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GOING BEYOND CLASSROOM LEARNING: THE ROLE OF THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM IN THE FORMATION OF ISLAMIC CHARACTER IN MTs. MUHAMMADIYAH JAYAPURA

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ABSTRACT

The Independent Curriculum Reform places character strengthening as part of the Pancasila student profile and the student profile of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (P2RA), but the practice of character formation in madrasahs often takes place outside the classroom through hidden curriculum which has not been widely studied in the context of non Islamic boarding school *tsanawiyah* madrasahs in Muslim minority areas such as Papua. This study aims to describe the hidden form of curriculum in MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura and analyze its role in the formation of Islamic character of students. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design; data were collected through a document study of the Madrasah Operational Curriculum (KOM) for the 2024/2025 Academic Year and analyzed through condensation, presentation, and data conclusion drawing following the interactive model Miles, Huberman, and Saldáña (2020). The results of the study show that the hidden curriculum in MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura is manifested in thirteen daily habituation practices, Golden Habits digital character mentoring programs, mandatory extracurricular activities (Hizbul Wathan and Tapak Suci), and optional extracurriculars associated with the dimension of Pancasila student profiles. These practices work implicitly and repeatedly to instill the values of worship, morals, discipline, and religious moderation, complementing the formal curriculum of Islamic Religious Education. This study concludes that the hidden curriculum functions as a strategic instrument for the formation of Islamic character whose success depends on the consistency of educators' example and the management of madrasah culture deliberately and planned, not on the existence of a dormitory structure alone.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Curriculum Reform emphasizes that the goals of education are not only limited to the achievement of academic excellence, but also include the formation of students' character through Pancasila student profiles and, especially in educational units under the Ministry of Religion, the student profile of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (P2RA) which is a characteristic of Islam as well as religious moderation (Susanti, Kusen, and Sumarto 2024). P2RA is designed as a response to the need for madrasas to present a tolerant, adaptive, and contextual face of Islam in accordance with Indonesia's diversity, while complementing the profile dimension of Pancasila students with Islamic values such as noble morals and religious moderation (Wulandari 2023; Nur'aini 2023). The implementation of this policy is explicitly realized through the project of strengthening student profiles that are integrated into the curriculum structure, as reflected in the Madrasah Operational Curriculum (KOM) document of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura for the 2024/2025 Academic Year which provides a special allocation of intracurricular hours for P5 and P2RA projects in addition to regular subjects.

Nevertheless, character formation is not entirely reliable on a formal curriculum that is written and allocated in lesson hours. Most of the values, attitudes, and habits of students are formed through what is known in curriculum studies as a hidden curriculum, which is the overall message, norms, and patterns of interaction that are not explicitly written in the curriculum document, but are consistently experienced by students in their daily lives in the educational unit environment (Fitria and Khalimah 2024; Yaqin 2023). The hidden curriculum operates through routines, educators' examples, discipline, organizational symbols, and social relations atmosphere in schools, and its influence on the formation of students' religious character has been consistently proven through various qualitative studies (Malahati and Rokhimawan 2024; Nurizah and Amrullah 2024).

Conceptually, the hidden curriculum is understood to function through at least four interrelated mechanisms, namely educator example, routine habituation, regulations and rules, and school symbols and physical environment (Yaqin 2023; Ali et al. 2023). Through these mechanisms, religious values and locality can be internalized repeatedly so that in the end they form a relatively permanent habitus in students, without realizing it as a formal learning process.

The study of the hidden curriculum in Islamic education in Indonesia is still dominated by research on boarding boarding schools, where the intensity of communal life for twenty four hours allows the internalization of values to take place very massively through congregational worship rituals, classical book recitation, and *pesantren* traditions (Alamin et al. 2024; Salim et al. 2024; Maulana and Fuad 2024). Research at the elementary school level has highlighted the habituation of Pancasila values and school culture as a vehicle for character education (Fatimah, Sumarno, and Dwijayanti 2024; Yulia and Ain 2024; Squirrel et al. 2023). Meanwhile, studies at the level of regular non dormitory *tsanawiyah* madrasahs – which face limited face to face time and do not have the flexibility to control the behavior of students for twenty four hours like in Islamic boarding schools – are still relatively limited, especially in the context of madrasahs in Muslim minority areas such as Papua.

MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura offers an academically interesting context to study. As a madrasah under the Muhammadiyah organization that is historically known

for its modernist Islamic style, this madrasah operates in the midst of an ethnically and religiously pluralistic Papuan society, with a relatively small number of students 139 people in the 2024/2025 Academic Year as well as educators who are mostly young and still in the stage of developing professional experience. This condition raises a fundamental academic question: can the hidden curriculum work effectively in shaping Islamic character without the support of a dormitory structure such as in Islamic boarding schools, and how is the hidden curriculum adapted through alternative strategies such as the Golden Habits application based digital mentoring and compulsory extracurricular organizations? This question is in line with the findings of Nurhayati and Hanif (2025) who stated that the habituation of prophetic values can be effective as long as it is institutionalized consistently, even without a full time communal structure such as pesantren, but this premise has not been widely tested in the context of Muhammadiyah madrassas in the Eastern Indonesia region.

Based on this description, this study is designed to answer three main questions: (1) how the form and mechanism of the hidden curriculum that takes place in MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura as reflected in the Madrasah Operational Curriculum document; (2) how the role of the hidden curriculum in the formation of students' Islamic character; and (3) what are the theoretical and managerial implications of the findings for the development of similar madrasah curriculum. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the discourse on hidden curriculum by presenting the context of non pesantren Muhammadiyah madrassas in the Muslim minority areas of Eastern Indonesia which have been underrepresented in literature (Negara et al. 2024; Setyani et al. 2024). Practically, this research is expected to be a reference for madrasah heads and curriculum development teams in designing a school culture that deliberately supports character formation, in line with the spirit of integrating Pancasila student profiles and rahmatan lil 'alamin student profiles in the Independent Curriculum.

B. METHOD

This research was applied using a descriptive qualitative approach that adopts a single case study design. This approach was chosen based on the research objectives that require an in depth understanding of contemporary phenomena—i.e. hidden curricula—in the real context of a madrasah, as recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018) for situations where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are quite clear. The location of the research is MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura, which is located in Jayapura City, Papua Province. This private madrasah is under the auspices of the Muhammadiyah Regional Executive of Jayapura City and in the 2024/2025 Academic Year serves as many as 139 students divided into three study groups (grades VII, VIII, and IX). The selection of the location was carried out purposively on the grounds that the madrasah has a Madrasah Operational Curriculum (KOM) document that has been validated by the madrasah supervisor and ratified in stages by the Madrasah Committee, the Head of the Madrasah, and the Head of the Office of the Ministry of Religion of Jayapura City. This makes the madrasah an authentic source of primary data related to madrasah curricular policies and practices. Data collection was carried out through a document study on KOM MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura for the 2024/2025 Academic Year as a primary data source. The document includes an analysis of the characteristics of the madrasah, vision mission objectives, intracurricular and co curricular curriculum structure, extracurricular lists, and descriptions of habituation

activities. The document study was chosen because the KOM document is an official institutional artifact that represents the madrasah curricular policy as a whole and has gone through a multi stakeholder validation process, so that it has adequate credibility as a data source (Miles, Huberman, and Saldáña, 2020). Furthermore, the data was reflexively reread using the hidden curriculum theory lens and associated with relevant previous research findings as a form of theoretical triangulation.

Data analysis follows an interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldáña (2020), which consists of three main stages: first, data condensation, which is the process of selecting and simplifying information units in KOM that are relevant to hidden curriculum indicators (including examples, habituation, regulations, as well as symbols and environments); Second, the presentation of data, namely the organization of findings into thematic categories which are then presented in the results section; third, drawing conclusions and verification, which includes the interpretation of the relationship between thematic categories with the construction of Islamic character formation and verification through comparison with similar literature. The validity of the data is guaranteed through triangulation of sources, namely by comparing the information contained in various parts of the KOM document (such as analysis of madrasah characteristics, curriculum structure, and description of habituation activities) to ensure the consistency of findings. In addition, theoretical triangulation is carried out through dialogue with the results of previous research. This study has limitations because it only relies on the analysis of institutional documents as the main data source without being supported by participatory observation or in depth interviews with madrasah residents. Therefore, the findings presented are descriptive interpretive to the written policy and require follow up in the form of field research to verify the level of actual implementation in the field

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Profile and Characteristics of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura as a Hidden Curriculum Background

MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura is located on Jalan Raya Abepantai Number 25, in the University of Muhammadiyah Papua Complex, Jayapura City, and is under the supervision of the Muhammadiyah Regional Executive of Jayapura City. The vision of the madrasah was formulated with the aim of "the realization of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura as a leading madrasah in the Papua region," which is supported by a mission that emphasizes excellence in three areas, namely academic and non academic achievements, the implementation of worship and the formation of morals, as well as cadre in the Muhammadiyah organization. Explicitly, the purpose of the madrasah emphasizes the orientation of character formation, namely "to produce generation Z with noble character" and "to produce a generation of Qur'an hafidz," in addition to academic goals directed at preparing students to be able to compete at the next level of education.

In the 2024/2025 Academic Year, this madrasah manages 139 students divided into class VII (38 students), class VIII (47 students), and class IX (54 students), as can be seen in Table 1. Admission of new students is carried out through four paths, namely achievement paths, zoning, affirmation, and parental assignment transfer, which reflect the diversity of social and geographical backgrounds of students. Based on the results of the initial assessment, only eight percent of new students have memorized one juz of

the Qur'an, while the other ninety two percent have not reached that level, an initial condition that directly demands the implementation of an intensive religious habituation strategy outside of formal lesson hours.

Table 1. Data on MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura Students for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

Classes	Son	Princess	Quantity
VII	16	22	38
VIII	21	26	47
IX	32	22	54
Total	69	70	139

Source: Madrasah Operational Curriculum (KOM) MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura, 2024

From the manpower aspect, the madrasah received support from thirteen teachers and one administrative staff, with details of academic qualifications consisting of seven teachers with bachelor's degrees (53.8 percent) and six teachers with master's degrees (46.2 percent). The KOM document transparently reveals that the majority of educators and education personnel are still in the young age range, which on the one hand provides opportunities through high motivation to learn, but on the other hand poses challenges due to limited experience in teaching. This condition is something that needs to be considered considering that the hidden curriculum is highly dependent on the consistency of educators' examples as behavioral figures for students (Nurhayati and Hanif 2025).

2. Daily Habituation as a Form of Hidden Curriculum

The main results of this study indicate that the hidden curriculum in MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura is most clearly manifested through thirteen daily habituation practices that are explicitly listed in the KOM, namely: (1) the implementation of ceremonies every Monday and on national holidays; (2) the singing of Mars the Sun during the ceremony; (3) the pronunciation of the Muhammadiyah Student Promise; (4) prayer before and after lessons; (5) giving and receiving greetings; (6) waste disposal in place; (7) queue culture; (8) dress neatly and cover the aurat; (9) on time arrival; (10) shaking hands with teachers when meeting; (11) the use of polite and polite language; (12) conveying greetings to madrasah guests; and (13) good communication with madrasah guests. Although these practices seem simple and routine, conceptually they represent a concrete manifestation of a hidden curriculum because they are carried out repeatedly without formal documentation of learning outcomes, but consistently shape the moral experience of students on a daily basis (Yaqin 2023). Symbolic rituals, such as the singing of Mars Sang Surya and the pronunciation of the Muhammadiyah Student Promise, play a role in instilling institutional identity and organizational affiliation from an early age, which is in line with the findings of Malahati and Rokhimawan (2024) that school symbols and rituals have an important role in forming students' sense of belonging to institutional values. In addition, the practice of greeting, salaman, and manners towards madrasah guests reflects the internalization of social religious manners which, according to Ali et al. (2023), prove effective in building religious character based on local wisdom if done consistently and not just as a mere ceremonial formality.

3. Golden Habits as a Digital Instrument for Character Assistance

Apart from habituation that is carried out regularly, MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura initiated the Golden Habits program as a digital tool that functions to support the simultaneous habituation of students, namely habituation that takes place at home and in madrasas. The application includes four aspects of assessment, namely habits (including compulsory worship, sunnah worship, literacy, and muamalah), moral assessment, tahfidz, and tahsin. In the path of daily habituation in madrasas, additional programs implemented include the implementation of duha prayers every day, daily muroja'ah, tahsin and tahfidz regularly, kultum after zuhur, and the Madrasah Literacy Movement (GLM). In addition, students' self development is also supported through counseling guidance both individually and classically, which also strengthens the character mentoring system. The existence of the Golden Habits program confirms that madrasas consciously seek to expand the scope of the hidden curriculum beyond the limitations of school space and time, by involving parents as partners in monitoring children's worship habits at home. This approach is in line with the findings of Fitria and Khalimah (2024) which show that the effectiveness of the hidden curriculum increases significantly if there is a continuity of values between the school and family environments. This approach is also a solution to the structural limitations of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura which does not have dormitory facilities such as pesantren, which according to various studies is actually a key factor in the success of instilling value through communal life for twenty four hours (Alamin et al. 2024; Salim et al. 2024).

4. Compulsory Extracurricular Associations and Optional Extracurriculars

The co curricular and extracurricular structure at MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura reflects the implementation of a hidden curriculum that is typical of the Muhammadiyah institution. Extracurricular activities required for students in grades VII and VIII include Hizbul Wathan (with a duration of two hours of lessons per week, which is associated with the dimension of the profile of Pancasila students "independent") and Tapak Suci (with a duration of three hours of lessons per week, which is related to the dimension of "faith, fear of God Almighty, and noble character"). These two autonomous organizations of Muhammadiyah are explicitly functioned as a means of cadres, so the designation of both as compulsory activities—not optional—indicates that the formation of the character of the organization has been institutionalized systematically, not simply developed implicitly. In addition, there are six optional extracurriculars that are still associated with the dimension of Pancasila student profile, namely the art of reciting the Qur'an and tahfidzul Qur'an skills (related to the dimensions of faith, piety, and noble character), superior academic guidance (critical and creative reasoning dimensions), Islamic dance (creative dimension and global diversity), qasidah (creative dimension and mutual cooperation), and badminton and futsal (independent dimension and mutual cooperation). Each student is required to choose at least one optional extracurricular, whose assistance is carried out weekly by a supervisory teacher determined through the Decree of the Head of the Madrasah.

This pattern reinforces the findings of Ma'arif et al. (2024) that co-curricular activities designed with the aim of instilling character values explicitly—not just as a forum for talent channeling increase the effectiveness of the hidden curriculum because students receive repeated value coaching in an atmosphere that does not appear to be formal learning.

Discussion

The findings obtained show that the hidden curriculum at MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura operates through four mutually reinforcing mechanisms, namely routine habituation, exemplary and social relations, the use of digital instruments of mentoring, and the regulation of co-curricular activities. These four mechanisms collectively form a typical moral climate of madrasas. This result strengthens the argument put forward by Fitria and Khalimah (2024) and Malahati and Rokhimawan (2024), who state that the formation of students' religious character does not occur through a single path, but rather is an accumulation of repetitive experiences that cross space and time.

However, this study also reveals significant differences when compared to previous studies that focused on boarding boarding schools (Alamin et al. 2024; Salim et al. 2024; Maulana and Fuad 2024). Without a communal structure for twenty-four hours, MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura overcomes the limited face-to-face time by utilizing the digitization of habituation (Golden Habits), which extends value control to the domestic realm of students. These findings provide a new perspective in the hidden curriculum discourse, namely that non-dormitory educational institutions are able to present a relatively equal intensity of habituation through structured partnerships with families, in line with the view of Nurhayati and Hanif (2025) that institutional consistency not just the duration of living together is a key factor in the effectiveness of value habituation.

The obligation to participate in Hizbul Wathan and Tapak Suci as mandatory extracurriculars also emphasizes the typical dimension of the hidden curriculum in madrasas affiliated with religious organizations, namely the function of ideological cadres in addition to the function of fostering universal character. These findings are in line with the results of the research of Susanti, Kusen, and Sumarto (2024), which shows that the project to strengthen the profile of rahmatan lil 'alamin students is effective as an instrument for cultivating religious moderation if it is integrated in a structured manner into co-curricular activities, rather than being left entirely to individual teachers' initiatives.

In the context of Papua, which has religious and ethnic diversity, the extracurricular function of this organization has a double relevance: on the one hand, it strengthens the Islamic Muhammadiyah identity of students, and on the other hand—through the habituation of greeting, manners, and hospitality listed in daily habituation activities—it prepares students to interact tolerantly with a plural social environment, as the spirit of P2RA explained by Wulandari (2023) and Nur'aini (2023).

However, the success of the hidden curriculum as described above cannot be separated from the role of educator example. In the case of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura, there is a structural challenge in the form of the dominance of young educators with relatively limited teaching experience. Negara et al. (2024) and Setyani et al. (2024) emphasized that the effectiveness of hidden curriculum is very vulnerable

to exemplary inconsistency. Therefore, efforts to develop teachers' professionals—as regulated in the KOM through pedagogic training and partnerships with universities—must be explicitly directed to strengthen the capacity of teachers as role models, not solely mastery of teaching materials.

Without such reinforcement, there is a risk that the habits that have been systemically designed in the KOM document are not fully internalized in daily practice, an implementation gap that is often found in hidden curriculum studies at various levels of education (Fatimah, Sumarno, and Dwijayanti 2024; Yulia and Ain 2024). Overall, the dialogue between the findings of this study and the existing literature shows that the hidden curriculum in MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura is not a phenomenon that arises by chance, but is the result of a deliberate institutional design.

This is reflected in the explicit inclusion of thirteen habituation practices, the Golden Habits program, and the association of each extracurricular with the dimensions of the Pancasila student profile in the KOM document itself. This condition is different from the general assumption that hidden curriculum is always implicit and undocumented (Ardilla et al. 2023); In this case, the madrasah is actually "writing down the hidden," that is, formally documenting the mechanisms that theoretically work implicitly. These findings open up new theoretical discussion spaces regarding the conceptual boundaries between hidden curricula and documented co-curricular curricula, especially in madrasahs that implement the Independent Curriculum with the demands of documenting projects to strengthen student profiles systematically.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that the hidden curriculum in MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura was realized in four main forms, namely: thirteen daily habituation practices that function to instill discipline and socio-religious manners; Golden Habits digital program that expands the implementation of worship habits to the home environment; compulsory extracurricular organizations (Hizbul Wathan and Tapak Suci) that integrate the functions of ideological cadre and character building; and optional extracurricular activities that are explicitly associated with the dimension of Pancasila student profile. These four forms operate implicitly and repeatedly, so as to complement the formal curriculum of Islamic Religious Education in instilling the values of worship, morals, discipline, and religious moderation to students. In addition, this study shows that the success of the implementation of hidden curriculum in non-Islamic boarding madrasahs such as MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura does not depend on the existence of dormitory structures, but on the consistency of institutionalizing habituation and structured partnerships with parents. However, these successes are very vulnerable to the limitations of exemplary experience from young educators. Theoretically, these findings contribute to the hidden curriculum discourse by presenting the context of Muhammadiyah madrasahs in the Muslim minority areas of Eastern Indonesia that have received little attention in the literature, as well as showing a new tendency in the form of formal documentation of mechanisms that are theoretically implicit. Given the limitations of this research which only focuses on the analysis of institutional documents, it is recommended that the follow-up research use a qualitative design with participatory observation methods and in-depth interviews

with madrasah heads, teachers, students, and parents to verify the actual implementation level of the policies contained in [KOM]. In addition, comparative research across Muhammadiyah madrasahs in Eastern Indonesia is also recommended to test the consistency of patterns found in this study. Research with a mixed methods approach is also recommended to measure the correlation between the intensity of hidden curriculum exposure and the achievement of students' character in a measurable manner.

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Author contributions: [Surindi ¹] Responsible for conceptualization, document analysis, and script writing. Meanwhile, [Desvita Astari Djamion ²] plays a role in the literature review, editing, and validation of research methodologies.

Data availability: The main data used in this study is in the form of the Madrasah Operational Curriculum (KOM) document of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura for the 2024/2025 Academic Year which is an institutional document; The data can be accessed through the author of the correspondence on the condition of reasonable request and approval from the madrasah

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this manuscript are entirely the views of the author and do not reflect the official position of MTs. Muhammadiyah Jayapura, the Regional Executive of Muhammadiyah Jayapura City, nor the author's affiliated institutions.

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