

The Influence of School Culture and Religious Activity Habituation Through Discipline on Students' Religious and National Character

Adi Rosadi^{1*}, Mahmud², Bambang Samsul Arifin³, Asep Nursobah⁴

¹STAI Kharisma, Cicurug, Sukabumi, Indonesia

^{2,3,4}UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the influence of school culture and religious activity habituation on students' religious and national character, with discipline as a mediating variable. The background of this research is the low level of students' religious and national character, as reflected in violations of religious and social norms within schools. A quantitative approach with a survey method was employed. A total of 286 students were selected proportionally from several private junior high schools in Sukaresmi District, Cianjur Regency, using stratified random sampling. The research instrument was a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data were analyzed using path analysis with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results show that school culture and religious activity habituation have a positive and significant effect on student discipline, religious character, and national character, both directly and indirectly through discipline. Discipline plays a strong mediating role in the relationship between independent variables and student character. Activities such as congregational prayer, Qur'an recitation, and routine supplication contribute to instilling discipline and fostering religious and nationalist values. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening school culture and integrating religious activities in character education. In conclusion, students' religious and national character can be significantly enhanced through a positive school culture and consistent religious practices, with discipline serving as a reinforcing foundation.

KEYWORDS: school culture, religious activities, discipline, religious character, national character.

INTRODUCTION

Religious and national character play a crucial role in shaping both individual identity and the collective morality of society. Religious character enables individuals to recognize and practice religious values in daily life, which in turn strengthens morality and adds meaning to life. Values such as honesty, justice, and compassion emphasized in religious teachings help form ethical individuals who care for others.

Meanwhile, national character promotes appreciation of national identity and cultural values, reinforces unity among citizens, and fosters a sense of responsibility towards the nation and fellow citizens. These two dimensions are complementary and mutually reinforcing in developing individuals who are responsible, ethical, and socially engaged members of society. It is essential for students to possess strong religious and national character, as these values are foundational in shaping moral principles, fostering respect for diversity, and encouraging tolerance and empathy in inclusive learning environments. Religious values are deeply embedded in school and community contexts (Satrio & Atno, 2024). Students with strong religious character build their personal identity upon ethical principles, value diversity (Ekawati et al., 2018), and exhibit tolerant behavior (Daryanto & Darmiatun, 2013).

However, current realities indicate a concerning decline in students' religious and national character. Many educational institutions face challenges where students' behaviors contradict religious norms and school values. These include violations of religious norms within schools, disruptive behavior in society, and even criminal acts such as violence, drug abuse, and sexual harassment. The decline in religious character among students has been linked to negative foreign cultural influences affecting students' character development (H. Sulaiman & Ameliani, 2023).

Supporting this, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) reported in 2018 that it handled 1,885 cases involving 504 children as perpetrators of criminal acts, including drug users, theft, and sexual misconduct. Children in conflict with the law (ABH) accounted for 23.9% of the cases, drug abuse for 17.8%, and sexual offenses for 13.2%. Furthermore, KPAI data showed that student brawl cases increased from 12.9% in 2017 to 14% in 2018 (Ikhsanudin, 2018). In the latest 2023 data from KPAI, the overall decline in children's character in Indonesia was reported at 69.52%. This figure combines various indicators such as religiosity, nationalism, independence, cooperation, and social behavior, with scores for religiosity at 73.13, independence 56.34, cooperation 63.97, and behavior at 71.99. These data suggest that children's character is still far from ideal, as indicated by the lack

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of social solidarity, legal noncompliance, irresponsible social media use, harmful social interactions, drug abuse, theft, and sexual harassment (Patola et al., 2023).

In schools, the low level of religious character is evident in students' indifference towards religious lessons, violation of religious rules, disrespect for religious teachers, and low participation in religious activities. This also reflects a lack of religious values in social interactions, academic ethics, and commitment to moral values at school. Acts of violence, drug abuse, and sexual harassment have further worsened the moral climate in schools (Sabrina et al., 2021).

Interviews with teachers at SMP NU Shofiyatul Huda revealed that the decline in students' religious character is due to a lack of awareness in applying religious values in daily life, such as wearing the hijab outside of school for female students, and general indiscipline during lessons (Wawancara Guru PAI SMP, Cianjur, 02 April 2024). This is consistent with interviews with teachers from several schools, who reported low religious character among students as evidenced by poor understanding of religious values, lack of worship practices, and low moral awareness. This problem was observed at SMP IT Bina Utama Sukaresmi, SMP IT Raden Fatah, SMP NU Shofiyatul Huda, SMP S Cokroaminoto Sukaresmi, and SMP Sinar Parahyangan. One of the main causes identified was the lack of communication between schools and the community, parental neglect, low discipline habits, and the cultural gap between school and home environments (Wawancara Guru PAI SMP, Cianjur, 02 April 2024).

The table presented earlier highlights the characteristics and causes of students' low religious character, based on teacher interviews. It confirms that weak communication, low parental engagement, poor discipline, and cultural disparities between home and school are critical contributing factors. The increasing number of violent acts, juvenile crimes, cheating, drug use, pornography, sexual assaults, robbery, and property damage among students has become a significant social issue. Student behavior is also marked by cheating, bullying, and school brawls, all of which have escalated to serious criminal acts (Zubaedi, 2015).

Despite the inclusion of religious and moral education in schools, it often lacks a significant impact on students' behavior. When Islamic religious education is limited to theoretical instruction without practical application, students may experience moral disorientation and become ill-prepared to navigate the complexities of modern life. This is reinforced by data from KPAI indicating rising student violence. In 2015, there were 538 cases of student brawls. Although the number decreased in 2016, it increased again from 2017 onward. One critical issue is the role of schools and educators in understanding and addressing students' emotional development. Data from Polresta Bogor showed a decline in street crimes involving students from 48 cases in 2021 to 32 cases in 2022. However, the number of brawlers doubled from 208 in 2021 to 421 in 2022 (Priyo, 2023). Violence against children remains a serious concern in Cianjur. The Cianjur Social Affairs Office recorded 46 child victims of sexual, physical, and psychological abuse, and 14 cases of bullying. There was also a school incident where senior students physically abused new students in a junior high school in the area. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, there are 301 junior high schools in Cianjur. A preliminary study was conducted in three of them (Sutriyawan & Sari, 2020).

The decline in religious character has major implications. Moral crises can emerge when religious values are not reflected in students' behavior. Violent behaviors like school brawls and bullying may increase. Sabrina et al., (2021) .argue that character education is a solution to the moral decline among youth and can positively impact social life Individuals with weak religious character may lose their moral compass and fail to maintain social harmony. This can hinder their ability to contribute to building a positive community. Limited understanding of religious teachings may reduce students' capacity to apply religious values in daily interactions.

Therefore, addressing the decline in religious and national character among students must be taken seriously. This is not only relevant to education but is essential for building a tolerant and compassionate society that honors religious values. Strengthening religious and national character must be integrated into the educational system and supported by families to ensure long-term, positive outcomes for students and society.

Nandini et al., (2022) identified seven key factors influencing students' religious character: school environment, family role, social education, heredity, mass media, spiritual awareness, and daily habits. In this study, the researcher hypothesizes that school culture and the habituation of religious activities contribute significantly to students' religious and national character. School culture, which encompasses the norms, values, and religious views within the school environment, has a substantial influence on students' character. Religious practices play a vital role in shaping students' understanding of faith and religious identity.

Nuraeni & Labudasari (2021) emphasize the role of teachers as surrogate parents in character development. Ahsanulhaq (2019) highlights the importance of parental support, school commitment, and proper facilities. Mawardi & Indayani (2020) stress that character-based school culture can restore students' values. Naim (2020) explains how religious values can be embedded into school life. Sofannah & Amrullah, (2023) note that the habituation of religious character is more effective when supported by the environment, teachers, and parental collaboration.

Jalaluddin, (2010) suggests that teaching good habits like discipline, honesty, tolerance, and justice in school curricula significantly influences students' character development. Romadhoni et al. (2023) argue that religious activities are effective in cultivating students' religious character by encouraging positive habits and deeper internalization of values and beliefs. Indriyati & Siswadi, (2023) found that habitual practices significantly reinforce character education in madrasah. Similarly, Kristanti & Tirtoni

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(2021) concluded that integrating character education into subjects, alongside school culture, religious habituation, and modeling, plays an essential role. Religious character formation can be strengthened through school culture (Khoiriah et al., 2023; Dewi, 2020; Sofannah & Amrullah, 2023). A sustainable school culture can subtly shape students' religious character, (Hamdani et al., 2023; Aprilia & Nawawi, 2023; Fajariyah & Sholehuddin, 2023; Farleni et al., 2023; Nuraeni & Labudasari, 2021; Yusrianti et al., 2023).

The influence of school culture and the habituation of religious activities mediated by student discipline is significant in shaping students' religious and national character. A school culture that promotes religious and national values creates a conducive environment for character development. One essential aspect of this culture is religious activity habituation, such as prayer, religious classes, and communal worship, which allows students to apply values like honesty, compassion, and mutual respect. Said et al., (2021) found a positive correlation between school culture and student discipline. Mujamil & Suryadi, (2024) highlight that discipline instills strong character, responsibility, and structured thinking. Munif et al., (2023) argue that religious practices instill respect for rules and a sense of responsibility towards oneself, society, and the nation.

This study introduces methodological innovation in three ways. First, it adopts a quantitative approach rarely used in this field where qualitative methods are more common. Second, it involves a large sample, allowing for deeper and more representative analysis. Third, it applies advanced statistical analysis using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), enabling simultaneous examination of complex variable relationships. Thus, this study not only reveals the significant influence of school culture and religious activity habituation on students' religious and national character but also contributes methodologically to the field.

The research gap addressed here is the lack of in-depth exploration of how school culture and religious activity habituation through discipline affect both religious and national character, particularly in the context of private junior high schools in Sukaresmi District, Cianjur. This study aims to fill this gap and enrich the discourse on character education

Research Hypotheses

- H1: School culture positively and significantly affects student discipline.
- H2: School culture positively and significantly affects students' national character.
- H3: School culture positively and significantly affects students' religious character.
- H4: Discipline positively and significantly affects students' national character.
- H5: Discipline positively and significantly affects students' religious character.
- H6: Religious practice habituation positively and significantly affects discipline.
- H7: Religious practice habituation positively and significantly affects national character.
- H8: Religious practice habituation positively and significantly affects religious character.
- H9: School culture indirectly affects national character through discipline.
- H10: School culture indirectly affects religious character through discipline.
- H11: Religious practice habituation indirectly affects national character through discipline.
- H12: Religious practice habituation indirectly affects religious character through discipline.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative correlational approach to examine the influence of school culture and the habituation of religious activities on student discipline, and how these variables affect the development of students' religious and national character. A quantitative approach is appropriate when the data collected are numerical and the analysis involves statistical procedures to test hypotheses (Creswell, 2012). The correlational design allows the researcher to assess the degree and direction of relationships among variables, particularly between school culture (X1), religious activity habituation (X2), student discipline (Z), religious character (Y1), and national character (Y2).

The research was conducted in four private junior high schools in Sukaresmi District, Cianjur Regency: SMP IT Bina Utama Sukaresmi, SMP NU Shofiyatul Huda, SMP S Cokroaminoto Sukaresmi, and SMP Sinar Parahyangan. These schools were selected because they represent a variety of school cultures and religious activity practices. Moreover, recent reports and field interviews have indicated moral and disciplinary concerns among students in this area. The total student population was 1,006, and the sample size of 286 respondents was determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error. A random sampling technique was applied, which is suitable for homogeneous populations (Sugiyono, 2018).

The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire developed based on theoretical frameworks from prior studies. The instrument utilized a five-point Likert scale ranging from "never" to "always." Each variable was operationalized into dimensions and indicators, and measured through both positive and negative statements. For instance, the school culture variable was broken down into dimensions such as values, norms, beliefs, and habits; the religious activity habituation variable included intellectual, ideological, public and private practice, and religious experience.

All instruments underwent validity testing using Pearson's Product Moment correlation, with all item scores exceeding the critical r-value (0.312), indicating satisfactory validity. The reliability of each variable was also tested using Cronbach's Alpha,

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yielding coefficients above 0.70, which meets the standard for internal consistency (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). For example, the reliability coefficient for the school culture variable was 0.8644, for religious activity habituation 0.7159, for discipline 0.8406, for religious character 0.8419, and for national character 0.8570.

To analyze the data, the study employed Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS software. This method is recommended when the model includes latent variables with reflective indicators and when the aim is prediction and theory development rather than confirmation (Hair, 2014). The outer model was assessed to evaluate indicator reliability, convergent and discriminant validity, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The inner model was evaluated through R-square (R²) values, effect size (f²), and predictive relevance (Q²).

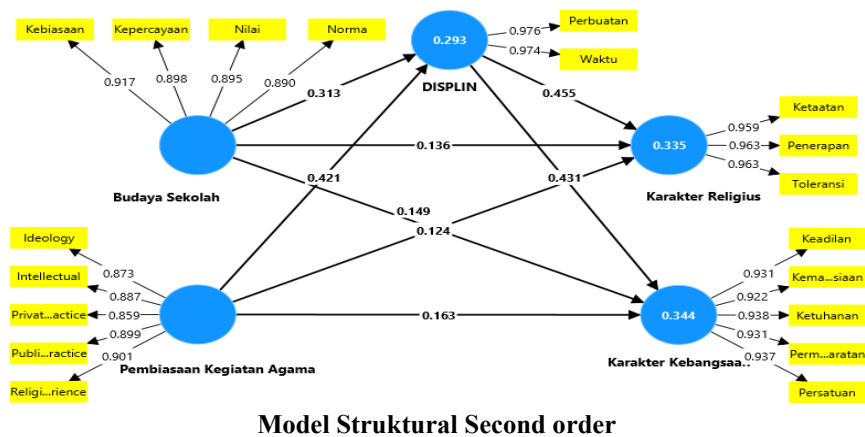
Hypothesis testing was carried out using t-statistics and p-values, with a significance level set at 0.05. Hypotheses were accepted if the t-statistic > 1.96 and p < 0.05 (Ghozali, 2018). The hypotheses tested include both direct and indirect effects, such as the mediating role of discipline between school culture/religious habituation and student character.

The research was conducted over six months, from January to June 2025, involving the stages of instrument development, data collection, analysis, and interpretation. This methodological design not only provides a robust framework for understanding the relationships among the studied variables but also contributes to empirical discourse on the role of school culture and religious practices in shaping student character.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Outer Model



Construct Reliability And Validity pada Second order

Variabel	Dimensi	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	AVE	Simpulan
Budaya Sekolah	Nilai	0.895	0.922	0.927	0.945	Valid
	Norma	0.890				Valid
	Kepercayaan	0.898				Valid
	Kebiasaan	0.917				Valid
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama	Intelektual	0.887	0.930	0.935	0.947	Valid
	Ideologi	0.873				Valid
	Praktik Publik	0.899				Valid
	Praktik Pribadi	0.859				Valid
	Pengalaman Keagamaan	0.901				Valid
Kedisiplinan	Waktu	0.974	0.949	0.950	0.975	Valid
	Perbuatan	0.976				Valid
Karakter Religius	Ketaatan	0.959	0.959	0.962	0.974	Valid
	Toleransi	0.963				Valid
	Penerapan	0.963				Valid
Karakter Kebangsaan	Ketuhanan	0.938	0.962	0.963	0.971	Valid
	Kemanusiaan	0.922				Valid
	Persatuan	0.937				Valid
	Permasyarakatan	0.931				Valid
	Keadilan	0.931				Valid

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The second-order Construct Reliability and Validity analysis confirms that all variables are valid and reliable. School Culture ($\alpha = 0.922$, AVE = 0.945), Religious Activity Habituation (AVE = 0.947), Discipline ($\alpha = 0.949$, AVE = 0.975), Religious Character ($\alpha = 0.959$, AVE = 0.974), and National Character ($\alpha = 0.962$, AVE = 0.971) all show high internal consistency and strong validity. These results indicate that the instruments used effectively measure the intended constructs.

Discriminant validity pada Second order

Discriminant validity is a measure used in quantitative research to ensure that each construct in a model is truly distinct from the others. It confirms that the indicators measuring a specific variable are more closely correlated with that variable than with any other. This validity can be assessed using several methods, including the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, and Cross Loadings.

a) Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

HTMT is a modern technique for evaluating discriminant validity by comparing the average correlations between indicators of different constructs (heterotrait) with those of the same construct (monotrait). A ratio below 0.85 or 0.90 indicates acceptable discriminant validity, meaning the constructs are empirically distinct. If the HTMT value exceeds this threshold, it suggests that the constructs may not be sufficiently different. The following section presents the HTMT analysis results.

Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) Second order

	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
Kedisiplinan <-> Budaya Sekolah	0.363
Karakter Kebangsaan <-> Budaya Sekolah	0.322
Karakter Kebangsaan <-> Kedisiplinan	0.579
Karakter Religius <-> Budaya Sekolah	0.317
Karakter Religius <-> Kedisiplinan	0.582
Karakter Religius <-> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.538
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama <-> Budaya Sekolah	0.079
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama <-> Kedisiplinan	0.468
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama <-> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.382
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama <-> Karakter Religius	0.352

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) analysis for the second-order constructs demonstrates that all variables meet the criteria for discriminant validity. All HTMT values are below the acceptable threshold of 0.85, ranging from 0.079 to 0.582. The highest correlation is found between Religious Character and Discipline (0.582), followed by Religious Character and National Character (0.538), which is reasonable given the conceptual closeness between these constructs. The lowest HTMT value is between Religious Activity Habituation and School Culture (0.079), indicating a strong distinction between these constructs. Overall, the results confirm that each construct in the model is empirically distinct and valid for further analysis.

The Fornell-Larcker criterion confirms that all constructs in the model demonstrate good discriminant validity. For each construct, the square root of its AVE is greater than its correlations with other constructs, indicating that each variable is more strongly related to its own indicators than to those of others. This supports the validity of the model.

Fornell-Larcker Second order

	Budaya Sekolah	Kedisiplinan	Karakter Kebangsaan	Karakter Religius	Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama
Budaya Sekolah	0.900				
Kedisiplinan	0.342	0.975			
Karakter Kebangsaan	0.307	0.554	0.932		
Karakter Religius	0.300	0.556	0.518	0.962	
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama	0.069	0.443	0.364	0.334	0.884

The Fornell-Larcker results indicate that each construct has a square root of AVE (shown on the diagonal) greater than its correlations with other constructs (off-diagonal values). For example, the AVE square root of *School Culture* is 0.900, which exceeds its correlations with *Discipline* (0.342), *National Character* (0.307), and so on. This demonstrates that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with others, confirming that discriminant validity is achieved in the model.

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Cross Loadings Second order

	Budaya Sekolah	Kedisiplinan	Karakter Kebangsaan	Karakter Religius	Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama
Ideologi	0.013	0.378	0.322	0.265	0.873
Intelektual	0.099	0.413	0.361	0.321	0.887
Keadilan	0.251	0.491	0.931	0.471	0.348
Kebiasaan	0.917	0.314	0.278	0.301	0.038
Kemanusiaan	0.275	0.508	0.922	0.475	0.326
Kepercayaan	0.898	0.323	0.277	0.247	0.050
Ketaatan	0.307	0.563	0.513	0.959	0.350
Ketuhanan	0.283	0.532	0.938	0.490	0.333
Nilai	0.895	0.262	0.217	0.255	0.054
Norma	0.890	0.323	0.323	0.273	0.102
Penerapan	0.299	0.526	0.505	0.963	0.319
Perbuatan	0.338	0.976	0.542	0.551	0.450
Permusyawaratan	0.317	0.500	0.931	0.486	0.329
Persatuan	0.303	0.547	0.937	0.491	0.359
Praktik Pribadi	0.089	0.337	0.251	0.291	0.859
Praktik Publik	0.061	0.459	0.324	0.305	0.899
Pengalaman Keagamaan	0.040	0.356	0.342	0.293	0.901
Toleransi	0.256	0.513	0.474	0.963	0.293
Waktu	0.328	0.974	0.539	0.534	0.413

The cross-loadings analysis shows that each indicator loads highest on its intended construct, confirming discriminant validity. For example, Kebiasaan, Kepercayaan, Nilai, and Norma load strongly on Budaya Sekolah (≥ 0.89), while Perbuatan and Waktu load very highly on Kedisiplinan (≥ 0.97). Indicators like Keadilan, Ketuhanan, and Persatuan show strong loadings on Karakter Kebangsaan (≥ 0.93), while Ketaatan, Penerapan, and Toleransi reflect Karakter Religius (≥ 0.95). For Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama, indicators such as Ideologi and Pengalaman Keagamaan load above 0.85. These results validate the construct structure and measurement accuracy.

Inner Model

The structural model evaluation aims to test the relationships between latent variables using key indicators such as R-square (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and path coefficients. The R^2 value indicates how well the independent variables explain the dependent variable. According to Ghazali and Hair et al., an R^2 of 0.75–1.00 is substantial, 0.50–0.74 is moderate, and 0.25–0.49 is weak. In this study, the R^2 values for dependent variables are used to assess the model's predictive strength and are presented in the following table.

R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted	Simpulan
Kedisiplinan	0.293	0.288	Lemah
Karakter Religius	0.335	0.328	Lemah

According to Hair et al., the R^2 values in this study reflect the capacity of independent variables to explain the dependent variables. The R^2 for Discipline is 0.293, categorized as weak, meaning that only 29.3% of the variation in Discipline is explained by the model, while the remaining 70.7% is influenced by factors outside the model.

For National Character, the R^2 is 0.344, and for Religious Character, it is 0.335. Both are still considered weak, but close to the moderate threshold, indicating that approximately 34.4% and 33.5% of the variation in these variables is explained by the model. Overall, the model shows a relatively small to moderate influence of independent variables. To improve the R^2 values, strategies such as adding more relevant predictors, introducing moderator or mediator variables, and re-evaluating indicator reliability can help strengthen the model's predictive power.

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Path Coefficients

	Path coefficients
Budaya Sekolah -> Kedisiplinan	0.313
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.149
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Religius	0.136
Kedisiplinan -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.431
Kedisiplinan -> Karakter Religius	0.455
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Kedisiplinan	0.421
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.163
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Religius	0.124

The path coefficients reveal that School Culture positively influences Discipline (0.313), while its effects on National Character (0.149) and Religious Character (0.136) are weak. In contrast, Discipline strongly impacts both National Character (0.431) and Religious Character (0.455), making it the most influential variable. Additionally, Religious Activity Habituation affects Discipline (0.421), though its direct influence on National Character (0.163) and Religious Character (0.124) is minor. Overall, strengthening student character should focus on enhancing discipline, supported by effective implementation of school culture and religious activities.

F-square

	f-square	Kekuatan
Budaya Sekolah -> Kedisiplinan	0.138	Sedang
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.030	Sedang
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Religius	0.024	Kecil
Kedisiplinan -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.200	Kecil
Kedisiplinan -> Karakter Religius	0.220	Sedang
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Kedisiplinan	0.250	Sedang
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.032	Sedang
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Religius	0.002	Kecil

The f-square analysis evaluates the effect size of each independent variable on the dependent variables within the structural model. The results indicate that School Culture has a moderate effect on Discipline ($f^2 = 0.138$), a moderate effect on National Character ($f^2 = 0.030$), and a small effect on Religious Character ($f^2 = 0.024$). Discipline exhibits a small effect on National Character ($f^2 = 0.200$) and a moderate effect on Religious Character ($f^2 = 0.220$). Meanwhile, Religious Activity Habituation shows a moderate effect on Discipline ($f^2 = 0.250$) and on National Character ($f^2 = 0.032$), but only a negligible effect on Religious Character ($f^2 = 0.002$). These findings suggest that Discipline plays a central mediating role, particularly in shaping students' religious character, while the direct contribution of religious activities to character development remains limited.

Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Simpulan
Budaya Sekolah -> DISPLIN	0.313	6.116	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.149	2.739	0.006	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Religius	0.136	2.697	0.007	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
DISPLIN -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.431	7.181	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
DISPLIN -> Karakter Religius	0.455	8.346	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> DISPLIN	0.421	8.771	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan

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	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Simpulan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.163	2.760	0.006	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Religius	0.124	2.185	0.029	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Tidak Langsung	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> DISPLIN -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.135	4.803	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> DISPLIN -> Karakter Religius	0.142	4.847	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> DISPLIN -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.182	5.091	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> DISPLIN -> Karakter Religius	0.192	5.785	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Total Pengaruh	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> DISPLIN	0.313	6.116	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.284	5.381	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Budaya Sekolah -> Karakter Religius	0.278	5.363	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
DISPLIN -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.431	7.181	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
DISPLIN -> Karakter Religius	0.455	8.346	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> DISPLIN	0.421	8.771	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Kebangsaan	0.344	6.823	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan
Pembiasaan Kegiatan Agama -> Karakter Religius	0.315	6.069	0.000	Hipotesis diterima dan Signifikan

The results of hypothesis testing, based on the t-statistics and path coefficients, are as follows:

H1: School culture has a positive and significant effect on student discipline. With a t-statistic of 6.116 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05), and a path coefficient of 0.313, this indicates that better school culture enhances student discipline. Thus, H1 is accepted.

H2: School culture has a positive and significant effect on national character. The hypothesis is supported with a t-statistic of 2.739 and a p-value of 0.006. The coefficient of 0.149 indicates a modest but significant relationship. H2 is accepted.

H3: School culture positively influences religious character. The t-statistic of 2.697 and p-value of 0.007 confirm the hypothesis, with a coefficient of 0.136. Therefore, H3 is accepted.

H4: Discipline significantly affects national character. With a t-statistic of 7.181 and a p-value of 0.000, and a coefficient of 0.431, disciplined students tend to exhibit stronger national character traits. H4 is accepted.

H5: Discipline positively influences religious character. This is confirmed by a t-statistic of 8.346 and a p-value of 0.000, with a coefficient of 0.455. H5 is accepted.

H6: Habituation of religious activities positively influences discipline. The t-statistic is 8.771 and the p-value is 0.000, with a path coefficient of 0.421. This suggests that regular religious practices enhance discipline. H6 is accepted.

H7: Habituation of religious activities positively affects national character. Supported by a t-statistic of 2.760 and a p-value of 0.006, the effect is significant though moderate (coefficient 0.163). H7 is accepted.

H8: Habituation of religious activities influences religious character. The t-statistic is 2.185 with a p-value of 0.029, and a coefficient of 0.124, indicating a small but significant effect. H8 is accepted.

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H9: School culture indirectly affects national character through discipline. The mediation effect is significant ($t = 4.803$, $p = 0.000$), with a coefficient of 0.135. H9 is accepted.

H10: School culture indirectly influences religious character through discipline. The mediation is confirmed with a t -statistic of 4.847, p -value of 0.000, and coefficient of 0.142. H10 is accepted.

H11: Habituation of religious activities influences national character through discipline. The t -statistic is 5.091 and the p -value is 0.000, with a coefficient of 0.182, confirming H11.

H12: Habituation of religious activities affects religious character through discipline. A strong mediating effect is confirmed ($t = 5.785$, $p = 0.000$, coefficient = 0.192). H12 is accepted.

In Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), confidence intervals are essential to estimate the reliability of parameter estimates. If a confidence interval does not contain zero, the effect is considered statistically significant. This approach provides a more nuanced understanding beyond p -values and supports the reliability of the model's findings.

Q^2 predict pada Tingkat Dimensi

	Q^2 predict
Perbuatan	0.283
Waktu	0.247
Keadilan	0.159
Kemanusiaan	0.158
Ketuhanan	0.166
Permusyawaratan	0.182
Persatuan	0.194
Ketaatan	0.191
Penerapan	0.168
Toleransi	0.129

Based on Ghazali and Latan (2015), Q^2 values between 0.15–0.35 indicate moderate predictive relevance. In this study, most dimensions—such as Behavior, Time, Justice, Humanity, Divinity, and Obedience—fall within this range, showing acceptable predictive power. Only Tolerance (0.129) falls in the weak category, suggesting limited prediction and the need for model improvement. Overall, the model has moderate predictive relevance across most dimensions.

Q^2 predict pada Tingkat Variabel

	Q^2 predict	Kekuatan
Kedisiplinan	0.279	Moderat
Karakter Kebangsaan	0.199	Moderat
Karakter Religius	0.177	Moderat

Based on Table the Q^2 predict values indicate that the model has moderate predictive relevance for the studied variables. The Q^2 predict for *Discipline* is 0.279, reflecting a fairly good predictive ability. *National Character* has a Q^2 predict of 0.199, and *Religious Character* 0.177—both also fall within the moderate category, though lower in comparison. Overall, while the model's predictive power is not strong, it is sufficient to explain the relationships among variables with a moderate level of confidence.

Menilai Kekuatan perbandingan predict

	PLS-SEM_RMSE	PLS-SEM_MAE	LM_RMSE	LM_MAE	IA_RMSE	IA_MAE
Perbuatan	0.850	0.713	0.847	0.711	1.004	0.861
Waktu	0.871	0.717	0.875	0.728	1.004	0.862
Keadilan	0.920	0.759	0.921	0.751	1.003	0.848
Kemanusiaan	0.920	0.756	0.929	0.767	1.003	0.836
Ketuhanan	0.916	0.771	0.922	0.772	1.003	0.838
Permusyawaratan	0.907	0.757	0.913	0.755	1.004	0.857
Persatuan	0.901	0.743	0.910	0.748	1.004	0.844
Ketaatan	0.903	0.766	0.919	0.775	1.004	0.863
Penerapan	0.916	0.781	0.935	0.797	1.004	0.875
Toleransi	0.937	0.805	0.958	0.819	1.004	0.868

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Based on the analysis results presented in the table, the PLS-SEM model demonstrates higher predictive power compared to the LM model across nearly all tested indicators. This is reflected in the generally lower PLS-SEM_MAE values than those of LM_MAE, except for the "Ketuhanan" (J5) indicator, where the PLS-SEM_MAE (0.771) is slightly higher than LM_MAE (0.772). Overall, the PLS-SEM model outperforms the LM model in predicting the variables, with lower prediction error, making it a more accurate method for measuring relationships among variables in this study.

Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.034	0.056

Based on the model fit analysis, the SRMR values for both the Saturated Model (0.034) and the Estimated Model (0.056) are below the recommended threshold (<0.08 or <0.10). This indicates that the model used in this study meets the criteria for a good fit, and thus can be validly employed to analyze the relationships among variables.

DISCUSSION

H1: School culture positively and significantly affects student discipline.

The findings of this study indicate that school culture exerts a positive and significant influence on student discipline, aligning with prior research that highlights the essential role of institutional culture in shaping student behavior (Krisbiyanto et al., 2025; Noori et al., 2024). The path coefficient of 0.313 supports this assertion, demonstrating that stronger school culture correlates with higher levels of student discipline. Among the dimensions of school culture, habit emerges as the most dominant. This reinforces the argument that consistent practices—such as teacher-student interactions, regular enforcement of rules, and internalization of school values—play a critical role in cultivating behavioral patterns conducive to discipline (Cherepanov & Polikarpova, 2024; Levchenkova & Loskutov, 2024). Repetitive exposure to positive school routines strengthens students' ability to act in disciplined and responsible ways.

Action is the key indicator of student discipline, shown through rule compliance and task completion (Okonkwo & Dlamini, 2024). A positive school culture fosters this discipline by reinforcing structure, expectations, and role models (Heriantini et al., 2024; Kamara et al., 2024; Mahinay, 2024; A. Sulaiman, 2021). Inclusive practices are crucial, as Ruffin warns of bias against marginalized groups. Overall, consistent school culture supports students' moral and behavioral growth (Jayawardena, 2021; Rizal et al., 2023; Turyamureeba et al., 2023).

H2: School culture positively and significantly affects students' national character.

The findings confirm that school culture has a positive and significant effect on students' national character. A positive school environment marked by consistent routines, religious and national values, and structured traditions contributes to the development of patriotic attitudes, social responsibility, and moral integrity (Nuraeni & Labudasari, 2021; Samong et al., 2016; Thresia et al., 2024). The dominant role of habitual practices, such as flag ceremonies, teacher respect, and cooperative behavior, aligns with earlier studies emphasizing the importance of moral modeling and value internalization in daily school life (Anisah, 2023; Hariyono et al., 2023; Kartinia & Winahyub, 2019). Moreover, the collaboration between school, parents, and community enhances the impact of school culture on character development (Damanik, 2022; Lilawati, 2024). These results reinforce the idea that schools serve as a microcosm of society where national identity is fostered through well-integrated educational routines (Husain & Lindawati, 2019; Lustick, 2022). Strengthening teacher competence, embedding national values in curriculum, and promoting inclusive and collaborative practices are essential for reinforcing national character through school culture (Ruffin et al., 2024; Taufiqurrahman & Nabilah, 2023).

H3: School culture positively and significantly affects students' religious character.

School culture has a positive and significant influence on students' religious character (Noori et al.). Values, norms, beliefs, and habitual practices within schools help students internalize religious teachings in their daily lives (Levchenkova & Loskutov, 2024). Routine activities such as communal prayers, religious observances, and respectful interfaith interactions are central to fostering religious values (Wangsa et al., 2021). The role of teachers as moral exemplars, combined with parental support, further reinforces students' religious development (Mahardika, 2024; Okonkwo & Dlamini, 2024). Studies confirm that a consistent religious school environment enhances students' adherence to religious practices and promotes tolerance (Frasandy et al., 2024; Retnasari et al., 2023). Thus, school culture functions as a strategic foundation for shaping students' religious character (Ghoffer & Abidin, 2023; Miranda, 2022; Ngadhimah et al., 2023).

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H4: Discipline positively and significantly affects students' national character.

Discipline has a positive and significant effect on students' national character. The stronger the discipline—seen in punctuality, rule compliance, and responsibility—the stronger the national character students exhibit (Noori et al.). Concrete practices such as respectful flag ceremonies and academic responsibility support this development (Samong et al.; Krisbiyanto et al.). Religious-based discipline further enhances morality and social responsibility (Cherepanov & Polikarpova; Okonkwo & Dlamini). Studies also highlight that a disciplined school climate strengthens values of nationalism, tolerance, and civic engagement (Goreti & Kristiantari; Aeni et al.). Discipline contributes to key dimensions of national character—Divinity, Humanity, Unity, Deliberation, and Justice—by fostering empathy, fairness, social harmony, and collective responsibility. Therefore, discipline plays a strategic role in building cohesive, morally grounded, and civically engaged future citizens.

H5: Discipline positively and significantly affects students' religious character.

Discipline has a positive and significant impact on students' religious character. The findings show that students with higher levels of discipline—such as punctuality in worship, obedience to school rules, and responsibility—tend to develop stronger religious traits. This is supported by Utami, who found that discipline fosters consistency in religious practice, and Gateri, who emphasized the role of discipline in internalizing moral values. Similarly, Raharjo and Afidah showed that discipline enhances students' moral development and empathy. Delviany et al. confirmed a moderate correlation between discipline and religious character ($R = 0.551$; $p < 0.001$). Islamic education further reinforces this link, as shown by Hasibuan et al., Suhara et al., and Samsudin et al., who highlighted the role of Islamic character education in promoting disciplined and religious behavior. Additional support comes from Anirah et al., who found that structured Islamic boarding environments cultivate obedience and responsibility. Overall, discipline consistently contributes to the strengthening of students' religious character.

H6: Religious practice habituation positively and significantly affects discipline.

Religious activity habituation has a positive and significant influence on student discipline. Regular engagement in religious practices—such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and structured worship—promotes adherence to rules, responsibility, and moral awareness. Fitriyana and Rasyid found that religious habituation contributes 32.9% to discipline formation. Similarly, Funny et al. and Mahbubi & Hasanah emphasized that religious routines enhance students' ethical behavior and self-control. Yusup et al. linked consistent worship to improved emotional regulation and discipline, while Pettalongi et al. and Safitri et al. highlighted that religious culture fosters time management and school rule compliance. Zahra' & Sofa and Nurizah & Amrullah noted that routine prayers instill punctuality and moral responsibility. Thus, schools play a key role in institutionalizing religious activities to strengthen student discipline holistically.

H7: Religious practice habituation positively and significantly affects national character.

Religious activity habituation has a positive and significant effect on students' national character. Active participation in religious practices fosters moral behavior, responsibility, and unity—core components of national identity. Studies by Wangsa et al. and Samong et al. affirm that religious routines in schools contribute to students' discipline and sense of nationalism. Nurizah & Amrullah emphasize moral development through religious habituation, while Royani & Laila highlight its role in promoting social concern. Uyun and Ma'arif et al. also show that religious values enhance students' patriotism and ethical awareness. Thus, integrating religious activities into school culture supports both spiritual and national character formation.

H8: Religious practice habituation positively and significantly affects religious character.

Religious activity habituation has a positive and significant impact on students' religious character. Regular practices such as communal prayers, religious readings, and structured worship help internalize spiritual values and moral behaviors. Studies by Mahinay, Noori et al., and Levchenkova & Loskutov confirm that consistent exposure to religious routines fosters discipline, responsibility, and stronger religious identity. Research by Nurizah & Amrullah, Kamaluddin et al., and Sukarman et al. further shows that community-based religious engagement enhances moral development and social empathy. Thus, religious habituation plays a key role in shaping students' religious character in both personal and communal contexts.

H9: School culture indirectly affects national character through discipline.

School culture significantly influences national character through student discipline. A disciplined environment shaped by clear norms, moral leadership, and consistent positive practices fosters responsibility, unity, and social care—core elements of national character. Studies by Wangsa et al., Shohib, and Krisbiyanto et al. confirm that school culture, especially when integrating religious and disciplinary values, enhances students' civic attitudes. Research by Utaminingsih et al., Yuniarsih, and Hidayat et al. also supports the mediating role of discipline in strengthening national identity. Moreover, Sa'diyah & Khouli and Hariyono et al. highlight how daily routines in value-rich school cultures build both discipline and patriotism.

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H10: School culture indirectly affects religious character through discipline.

School culture significantly influences students' religious character through discipline. A disciplined environment helps internalize religious values, as supported by Noori et al. and Wulandari et al., who found that structured school norms enhance students' religious behavior. The mediating effect of discipline aligns with Baron & Kenny's model and Bandura's social learning theory, where religious conduct is shaped through observable habits. This is further supported by Kohlberg's theory of moral internalization. As students repeatedly engage in structured religious activities, such as communal prayers and Quran recitation, discipline becomes a pathway through which school culture shapes strong religious character.

H11: Religious practice habituation indirectly affects national character through discipline.

Religious activity habituation significantly influences students' national character through discipline. Routine practices such as congregational prayers and Islamic studies foster self-discipline, which in turn cultivates national values like responsibility and social care (Mahinay; Noori et al.; Levchenkova & Loskutov). Cahyanto et al. highlight that consistent religious practice builds a school culture that internalizes discipline, while Kaur & Kumar show that disciplined environments enhance pro-social behaviors foundational to national identity. The mediating role of discipline confirms that religious values are transformed into civic behavior (e.g., respect, cooperation). Supporting studies (Taubah et al.; Hosna et al.; Muslimin & Zamzam) affirm that structured religious programs contribute to both moral development and national character.

H12: Religious practice habituation indirectly affects religious character through discipline.

Religious activity habituation significantly influences students' religious character through the mediating role of discipline. Consistent engagement in practices such as congregational prayers and Quranic recitation fosters routine and self-regulation, which strengthen values like obedience and sincerity (Sukarman et al.; Taubah et al.; Cahyanto et al.). Discipline transforms religious routines into moral character traits, confirming that daily habituation supports value internalization (Dinda Puspita Ayu & Prayitno; Ningsih & Lessy). Challenges like inconsistent participation and limited home support (Kaur & Kumar; Kurniawanto) highlight the need for parental collaboration and structured reinforcement.

This study contributes novel insights by applying Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the mediating role of discipline in the relationship between school culture, religious activities, and students' religious and national character. Unlike traditional methods, PLS-SEM enables more accurate predictions in complex models with non-normal data. Supported by Q² Predict analysis, this approach confirms discipline as a key mediator and offers a data-driven framework for character education. The study also integrates religious habituation and school culture in one predictive model, providing empirical evidence to inform character-building policies and school-based interventions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that school culture and the habituation of religious activities have a positive and significant influence on the development of students' religious and national character, both directly and indirectly through discipline. A strong and consistent school culture enhances discipline, which in turn strengthens students' religious and national values. Similarly, the regular practice of religious activities contributes to building student discipline, which positively impacts their character formation. Discipline serves as a key mediating variable in the relationships among these factors. Therefore, integrating a positive school culture with sustained religious practices, supported by discipline, is an effective strategy for shaping students with strong religious and national character.

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