

Madrasah Culture and Students' Religious Attitudes: A Socio-Religious Ecosystem Perspective

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines how madrasah culture shapes students' religious attitudes through everyday institutional practices. Although previous studies have highlighted the importance of religious instruction and school culture, the cultural mechanisms through which religious values are internalized remain underexplored. This study investigates how madrasah culture functions as a socio-religious ecosystem in fostering students' religious attitudes. This study employed an intrinsic qualitative case study design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 17 participants, including the headmaster, four Islamic Education teachers, and twelve students at MIN 1 Magelang, complemented by institutional document analysis. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis involving data condensation, coding, category development, and theme construction. The findings reveal that madrasah culture operates through the interaction of cultural artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. These cultural dimensions are internalized through habituation, teacher modeling, and collective social legitimization. These processes cultivate a religious habitus reflected in students' discipline in worship, moral conduct, and spiritual awareness. The study concludes that students' religious attitudes are shaped not only through formal religious instruction but also through the socio-religious ecosystem embedded in everyday madrasah life.

Keywords: *Madrasah Culture; Socio-Religious Ecosystem; Religious Attitudes; Value Internalization; Hidden Curriculum*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana budaya madrasah membentuk sikap keberagamaan siswa melalui praktik-praktik kelembagaan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Meskipun berbagai penelitian sebelumnya telah menekankan pentingnya pembelajaran agama dan budaya sekolah, mekanisme kultural yang memungkinkan internalisasi nilai-nilai keagamaan masih belum banyak dikaji. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana budaya madrasah berfungsi sebagai ekosistem sosio-religius dalam membentuk sikap keberagamaan siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain studi kasus kualitatif intrinsik. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap 17 partisipan yang terdiri atas kepala madrasah, empat guru Pendidikan Agama Islam, dan dua belas siswa di MIN 1 Magelang, serta didukung oleh analisis dokumen kelembagaan. Data dianalisis

menggunakan analisis tematik yang meliputi kondensasi data, pengodean, pengembangan kategori, dan konstruksi tema. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa budaya madrasah bekerja melalui interaksi antara artefak budaya, nilai-nilai yang dianut, dan asumsi-asumsi dasar. Ketiga dimensi budaya tersebut diinternalisasikan melalui proses habituasi, keteladanan guru, dan legitimasi sosial kolektif. Proses tersebut membentuk habitus religius yang tercermin dalam kedisiplinan beribadah, perilaku moral, dan kesadaran spiritual siswa. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa sikap keberagamaan siswa dibentuk tidak hanya melalui pembelajaran agama secara formal, tetapi juga melalui ekosistem sosio-religius yang terintegrasi dalam kehidupan madrasah sehari-hari.

Kata-kata Kunci: Budaya Madrasah; Ekosistem Sosio-Religius; Sikap Keberagamaan; Internalisasi Nilai; Kurikulum Tersembunyi.

1. INTRODUCTION

The formation of students' religious attitudes remains a central concern in Islamic education, particularly in madrasahs where religious values are expected to be reflected not only in classroom instruction but also in students' everyday behavior. In practice, however, the development of religious attitudes cannot be achieved merely through formal religious lessons. Students may learn Islamic teachings cognitively, but their discipline in worship, moral behavior, and spiritual awareness are more consistently shaped through the cultural environment in which they interact, observe, and participate. Therefore, understanding the formation of students' religious attitudes in madrasahs requires moving beyond curriculum-based explanations to examine how institutional culture functions as a medium for value internalization.

Within the context of Islamic education, madrasahs represent distinctive socio-cultural institutions where religious values are embedded not only in instructional content but also in everyday social practices. Madrasahs function as religious learning communities in which Islamic teachings are practiced collectively through routines such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, moral guidance, and other forms of spiritual habituation. These practices create an educational environment in which religious values are internalized through both explicit teaching and implicit socialization processes. In this sense, the cultural environment of the madrasah becomes an important mechanism through which students' religious attitudes and moral dispositions are formed.

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of school culture in character education and moral development. School culture has long been recognized as a key factor shaping institutional behavior, shared values, and students' identity formation (Deal & Peterson, 2009; Keddie, 2021). In Islamic education, several scholars have shown that religious school environments contribute to students' moral formation when religious values are integrated into daily practices rather than taught only as instructional content (Halstead, 2007; Sahin, 2018; Tan & Ibrahim, 2020). Studies in the Indonesian context

also indicate that religious culture in madrasahs supports moral awareness, spiritual discipline, and students' religious commitment ([Adi, 2024](#); [Puadah et al., 2025](#)).

However, previous studies have predominantly examined religious culture as a collection of school programs, pedagogical strategies, or character-building activities, with limited attention to how it operates as an integrated cultural system connecting institutional values, social interaction, and repeated religious practices in everyday madrasah life. Limited attention has been given to how madrasah culture operates as an integrated cultural system that connects institutional values, social interaction, and repeated religious practices. This gap is important because religious attitudes are not formed only through explicit teaching, but also through implicit cultural processes embedded in everyday school life. Therefore, there is a need to examine madrasah culture not merely as a background of Islamic education, but as a socio-religious ecosystem that actively shapes students' religious dispositions.

To address this gap, this study conceptualizes madrasah culture as a socio-religious ecosystem that explains how institutional culture, hidden curriculum, and habitus interact in shaping students' religious attitudes. The primary contribution of this study lies in integrating organizational culture theory, hidden curriculum, and habitus into a unified analytical framework for explaining religious attitude formation in madrasahs. Rather than treating congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and moral habituation as separate programs, this study interprets them as interconnected cultural mechanisms through which religious attitudes are formed.

The concept of hidden curriculum provides an important theoretical lens for understanding how values are transmitted implicitly through everyday school life. The concept of the hidden curriculum was originally introduced by Jackson to describe the ways in which schools transmit social values through routines, expectations, and institutional norms rather than through formal instruction ([Jackson, 1990](#)). Contemporary research expands this perspective by emphasizing that implicit learning processes play a crucial role in shaping students' moral and religious character through social interaction and institutional practices ([Alsubaie, 2021](#); [Fuad, 2024](#)). In madrasahs, the hidden curriculum operates through collective religious practices, teacher-student interaction, and shared institutional traditions that reinforce religious values as part of students' everyday experiences.

From the perspective of organizational culture, [Schein \(2010\)](#) proposes that institutional culture operates through three interconnected levels: cultural artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. Cultural artifacts represent visible practices and institutional symbols, while espoused values reflect shared beliefs guiding behavior within the organization. Underlying assumptions constitute deeper cultural beliefs that shape institutional identity and collective meaning. This framework provides a useful analytical lens for examining how religious practices in madrasahs are supported

by deeper institutional values that define religiosity as a core educational identity (Schein, 2010).

Furthermore, value internalization within institutional culture can be understood through Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Bourdieu argues that repeated participation in structured social practices gradually forms durable behavioral dispositions that shape individuals' perceptions and actions (Bourdieu, 1990). Within educational environments, repeated engagement in religious practices can generate a religious habitus that influences students' attitudes toward worship, morality, and spirituality. Through continuous interaction with institutional norms and practices, students gradually internalize religious values as part of their personal identity rather than merely as external expectations.

Building on these theoretical perspectives, this study analyzes how madrasah culture at MIN 1 Magelang functions as a socio-religious ecosystem in shaping students' religious attitudes. This study contributes to Islamic education scholarship by proposing a cultural framework that explains religious attitude formation through the interaction of organizational culture, hidden curriculum, and religious habitus. Practically, the findings are expected to provide guidance for madrasah leaders and Islamic education practitioners in strengthening institutional culture as a strategic component of character education.

2. METHOD

This study employed an intrinsic qualitative case study design to explore how madrasah culture functions as a socio-religious ecosystem in shaping students' religious attitudes. A qualitative case study was selected because it enables researchers to investigate social phenomena in their natural settings and develop a holistic understanding of complex cultural processes within educational institutions (Yin, 2014). Through this approach, the study sought to capture participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and interpretations regarding the implementation of religious culture in the madrasah environment. The intrinsic case study design was considered appropriate because the study focused on the particular cultural practices of a single madrasah as a bounded case. Rather than seeking statistical generalization, the study aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of how religious values are organized, practiced, and internalized within a specific institutional context. This design enabled the researcher to interpret madrasah culture as a lived socio-religious ecosystem rather than merely as a collection of formal religious programs.

The study was conducted at MIN 1 Magelang, a public Islamic elementary school in Central Java, Indonesia. The madrasah was purposively selected because it had developed a well-established institutional culture characterized by routine religious activities, collective worship, Qur'anic recitation, teacher role modeling, and structured character education programs. These characteristics provided an appropriate empirical context for examining how institutional culture contributes to the formation of students'

religious attitudes through the interaction of cultural artifacts, shared values, and underlying assumptions.

The participants consisted of seventeen informants who were directly involved in the implementation of religious cultural practices within the madrasah. The participants comprised one headmaster, four Islamic Education (PAI) teachers, and twelve students from Grades 4 to 6. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that they possessed relevant knowledge and experience related to the phenomenon under investigation. The headmaster was included because of his leadership role in designing and implementing institutional policies concerning religious culture, while the Islamic Education teachers were selected because they were directly responsible for facilitating religious learning activities and modeling religious practices. The students were chosen to represent those who regularly participated in the madrasah's religious cultural activities. Including participants representing leadership, teaching, and student groups enabled the study to obtain multiple perspectives on institutional culture and to compare how religious values were understood and experienced across different roles within the madrasah community.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method because they provided flexibility to explore participants' experiences while maintaining consistency through a common interview protocol. The interview protocol was developed based on the theoretical frameworks of organizational culture and value internalization. The interviews explored participants' experiences of religious routines, shared institutional values, teacher role modeling, social reinforcement, and perceived changes in students' religious attitudes. More specifically, the interview protocol examined three dimensions of madrasah culture, namely cultural artifacts reflected in visible religious practices and institutional routines such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and other collective religious activities; espoused values representing the shared beliefs and institutional principles guiding religious behavior within the madrasah; and underlying assumptions referring to deeper cultural beliefs regarding religiosity as a core institutional identity. The interviews also explored the mechanisms through which religious values were internalized, including habituation, teacher role modeling, and collective social legitimization within everyday school life. Each interview lasted approximately 30–45 minutes and was conducted within the madrasah environment to encourage participants to share their experiences openly.

To complement the interview data, institutional documents related to religious cultural programs, including school regulations, activity schedules, and documentation of religious activities, were analyzed. These documents provided contextual information and helped verify participants' accounts of religious practices and institutional routines, thereby strengthening the interpretation of madrasah culture through the integration of interview and documentary evidence.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the procedures proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (Miles et al., 2014). The analysis began with data condensation by repeatedly reviewing interview transcripts and institutional documents of interview transcripts and institutional documents to identify meaningful statements related to religious cultural practices. The data were subsequently coded using an open coding process to categorize information concerning religious practices, cultural values, and value internalization mechanisms. The resulting codes were then organized into broader categories corresponding to the three levels of organizational culture, namely cultural artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. Finally, these categories were synthesized into overarching themes explaining how madrasah culture operates as a socio-religious ecosystem in shaping students' religious attitudes. Throughout the analysis, the coding process remained both theory-informed and data-driven. The theoretical framework of organizational culture guided the initial analytical categories, while participants' narratives allowed new empirical patterns to emerge from the data. Related codes were compared across participant groups to identify recurring patterns, and perspectives from the headmaster, teachers, and students were examined collectively to ensure that the resulting themes accurately reflected the relationship between institutional culture, value internalization mechanisms, and students' religious attitudes.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied several validation strategies encompassing credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from the headmaster, teachers, and students. Peer debriefing was conducted through discussions with academic colleagues to review data interpretation and analytical conclusions, thereby minimizing potential researcher bias and improving analytical rigor. In addition, iterative data interpretation was conducted throughout the analysis process, allowing the researcher to revisit the data repeatedly to ensure that the interpretations accurately represented participants' experiences and the cultural context of the madrasah. Confirmability was enhanced by maintaining consistency between interview findings, documentary evidence, coding categories, and thematic interpretations. The emerging themes were reviewed iteratively to ensure that the conclusions remained grounded in the collected data, thereby increasing the transparency, credibility, and trustworthiness of the qualitative findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that madrasah culture at MIN 1 Magelang functions as an integrated socio-religious ecosystem that significantly influences the formation of students' religious attitudes. Most participants consistently described religious cultural practices as an integral part of everyday madrasah life, suggesting that religious values had become deeply internalized through continuous institutional

routines. Interviews with the headmaster, Islamic Education teachers, and students reveal that collective religious practices such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and daily moral guidance have become integral components of students' learning experiences. These practices are not merely perceived as ritual obligations but gradually develop into habitual behaviors that shape the overall religious atmosphere of the school environment.

More specifically, the findings show that religious culture in MIN 1 Magelang is constructed through the interaction between institutional routines, social actors, and shared meanings. Religious activities, including congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, moral habituation, and teacher guidance, function as interconnected practices rather than isolated programs. These practices are interconnected within a cultural pattern that repeatedly exposes students to Islamic values in daily school life. This pattern indicates that the formation of students' religious attitudes occurs through a continuous process of cultural participation rather than through formal religious instruction alone.

From the perspective of the madrasah headmaster, religious culture represents the core identity of the institution and serves as the foundation for educational policy and organizational decision-making. Institutional values such as discipline in worship, Islamic morality, and social responsibility are systematically integrated into daily educational activities. The headmaster emphasized that religious practices are not simply programmatic activities but represent a cultural system that continuously shapes students' character formation. This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the important role of educational leadership in constructing and sustaining institutional culture ([Fullan, 2020](#)). Effective leadership encourages the integration of institutional values into everyday practices, enabling schools to function as moral communities that cultivate students' ethical development.

The headmaster's role is therefore not limited to administrative coordination, but extends to cultural leadership. Through policy direction, supervision of religious routines, and reinforcement of institutional values, the headmaster contributes to the creation of a normative environment in which religiosity becomes part of the madrasah's collective identity. This finding strengthens the argument that leadership in Islamic educational institutions is closely related to the construction of religious culture. In this context, the headmaster acts as a cultural agent who ensures that religious values are not only written in institutional vision and mission statements, but are also translated into everyday practices.

From the perspective of Islamic Education teachers, madrasah culture facilitates the internalization of religious values primarily through mechanisms of habituation and role modeling. Teachers function not only as instructors who transmit religious knowledge but also as cultural agents who embody institutional values through their daily interactions with students. Teachers explained that students develop religious behaviors more effectively through observation, imitation, and repeated participation than through

formal instruction alone. This observation aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, which suggests that individuals acquire behavioral patterns through observational learning and interaction with role models (Bandura, 1986). In educational contexts, teacher behavior therefore becomes an important mechanism for transmitting institutional values and shaping students' moral dispositions.

Teacher role modeling is particularly important because students encounter religious values in concrete forms through teachers' behavior, language, discipline, and interaction patterns. The teachers' consistency in guiding prayer, encouraging Qur'anic recitation, reminding students about manners, and demonstrating respectful conduct provides students with living examples of religious values. These findings indicate that value internalization within madrasah culture is not solely a cognitive process but also involves performative and relational dimensions. Students learn religiosity through what they see, repeat, and experience in daily interaction with teachers and peers.

Teachers also reported that consistent participation in religious cultural practices gradually leads to observable behavioral changes among students. These changes include increased discipline in performing worship, improved respectful conduct toward teachers and peers, and stronger awareness of moral responsibility in social interaction. These findings are consistent with previous research in studies examining Islamic school culture, which suggest that religious environments contribute significantly to students' character formation when religious values are embedded within everyday institutional practices rather than limited to classroom instruction (Tan & Ibrahim, 2020). In this sense, religious culture functions as a social framework that enables students to internalize values through collective participation and institutional interaction (Memon, 2011). The findings of this study also support previous research conducted in Indonesian madrasahs which indicates that religious school culture significantly influences students' moral development and religious commitment. When religious values are integrated into daily institutional routines, students tend to develop stronger internal motivation to practice religious teachings in their everyday lives (Puadah et al., 2025).

The behavioral changes reported by teachers suggest that religious attitude formation involves a gradual movement from external compliance to internal awareness. At the beginning, students may participate in religious routines because they are part of school regulations. However, repeated participation, teacher guidance, and peer reinforcement gradually transform these routines into personal habits. This process shows that madrasah culture works through habituation, in which repeated religious practices form students' dispositions toward worship discipline, moral behavior, and spiritual sensitivity.

Students' perspectives also reinforce the importance of collective participation in religious cultural practices. Students consistently reported that the religious atmosphere of the madrasah encourages them to participate in worship activities consistently and to

develop a deeper understanding of Islamic values in daily life. Students explained that participating in religious activities together creates a sense of shared commitment that motivates them to follow institutional expectations. This finding supports research indicating that communal religious practices strengthen students' moral engagement by creating shared social norms that encourage collective participation ([Puadah et al., 2025](#)).

From the students' perspective, the collective nature of religious activities creates a sense of belonging to a religious community. Students do not experience worship and moral habituation as isolated individual activities, but as shared practices performed with teachers and peers. This collective experience strengthens social reinforcement because students are encouraged to behave religiously within a community that values similar norms. Thus, students' religious attitudes are shaped not only by personal understanding, but also by participation in a moral community that continuously legitimizes religious behavior.

The collective dimension of religious practices also contributes to the development of a supportive moral environment within the school. When students observe their peers participating in religious activities, social reinforcement occurs, encouraging broader participation and strengthening the institutional culture. This process reflects the concept of social legitimization, in which shared practices gradually become normalized through repeated collective engagement. Recent studies on school culture similarly suggest that institutional environments significantly influence students' moral behavior by establishing shared expectations that guide everyday interactions ([Keddie, 2021](#)).

Social legitimization is evident when religious practices become accepted as normal and expected behavior within the madrasah environment. In such a context, students are not only instructed to perform religious practices, but are socially encouraged to participate because these practices have become part of the school's collective identity. This finding is significant because it shows that madrasah culture shapes religious attitudes through social norms, not merely through formal rules. The more religious practices are collectively recognized and repeated, the stronger their influence on students' religious dispositions.

The thematic analysis conducted in this study reveals that madrasah culture operates through three interconnected components: cultural artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions. Cultural artifacts include visible religious practices such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation sessions, and institutional religious programs. Espoused values represent shared beliefs emphasizing the importance of religious discipline, moral conduct, and spiritual development. Underlying assumptions reflect deeper institutional beliefs that define religiosity as a central component of educational identity. These components interact to form a coherent cultural system that supports the internalization of religious values among students.

These three cultural components are not separate layers, but mutually reinforcing dimensions of madrasah culture. Cultural artifacts provide visible and repeatable religious practices. Espoused values give meaning to those practices by emphasizing discipline, morality, and spirituality. Underlying assumptions provide the deepest foundation by positioning religiosity as an essential identity of the madrasah. The interaction among these layers explains why religious routines are sustained and why they become meaningful for students' attitude formation. To facilitate a clearer understanding of the thematic findings, [Table 1](#) summarizes the major cultural dimensions identified in the study, their internalization mechanisms, and their implications for students' religious attitudes.

Table 1. Thematic Analysis of Madrasah Culture as a Socio-Religious Ecosystem

Cultural Dimension	Indicators	Internalization Mechanism	Impact on Students
Cultural Artifacts	Congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, religious routines	Habituation	Discipline in worship practices
Espoused Values	Religious discipline, moral responsibility, spiritual awareness	Modeling	Development of moral behavior
Underlying Assumptions	Religiosity as institutional identity	Social legitimization	Strengthened religious commitment

As presented in [Table 1](#), the thematic analysis demonstrates that madrasah culture operates as an integrated cultural system in which cultural dimensions, internalization mechanisms, and student outcomes are interconnected. Cultural artifacts provide visible practices, espoused values guide behavioral norms, and underlying assumptions shape institutional identity. These elements collectively contribute to the formation of students' religious attitudes through structured cultural processes.

The table also indicates that the formation of students' religious attitudes cannot be explained by one single factor. Worship discipline, moral behavior, and religious commitment emerge from the interaction between visible practices, shared values, and institutional assumptions. Therefore, madrasah culture functions as an ecosystem because each cultural element supports and strengthens the others. Religious routines become meaningful because they are supported by shared values, and these values become sustainable because they are rooted in deeper assumptions about the religious identity of the madrasah.

The interaction between these cultural components can be interpreted through Schein's organizational culture framework. According to Schein, artifacts represent

visible manifestations of deeper institutional values and assumptions (Schein, 2010). Within the madrasah context, visible religious practices function as pedagogical instruments that reinforce shared values regarding religious commitment and moral responsibility. These practices not only symbolize institutional identity but also serve as mechanisms for transmitting cultural meaning through everyday interaction.

Schein's organizational culture framework provides a useful explanation for understanding the cultural depth of religious practices within the madrasah. Congregational prayer and Qur'anic recitation are visible artifacts, but their significance cannot be understood only as observable activities. These practices reflect espoused values such as obedience, discipline, and moral responsibility. At a deeper level, they are supported by the assumption that Islamic religiosity is central to the identity and purpose of madrasah education. This layered interpretation shows that religious practices operate as cultural expressions of institutional meaning.

The findings also highlight the importance of habituation as a mechanism for value internalization. Through repeated participation in religious activities, students gradually develop behavioral patterns that reflect religious commitment. This process can be interpreted through Bourdieu's concept of habitus, which suggests that repeated engagement in structured social practices generates durable dispositions shaping individuals' perceptions and actions (Bourdieu, 1990). Within the madrasah environment, repeated participation in worship practices and moral routines gradually forms a religious habitus that influences students' attitudes toward spirituality and social ethics.

The concept of religious habitus helps explain why repeated participation in religious practices gradually develops relatively stable religious dispositions among students. Students' participation in daily religious routines gradually shapes their sense of what is appropriate, expected, and meaningful in the madrasah environment. Over time, worship discipline, respectful conduct, and spiritual awareness become part of students' practical orientation. Thus, religious habitus is formed not only through teaching, but through repeated embodied participation in the cultural life of the madrasah.

Importantly, the results of this study confirm previous research emphasizing the importance of institutional culture in shaping students' character development. However, this study extends existing literature by conceptualizing madrasah culture as a socio-religious ecosystem rather than merely a background context for religious learning. Previous studies often treat religious activities as educational programs or pedagogical strategies. In contrast, this research demonstrates that religious culture operates as an integrated system linking institutional values, social interaction, and students' lived experiences.

The primary analytical contribution of this study lies in conceptualizing madrasah culture as a socio-religious ecosystem that integrates institutional culture, hidden curriculum, and religious habitus into a unified explanatory framework. The socio-

religious ecosystem perspective enables madrasah culture to be understood as a dynamic system of value formation. It connects leadership, teacher modeling, collective routines, peer interaction, institutional norms, and students' lived experiences into one interpretive framework. By using this perspective, the study demonstrates that religious attitude formation in madrasahs is not only a pedagogical process, but also a cultural and social process.

While previous studies have highlighted the importance of school culture in character education, this study extends existing research by providing empirical evidence that madrasah culture operates as a socio-religious ecosystem in which institutional culture, social interaction, and internalization mechanisms interact simultaneously. Unlike earlier studies that primarily examined religious activities as educational programs, the present study demonstrates that religious culture functions as an integrated system that shapes students' religious attitudes through continuous participation in institutional practices. This perspective offers a broader analytical understanding of how religious identity is formed within Islamic educational institutions.

These findings directly address the research gap identified in the introduction by demonstrating how institutional culture, rather than isolated educational programs, systematically shapes students' religious attitudes. Previous research has shown that religious culture contributes to character formation, but they have not sufficiently explained how cultural elements work together as a system. This study fills that gap by showing that artifacts, values, assumptions, habituation, modeling, and social legitimization interact in shaping students' religious attitudes. The emphasis on interaction among cultural elements is what distinguishes the socio-religious ecosystem approach from program-based explanations of religious culture.

The socio-religious ecosystem perspective highlights the dynamic relationship between institutional structures and students' behavioral development. Organizational artifacts create structured opportunities for participation, teacher modeling facilitates observational learning, and collective engagement reinforces shared norms within the school community. These processes collectively contribute to the formation of students' religious attitudes through continuous interaction between cultural practices and social experiences.

This dynamic relationship also shows that students are not passive recipients of religious values. They participate in cultural practices, observe teachers and peers, respond to institutional expectations, and gradually construct their own religious dispositions. In this sense, students' religious attitudes are formed through active engagement with the madrasah's cultural environment. This finding strengthens the view that Islamic education should be understood as a lived cultural process, not merely as the delivery of religious knowledge.

This finding resonates with broader educational theories suggesting that school culture plays a fundamental role in shaping students' identity and moral orientation. Educational institutions function not only as sites of knowledge transmission but also as cultural environments where values are reproduced through everyday practices and social interaction (Biesta, 2020; Lafrarchi, 2020; Memon, 2011; Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). In Islamic educational settings, these cultural processes become particularly significant because religious values are embedded not only in instructional content but also in collective institutional practices (Suyatno et al., 2019).

These findings indicate that madrasah culture should be understood as a fundamental component of Islamic education, where the internalization of religious values is not limited to formal instruction but is embedded within institutional culture and daily social practices. In this context, Islamic education operates not only through curriculum delivery but also through cultural and social mechanisms that shape students' religious identity and moral behavior.

Accordingly, strengthening madrasah culture has practical implications for Islamic education management. Madrasah leaders should ensure that religious practices are not implemented only as routine programs, but are connected to clear institutional values and supported by consistent teacher modeling. Teachers also need to understand their role as cultural agents whose behavior, language, and interaction patterns influence students' religious attitudes. These implications show that character education in madrasahs requires cultural consistency across leadership, teaching practices, and student participation.

The findings also contribute to the discourse on hidden curriculum within Islamic education. Hidden curriculum refers to the implicit transmission of values through institutional routines, social interaction, and organizational norms rather than through formal instructional content (Jackson, 1990). In the context of madrasah culture, hidden curriculum operates through daily religious practices, teacher-student interactions, and shared moral expectations within the school environment. These mechanisms enable students to internalize religious values organically through lived experiences rather than through explicit instruction alone.

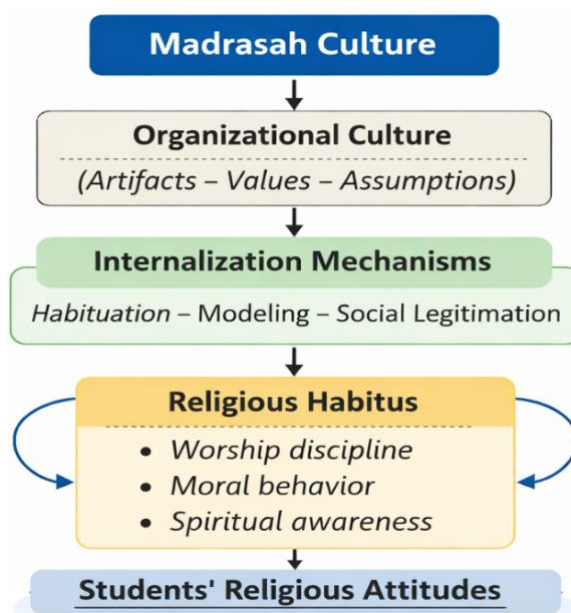
The hidden curriculum in MIN 1 Magelang is reflected in the unwritten but repeatedly experienced norms of religious life. Students learn punctuality in worship, respect for teachers, moral responsibility, and spiritual discipline through the atmosphere and routines of the madrasah. These implicit processes are often more influential because they are experienced continuously and socially reinforced. Thus, hidden curriculum becomes one of the cultural mechanisms through which the socio-religious ecosystem shapes students' religious attitudes.

Overall, the results of this study demonstrate that madrasah culture functions as a dynamic socio-religious ecosystem that systematically shapes students' religious

attitudes through the interaction of institutional culture, collective practices, and value internalization mechanisms. The integration of these elements creates a holistic learning environment in which religious values are continuously reinforced through everyday educational experiences.

This integrated process can be summarized in three analytical points. First, madrasah culture provides visible religious artifacts that structure students' daily participation. Second, these artifacts are supported by shared values and underlying assumptions that give meaning to religious practices. Third, habituation, modeling, and social legitimization transform these cultural practices into students' religious habitus. These three points explain how religious attitudes are formed through the cultural ecosystem of the madrasah.

To synthesize the relationships among the themes identified in this study, [Figure 1](#) presents the conceptual model of madrasah culture as a socio-religious ecosystem shaping students' religious attitudes. The conceptual framework illustrates how organizational culture within the madrasah creates mechanisms of habituation, modeling, and social legitimization that contribute to the formation of students' religious habitus.



[Figure 1](#). Socio-Religious Ecosystem Model of Madrasah Culture in Shaping Students' Religious Attitudes.

[Figure 1](#) illustrates the conceptual model of madrasah culture as a socio-religious ecosystem that shapes students' religious attitudes through interconnected cultural and social processes. The model demonstrates that madrasah culture functions as the foundational context that influences organizational culture within the institution. At the organizational level, cultural elements including artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions create a normative framework that guides religious practices in everyday school life. These cultural structures then operate through internalization

mechanisms, including habituation, teacher modeling, and social legitimization, which enable students to experience religious values not only as formal teachings but also as lived practices. Through continuous participation in these cultural processes, students gradually develop a religious habitus characterized by worship discipline, moral behavior, and spiritual awareness. Ultimately, these dispositions contribute to the formation of students' religious attitudes, demonstrating that religious character formation in madrasahs emerges through the interaction between institutional culture and students' everyday social experiences.

The model also emphasizes that the relationship among cultural components is cyclical rather than linear. Madrasah culture shapes organizational culture, organizational culture structures internalization mechanisms, and these mechanisms form students' religious habitus. At the same time, students' repeated participation reinforces the existing religious culture of the madrasah. This cyclical process explains why religious culture can become sustainable when it is continuously practiced, legitimized, and reproduced by members of the school community.

The conceptual model presented in [Figure 1](#) can also be interpreted through the lens of organizational culture theory and sociological perspectives on habitus formation. According to Schein, organizational culture operates through three interrelated layers: artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions, which together shape the behavioral norms within an institution ([Schein, 2010](#)). In the context of madrasahs, these cultural layers are reflected in visible religious practices, shared institutional values emphasizing religiosity, and deeper assumptions that position Islamic morality as a central educational identity. Through repeated participation in these culturally structured practices, students gradually internalize religious dispositions. This process resonates with Bourdieu's concept of habitus, which explains how repeated social experiences generate durable behavioral orientations that influence individuals' perceptions and actions ([Bourdieu, 1990](#)). Consequently, the formation of students' religious attitudes can be understood not merely as the outcome of formal religious instruction but as the product of continuous interaction between institutional culture, social practices, and internalized dispositions within the educational environment.

Taken together, the findings affirm that madrasah culture is not merely a contextual background of Islamic education, but an active socio-religious ecosystem that produces religious meaning, regulates behavior, and forms students' religious dispositions. This interpretation provides a more comprehensive explanation of religious attitude formation because it connects institutional culture, hidden curriculum, and habitus formation in one analytical framework. Accordingly, this study contributes to Islamic education scholarship by offering an empirically grounded cultural framework that explains how religious values become internalized through everyday madrasah life.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that madrasah culture at MIN 1 Magelang functions as a socio-religious ecosystem that shapes students' religious attitudes through the interaction of cultural artifacts, shared values, and underlying organizational assumptions. Religious values are internalized not only through formal Islamic instruction but also through continuous participation in the cultural life of the madrasah. Daily religious routines, collective worship, Qur'anic recitation, teacher role modeling, and shared moral expectations operate as interconnected cultural mechanisms that reinforce habituation, social legitimization, and the formation of a religious habitus. As a result, students' religious attitudes are reflected in greater discipline in worship, stronger moral conduct, and deeper spiritual awareness. The findings suggest that strengthening Islamic education cannot rely solely on curriculum development or instructional improvement. Institutional culture should be recognized as a strategic learning environment that facilitates the holistic internalization of religious values. By conceptualizing madrasah culture as a socio-religious ecosystem, this study contributes to Islamic education scholarship by integrating organizational culture theory, hidden curriculum, and Bourdieu's concept of habitus into a unified framework for explaining how religious attitudes are formed through everyday institutional practices. This framework provides a more comprehensive understanding of the interaction between institutional culture, social participation, and value internalization within madrasah education. From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that madrasah leaders and Islamic Education teachers should strengthen institutional religious culture by managing religious activities as a coherent cultural system rather than as isolated routine programs. Collective religious practices, teacher role modeling, and shared institutional values should be consistently integrated into everyday school life to support the sustainable development of students' religious character. In this way, institutional culture becomes an essential component of character education that complements formal classroom instruction. This study was limited to a single madrasah context. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the specific institutional setting in which the study was conducted. Future research should examine diverse madrasah contexts, including public and private institutions at different educational levels, to further validate the proposed socio-religious ecosystem framework. Comparative and mixed-method studies may also provide broader insights into the relationship between institutional culture and students' religious development. Overall, the findings demonstrate that madrasah culture should be understood not merely as the contextual background of Islamic education but as an active socio-religious ecosystem that shapes students' religious dispositions and provides a conceptual foundation for strengthening religious character education through the integration of institutional culture, social interaction, and value internalization.

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