book alone.

Conclusion

This study aimed to describe the implementation of the *GATOTKACA Mutaba'ah* Book, to examine its association with students' religious character, and to explore its relationship with their academic performance at *MIN 2 Sukoharjo*. All three objectives were met: the program was implemented as a single instrument recording worship practice, reading activity, and screen time, verified at home and reviewed by teachers; and its implementation coincided with an increase in worship consistency among 83% of the 30 participants, in reading frequency and reduced screen time among 76%, and in literacy-related academic scores among 70%.

These figures describe observed improvements, not causal effects. As a single-case qualitative study without a comparison group or pre-registered baseline, the design supports an associative and explanatory claim, that the recording, verification, and reflection cycle of the *mutaba'ah* book is a plausible mechanism linking religious habituation to literacy behaviour and, more distally, to academic performance, but not a claim that the program caused these changes in a statistically established sense.

The study has four main limitations: it is confined to a single institution and 30 purposively selected participants, so findings are not statistically generalisable; its percentages are descriptive frequencies derived from qualitative and documentary data rather than measures of effect from an experimental design; its evidence relies substantially on self-reported and teacher-verified records, which remain subject to social desirability bias despite triangulation; and its single-semester timeframe leaves open whether the observed changes are sustained over time.

For other Islamic elementary schools considering a similar program, the findings imply that its value depends less on the specific content of the instrument than on three conditions this study identified as strongest predictors of implementation quality: consistent teacher verification, routine reflective review with students, and active parental engagement at home, the last of which was also this study's weakest-scoring component and therefore the condition most likely to limit impact elsewhere. Future research using comparative, longitudinal, or quasi-experimental designs across multiple madrasahs would help establish these associations with greater causal warrant.

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