

Strengthening Students' Character through School-Family Partnership: Evidence from the Seven Habits of Great Indonesia Children Program

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Abstract: *This study examines the role of school-family partnership in strengthening students' character through the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program (7KAIH) at SDN Ungaran 01, Indonesia. A qualitative case study design was employed, involving the principal, teachers, students, school committee members, and parents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation and analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed four key dimensions of school-family partnership: parental engagement, school-family communication and coordination, continuity of character habituation between school and home, and collaborative monitoring for sustaining character development. The partnership strengthened students' discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness by extending school-based habituation into family routines. However, differences in family routines and digital device use challenged consistent habituation. The study concludes that sustainable character development requires reciprocal communication, shared responsibility, and continuous collaboration between schools and families.*

Keywords: *Character Education, School-Family Partnership, Parental Engagement, Character Habituation, Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children.*

Abstract: *Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran kemitraan sekolah-keluarga dalam memperkuat karakter siswa melalui Program Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat (7KAIH) di SDN Ungaran 01, Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru, siswa, komite sekolah, dan orang tua yang dipilih secara purposif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi serta dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif yang meliputi kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menemukan empat dimensi utama kemitraan sekolah-keluarga, yaitu keterlibatan orang tua, komunikasi dan koordinasi sekolah-keluarga, kesinambungan pembiasaan karakter antara sekolah dan rumah, serta pemantauan kolaboratif untuk keberlanjutan pengembangan karakter. Kemitraan tersebut memperkuat kedisiplinan, religiusitas, tanggung jawab, kemandirian, kerja sama, dan kepedulian sosial siswa melalui kesinambungan pembiasaan di sekolah dan keluarga. Namun, perbedaan rutinitas keluarga dan penggunaan perangkat digital menjadi tantangan dalam menjaga konsistensi pembiasaan. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa pengembangan karakter berkelanjutan memerlukan komunikasi timbal balik, tanggung jawab bersama, dan kolaborasi berkelanjutan antara sekolah dan keluarga.*

Keywords: *Pendidikan Karakter; Kemitraan Sekolah-Keluarga; Keterlibatan Orang Tua; Pembiasaan Karakter; Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat.*

Introduction

Character education is a fundamental component of developing high-quality human resources because education is expected not only to improve academic competence but also to cultivate values, attitudes, and behaviors that guide students' individual and social lives. At the elementary school level, character development is particularly important because childhood is a formative period for establishing habits, morality, and personality. Schools therefore function not merely as institutions for knowledge transmission but also as environments where positive values are modeled, experienced, and practiced. A supportive school culture can facilitate discipline, responsibility, cooperation, integrity, and social awareness through everyday interactions and habituation activities (Yulia et al., 2025; Zahra & Sumarno, 2025; Retnasari et al., 2021; Yulia & Ain, 2024). However, character formation cannot be regarded exclusively as the responsibility of schools because students develop their behaviors through continuous interactions across school and family environments.

The importance of collaboration between schools and families has become increasingly evident amid rapid technological development, globalization, and social transformation. Digital technology provides children with extensive access to information and learning resources, yet intensive exposure to digital environments may also affect social interaction, daily routines, discipline, and social awareness. Educational success should therefore be measured not only through academic achievement but also through students' responsibility, self-discipline, collaboration, and morally grounded behavior. School-family partnership is important because schools establish structured expectations and habituation, while families provide opportunities for children to practice and reinforce these behaviors within daily routines. A comprehensive approach to character development requires systematic management, supportive school culture, and active participation from educational stakeholders (Suriaman et al., 2024; Sutarman et al., 2025; Yaqin, 2023).

School-family partnership represents a strategic component of sustainable character education. Schools provide structured environments through policies, learning activities, teacher role modeling, and habituation, whereas families constitute the primary social environment in which children practice behaviors outside school. Principals establish institutional directions, teachers model positive behaviors, and parents reinforce school-based habits through family routines. When these environments communicate and collaborate effectively, students receive consistent behavioral expectations and opportunities to internalize positive values. Previous studies indicate that synergy among schools, families, and communities strengthens character education through shared values, habituation, role modeling, and continuous supervision (Dike & Parida, 2020; Nurhikmah et al., 2023; Mulianti & Suardin, 2023; Hamdi et al., 2022; Ayu et al., 2024).

Despite its importance, character education continues to encounter challenges. Character-strengthening programs may be implemented primarily as formal activities without being sufficiently embedded in students' everyday experiences. Monitoring may remain inadequate, while habituation can differ between school and home. Variations in family circumstances, parenting practices, social environments, and school-parent communication may create discontinuities in students' behavioral experiences. A habit promoted at school may not receive similar reinforcement at home. Thus, effectiveness depends not merely on school programs but also on organizational culture and sustainable collaboration with families and communities (Handoko et al., 2023; Astuti et al., 2023; Marnayana et al., 2024; Mutsaqofah & Yohamintin, 2025).

One national initiative requiring such continuity is the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program (Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat/7KAIH). The program strengthens character through seven positive daily habits: waking up early, practicing religious activities, exercising, consuming healthy and nutritious food, enjoying learning, engaging in social activities, and going to bed early. Rather than treating character as abstract moral knowledge, 7KAIH emphasizes repeated practices that become part of students' everyday lives. Previous studies suggest that consistent habituation can strengthen discipline, responsibility, religiosity, independence, and social awareness (Aulia et al., 2025; Dedi et al., 2025; Yaqin, 2023; Harianto et al., 2023). Importantly, several 7KAIH habits occur predominantly outside school hours, making family participation essential to sustaining the program.

From an educational management perspective, implementing 7KAIH requires systematic processes of establishing objectives, distributing responsibilities, coordinating stakeholders, implementing habituation, and evaluating outcomes. Previous studies demonstrate that integrated management functions contribute to effective and sustainable character education (Dike & Parida, 2020; Mulianti & Suardin, 2023; Dian et al., 2025; Marnayana et al., 2024; Mutsaqofah & Yohamintin, 2025). However, because this study does not empirically examine Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) as separate analytical dimensions, POAC is treated as a general management perspective rather than the primary analytical framework. The study instead focuses on the partnership processes through which schools and families sustain character habituation.

Character is formed not simply through formal instruction but through repeated interactions, role modeling, routines, regulations, and shared behavioral expectations. Research indicates that schools integrating character education into organizational culture have greater potential to develop students' discipline, responsibility, cooperation, religiosity, and social awareness (Yulia et al., 2025; Zahra & Sumarno, 2025; Retnasari et al., 2021; Indrianingrum et al., 2024). Sustainable character development therefore requires these practices to continue beyond school, with families extending character habituation into everyday home routines. Previous research has emphasized school culture as a foundation for discipline, responsibility, and social awareness (Retnasari et al., 2021; Handoko et al., 2023; Yulia & Ain, 2024). Educational management studies further highlight leadership, organizational culture, stakeholder involvement, and evaluation (Mulianti & Suardin, 2023; Marnayana et al., 2024; Mutsaqofah & Yohamintin, 2025). Studies on 7KAIH similarly report contributions to discipline, religiosity, responsibility, and independence through consistent habituation (Aulia et al., 2025; Dedi et al., 2025; Al Ghazi & Amrullah, 2025; Harianto et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, an important empirical gap remains concerning how character habituation is sustained across school and family environments. Existing studies have largely emphasized school culture, character education implementation, management processes, or habituation outcomes. Although parental participation is acknowledged, limited attention has been given to how schools and families establish practical partnerships to maintain character habits, particularly within 7KAIH. Previous studies also identify challenges involving stakeholder coordination, parental involvement, and behavioral reinforcement beyond school environments (Astuti et al., 2023; Nurhikmah et al., 2023; Dian et al., 2025). This gap is particularly important because 7KAIH combines school-based activities with habits predominantly practiced within families.

The present study addresses this gap by shifting attention from the internal management of 7KAIH toward the school–family partnership that sustains character habituation. Its central contribution is the finding that school–family partnership functions as an *integrated character-habitation system* connecting school-based habituation with family routines through four

interconnected mechanisms: (1) parental engagement in reinforcing 7KAIH practices at home; (2) school–family communication and coordination in establishing shared expectations and responding to students’ needs; (3) continuity of character habituation between school and home through consistent reinforcement; and (4) collaborative monitoring to identify challenges, provide follow-up, and sustain positive character development. Thus, the novelty lies not in the research site, but in demonstrating how these four mechanisms operate collectively as an integrated system for extending and sustaining 7KAIH-based character habituation beyond the school boundary.

Based on this contribution, the present study aims to analyze the role of school–family partnership in strengthening students’ character through the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program at SDN Ungaran 01, West Ungaran District, Semarang Regency. Specifically, it examines parental engagement, school–family communication and coordination, continuity of character habituation, and collaborative monitoring. By focusing on these mechanisms, the study contributes to educational management and character education research by explaining how reciprocal engagement, coordinated communication, continuous reinforcement, and collaborative monitoring connect school-based character education with students’ everyday family lives.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to examine how school–family partnership contributes to strengthening students’ character through the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program (7KAIH). A case study was selected because the study sought to understand partnership practices, interactions, and habituation processes within their natural school and family contexts. The case was bounded by the implementation of the 7KAIH Program and the partnership practices developed between SDN Ungaran 01 and students’ families during the 2025/2026 academic year. The study focused on how character habituation was implemented, reinforced, communicated, and monitored across school and home environments rather than measuring the program’s effectiveness statistically.

The research was conducted at SDN Ungaran 01, West Ungaran District, Semarang Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The school was selected purposively because it actively implemented the 7KAIH Program and developed collaboration with families to support students’ character habituation. Participants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in implementing, supporting, or monitoring the 7KAIH Program. The participants comprised the principal (1 person), teachers (4 persons), parents (6 persons), and students (8 persons), resulting in a total of 19 participants.

The inclusion criteria were: (1) the principal had responsibility for coordinating or supervising the 7KAIH Program; (2) teachers were actively involved in implementing character habituation and interacting with students’ families; (3) parents had children participating in the 7KAIH Program and were involved in reinforcing at least one of its habits at home; and (4) students had participated in the program during the study period and were able to describe their experiences of character habituation at school and home. Participants were also selected to ensure variation in perspectives among school administrators, teachers, families, and students.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. Fieldwork was conducted during the 2025/2026 academic year over approximately three months, from April to June 2026. Interviews were conducted with all 19 participants, with each participant interviewed at least once and selected participants interviewed again when clarification or additional information was required. Each interview lasted approximately 30–60

minutes and was conducted in a quiet setting at the school or participants' homes, depending on participant availability.

Observations were conducted repeatedly during school activities related to 7KAIH habituation, including morning routines, religious activities, learning activities, physical activities, social interactions, and other character-building practices. Observations were conducted on eight occasions, with each observation lasting approximately 60–120 minutes. The researcher also observed interactions between teachers and students and, where access was available, examined how parents reported reinforcing the same habits at home. Field notes were recorded systematically after each observation.

Documents were used to complement interview and observation data. The documents included school policies and schedules related to 7KAIH, program guidelines, activity records, communication records between teachers and parents, student monitoring records, and other relevant documentation. Data collection continued until the information obtained from different sources became sufficiently repetitive and no substantially new themes emerged.

Data analysis followed an iterative qualitative process consisting of data organization, familiarization, coding, categorization, thematic development, and interpretation. Interview recordings were transcribed, while observation and document data were organized according to their respective sources and dates. The coding process was conducted in three stages. First, initial coding was performed by identifying meaningful statements and actions related to school–family partnership, character habituation, communication, parental involvement, and monitoring. Second, related initial codes were compared, grouped, and developed into broader categories based on similarities and relationships across the data. Third, categories were reviewed across interviews, observations, and documents to identify patterns and relationships that could support higher-level themes.

The four final themes were therefore derived inductively from recurring patterns in the empirical data rather than predetermined solely from the conceptual framework. Parental engagement emerged from evidence concerning parents' participation in reinforcing 7KAIH habits at home. Communication and coordination emerged from recurring evidence of information exchange, shared expectations, and interaction between teachers and parents. Continuity of character habituation emerged from evidence showing that habits introduced at school were reinforced through family routines. Collaborative monitoring emerged from evidence concerning joint observation, follow-up, feedback, and problem-solving involving schools and families. The four themes were subsequently compared across participant groups and data sources to examine their consistency and interrelationships.

The phrase “according to the focus of the second study” has been removed because this research is a single case study. The analysis was instead conducted according to the focus and research questions of the present study.

The trustworthiness of the findings was established through credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of data sources and methods by comparing information obtained from the principal, teachers, parents, and students with observations and relevant documents. The researcher also conducted member checking by presenting preliminary interpretations to selected participants and asking them to confirm whether the interpretations accurately represented their experiences. Clarifications and corrections provided by participants were incorporated into the final interpretation where appropriate.

Dependability was supported through an audit trail documenting the research process, including participant selection, interview procedures, observation records, transcription, coding

decisions, category development, and revisions to the thematic structure. This documentation enabled the researcher to trace how interpretations were developed from the original data.

Confirmability was strengthened by maintaining the connection between raw data, codes, categories, and final themes. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were compared before conclusions were established. The researcher also maintained reflexive notes to distinguish participants' statements and observed evidence from the researcher's own interpretations. These procedures ensured that the findings were grounded in the empirical data rather than based primarily on researcher assumptions.

Before data collection, participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of the information they provided. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the relevant school authorities. Participants' identities were protected by using general participant categories rather than personal names in the presentation of findings.

Result and Discussion

The findings revealed that school–family partnership played an important role in strengthening students' character through the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program (Tujuh Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat/7KAIH) at SDN Ungaran 01. The partnership developed through parental involvement, continuous communication, shared responsibility for habituation, and collaborative monitoring of students' behavioral development. The findings also indicated that the involvement of families was particularly important because several habits promoted by the program occurred beyond school hours and could not be directly supervised by teachers. Based on the analysis of interviews, observations, and documentation, four interrelated themes emerged: (1) parental engagement in the 7KAIH Program, (2) school–family communication and coordination, (3) continuity of character habituation between school and home, and (4) collaborative strategies for sustaining students' character development.

Parental Engagement in the 7KAIH Program

The findings demonstrated that parental engagement constituted an important component of the implementation of the 7KAIH Program. The school recognized character development as a shared responsibility involving not only principals, teachers, and educational staff but also students' families. Parents were therefore involved in supporting the continuation of character-building practices outside the school environment. Their involvement became particularly important because several of the seven habits were closely connected with students' everyday family routines.

Parental engagement was initiated through the dissemination of information about the objectives and activities of the program. The school communicated that 7KAIH was intended to strengthen students' discipline, responsibility, religiosity, independence, social awareness, environmental awareness, and cooperation through seven daily habits: waking up early, practicing religious activities, exercising regularly, consuming healthy and nutritious food, enjoying learning, engaging in social activities, and going to bed early. Parents were encouraged to understand these habits not merely as school activities but as behaviors that needed to be consistently practiced in students' daily lives.

The findings showed that the school involved parents to ensure that character habituation initiated at school could continue within family settings. While teachers were able to guide students' discipline, responsibility, literacy, religious practices, cleanliness, cooperation, and social behavior during school hours, families had a more direct role in habits occurring before

and after school. These included waking up early, maintaining appropriate sleeping schedules, eating habits, home learning routines, religious practices, physical activities, and the management of digital device use.

Parents thus functioned as an extension of the character education process initiated by the school. Their involvement helped connect institutional character expectations with students' everyday routines. The school did not position parents merely as recipients of information but encouraged them to participate in reinforcing positive behavior. This arrangement demonstrated an effort to establish shared responsibility for students' character development.

However, parental involvement was not equally consistent across all family environments. The findings identified differences in students' existing habits and family conditions as factors influencing the continuity of character habituation. The influence of digital device use also presented challenges to students' routines. Consequently, parental engagement emerged as both an essential supporting factor and an aspect requiring continuous reinforcement. The findings suggest that effective character habituation through 7KAIH depended partly on families' capacity to maintain the positive practices promoted by the school.

School-Family Communication and Coordination

The second theme concerned communication and coordination as mechanisms for connecting character education between school and home. The findings indicated that the school utilized several communication channels, including school meetings, parent gatherings, direct communication between teachers and parents, and class-based messaging groups. These mechanisms were used to disseminate information about program activities, establish shared understanding, communicate students' behavioral development, and coordinate responses to challenges encountered during program implementation.

At the beginning of program implementation, communication primarily served to socialize the seven habits and explain their character-building purposes. Parents received information about the habituation activities implemented by the school and were encouraged to reinforce corresponding practices at home. This socialization was intended to develop a common understanding among school members and families so that 7KAIH could be implemented consistently across students' educational environments.

Communication subsequently developed into a mechanism for maintaining coordination. Teachers communicated information concerning students' character development and encouraged parents to continue positive habituation at home. Class-based messaging groups provided a practical communication channel through which schools could maintain contact with families. Parent gatherings and direct communication complemented these digital channels by allowing the school and families to discuss students' behavioral development and program implementation.

The findings also showed that communication became particularly important when students had not demonstrated the expected character development. Teachers could identify behavioral challenges through daily observations at school, but some problems were related to routines beyond the school environment. In such situations, communication with parents enabled teachers and families to discuss the challenges and determine appropriate guidance that could be applied more consistently.

The partnership therefore involved more than one-way communication from school to parents. Information sharing functioned as a coordination mechanism through which schools and families could reinforce similar expectations. Open communication also facilitated responses to differences in students' habits and problems associated with digital device use and inconsistent character habituation within families.

Nevertheless, the findings indicated an inherent limitation in school-based monitoring. Teachers could directly observe students' punctuality, cleanliness, literacy practices, physical activities, religious behavior, responsibility, and social interactions during school hours. In contrast, they could not directly monitor waking and sleeping schedules or other habits occurring at home. Communication with parents therefore served as an important bridge between what teachers could observe at school and students' behavioral experiences within their families.

Continuity of Character Habituation between School and Home

The third theme revealed that continuity between school and home was central to character strengthening through 7KAIH. At school, students participated in structured habituation activities such as prayers, congregational worship, morning literacy, group exercise, classroom cleaning, Friday Clean Up, community service, queuing, environmental cleanliness, and mutual cooperation. These activities provided direct opportunities to practice discipline, responsibility, religiosity, cooperation, and social awareness. Teachers also integrated character values into learning and served as behavioral models. Students' active involvement and repeated participation helped transform character education from conceptual understanding into authentic behavioral practice and established a supportive environment for character habituation.

However, several 7KAIH habits extended into family life, including waking and sleeping early, nutritious eating, learning routines, religious practices, exercise, social engagement, and digital device management. Differences in students' habits, digital device use, and inconsistent reinforcement at home could weaken the continuity of habituation established at school. Therefore, character development required active coordination between teachers and parents rather than simply implementing the same program in both environments. The school encouraged families to reinforce 7KAIH practices at home through communication and parental involvement. Thus, school-family partnership functioned as a bridge connecting institutional character education with students' everyday lives and supporting the consistency needed for character habits to develop sustainably.

Collaborative Strategies for Sustaining Students' Character Development

The fourth theme concerned collaborative strategies for sustaining students' positive character development through continuous monitoring, evaluation, guidance, reinforcement, communication with parents, and follow up actions. Teachers monitored punctuality, religious practices, cleanliness, literacy, physical exercise, responsibility, and social interactions across different school settings. The information obtained helped teachers identify positive behavioral development and students requiring additional guidance. Coordination among educators also enabled the exchange of information and periodic evaluation of students' behavioral progress. When students had not demonstrated expected habits, teachers provided individual or group guidance, motivation, and reinforcement, while difficulties related to behaviors outside school were communicated to parents. This process demonstrates that character development requires collaboration because behaviors occurring within family life cannot be addressed through school intervention alone. Collaborative monitoring was particularly important for habits that teachers could not directly observe, including waking and sleeping routines, digital device use, and the continuation of character practices at home. Communication with parents enabled monitoring and reinforcement to be shared across school and family environments. Collaboration also functioned as a continuous improvement strategy because identified inconsistencies were addressed through guidance, communication, and adjustment of reinforcement rather than evaluation alone. Overall, school-family partnership formed an interconnected system supporting 7KAIH implementation. Parental engagement extended character education beyond

school hours, communication and coordination connected teachers' and parents' efforts, continuity of habituation maintained consistent expectations, and collaborative monitoring supported the resolution of challenges. This partnership was particularly important because the seven habits involve behaviors practiced across both school and family environments.

Table 1. Summary of Findings on School–Family Partnership in the 7KAIH Program

Theme	Main Findings	Contribution to Students' Character
Parental Engagement	Parents were involved in reinforcing positive habits at home, particularly habits occurring beyond school hours	Extended character education from school into students' everyday family routines
School–Family Communication and Coordination	School meetings, parent gatherings, direct communication, and class-based messaging groups supported information sharing and coordination	Established shared understanding and more consistent behavioral expectations
Continuity of Character Habituation	School-based routines were connected with family practices, although differences in home routines and digital device use created challenges	Supported consistent development of discipline, responsibility, religiosity, independence, cooperation, and social awareness
Collaborative Strategies for Sustainability	Teachers monitored students at school, provided follow-up guidance, and communicated with parents regarding behaviors requiring reinforcement at home	Facilitated continuous monitoring, joint problem solving, and sustained character habituation

As summarized in Table 1, the four themes were mutually reinforcing rather than operating independently. Parental engagement provided the foundation for extending habituation into the family environment, while communication enabled schools and parents to coordinate their respective roles. Continuity between school and home provided students with repeated experiences of similar character expectations, whereas collaborative monitoring enabled difficulties to be identified and addressed through shared guidance. Thus, the findings suggest that strengthening students' character through the 7KAIH Program was supported not merely by the intensity of school-based habituation but by the ability of schools and families to connect their educational roles and maintain positive practices across students' daily environments.

Data from the original study explicitly support this restructuring: the school involved parents through meetings and class communication groups and encouraged them to continue school-based habituation within the family environment. The original findings also identify inconsistent family habituation and digital-device use as implementation challenges, while school–parent cooperation was strengthened to maintain character practices at home.

DISCUSSION

Parental Engagement in Supporting Students' Character Development through the 7KAIH Program

The findings indicate that parental engagement is an essential component supporting character development through the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program (7KAIH). Character development at SDN Ungaran 01 was not perceived exclusively as the responsibility of the school but as a shared educational responsibility involving teachers and families. This perspective is particularly relevant because several 7KAIH habits occur outside school hours. Waking up early, maintaining appropriate sleeping schedules, consuming healthy food, practicing religious activities, and developing learning routines require family support. Consequently, family involvement facilitates the continuation of character-related practices

introduced at school rather than independently producing measurable changes in students' character.

This finding supports Handoko et al. (2023), who emphasized that character education should be adapted to students' needs and educational contexts. In the context of 7KAIH, the educational context extends beyond school because students move continuously between school and family environments. Character education therefore requires an ecological perspective in which discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness can be supported across the environments in which students live and interact. Parents serve as important educational partners who enable positive practices introduced by teachers to become part of students' everyday routines.

The involvement of parents also reflects the collective nature of character education. Marnayana et al. (2024) emphasized that successful character education management depends on the involvement of various educational stakeholders. The present findings extend this perspective by showing that stakeholder involvement is particularly important when character education relies on daily habituation that crosses school and family boundaries. Parental participation enables character-building processes to continue after students leave school and provides opportunities for students to practice the same values within different social contexts. Thus, family involvement is not merely complementary to school programs but forms an integral component of the character-development process.

This interpretation is further consistent with Prayatni et al. (2025), who highlighted that the success of character education is influenced by the consistency of habituation practices within the family environment. The findings at SDN Ungaran 01 demonstrate that the school recognized this requirement by involving parents and encouraging them to continue positive habits at home. Nevertheless, differences in family routines, students' existing habits, and digital device use created variations in the consistency of reinforcement. These findings indicate that parental engagement supports the sustainability of discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness, while its contribution depends on families' capacity to maintain and reinforce positive practices.

School-Family Communication and Coordination as a Partnership Mechanism

The findings reveal that communication and coordination serve as principal mechanisms in school-family partnership at SDN Ungaran 01. Communication through school meetings, parent gatherings, direct teacher-parent interactions, and class-based messaging groups enabled the school to explain program objectives, communicate character expectations, share students' behavioral development, and coordinate follow-up actions. Communication therefore functioned not merely as information dissemination but as a mechanism for connecting character practices between school and home. This finding is consistent with Muliarti and Suardin (2023), who emphasized the importance of coordination and management in character education. The present study extends this perspective by showing that coordination should also involve parents, who reinforce behaviors beyond teachers' direct supervision. Consistent communication establishes shared expectations and supports discipline, responsibility, religiosity, independence, cooperation, and social awareness. This finding is also related to Nurhikmah et al. (2023), who highlighted the importance of principal and teacher role modeling, which can be strengthened when families understand and reinforce similar behavioral standards at home.

The findings further support Khasanah et al. (2022), who emphasized synergy among school leadership, teachers, educational staff, and families in developing strong school culture. At SDN Ungaran 01, such synergy was developed through regular interaction and information exchange, including messaging groups, parent meetings, and direct communication rather than

merely through formal parental participation. Communication also enabled teachers and parents to exchange information and coordinate guidance when students experienced difficulties in maintaining positive habits. Therefore, communication should be understood as a relational component of character education management that extends from program socialization to collaborative problem solving. School–family partnership becomes more effective when communication is continuous, reciprocal, and oriented toward students’ developmental needs rather than limited to administrative matters.

Continuity of Character Habituation between School and Home

One of the most significant findings is that continuity between school and home supports the sustainability of character habituation. At school, repeated activities such as collective prayers, morning literacy, physical exercise, classroom cleaning, community service, queuing, environmental cleanliness, and mutual cooperation provided authentic opportunities to practice character values. This finding is consistent with Yulia et al. (2025), who emphasized that character development becomes more effective when embedded within school culture through continuous habituation. Teachers functioned as behavioral models, while the principal encouraged consistent implementation, supporting Sudirman et al. (2024), who demonstrated that participatory leadership can strengthen teachers’ commitment to character education. Leadership therefore provides institutional conditions for consistent habituation, while teachers translate these expectations into students’ everyday experiences. Similarly, Harianto et al. (2023) argued that habituation based character education is effective because it provides authentic opportunities for students to apply character values. The present study extends this perspective by showing that habituation needs to continue across school and family environments, particularly because the seven habits in 7KAIH cross institutional boundaries. Habits such as waking and sleeping early, nutritious eating, learning routines, religious practices, physical activity, and social engagement require reinforcement in both environments. Continuity therefore supports discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness. Environmental cleanliness and literacy are not treated as separate core character dimensions but as habituation activities that provide opportunities to practice broader values, such as responsibility, cooperation, and learning oriented behavior. This distinction maintains consistency with the core character dimensions identified in the study: discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness.

Collaborative Monitoring and Strategies for Sustaining Character Development

The findings demonstrate that sustainable character development requires collaborative monitoring and continuous reinforcement. Teachers monitored students’ punctuality, religious practices, literacy, cleanliness, physical activities, responsibility, and social interactions during school hours, while literacy and cleanliness functioned as habituation activities for practicing broader character dimensions. When difficulties occurred beyond school, communication with parents became an important follow up mechanism. This finding supports Astuti et al. (2023), who emphasized systematic character education evaluation for educational decision making. Monitoring in this study focused not only on activity completion but also on observable behaviors, transforming evaluation into a developmental mechanism for identifying difficulties and appropriate follow up. Because teachers cannot continuously observe family routines, parents became essential partners in monitoring behaviors such as waking and sleeping routines, digital device use, religious practices, learning, and nutritional habits. This finding is consistent with Retnasari et al. (2021), who emphasized collaboration between schools and families in maintaining consistent character habituation, particularly when character programs extend beyond school.

Prayatni et al. (2025) similarly emphasized continuity in monitoring and mentoring between teachers and parents. At SDN Ungaran 01, teachers provided guidance and reinforcement at school, while parents continued appropriate guidance at home, making collaborative monitoring a mechanism for joint problem solving rather than merely surveillance. Overall, school–family partnership functioned as an integrated character habituation system through parental engagement, communication and coordination, continuity of habituation, and collaborative monitoring. These mechanisms supported the development of discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness, while literacy and environmental awareness functioned as contexts for practicing these values. The contribution of this study is therefore not to demonstrate a causal increase in character, as the qualitative design did not employ pre and post measurement, but to explain how school–family partnership facilitates the continuity of character related practices across school and family environments.

Conclusion

This study concludes that school–family partnership plays a strategic role in strengthening students' character through the Seven Habits of Great Indonesian Children Program (7KAIH) at SDN Ungaran 01, West Ungaran District, Semarang Regency. Effective character development cannot rely solely on school-based habituation because several 7KAIH habits extend beyond school hours and require consistent reinforcement at home. The partnership was manifested through parental engagement, continuous communication and coordination, continuity of habituation between school and home, and collaborative monitoring and follow-up. School activities such as religious practices, literacy, physical exercise, environmental cleanliness, discipline, cooperation, and social activities provided structured opportunities for students to practice positive values, while habits such as waking and sleeping early, maintaining learning routines, consuming nutritious food, practicing religion at home, and managing digital device use required stronger family involvement. This collaboration contributed to strengthening students' discipline, religiosity, responsibility, independence, cooperation, and social awareness, although differences in family routines, existing student habits, and digital device use remained challenges.

This study contributes to educational management and character education research by demonstrating that school–family partnership can function as an integrated character habituation system rather than merely supplementary parental participation. Schools and families perform complementary roles, with schools providing structured habituation, leadership, role modeling, and educational guidance, while families provide continuity, reinforcement, and monitoring in students' everyday lives. Therefore, the sustainability of the 7KAIH Program requires reciprocal communication, shared responsibility, consistent behavioral expectations, and collaborative monitoring between schools and families. School principals and teachers should develop systematic mechanisms for meaningful parental engagement and continuous school–home coordination, while future research should examine the implementation of school–family partnerships across different school contexts and educational levels using comparative or mixed-methods approaches.

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