

The Relationship Between G7KAIH Program Implementation and Elementary School Students Character Development

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between the implementation of the Great Children's Seven Habits Movement (G7KAIH) program and the character development of elementary school students. A quantitative correlational design was employed at SD Negeri Pancoranmas 1 during the 2025/2026 academic year, involving 33 fourth-grade students selected through total sampling. Data were collected using four-point Likert-scale questionnaires measuring G7KAIH program implementation and students' character development. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, assumption tests, and correlation analysis at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed a positive relationship between G7KAIH program implementation and students' character development, indicating that better program implementation was associated with stronger character development. These findings suggest that consistent habituation through the G7KAIH program, supported by continuous monitoring, can contribute to strengthening character education in elementary schools.



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INTRODUCTION

Character education has become an increasingly urgent global agenda, as schools are expected not only to pursue academic achievement but also to prepare learners with responsibility, social concern, and moral conduct necessary for life in society. Scholars emphasize that character strengthening should be implemented through the integration of character values into learning activities and the reinforcement of positive behavioral habits. This process requires strong collaboration between schools and parents to ensure consistency, even when learning conditions change, such as during the pandemic (Gestiardi & Suyitno, 2021). In addition, the internalization of humanitarian values and social care requires sustained involvement from multiple stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and the wider community. This involvement ensures that character education does not remain limited to discourse, but becomes a tangible practice embedded in students' everyday lives (kawuryan, 2021).

The elementary school phase is particularly critical because children at this stage are more receptive to habit formation and value internalization through repeated learning experiences. However, empirical findings show that character related behavioral issues remain prevalent, including tardiness, failure to complete classroom responsibilities, bullying, and dishonest behavior such as cheating and neglecting homework (Amelia & Ramadan, 2021). These challenges become even more complex when learning patterns shift, because character education practices may be disrupted and require stronger cooperation between schools and parents to ensure that habituation and reinforcement of values remain consistent (Gestiardi & Suyitno, 2021). Evaluations of character education programs at the elementary level further highlight that routine habituation, school culture, and classroom integration are essential components for systematic and directed character strengthening (Jadid & Widodo, 2023).

In educational research, character is commonly conceptualized as an integration of moral knowledge, moral sensitivity, moral commitment, and consistent moral action in daily life. Angga et al.

(2022) argue that good character is reflected through moral understanding, moral emotions, and moral behavior, which implies that character assessment must extend beyond cognitive comprehension and be observable in attitudes and practices. Similarly, (Revalina et al., 2023) emphasize that character development requires habitual patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting ethically. This perspective suggests that character is best understood as a repeated behavioral pattern embedded in the social environment of the school. Therefore, character values should be translated into structured routines that are continuously practiced and monitored through habituation-based programs.

Habituation is essential because character values are more likely to be internalized when they become consistent daily routines within school culture. (Jadid & Widodo, 2023) report that character strengthening in elementary schools is commonly implemented through scheduled and repetitive activities such as literacy programs, the five S culture, cleanliness habits, religious routines, and other structured practices that shape students' daily behavior. Hartiwisidi et al. (2022) further explain that character education can be strengthened through routine activities that cultivate respectful attitudes toward teachers and integrate values into instructional processes, enabling positive behaviors to be practiced more sustainably. A comprehensive approach that involves teachers, schools, parents, and communities also supports the success of habituation because the cultivation of caring environments and the teaching of humanitarian values require consistent engagement from various parties (kawuryan, 2021). In this context, a structured habit-oriented program in elementary education can be examined through the implementation of G7KAIH.

The Indonesian Great Children's Seven Habits Movement, known as G7KAIH, was introduced as a habituation program guiding students to practice seven daily habits. These habits include waking up early, engaging in worship, exercising, consuming healthy and nutritious food, enjoying learning, participating socially, and sleeping early as a foundation for positive behavior in children (Kemendikdasmen Republik Indonesia, 2025). In school implementation, G7KAIH is generally delivered through planned socialization and the development of activity plans based on the school context, so that teachers have clear operational guidance for consistent and sustained habit building (Sukistini et al., 2025). The seven habits can also be introduced using participatory and interactive approaches and evaluated using simple instruments that capture students' understanding and commitment to adopting positive behavior (Siregar et al., 2025). Therefore, G7KAIH should be understood not merely as a campaign promoting values, but as a set of practices whose outcomes may vary across schools depending on the quality of implementation and contextual support.

A major empirical challenge in strengthening character education at the elementary level is that program outcomes are often inconsistent across schools. This inconsistency occurs because implementation depends on the regularity of routines, teacher engagement, availability of resources, and continuous monitoring. Despite the increasing focus on habituation programs, empirical evidence that rigorously tests the relationship between the level of program implementation and students' character outcomes remains limited. Existing evaluations often report high results in terms of context, input, process, and product components, but these studies primarily assess the feasibility of program implementation rather than mapping measurable associations between implementation quality and changes in students' character indicators (Jadid & Widodo, 2023). As a result, it remains unclear to what extent stronger implementation corresponds to stronger character development among elementary school students.

Recent research on character strengthening in elementary education emphasizes the centrality of habituation and school culture. Routine and repeated activities such as literacy programs, the five S culture, cleanliness practices, and religious routines are frequently identified as key mechanisms for shaping stable character behavior (Jadid & Widodo, 2023). In addition, scholars highlight that character reinforcement should integrate instructional processes with daily behavior formation, where teachers play an important role in modeling and cultivating values through everyday interaction and classroom practice (Hartiwisidi et al., 2022).

Character is increasingly conceptualized as a multidimensional construct involving moral cognition, moral affect, and moral behavior. Angga et al. (2022) emphasize that character development cannot be evaluated solely through knowledge-based indicators, because moral action must be observable and consistent in daily practices. Similarly, Revalina et al. (2023) argue that character formation requires repeated patterns of ethical thinking, feeling, and acting, supporting the view that character education must be operationalized through structured and sustained routines. Collaboration

among stakeholders is also consistently recognized as essential for ensuring that habituation continues across contexts, especially when learning patterns change. Gestiardi & Suyitno (2021) highlight the importance of school and parent collaboration to sustain character reinforcement when school routines are disrupted. In addition, kawuryan (2021) emphasizes that character education becomes more effective when supported by a comprehensive approach involving administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and the community, so that humanitarian values are internalized through lived experiences rather than remaining rhetorical ideals.

With specific reference to G7KAIH, existing publications are largely dominated by conceptual discussions and literature reviews that emphasize habituation and collaboration, but they rarely provide robust measurement-based evidence linking implementation strength to student character outcomes (Hasanah & Islamiyati, 2025; Sofia et al., 2025). While correlational studies have begun to emerge, the findings remain context specific, for example focusing on Christian character development in a single school and including principal leadership variables. This limits the generalizability of findings for character development in elementary school students across broader contexts (Situmeang, 2025). Therefore, although the theoretical foundation for habituation-based character strengthening is increasingly established, empirical testing of the relationship between G7KAIH implementation and students' character outcomes remains underdeveloped.

The major research gap lies in the limited availability of empirical studies that quantitatively measure G7KAIH implementation using structured instruments and test its association with standardized indicators of character development in elementary students. Existing evaluations and conceptual writings emphasize the importance of habituation programs but primarily focus on program feasibility or theoretical relevance rather than establishing measurable relationships between implementation quality and student character outcomes (Hasanah & Islamiyati, 2025; Jadid & Widodo, 2023; Sofia et al., 2025). Moreover, existing correlational research remains narrow in scope and context specific, reducing the transferability of results across different elementary education settings (Situmeang, 2025).

Based on this gap, the present study aims to analyze the relationship between G7KAIH implementation and character development among elementary school students. The research question guiding this study is as follows: To what extent is the level of G7KAIH program implementation associated with the character development of elementary school students. In line with the correlational design of the study, the research hypothesis posits that there is a positive relationship between G7KAIH implementation and students' character development. This means that higher levels of program implementation are associated with higher observable character indicators.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationship between the implementation of the Indonesian Great Children's Seven Habits Movement, known as G7KAIH, and character development among elementary school students. The design was selected to determine the direction and strength of the association between program implementation levels and students' character indicators. The study was conducted at SD Negeri Pancoranmas 1 during the 2025/2026 academic year.

To support transparency and replicability, the instruments, scoring procedures, and statistical analysis protocol are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author. No restrictions apply to the availability of materials and information used in this research. The dataset generated and analyzed in this study is not currently deposited in a public database, but it may be provided during review and prior to publication if required by the journal.

This study did not involve medical or psychological intervention and posed minimal risk to participants. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school authority. Ethical approval codes were not required because the study used non-invasive self-report questionnaires administered in a school setting, and no personally identifiable information was reported.

The data in this study consisted of students' responses to two structured questionnaires, namely the G7KAIH implementation questionnaire and the character development questionnaire. The data sources were all fourth grade students enrolled at SD Negeri Pancoranmas 1 during the data collection

period. A total of 33 students participated, and total sampling was applied because the entire population of the class was included as the study sample.

The G7KAIH implementation questionnaire was developed based on indicators provided in the official program guideline issued by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah, 2025). The questionnaire measured students' engagement in seven daily habits and the supporting implementation context within the classroom and school environment. The character development questionnaire was based on observable character behavior indicators adapted from Nisa et al. (2021), including discipline, responsibility, honesty, caring, cooperation, and respect.

Data were collected using a four point Likert scale questionnaire consisting solely of positively worded statements to ensure clarity and reduce potential misinterpretation among elementary school students (Hapsari & Mawardi, 2024). Instrument development began with the construction of an item specification grid and item writing based on the G7KAIH implementation indicators and character behavior indicators (Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah, 2025; Nisa et al., 2021).

Content validity was evaluated through expert judgment. The questionnaires were then piloted with students of equivalent level outside the main participants. Item validity and reliability were tested, and only valid and reliable items were retained for the final instruments. During the main data collection phase, both questionnaires were administered to all participants at the same time. Students received brief instructions before filling in the questionnaires. After completion, responses were checked for completeness before data processing and analysis. Data analysis was conducted through descriptive statistics and inferential correlation testing. Descriptive analysis included data tabulation, mean score calculation, and standard deviation. Assumption testing was then carried out using normality and linearity tests.

Correlation analysis was performed using Pearson correlation when the data met the assumptions of normality and linearity. When the normality assumption was not met, Spearman correlation was used. Statistical significance was tested at the 0.05 level to confirm whether the relationship identified was statistically meaningful. The results were reported as correlation coefficients, significance values, and interpretations of relationship strength.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study involved 33 fourth-grade students from SD Negeri Pancoranmas 1 as research participants. Data were gathered through two structured questionnaires: an instrument measuring the implementation of G7KAIH, consisting of 42 items with a total possible score ranging from 42 to 168, and a student character questionnaire comprising 26 items with a score range of 26 to 104. For each variable, respondents' total scores were obtained by summing the scores across all items within the respective questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were subsequently computed to summarize the distribution of scores, and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of G7KAIH Implementation and Student Character Scores

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
G7KAIH Implementation	33	98	162	132.48	15.27
Student Character	33	61	101	82.36	9.14

The results of the instrument quality evaluation demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.91 for the G7KAIH implementation questionnaire and 0.88 for the student character questionnaire. The reliability estimates are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Instrument Reliability

Instrument	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
G7KAIH Implementation Questionnaire	42	0.91
Student Character Questionnaire	26	0.88

Prior to hypothesis testing, prerequisite analyses were conducted. The Shapiro–Wilk normality test indicated that the significance value for the G7KAIH implementation variable was 0.318, and for the student character variable was 0.476. Since both variables demonstrated normal distributions ($p > 0.05$), the relationship between the variables was examined using Pearson’s product–moment correlation. A summary of the normality test results is provided in Table 3.

Table 3 Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test Results

Variable	W Statistic	Sig. (p)
G7KAIH Implementation	0.964	0.318
Student Character	0.972	0.476

The correlation test results revealed a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.62$ with a significance value of $p = 0.001$ at the 0.05 significance level. This finding indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between G7KAIH implementation and student character development. The results suggest that higher levels of G7KAIH implementation are associated with higher student character scores within the research sample. A summary of the correlation results is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Correlation Test Results between G7KAIH Implementation and Student Character

Variable Pair	Test Type	r / ρ	Sig. (p)	Decision
G7KAIH Implementation and Student Character	Pearson	0.62	0.001	Reject H_0

Pearson’s correlation analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.62$ with $p = 0.001$, indicating a moderate-to-strong positive correlation between G7KAIH implementation and student character formation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of G7KAIH is significantly associated with student character development, whereby higher implementation scores correspond to higher student character scores among the participants.

The findings of this study indicate a positive relationship between the level of G7KAIH implementation and the character development of fourth-grade students at SD Negeri Pancoranmas 1. This suggests that the more effectively the program is integrated into daily school routines, the more strongly positive character indicators are manifested among students. Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah (2025) emphasizes that daily habituation practices, when implemented consistently, have the potential to become internalized as stable character traits and therefore require continuous monitoring and ongoing evaluation. In this context, the present results reinforce the notion that the regularity and consistency of daily habits serve as an enabling environment that encourages the emergence of positive student behaviors.

This relationship is consistent with previous studies highlighting the importance of sustained daily practices both at school and at home to ensure stable character formation. Hasanah & Islamiyati (2025) argue that the seven habits must be carried out consistently through collaboration between schools and families in order to strengthen healthy character development in children. Similarly, Gofur & Febriyanti (2025) found that the implementation of the seven-habits program in schools can be monitored through activity journals and contributes to improved student discipline; however, differences in family support may pose challenges. These findings indicate that the strength of the association between program implementation and character outcomes is influenced not only by school-based routines but also by the continuity of habituation practices in the home environment.

The results may also be interpreted through the lens of school culture, as routines, regulations, and value-reinforcement ecosystems shape behavioral norms that are easily imitated and gradually adopted by students. Research on character education through school culture demonstrates that character attributes such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, independence, religiosity, and honesty tend to develop more effectively when schools organize structured routines and foster a supportive learning climate (Yulia & Ain, 2024). In addition, evaluations of character-strengthening programs in primary schools reveal that program success is largely determined by implementation quality, activity management, and consistency in school-based processes (Jadid & Widodo, 2023). Therefore, the present findings can be understood as reflecting the impact of G7KAIH implementation that is more orderly and embedded within a supportive school culture.

Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of operationalizing character constructs into clear and measurable indicators, allowing the relationship between character education programs and character development to be tested empirically. Nisa et al. (2021) highlight the need for character assessment instruments, noting that character education practices are often not accompanied by adequate measurement tools; consequently, behavioral indicators should be clearly defined to ensure consistent evaluation. Nevertheless, several limitations must be acknowledged. The sample was restricted to one class consisting of 33 students, and the study employed a cross-sectional design; therefore, the generalizability of the findings remains limited, and causal conclusions cannot be drawn. Future research is recommended to involve multiple schools and to incorporate observational data or program monitoring records to strengthen validity, while also clarifying the role of parental support as a contributing factor in sustaining program implementation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between G7KAIH implementation and character development among fourth-grade students at SD Negeri Pancoranmas 1. The findings indicate that stronger integration of G7KAIH daily habituation practices within students' routines is associated with higher levels of observable character indicators, including discipline, responsibility, honesty, care, cooperation, and respect. In line with the objective of the research, the study provides empirical support that G7KAIH can serve as a relevant habituation-based approach for strengthening character education in primary school settings. The contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that character-building initiatives such as G7KAIH can be evaluated quantitatively through reliable measures, thereby strengthening evidence-based discussion regarding the effectiveness of school habituation programs and moving beyond purely normative claims commonly found in character education implementation.

Despite these contributions, the study has limitations that should be acknowledged. The sample was limited to 33 students from a single class, which restricts the generalizability of the results. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not allow causal interpretations regarding whether improved G7KAIH implementation directly leads to character improvement over time. Future research is therefore recommended to include multiple schools and grade levels, employ larger and more diverse samples, and incorporate observational data or monitoring records to strengthen the validity of findings. Studies using longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs are also needed to provide deeper insight into causal mechanisms and to clarify the role of contextual factors such as parental support and home-based habituation.

The implications of this research highlight the importance of strengthening G7KAIH implementation through consistent scheduling of school routines, teacher modeling, and periodic monitoring to ensure program stability. Teachers are encouraged to integrate G7KAIH values and practices into classroom learning and daily activities while providing positive reinforcement to sustain student motivation in maintaining good habits. Parental involvement is also essential, as continuity between school and home practices can prevent habituation from being fragmented and can reinforce character formation more effectively. Overall, this study suggests that character development is not only influenced by the presence of a program but also by the quality and consistency of its implementation within a supportive educational ecosystem.

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