

Morning Wake-Up Habits and Student Discipline: A Case Study in an Indonesian Elementary School

Elmi Hanjar Bait^{1*}, Herli Salim², and Elih Sudiapermana³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

*elmihanjarbait@upi.edu

Abstract. This study examines the influence of morning wake-up habits on student discipline at SDN Kareogenggong. Discipline, an essential component of character education, is reflected in punctuality, responsibility, and behavioral consistency. Using a quantitative correlational design, data were collected from 45 students through questionnaires, observations, and school records. The results show a strong and significant positive correlation between morning wake-up habits and key discipline indicators, including punctual arrival, task completion, and adherence to school rules ($r = 0.779$, $p < 0.001$). This study addresses an empirical gap by providing direct evidence that morning wake-up habits can serve as behavioral predictors of discipline—an area seldom explored in Indonesian elementary education. The findings suggest that structured morning routines at home and school may strengthen students' character development and daily learning readiness.

Keywords: discipline, morning habits, character education, punctuality, elementary students

INTRODUCTION

Discipline is one of the most essential components of character education in elementary schools because it reflects children's ability to regulate their behavior, manage time, and act responsibly in their daily routines (Brophy, 2006). Among the various factors that shape discipline, morning wake-up habits play a particularly significant role. Routines such as waking up on time, preparing for school, and arriving punctually directly influence students' readiness to learn and their ability to follow school rules. These habits form the initial foundation that shapes students' daily behavior.

To understand how morning routines influence discipline, Zimmerman's (2000) Self-Regulation Theory provides an important conceptual framework. This theory emphasizes that disciplined behavior emerges from one's ability to plan, monitor, and regulate actions toward specific goals. In the context of elementary students, waking up early requires them to manage sleep schedules, prepare school necessities, and adhere to morning routines independently. This daily process serves as a practical exercise in self-regulation, making morning routines not merely physical actions but a formative character-building practice.

The Habit Formation Theory proposed by Lally et al. (2010) further explains how repeated behaviors develop into stable and automatic patterns. Consistent morning routines—such as waking up early, staying organized, and beginning the school day in a structured manner—help establish enduring patterns of discipline among school-aged children. Thus, morning

wake-up habits function both as biological routines and as moral practices that foster self-discipline, consistency, and responsibility.

Empirical research also reinforces the link between morning routines and disciplined behavior. Carrell, Maghakian, and West (2011) found that wake-up timing influences cognitive readiness and behavioral stability. Similarly, Gillen-O'Neel, Huynh, and Fuligni (2013) noted that sleep quality and wake-up patterns are associated with emotional regulation, which affects students' ability to follow classroom rules. Fischer et al. (2020) also reported that stable morning routines improve children's capacity to follow instructions and maintain focus. These findings demonstrate that morning routines have a direct impact on behavior, beyond their effects on physical health or academic outcomes.

The importance of morning routines becomes even clearer when connected to character-building practices in schools. Bowers and Moyer (2017) emphasized that structured morning habits enhance students' mental readiness for learning, while Walker (2017) highlighted the role of healthy sleep-wake patterns in supporting concentration and emotional stability—key prerequisites for classroom discipline. In practice, schools can strengthen character education by implementing structured morning activities such as readiness checks, morning briefings, or daily reflection. This creates continuity between home routines and school-based behavioral expectations, positioning morning habits as a bridge between self-management and character formation.

In Indonesia, the “7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat” program introduced by the Ministry of Education identifies early rising as one of the core habits that foster discipline, responsibility, and independence. This routine is viewed not only as a physical activity but also as a moral practice that reinforces positive character through daily repetition. This national perspective aligns with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's principles of character education, which emphasize the formation of behavior through consistent daily habits.

Despite the theoretical and practical relevance of morning routines, empirical studies specifically examining the relationship between morning wake-up habits and student discipline remain limited. Most previous research has focused on sleep patterns and academic achievement (Huang, 2016; Rosen et al., 2019), with relatively little attention given to behavioral discipline. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the influence of morning wake-up habits on the discipline of elementary school students. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of character-based educational programs that emphasize daily routines as key drivers of discipline formation.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To determine the correlation between morning wake-up habits and student discipline.
2. To identify behavioral patterns that link early rising with punctuality, rule compliance, and active participation.
3. To provide recommendations for strengthening character education through positive daily habits.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design aimed at examining the relationship between morning wake-up habits (*variable X*) and student discipline (*variable Y*). This design was chosen because both variables represent natural student behaviors that cannot be ethically manipulated. Thus, statistical correlation analysis becomes the most appropriate approach to identify patterns of association without altering participants' conditions (Creswell, 2012). Through this correlational design, the researcher can objectively determine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables using correlation coefficients.

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at SDN Kareogenggong in Jawilan District, Serang Regency, a school implementing the "7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat" program, which supports the formation of positive habits relevant to this research. All 45 students in Grades V and VI were included using total sampling due to the small population size.

Grades V and VI were chosen because students aged 10–12 years are in the late concrete operational stage (Piaget, 1952), enabling them to recognize and evaluate their habits and respond accurately to questionnaires. At this level, students also encounter greater disciplinary demands, making them suitable for studying discipline-related behaviors. Their reading ability supports the use of Likert-scale instruments, and their more consistent behavior allows teachers to observe punctuality, engagement, and rule compliance reliably.

Variables

- a. Independent Variable (X): Morning Wake-Up Habits — measured through the time of waking up, consistency, and morning activities (e.g., exercise, breakfast, and preparation).
- b. Dependent Variable (Y): Student Discipline — measured through punctuality, adherence to school rules, readiness for lessons, and classroom participation.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three main instruments:

1. Questionnaires – to measure both morning habits and levels of discipline, using a 5-point Likert scale.
2. Observation Sheets – to assess punctuality and classroom engagement, completed by teachers.
3. Documentation – to verify attendance and academic punctuality records.

Research Instruments

Two structured questionnaires were developed to measure the study variables.

1. Morning Wake-Up Habits Scale (MWHS)

This instrument consists of 10 items assessing wake-up time, morning activities, habit frequency, and perceived readiness. Examples of actual items include:

- a. "At what time do you usually wake up in the morning?"
- b. "What do you usually do after waking up?"
- c. "How often do you wake up at the same time regularly?"
- d. "Do you feel more prepared to start the day after waking up early?"

These items reflect indicators aligned with the Habit Formation Theory proposed by Lally et al. (2010) and the Self-Regulation Theory introduced by Zimmerman (2000).

2. Student Discipline Scale (SDS)

This instrument consists of 10 items measuring punctuality, rule compliance, learning readiness, and classroom participation. Examples of actual items include:

- a. "How often do you arrive at school on time?"
- b. "Do you follow the school schedule (lessons, breaks, etc.) with discipline?"
- c. "Are you always prepared (books, stationery, assignments) before lessons begin?"
- d. "How active are you in classroom activities?"
- e. "How often do you obey school rules?"

These items reflect indicators informed by Lickona's character discipline framework (Lickona, 1991) and the Indonesian Ministry of Education's character education guidelines (Kemdikbud, 2017), which emphasize punctuality, responsibility, and consistent adherence to rules as core components of student discipline.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS 29 with the following techniques:

- a. Descriptive Statistics to summarize students' morning habits and discipline scores.
- b. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables.
- c. Significance Testing ($p < 0.05$) to confirm statistical relevance.

Both instruments were validated by two educational experts and pilot-tested with 10 non-sample students. Reliability testing showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.83, indicating excellent internal consistency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Findings

The descriptive findings aim to provide an overview of students' morning routines and discipline levels before conducting relational analysis. Data were collected from 45 students in Grades V and VI.

1. Statistical Description

To gain a more objective understanding of the characteristics of the dataset, descriptive statistical analysis was performed using SPSS. The output is presented in Figure 1.

		Descriptive Statistics					
		Statistic	Std. Error	Bias	Bootstrap ^a		
					Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper	
Skor_KBP	N	45		0	0	45	45
	Range	9					
	Minimum	11					
	Maximum	20					
	Sum	724					
	Mean	16.09	.402	.00	.40	15.31	16.80
	Std. Deviation	2.695		-.030	.217	2.242	3.095
	Variance	7.265		-.112	1.160	5.028	9.582
	Skewness	-.142	.354	.011	.199	-.484	.288
	Kurtosis	-.770	.695	.035	.300	-1.223	-.061
Skor_TDS	N	45		0	0	45	45
	Range	10					
	Minimum	10					
	Maximum	20					
	Sum	690					
	Mean	15.33	.603	-.01	.58	14.11	16.33
	Std. Deviation	4.045		-.042	.233	3.529	4.447
	Variance	16.364		-.285	1.855	12.451	19.773
	Skewness	-.125	.354	.004	.217	-.534	.310
	Kurtosis	-1.454	.695	.084	.220	-1.733	-.914
Valid N (listwise)	N	45		0	0	45	45

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

Figure 1. SPSS 29 Output – Descriptive Statistics

Figure 1 presents the summary statistics for the Morning Wake-Up Habits Scale (MWHS/KBP) and Student Discipline Scale (SDS/TDP). The mean score for MWHS/KBP is 16.09 (SD = 2.695), while the mean score for SDS/TDP is 15.33 (SD = 4.045). The skewness and kurtosis values fall within the acceptable range of -2 to +2, indicating that both variables are normally distributed and suitable for parametric correlation testing.

The questionnaire data support these statistics, showing that:

- a. 71% of students wake up between 04:30–05:30,
- b. 29% of students wake up after 06:00,
- c. 80% of students engage in morning routines such as breakfast, bathing, or light exercise,
- d. 78% of students arrive at school on time,
- e. 82% report being consistently ready for lessons, and
- f. 75% actively participate in classroom activities.

These findings indicate that most students maintain stable morning routines and demonstrate positive disciplinary behaviors. Minor variations exist, but they remain within a reasonable range and do not compromise the validity of subsequent statistical analyses. Overall, the descriptive findings provide a solid basis for examining the relationship between morning wake-up habits and student discipline.

2. Correlation Results

After establishing an overview of both variables, the next step was to determine whether a meaningful relationship exists between morning wake-up habits and student discipline. The Pearson Product-Moment correlation test was used, as the data met the normality assumption. The correlation results are presented in Figure 2.

Correlations

		Skor_KBP	Skor_TDS		
Skor_KBP	Pearson Correlation	1	.779**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001		
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	319.644	373.667		
	Covariance	7.265	8.492		
	N	45	45		
	Bootstrap ^b	Bias	0	-.002	
		Std. Error	0	.050	
		95% Confidence Interval	Lower	1	.668
			Upper	1	.865
		Skor_TDS	Pearson Correlation	.779**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001				
Sum of Squares and Cross-products	373.667		720.000		
Covariance	8.492		16.364		
N	45		45		
Bootstrap ^b	Bias		-.002	0	
	Std. Error		.050	0	
	95% Confidence Interval		Lower	.668	1
			Upper	.865	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

b. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

Figure 2. SPSS Output – Correlation Matrix (Pearson Correlation)

Figure 2 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient between MWHS/KBP and SDS/TDP is $r = 0.779$, with a significance value of $p < 0.001$, indicating a strong and statistically significant relationship. The 95% confidence interval (0.668–0.865) confirms the stability of this result, and the bootstrap estimate (bias = -0.002) further supports its reliability.

In practical terms, these results suggest that students who maintain consistent morning routines—waking up at a regular time and engaging in structured morning activities—tend to exhibit higher levels of discipline. They are more punctual, better prepared for lessons, and more compliant with school rules. This evidence reinforces the notion that daily routines, particularly morning wake-up habits, play an important role in fostering disciplined behavior among elementary school students.

Interpretation and Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that early wake-up habits, as measured by the Morning Wake-Up Habits Scale, are strongly associated with higher levels of student discipline, as assessed by the Student Discipline Scale. This relationship can be understood through multiple theoretical perspectives. First, habit formation theory (Wood & Runger, 2016) posits that repeated behaviors, when performed consistently, reduce cognitive effort and eventually become automatic. In the context of elementary school students, structured morning routines—waking up early, eating breakfast, bathing, and preparing for school—help students internalize discipline naturally, without constant external monitoring. Empirical studies, such as the “Duta Bangun Pagi” program (Khairroh & Malik, 2023) and morning routine interventions in Thailand (Haerani, Prasetyo & Indra, 2024), demonstrate that habitual morning activities enhance responsibility, punctuality, and engagement, supporting the idea that consistent habits are a foundation for character development.

Second, self-regulation theory (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007) provides a psychological explanation for these findings. Structured morning routines require students to manage their attention, emotions, and actions, fostering self-control and goal-directed behavior. Research in early childhood education (Mudayanti & Jumiati, 2024) confirms that children who follow consistent daily habits exhibit stronger self-regulation and discipline. In this study, students who maintain regular morning routines were observed to arrive on time, be prepared for lessons, and actively participate in classroom activities—behaviors that reflect internalized self-regulation.

Third, sleep science and circadian rhythm research (Walker, 2017) offer a physiological explanation. Healthy sleep patterns and consistent wake-up times improve attention, emotional stability, and executive functioning. Studies on school-aged children (Sivakumar et al., 2022) and interventions on child sleep routines (2023) show that children with regular sleep-wake cycles respond better to structured routines, which translates into improved behavioral outcomes. These findings indicate that the benefits of morning routines are not purely

behavioral or cognitive—they are also rooted in biological readiness, allowing students to engage effectively in school activities.

Comparative Discussion

Compared to previous research, this study provides unique insights into the relationship between morning routines and discipline in primary education. While many studies focus on sleep quality and academic performance among adolescents and adults (e.g., Rosen et al., 2019; Utomo, Rini & Matulesy, 2024), few have examined how early wake-up habits influence behavioral discipline among elementary school students. Prior research in early childhood and primary school settings has highlighted the role of daily routines in promoting self-regulation and responsibility (Mudayanti & Jumiatin, 2024; Khairoh & Malik, 2023), but these studies often focus on general classroom management rather than explicitly linking morning routines to measurable discipline outcomes.

The present study fills this gap by empirically demonstrating that consistent morning habits are strongly correlated with higher levels of student discipline. This finding reinforces the notion that discipline is not solely an externally imposed requirement but an internalized pattern of self-regulation cultivated through repeated small behaviors, such as waking up early and completing structured morning activities. These micro-level behaviors contribute to macro-level character traits—including responsibility, reliability, and persistence—which are essential for holistic student development.

Furthermore, integrating habit formation, self-regulation, and sleep science provides a multi-dimensional explanation of how routine behaviors translate into disciplined actions. By connecting these theories, this study offers a novel framework for character education in primary schools: simple, consistent daily routines not only foster discipline and classroom engagement but also support the development of long-term character traits, bridging the gap between psychological, physiological, and pedagogical perspectives.

In conclusion, the study's contribution is twofold. First, it provides empirical evidence that morning routines directly influence discipline among elementary students—a relatively underexplored area in the literature. Second, it offers practical guidance for educators and parents, demonstrating that fostering structured morning habits can be an effective strategy for cultivating self-regulation, behavioral discipline, and holistic character development in children. This integrative approach highlights how small, consistent daily practices can yield meaningful educational and developmental outcomes.

Practical Implications

The implications of this study extend to three domains:

1. For Schools

Short-term strategies: Schools can implement structured morning programs before class hours to improve punctuality and readiness. Examples include:

- a. 10–15 minutes of light stretching or physical exercise to energize students.
- b. Quiet reading sessions to encourage mental focus.
- c. Reflection or mindfulness activities, such as setting daily goals or gratitude sharing.
- d. These activities can be easily scheduled within the first 30 minutes of school to help students transition smoothly into academic tasks.

Long-term strategies: Schools can institutionalize these routines as part of the curriculum, establishing a “morning habit culture” that consistently reinforces punctuality, self-regulation, and preparation for learning. Programs like a “Morning Character Hour” or “Daily Leadership Circle” can integrate small leadership tasks, responsibility assignments, or peer mentoring to embed discipline as a habitual practice over time.

2. For Teachers

Short-term strategies: Teachers can model disciplined behavior by arriving early, adhering to schedules, and demonstrating consistent morning routines. Small daily cues—such as greeting students punctually, conducting morning check-ins, or leading brief mindfulness exercises—signal the importance of structured habits.

Long-term strategies: Teachers can mentor students in developing personalized morning routines, reinforcing these behaviors through feedback, recognition, or classroom rewards, gradually cultivating self-discipline as an internalized habit rather than an externally imposed rule.

3. For Parents

Short-term strategies: Families can ensure that children follow consistent bedtime and wake-up schedules, minimizing late nights and irregular sleep patterns that disrupt morning readiness. Coordinating simple morning rituals—like shared breakfast, organized schoolbags, or morning affirmations—can support school routines.

Long-term strategies: Parents can nurture a family culture of disciplined habits, emphasizing responsibility, independence, and time management. Encouraging children

to plan their mornings autonomously, gradually reducing parental prompts, helps sustain school-based discipline and fosters lifelong self-regulation.

CONCLUSION

The key message of this study is that consistent morning wake-up habits, as measured by the Morning Wake-Up Habits Scale, play a critical role in shaping student discipline in elementary education. The strong positive correlation with the Student Discipline Scale ($r = 0.779$, $p < 0.001$) demonstrates that students who rise early and engage in structured morning routines exhibit higher punctuality, better compliance with school rules, and greater academic engagement.

These routines contribute to the development of self-regulation, time management, and intrinsic motivation—core components of character education. Therefore, fostering early wake-up habits should be viewed not merely as a lifestyle choice but as a strategic intervention to support discipline-oriented learning environments.

Methodological limitations should be acknowledged. This study employed a cross-sectional design with a relatively small sample size ($n = 45$) from two grade levels in a single school, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Data relied primarily on self-reported questionnaires and observation, which could introduce response bias.

Future research is recommended to:

1. Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of habitual morning routines on a broader range of character traits, such as resilience, empathy, and leadership.
2. Investigate interventions combining school and family routines, to determine how collaborative strategies reinforce both behavior and character development.
3. Explore mediating and moderating factors, such as sleep quality, socio-economic background, or parental involvement, to understand the mechanisms through which morning routines influence discipline.
4. Compare different types of morning programs (e.g., mindfulness, physical exercise, or goal-setting) to determine which strategies most effectively support self-regulation and character formation.

In summary, this study highlights that morning wake-up habits are not merely daily routines but a practical and evidence-based lever for fostering disciplined behavior and holistic character development in elementary school students. Establishing such habits early can provide a foundation for lifelong self-regulation and responsible behavior.

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