



## School strategies in instilling student discipline to improving education quality

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### ABSTRACT

Discipline as a significant factor in improving the quality of education and shaping student character needs to be upheld in the implementation of education. Therefore, this study aims to determine the school's strategy in instilling student discipline values at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method, utilizing data collection techniques that include observation and interviews with the principal, vice principal for student affairs, and homeroom teachers. The results showed that the implemented strategies included the enforcement of school regulations, habituation of religious activities such as Zuhur prayer in congregation, and parental involvement in supporting student discipline. Supporting factors in the implementation of discipline include the active role of the principal, teachers, and educators. However, the main challenge faced is students' low awareness of time discipline and compliance with school rules. To overcome this obstacle, the school employs educational sanctions and moral coaching on an ongoing basis. It can be concluded that the strategies implemented focus on strengthening character and promoting discipline as part of the school culture, thereby improving the quality of education.

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### ABSTRAK

Kedisiplinan sebagai faktor utama dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan dan membentuk karakter siswa perlu ditegakkan pada pelaksanaan pendidikan. Maka dari itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui strategi sekolah dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai kedisiplinan siswa di SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi dan wawancara dengan kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah bidang kesiswaan, dan wali kelas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi yang diterapkan meliputi penerapan peraturan sekolah, pembiasaan kegiatan religius seperti salat Zuhur berjamaah, serta keterlibatan orang tua dalam mendukung kedisiplinan siswa. Faktor pendukung dalam penerapan disiplin meliputi peran aktif kepala sekolah, guru, serta tenaga pendidik. Namun, tantangan utama yang dihadapi adalah rendahnya kesadaran siswa terhadap disiplin waktu dan kepatuhan terhadap aturan sekolah. Dalam mengatasi hambatan ini, pihak sekolah menerapkan sanksi edukatif dan pembinaan moral secara berkelanjutan. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa strategi yang diterapkan berfokus pada penguatan karakter dan pembiasaan disiplin sebagai bagian dari budaya sekolah dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan.

**Kata Kunci:** kedisiplinan siswa; manajemen sekolah; strategi sekolah

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Discipline is a fundamental aspect of education, playing a crucial role in shaping students' character and behavior. It is not merely about compliance with rules but also contributes to building self-awareness and individual responsibility toward their social environment (Carden et al., 2022). In the school context, the level of student discipline reflects the success of an educational institution in instilling moral and ethical values (Anisah, 2023). Therefore, the role of the vice principal for student affairs is highly strategic in fostering and developing discipline among students. Moreover, discipline serves as a key factor in creating a conducive learning environment where students can concentrate on their studies without being disrupted by disorder within the school. Through the consistent implementation of discipline, students are expected to develop a sense of responsibility, independence, and a strong work ethic that will benefit their future.

The vice principal for student affairs is responsible for managing various aspects related to character development, including discipline. The strategies employed to instill discipline vary according to the school's characteristics and prevailing culture (Maqbool et al., 2024). These strategies include implementing clear regulations, effective communication, and a consistent system of rewards and punishments. Additionally, the vice principal plays a role in organizing special programs aimed at fostering discipline in a sustainable manner, such as mentoring activities, character-building through extracurricular programs, and reinforcing moral values in every school activity. Through a comprehensive approach, students are expected not only to comply with rules but also to understand the essence of discipline itself.

One of the primary strategies implemented is the strict and consistent enforcement of school regulations. School rules serve as guidelines that regulate student behavior in their daily academic activities. A systematic and well-defined set of rules is implemented to help students understand the boundaries they must adhere to (Siswanto et al., 2025; Qiao et al., 2024). The vice principal ensures that every student understands the applicable rules through regular socialization sessions and a handbook distributed at the beginning of the academic year (Suryatama et al., 2024). Furthermore, periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of these rules are conducted to ensure that they remain relevant to the evolving needs of students. As a result, school regulations do not merely exist as written rules but function as guiding principles for interactions both within and beyond the school environment.

Additionally, effective communication between the school and its students is a crucial factor in promoting discipline. Good communication helps build harmonious relationships between students and educators, making it easier for students to accept established rules (Apriwulan et al., 2025). The vice principal for student affairs often adopts a persuasive approach, such as providing motivation, engaging in personal discussions with students struggling with discipline, and organizing reflective activities to enhance students' awareness of the importance of discipline. This approach also involves parents in the disciplinary process, where intensive communication between the school and parents ensures that the values of discipline instilled at school are reinforced at home. Through continuous discipline-building efforts, students can develop a sense of discipline as an integral part of their character.

Implementing a reward and punishment system is also an effective strategy for instilling discipline in students. Rewards are given to students who demonstrate good discipline, such as certificates of appreciation, public recognition, or special privileges. Conversely, punishments are applied to students who violate the rules to create a deterrent effect. A balanced combination of rewards and punishments has been proven to increase students' awareness of the importance of following rules (Tarso et al., 2025; Tisnawati & Fatimah, 2024). Furthermore, this approach must be applied fairly and transparently so that students perceive that the recognition and sanctions given genuinely reflect their behavior. With a clear and consistent system, students will be more motivated to exhibit disciplined behavior in their daily lives.

The success of this strategy heavily depends on the synergy between the vice principal, teachers, parents, and other educational personnel. Collaboration among various stakeholders within the school environment is crucial for establishing a strong culture of discipline (Hanama et al., 2024; Siswanto & Firmansyah, 2024). Teachers serve as role models in instilling discipline, while parents reinforce it at home. With effective coordination among all parties, students will find it easier to adapt to the norms implemented in school. Moreover, a supportive social environment also plays a role in shaping student discipline. When students are in an environment that values discipline, they are more likely to adopt disciplined behavior in their daily lives (Yogyanto et al., 2024).

However, in practice, school faces various challenges in instilling discipline among students. One of the most common challenges is students' low awareness of the importance of discipline. Many students fail to understand the consequences of violating rules and their impact on their future (Hatmoko et al., 2024; Wahyuni et al., 2024). Therefore, a more intensive approach, such as personalized guidance and counseling, is necessary. Another challenge is the diversity of student backgrounds and characteristics, making it more difficult for some students to adapt to school rules. In such cases, a flexible yet firm approach is required to ensure that every student understands the importance of discipline without feeling forced or intimidated.

To address these challenges, stricter enforcement of sanctions for rule violations is needed. The vice principal must ensure that every violation is met with appropriate and consistent sanctions so that students understand that discipline is non-negotiable. Additionally, ongoing education about the importance of discipline should be enhanced through various activities, such as seminars, workshops, and integration into the curriculum (Caesaria et al., 2024). In this context, technology can also be utilized as a tool to monitor and control student discipline, such as through the use of discipline monitoring applications accessible to students, teachers, and parents.

Unlike previous studies that focused on traditional discipline, such as physical punishment or reprimands, this study proposes a systematic and technology-based approach (Wardah et al., 2024). Previous studies have emphasized teachers as the primary enforcers of discipline, whereas this study highlights the role of vice principals in ensuring consistent sanctions and promoting discipline through ongoing education (Hanama et al., 2024; Siswanto & Afandi, 2024). The technology used to monitor discipline is rarely discussed, so this study offers a new perspective on managing school discipline effectively. These strategies help create a conducive school environment that fosters disciplined student character. Therefore, this

study aims to determine the school's strategy in instilling student discipline values at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Leadership of the Vice Principal in the Student Affairs Division**

The leadership of the vice principal in the student affairs division plays a crucial role in creating a school environment that supports students' character development and fosters a conducive learning atmosphere. The vice principal is responsible for designing and supervising various student development programs, which include aspects of discipline, guidance, and counseling, as well as the development of students' talents and interests (Adeoye & Ainnubi, 2023). Effective leadership in this field does not solely prioritize administrative approaches but also functions as a motivator and facilitator in shaping students' character and enhancing their engagement in various school activities (Pulungan et al., 2024). The success of student affairs leadership largely depends on the communication strategies employed in fostering harmonious relationships among students, teachers, and parents. These relationships encourage students to develop discipline, responsibility, and a sense of ownership toward their school environment.

Furthermore, the leadership of the vice principal in the Student Affairs division is closely tied to the policies implemented to create a positive school climate. A transformational leadership approach can enhance student motivation by providing inspiration and exemplary behavior, ensuring that students do not merely comply with rules out of coercion but genuinely understand the values embedded within school policies (Howell et al., 2022). The effectiveness of leadership in this field depends on the vice principal's ability to adapt to various challenges, such as increasing cases of disciplinary violations or changes in students' character due to technological and cultural developments (Aprilia et al., 2025; Wantoro et al., 2025). Therefore, adaptive and value-based leadership is crucial in creating a disciplined, harmonious, and inspiring school environment for students.

### **Student Discipline**

Student discipline is a fundamental aspect of education that plays a crucial role in enhancing academic achievement and fostering a strong character. A consistent habituation process, particularly with the support of teachers and educational staff, is a key factor in developing student discipline within the school environment (Purba, 2024). Schools that implement transparent and educationally based disciplinary systems can create a more conducive and productive learning atmosphere. Effective disciplinary strategies involve a combination of preventive, corrective, and repressive approaches (Susniwati et al., 2023; Wahyuni et al., 2024). The preventive approach emphasizes the importance of socializing school regulations and establishing a culture of discipline from an early stage. In contrast, the corrective approach aims to provide students with an understanding of the consequences of any violations committed. Meanwhile, the repressive approach serves as a last resort in addressing repeated violations by imposing educational and proportional sanctions.

Additionally, student discipline is significantly influenced by the leadership style employed within the school, particularly by the vice principal in the Student Affairs division. Schools that adopt participative leadership in formulating rules and disciplinary policies tend to have higher student compliance rates compared to those that implement an authoritarian approach (Raj & Chand, 2023; Zein et al., 2025). By involving students in the development of disciplinary policies, they develop a greater sense of responsibility for the rules in place. Moreover, rewarding students who demonstrate high levels of discipline serves as a form of positive reinforcement that has been proven effective in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation to behave in a disciplined manner (Udeogalanya, 2022). This approach not only ensures that students comply with rules out of fear of punishment but also helps them understand the importance of discipline in everyday life. Therefore, implementing an educational and participatory-based disciplinary strategy is a key factor in shaping disciplined and responsible students.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing a case study method, to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies implemented by the vice principal in instilling discipline values in students at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati. The research sources include the vice principal for student affairs, the principal, civics teachers, homeroom teachers, students, and parents of students. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, observations of the implementation of discipline strategies in schools, document studies from various official sources, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to gather perspectives from students and their parents. Data analysis follows the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and concluding with verification. The validity of the data is ensured through triangulation techniques, including source triangulation, methodology triangulation, and time triangulation, to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the research findings. The expected results of this study include identifying the strategies employed by the vice principal in instilling discipline, revealing the supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation, and providing recommendations for the school to enhance the effectiveness of disciplinary enforcement strategies at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **School Strategy in Implementing Student Discipline Values**

To instill good behavior in students, the principal, vice principal, and teaching staff play a crucial role in designing and enforcing school regulations. These regulations are established to be adhered to by all members of the school community, defining individual rights and responsibilities and clarifying permissible and non-permissible boundaries within the school environment. Based on research and interviews conducted by the author with the school principal regarding the vice principal's strategies in fostering discipline values, it was concluded that school regulations serve as guidelines to enhance student discipline, particularly in academic activities. The principal and teachers strive to cultivate regular study habits by requiring students to adhere to a daily study schedule.

One of the primary aspects of discipline that is emphasized is school attendance, which is considered a key factor in improving the quality of education. Additionally, fostering good moral habits is also prioritized, such as the practice of performing the Zuhur prayer in congregation at the school mosque. The Vice Principal for Student Affairs, Ms. Pisri, emphasized that instilling values of discipline is not only carried out within the school environment but also involves parents in providing discipline education at home. Therefore, parental engagement through socialization serves as an initial step to ensure collaboration in cultivating positive habits in children.

Student discipline, particularly in terms of attendance and the development of good moral habits, has a significant impact on academic achievement and learning motivation. Consistent attendance enables students to engage in continuous learning, leading to a deeper understanding of the material and improved academic performance. Furthermore, practicing good moral habits, such as regular worship and adherence to school regulations, helps shape a sense of responsibility and discipline in completing academic tasks. With parental involvement in instilling discipline at home, students become more motivated to learn as they feel supported by a harmonious environment between school and family.

Furthermore, after the Zuhur prayer, students receive moral guidance and mentoring from teachers. Other activities that support student discipline include the weekly flag-raising ceremony, held every Monday, as well as collective prayers and sholawat recitations before the start of learning activities. In this process, the principal emphasizes that teachers must serve as role models for students. Teachers are not only responsible for explaining school regulations but must also practice them in their daily lives. If teachers themselves fail to adhere to the rules, it will be difficult for students to see them as good role models.

To ensure that discipline becomes a deeply ingrained habit among students, the principal and vice principal actively review and enforce existing regulations. The primary objective of implementing school rules is to ensure that all students and teachers uphold the values of discipline, as it is a key factor in shaping responsible individuals. By instilling discipline from an early age, students not only gain benefits in their academic lives but also their social interactions. A disciplined attitude helps them develop effective time management skills, adhere to rules, and cultivate a strong sense of responsibility toward their tasks and obligations. Moreover, discipline fosters greater independence, enabling students to face various challenges with a more structured and well-planned approach.

The implementation of discipline in the teaching and learning process is carried out through a structured strategy that integrates rules, routines, and positive reinforcement. Teachers establish clear expectations for behavior and academic responsibilities from the outset, ensuring that students understand the importance of punctuality, active participation, and task completion. Consistent enforcement of classroom rules, such as starting lessons on time and maintaining a respectful learning environment, helps students develop self-discipline and take responsibility for their actions. Additionally, discipline is reinforced through a reward system, where students who demonstrate exemplary behavior and responsibility receive recognition, fostering intrinsic motivation. A collaborative effort between teachers and parents further strengthens this approach, ensuring that discipline becomes a sustainable habit both at school and at home. Thus, the strategies implemented not only focus on imposing sanctions but also emphasize moral development and character building, helping

students develop an awareness of the importance of discipline in their lives and apply it to various aspects of their daily activities.

To gain broader insights, the author also conducted interviews with homeroom teachers at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati to understand the approaches used in instilling discipline from a classroom teacher's perspective. Mr. Cahyo, a Pancasila Education teacher and homeroom teacher of Class X-A, explained that his subject is closely related to character education and student discipline. In practice, Pancasila Education teachers are responsible for supervising student discipline, both in the classroom and throughout the school environment. One of the disciplinary measures implemented is the imposition of educational sanctions for students who arrive late to school or the mosque, such as memorizing short surahs from the Quran. This disciplinary enforcement is expected to help students become more orderly and structured in their daily lives. Moreover, they will develop an understanding that discipline is a crucial aspect of their future, as it fosters a strong character and benefits their surroundings.

Interviews with the vice principal for student affairs also revealed that discipline remains a challenge at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati. This is primarily because most students are santri (students from Islamic boarding schools) with tight schedules at their pesantren, making time management a significant challenge. As a result, some students frequently arrive late or fail to wear the school uniform as required by regulations. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that student discipline at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati still requires improvement. Some students continue to struggle with adhering to punctuality and dress code regulations. Thus, stricter measures from the school are necessary to enhance student compliance with existing rules. Additionally, collaboration between the school and the pesantren caretakers is essential to help students better manage their time. With a stricter yet educational approach, it is hoped that students will understand the importance of discipline and apply it in their daily lives.

### **Supporting Factors, Inhibiting Factors, and Solutions in the Implementation of Student Discipline**

In carrying out responsibilities, challenges inevitably arise alongside supporting factors. Based on an interview with the Vice Principal for Student Affairs at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati, it was stated that the key supporting factors in implementing discipline values at the school include the role of the Principal, teachers, and all educational staff. They not only provide academic knowledge but also instill discipline in students, shaping them into individuals with good character in society.

However, several inhibiting factors persist, particularly regarding punctuality. Many students still arrive late for various reasons, such as oversleeping or lack of transportation. Additionally, violations such as smoking are categorized into two types: minor and major infractions. Minor violations are addressed through disciplinary actions, such as cleaning bathrooms or performing other tasks, while significant infractions can result in expulsion. Nevertheless, no students have been expelled from the school to date.

To address these challenges, several measures have been implemented. To address issues related to punctuality and adherence to the proper dress code, the school issues warnings

and sanctions following existing regulations. The goal is to increase students' awareness of the importance of discipline. Furthermore, every Monday, the school conducts a flag-raising ceremony followed by student and teacher coaching sessions. During these sessions, the Principal provides guidance on the types of violations that must be eliminated, while teachers are expected to set a good example in following school regulations. Teachers must model proper behavior, as inconsistency between their words and actions can undermine the effectiveness of discipline enforcement.

Based on the interview findings, it can be concluded that both supportive and inhibiting factors influence the implementation of discipline at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati. The primary supporting factor is the active role of the Vice Principal for Student Affairs, the Principal, and teachers, who not only provide academic education but also shape students' disciplinary attitudes. With the collective support of the entire teaching staff, discipline can be implemented more effectively and sustainably.

Conversely, one of the most common challenges is students' lack of compliance with dress code regulations and punctuality. Many students continue to arrive late for school due to various reasons, such as oversleeping or limited transportation options. This issue presents a significant challenge for the school in enforcing discipline. Therefore, more assertive and solution-oriented strategies are needed to ensure that discipline values are truly instilled in students' daily lives.

To address these challenges, the vice principal for student affairs has implemented several concrete steps, including implementing strict sanctions, communicating with boarding school supervisors, and providing ongoing student guidance. Additionally, school regulations serve as the primary tool for reinforcing student discipline. By establishing clear rules and maintaining consistency in enforcement, it is expected that students' awareness of the importance of discipline will improve, fostering a more conducive learning environment and supporting the development of students' character.

## **Discussion**

Discipline is one of the essential factors in shaping students' character within the school environment. The principal, vice principal, and teachers play a key role in ensuring that disciplinary values are effectively implemented through the formulation and enforcement of school regulations (Oti & Doe, 2025). Based on research findings, school rules are not only designed to set boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable behavior but also serve as guidelines to enhance student discipline, particularly in academic discipline (Pisriwati et al., 2024). A study conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati revealed that the principal and the teaching staff strive to instill regular study habits by requiring students to create and adhere to a daily study schedule. Additionally, school attendance and participation in religious activities, such as congregational Zuhur prayers, serve as key indicators in strengthening student discipline to improve education quality.

The vice principal in charge of student affairs plays a strategic role in instilling disciplinary values. According to the interview, the strategies employed extend beyond the school environment and involve parents in promoting discipline at home. Socialization programs for parents are conducted to ensure they support and oversee the implementation of discipline

within the family setting, thereby enhancing the learning environment and improving student learning activities. Furthermore, after the congregational Zuhur prayers, students receive moral guidance and coaching from teachers to instill a sense of responsibility and discipline in their daily lives. Other activities that promote student discipline include the Monday flag-raising ceremony, as well as collective prayers and recitations of salawat before the start of lessons. In practice, the principal emphasizes the importance of teachers serving as role models for students, highlighting that teachers should not only explain school rules but also demonstrate compliance with the established regulations.

To ensure the sustainable implementation of discipline, the school continuously evaluates the effectiveness of the existing regulations. Previous research findings indicate that SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati continues to face various challenges in enforcing student discipline. One major challenge is the demanding schedule of students who are also boarding school (*pesantren*) students, making it difficult for them to manage their time, resulting in frequent tardiness or non-compliance with uniform regulations. From interviews with the school's guidance and counseling teachers, it was found that one method used to improve student discipline is the implementation of educational sanctions, such as requiring late students to memorize short surahs from the Quran. This method aims to instill a sense of deterrence while also enhancing students' religious knowledge in their learning activity (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023).

Student discipline is significantly influenced by a combination of supporting and inhibiting factors (Siswanto et al., 2025). The primary supporting factors in enforcing discipline include the active involvement of the principal, vice principal, and teaching staff in providing consistent guidance and supervision. Additionally, a school environment that fosters discipline, such as regular coaching sessions and moral guidance following religious activities in students' learning environments, contributes to the development of disciplined habits among students (Yoshimoto et al., 2023). However, on the other hand, inhibiting factors such as students' lack of awareness regarding the importance of punctuality and dress code regulations remain challenges that need to be addressed. Some students frequently arrive late due to reasons such as oversleeping or the unavailability of transportation to school.

To overcome the obstacles to student discipline, the school implements various stricter and more targeted strategies. The school issues warnings and enforces sanctions or punishments following school regulations to raise students' awareness of the importance of discipline. Additionally, every Monday, a flag-raising ceremony is held, followed by coaching sessions for students and teachers. During these sessions, the principal provides guidance on the types of violations that should be avoided, while teachers are expected to serve as role models in adhering to school regulations. In this context, teacher role modeling is a key factor in the effectiveness of discipline enforcement, as any inconsistency between teachers' words and actions can make it difficult for students to internalize the disciplinary values being taught (Putri et al., 2024; Welsh, 2024).

## **CONCLUSION**

SMA Muhammadiyah Mlati enforces discipline by fostering positive habits through strict rules, teacher role models, and collaboration with parents and boarding school caregivers to

enhance the quality of education. Discipline is supported by the active involvement of school leaders and teachers in ensuring consistent enforcement of rules. However, issues such as dress code violations and tardiness persist, necessitating firm action through educational sanctions and moral guidance. A solution-oriented, sustainable approach can instill discipline, create a conducive learning environment, and shape responsible students in their learning activities. Future research could examine the long-term effects of these strategies, the role of digital monitoring tools, and student perspectives on discipline enforcement. Comparative studies on different school approaches may also provide valuable insights.

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