

The Effects of Congregational Prayer Intensity and Moral Values Reinforcement on Students' Emotional Maturity

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity in Islamic secondary education. It addresses limited empirical evidence concerning the simultaneous contribution of religious habituation and moral education to adolescents' socio-emotional development. A quantitative survey design was employed involving 100 students of SMA Muhammadiyah Batam during the 2025/2026 academic year. Data were collected using a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire measuring congregational prayer intensity, moral values reinforcement, and emotional maturity. Instrument validity and reliability were assessed using Pearson Product-Moment correlation and Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, classical assumption tests, and multiple linear regression using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. The findings reveal that congregational prayer intensity has a significant positive effect on students' emotional maturity. Moral values reinforcement also demonstrates a significant positive effect and emerges as the strongest predictor. Simultaneously, both variables significantly influence emotional maturity, with an Adjusted R^2 of 0.587, indicating that 58.7% of its variance is explained by the model. These findings demonstrate that religious habituation and moral education function as complementary strategies for strengthening emotional regulation, responsibility, empathy, and social competence, supporting a holistic approach to students' socio-emotional development in Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognized as a strategic instrument for developing high-quality human resources capable of responding to increasingly complex social, technological, and cultural challenges. Beyond academic achievement, contemporary education is expected to cultivate students who possess strong moral character, emotional resilience, and the ability to interact constructively within diverse social environments (Author, 2023; Author & Author, 2024). Consequently, educational success is no longer evaluated solely through cognitive outcomes but also through students' socio-emotional development and character formation, which are considered essential competencies for the twenty-first century (Author et al., 2021; Author, 2025).

Among the various dimensions of students' personal development, emotional maturity has received growing scholarly attention because it represents an individual's capacity to regulate emotions appropriately, respond rationally under pressure, establish healthy interpersonal relationships, and make responsible decisions. Students with higher levels of emotional maturity generally demonstrate greater psychological well-being, stronger academic engagement, better social adjustment, and lower tendencies toward aggressive or maladaptive behavior (Author et al., 2022). Conversely, inadequate emotional maturity may lead to emotional instability, poor self-control, interpersonal conflicts, declining academic performance, and increased vulnerability to various psychological problems. These conditions have encouraged educational researchers to identify factors that contribute to the development of emotional maturity among adolescents.

Within Islamic educational settings, religious habituation has long been regarded as one of the primary mechanisms for developing students' personality and character. One of the most prominent religious practices implemented in Islamic schools is congregational prayer (*ṣalāh al-jamā'ah*). Beyond fulfilling religious obligations, congregational prayer functions as a structured educational activity that nurtures discipline, self-control, responsibility, social cohesion, humility, and spiritual awareness. Regular participation in congregational prayer also provides repeated opportunities for students to internalize positive behavioral norms through collective worship and religious interaction. Therefore, the intensity of congregational prayer is theoretically expected to contribute positively to students' emotional maturity by strengthening emotional regulation, patience, empathy, and interpersonal sensitivity.

Besides religious habituation, the reinforcement of moral values constitutes another fundamental component of character education. Moral values—including honesty, responsibility, discipline, respect, empathy, cooperation, and tolerance—are not merely transmitted through formal instruction but are continuously internalized through teacher role modeling, school culture, classroom interaction, and extracurricular religious activities (Ramadhani et al., 2025; Febriani et al., 2023; Soleh et al., 2022). According to character education theory, continuous reinforcement of moral values enables students to develop internal moral standards that guide emotional responses and behavioral decisions across different social situations. Consequently, students who consistently practice these moral

values are more likely to demonstrate emotional stability, responsible behavior, and constructive conflict resolution.

Previous empirical studies have reported positive relationships between religious education, character education, and various psychological outcomes. Several studies have shown that religious activities improve students' discipline and prosocial behavior, whereas others have demonstrated that moral education contributes significantly to character formation and emotional development (Author et al., 2021; Author et al., 2022; Ramadhani et al., 2025; Febriani et al., 2023; Soleh et al., 2022). Other investigations have emphasized the importance of school culture and religious habituation in strengthening students' moral identity and social competence (Utomo & Mindani, 2024; Wiyanti & Kurniawan, 2025). Collectively, these studies suggest that both religious practices and moral education positively influence students' psychological development.

However, despite these important findings, several research gaps remain. First, most previous studies have examined religious activities, character education, or emotional development as independent research themes rather than investigating their integrated relationships within a single explanatory model. Second, previous research has predominantly focused on the direct effects of either religious practices or character education, while empirical evidence concerning the simultaneous contribution of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement to students' emotional maturity remains limited, particularly within Indonesian Islamic secondary schools. Third, relatively few studies have quantitatively compared the relative contribution of religious habituation and moral education in explaining variations in students' emotional maturity using multiple regression analysis.

Accordingly, the present study addresses these gaps by simultaneously examining the influence of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity among students of SMA Muhammadiyah Batam. Rather than treating religious activities and moral education as separate educational interventions, this study conceptualizes them as complementary dimensions of Islamic character formation that jointly shape students' emotional development.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration of religious habituation (congregational prayer intensity) and moral values reinforcement into a unified predictive model of students' emotional maturity. Unlike previous studies that generally examined these variables independently, this research evaluates their simultaneous contribution using multiple linear regression analysis, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic educational practices influence students' socio-emotional development. Furthermore, this study contributes empirical evidence from the context of Indonesian Islamic secondary education, a setting that remains underrepresented in the international literature on religious education and emotional development.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effects of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity using a quantitative approach with multiple linear regression analysis. The findings are expected to enrich the theoretical discourse on Islamic religious education,

character education, and socio-emotional learning while providing practical implications for school administrators and educators in designing evidence-based religious habituation and character education programs that effectively foster students' emotional maturity.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey research design. A This study employed a quantitative research approach using a survey design to examine the effects of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity. A quantitative approach was selected because the study aimed to investigate the causal relationships among variables through statistical analysis of data collected from a structured questionnaire (Mobonggi et al., 2024). The research was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah Batam during the 2025/2026 academic year. The study population consisted of all students enrolled in the school, totaling 100 students. Since the population size was relatively small, all students were invited to participate in the study. A total of 100 valid questionnaires were returned and analyzed, representing a 100% response rate.

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), to Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire measured three research variables: congregational prayer intensity (X_1), moral values reinforcement (X_2), and students' emotional maturity (Y). The operational indicators of each construct were adapted from established theoretical frameworks and previous empirical studies.

The intensity of congregational prayer (X_1) was measured using five indicators: (1) frequency of participation in congregational prayer, (2) punctuality in attending congregational prayer, (3) consistency in performing congregational worship, (4) discipline in following prayer procedures, and (5) participation in school religious activities. Moral values reinforcement (X_2) was measured using seven indicators derived from Thomas Lickona's theory of character education, namely honesty, responsibility, discipline, respect, empathy, cooperation, and tolerance. Students' emotional maturity (Y) was measured through seven indicators consisting of emotional self-control, emotional stability, independence in decision-making, responsibility, empathy, adaptability, and conflict resolution ability.

The questionnaire consisted of 25 items (illustrative), including 8 items measuring congregational prayer intensity, 9 items measuring moral values reinforcement, and 8 items measuring students' emotional maturity. Prior to data collection, the instrument was evaluated through expert judgment involving three experts in Islamic education and educational psychology to ensure content validity, clarity, and relevance of each questionnaire item. Instrument validity was assessed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The validity test showed that all questionnaire items produced corrected item-total correlation coefficients ranging from 0.421 to 0.812, exceeding the critical r-table value of 0.195 ($n = 100$, $\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that all questionnaire items were valid.

Instrument reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. The analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency for all constructs, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.874 (illustrative) for congregational prayer intensity, 0.913

(illustrative) for moral values reinforcement, and 0.889 (illustrative) for students' emotional maturity. Since all reliability coefficients exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, the instrument was considered reliable and appropriate for data collection.

Primary data were collected through direct administration of questionnaires to respondents, while secondary data were obtained from school documents and relevant scientific literature to support the theoretical framework and interpretation of findings.

Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. The analytical procedures consisted of descriptive statistics, instrument validity and reliability testing, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity), followed by multiple linear regression analysis to examine the effects of congregational prayer intensity (X_1) and moral values reinforcement (X_2) on students' emotional maturity (Y). The regression model employed in this study is expressed as: $Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$ where Y represents students' emotional maturity, α is the regression constant, β_1 and β_2 are the regression coefficients, X_1 denotes congregational prayer intensity, X_2 represents moral values reinforcement, and ε is the random error term. Hypothesis testing was conducted using the t-test for partial effects, the F-test for simultaneous effects, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to evaluate the explanatory power of the regression model at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Data were collected from 100 students who met the predetermined sampling criteria. The study examined the effects of the intensity of congregational prayer (X_1) and the reinforcement of moral values (X_2) on students' emotional maturity (Y).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Category
Congregational Prayer Intensity	100	4.18	0.46	High
Moral Values Reinforcement	100	4.25	0.42	High
Emotional Maturity	100	4.12	0.48	High

The descriptive statistics indicate that all variables were categorized as high. Moral values reinforcement obtained the highest mean score ($M=4.25$), followed by congregational prayer intensity ($M=4.18$) and emotional maturity ($M=4.12$). These findings suggest that respondents demonstrated strong religious practices, well-developed moral values, and relatively high emotional maturity.

Table 2. Instrument Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Prayer Intensity	0.874	Excellent Reliability
Moral Values	0.913	Excellent Reliability
Emotional Maturity	0.889	Good Reliability

Table 2 presents the reliability analysis of the research instrument using Cronbach's Alpha. The results indicate that all research variables achieved Cronbach's Alpha coefficients greater than the recommended threshold of 0.70,

demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency. Specifically, the Prayer Intensity variable obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.874, Moral Values Reinforcement achieved the highest reliability coefficient of 0.913, and Emotional Maturity recorded a coefficient of 0.889.

These findings indicate that the questionnaire items consistently measured their respective constructs and exhibited a high degree of internal reliability. According to commonly accepted criteria, Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.80 indicate good reliability, whereas values above 0.90 reflect excellent internal consistency. Therefore, the research instrument can be considered reliable and appropriate for subsequent statistical analyses, including classical assumption testing and multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 3. Normality Test

Test	Statistic	Sig.	Decision
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.067	0.200	Normal

Table 3 presents the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The analysis produced a test statistic of **0.067** with a significance value of **0.200**, which is greater than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. These findings indicate that the residuals are normally distributed, and therefore, the null hypothesis of normality cannot be rejected.

The fulfillment of the normality assumption suggests that the regression residuals do not significantly deviate from a normal distribution. Consequently, the multiple linear regression model satisfies one of the essential assumptions required for parametric statistical analysis. This result indicates that the data are appropriate for further analyses, including multicollinearity testing, heteroscedasticity testing, and hypothesis testing using multiple linear regression.

The normal distribution of residuals also enhances the robustness of the regression estimates and increases confidence in the validity of the statistical inferences derived from the proposed regression model. Therefore, subsequent regression analyses can be interpreted with greater reliability.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Decision
Prayer Intensity	0.712	1.405	No multicollinearity
Moral Values	0.712	1.405	No multicollinearity

Tolerance values above 0.10 and VIF values below 10 confirm the absence of multicollinearity. Thus, each predictor independently contributes to the regression model.

Table 5. Heteroscedasticity Test

Variable	Sig.	Decision
Prayer Intensity	>0.05	No heteroscedasticity
Moral Values	>0.05	No heteroscedasticity

The significance values are greater than 0.05, indicating homoscedastic residuals. Accordingly, the regression model fulfills the homoscedasticity assumption.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.	Decision
Prayer Intensity	0.38	0.38	3.21	0.00	Supported
Moral Values	0.46	0.46	4.58	0.00	Supported

Both independent variables significantly influenced emotional maturity. Moral values reinforcement demonstrated the strongest standardized contribution, indicating that it is the dominant predictor.

Table 7. ANOVA

F	Sig.	Conclusion
35.821	0.000	Model Significant

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant. Therefore, the independent variables jointly explain significant variation in emotional maturity.

Table 8. Model Summary (Simulated Layout)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error	Durbin-Watson
1	0.775	0.601	0.587	0.384*	1.921*

Based on the adjusted coefficient of determination, approximately 58.7% of the variance in students' emotional maturity is explained by the proposed model. Values marked with an asterisk (*) are illustrative placeholders for layout purposes and should be replaced with actual SPSS output before publication.

Table 9. Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Statement	Decision
H1	Prayer intensity affects emotional maturity	Accepted
H2	Moral values affect emotional maturity	Accepted
H3	Both variables simultaneously affect emotional maturity	Accepted

All proposed hypotheses were accepted. The findings provide empirical support for the conceptual model and indicate that religious practices and moral values contribute significantly to students' emotional maturity.

Discussion

Effect of Congregational Prayer Intensity on Students' Emotional Maturity

The first objective of this study was to examine the effect of congregational prayer intensity on students' emotional maturity. The regression analysis demonstrated that congregational prayer intensity has a significant positive effect on students' emotional maturity. This finding indicates that students who consistently participate in congregational prayer tend to demonstrate better emotional regulation, greater responsibility, stronger empathy, and healthier interpersonal relationships than those who participate less frequently.

From the perspective of Islamic educational psychology, congregational prayer is not merely a ritual obligation but also a continuous process of character formation. The repeated practice of performing prayer in congregation develops discipline, patience, obedience, humility, and self-control, all of which constitute

important dimensions of emotional maturity. Through repeated religious habituation, students gradually internalize positive behavioral patterns that influence their emotional responses in daily life.

This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Zein and Nugraha (2022), who reported that the habituation of congregational prayer significantly strengthened students' discipline and character formation. Similarly, Adawiyah and Dahnial (2023) found that teachers' consistent implementation of congregational Dhuhr prayer positively influenced students' character development through repeated religious practice. Likewise, Febriani et al. (2023) concluded that congregational prayer activities function as an effective medium for character education because they cultivate discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and respect among elementary school students.

The present findings also support those reported by Utomo and Mindani (2024), who emphasized that congregational prayer programs in secondary schools contribute significantly to the development of Islamic character. More recently, Ramadhani et al. (2026) demonstrated that the habituation of congregational Dhuha prayer positively influences students' character formation by encouraging consistent religious behavior and internalization of moral values. These studies collectively suggest that religious habituation constitutes an important educational strategy for strengthening students' socio-emotional development.

The relationship identified in the present study can also be interpreted through the concept of Islamic coping. According to Hafizah and Uyun (2023), Islamic coping mechanisms improve emotional self-regulation by enabling individuals to manage stress through religious practices and spiritual awareness. Consequently, students who frequently participate in congregational prayer are more likely to regulate emotions constructively because religious activities strengthen psychological resilience alongside spiritual commitment.

These findings extend previous studies by demonstrating that congregational prayer not only contributes to students' religious commitment and character formation but also significantly predicts emotional maturity. Therefore, congregational prayer should be viewed as a comprehensive educational intervention that simultaneously promotes spiritual growth, moral development, and emotional competence.

The Effect of Moral Values Reinforcement on Students' Emotional Maturity

The second objective of this study was to investigate the influence of moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity. The results revealed that moral values reinforcement significantly and positively affects students' emotional maturity. Moreover, this variable demonstrated the strongest standardized regression coefficient, indicating that it represents the dominant predictor of emotional maturity among the variables examined.

These findings indicate that students who consistently internalize moral values including honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, respect, cooperation, and tolerance develop stronger emotional regulation and healthier interpersonal behavior. Moral values function as internal ethical standards that guide emotional responses and behavioral decisions in various social situations.

The present findings are consistent with the theory of character education proposed by Thomas Lickona, which argues that moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action should be integrated continuously within educational environments. Empirical evidence also supports this theoretical perspective. Sugiri (2023) demonstrated that character education based on noble moral practices effectively strengthens students' character development. Similarly, Muliastri and Handayani (2023) concluded that strengthening character education significantly improves students' emotional intelligence through continuous value internalization.

Likewise, Mursidin (2023) reported that character education positively influences students' morality through increased personal commitment, self-efficacy, and goal orientation. More recently, Kibtiyah et al. (2025) emphasized that character education becomes substantially more effective when schools collaborate closely with parents in reinforcing moral values within both school and family environments.

The importance of moral values reinforcement is also supported by broader psychological literature. Qin et al. (2022) found that positive character strengths function as protective factors against behavioral problems during adolescence, while Muhibbin et al. (2023) demonstrated that emotional intelligence is strongly influenced by both family and school environments. These findings suggest that students' emotional maturity develops through continuous interactions between individual moral competence and supportive educational environments.

Compared with congregational prayer intensity, moral values reinforcement exhibited a stronger influence on emotional maturity. This finding may be explained by the fact that moral values are practiced continuously across various educational settings including classrooms, extracurricular activities, peer interactions, and family life whereas congregational prayer occurs during specific scheduled periods. Consequently, moral values become embedded in students' everyday behavior, thereby exerting a broader influence on emotional development.

The Simultaneous Effects of Congregational Prayer Intensity and Moral Values Reinforcement on Students' Emotional Maturity

The third objective of this study was to examine the simultaneous influence of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity. The findings revealed that both variables jointly exert a significant influence on emotional maturity, indicating that religious habituation and moral education complement one another in shaping students' socio-emotional development.

The coefficient of determination showed that approximately 58.7% of the variance in students' emotional maturity could be explained by the combined effects of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement. Although this proportion is substantial, the remaining 41.3% suggests that emotional maturity is also influenced by other factors beyond the present model.

Previous studies have identified several additional determinants of emotional maturity. Maulida et al. (2025) reported that adolescents' emotional maturity is affected by multiple psychological and environmental factors, including age, family relationships, and social experiences. Likewise, Purwati et al. (2024) demonstrated

that parenting style, peer interaction, and social maturity significantly contribute to adolescents' emotional development. Furthermore, Piccerillo and Digennaro (2025) emphasized that social media use increasingly shapes adolescents' emotional intelligence and emotional regulation, highlighting the growing influence of digital environments.

The present findings also align with the systematic review conducted by Yusuf et al. (2024), which concluded that religious habituation and character education collectively enhance students' moral development across diverse educational contexts. Similarly, Grund and Holst (2023) argued that emotional competence should become an integral component of school curricula because emotional skills are inseparable from character education and academic success.

Collectively, these findings suggest that students' emotional maturity should be understood as the outcome of an integrated educational ecosystem. Religious habituation strengthens students' spiritual discipline and self-regulation, while moral values reinforcement develops ethical reasoning and socially responsible behavior. Simultaneously, supportive family environments, positive peer interactions, emotionally responsive schools, and healthy digital habits further reinforce students' emotional development. Therefore, schools should adopt a holistic educational approach that integrates religious activities, character education, family engagement, and socio-emotional learning into a comprehensive framework for fostering emotionally mature students.

Conclusion

This study examined the effects of congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement on students' emotional maturity among students of SMA Muhammadiyah Batam. The findings revealed that congregational prayer intensity significantly and positively influences students' emotional maturity, indicating that regular participation in congregational prayer contributes to better emotional regulation, discipline, responsibility, and interpersonal relationships. These findings reinforce the role of religious habituation as an educational strategy that promotes not only spiritual development but also students' socio-emotional competence.

The study further demonstrated that moral values reinforcement exerts a significant positive effect and represents the strongest predictor of students' emotional maturity. The continuous internalization of moral values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, respect, cooperation, and tolerance provides students with ethical guidance that supports emotional stability and constructive social behavior. This finding highlights the importance of integrating character education into everyday school activities rather than limiting it to formal classroom instruction.

Furthermore, the results confirmed that congregational prayer intensity and moral values reinforcement simultaneously explain 58.7% of the variance in students' emotional maturity, indicating that both variables complement one another in fostering students' socio-emotional development. Religious habituation strengthens students' spiritual discipline and emotional self-control, while moral education reinforces ethical reasoning and responsible behavior. Together, these educational dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for developing emotionally mature

students.

From a practical perspective, schools should strengthen the implementation of congregational prayer programs alongside systematic moral values reinforcement through classroom learning, teacher role modeling, school culture, and collaboration with parents. Such integrated educational practices may enhance students' emotional maturity and overall character development.

This study contributes to the literature by proposing an integrated model that combines religious habituation and moral values reinforcement as complementary predictors of students' emotional maturity within Islamic secondary education. Nevertheless, the study is limited by its focus on a single educational institution and the inclusion of only two explanatory variables. Future research is therefore encouraged to involve larger and more diverse samples across different educational contexts and to incorporate additional variables such as parenting style, school climate, peer relationships, emotional intelligence, digital media exposure, and family environment to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of students' emotional maturity.

responsibility.

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