



## The Ta'dzim Tradition as a Form of Hidden Curriculum in Students' Character Formation at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang

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**Abstract:** The tradition of *ta'dzim* represents a deeply embedded social practice in pesantren life and serves as a form of value education that extends beyond formal instruction. This study analyzes *ta'dzim* as a form of hidden curriculum in students' character formation at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. The study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving seven informants, including the pesantren leader, teachers, senior students, and newly enrolled students. Data were analyzed through coding, thematic categorization, and triangulation across sources and data-collection techniques. The findings reveal three main themes. First, *ta'dzim* is manifested in everyday practices, including lowering one's head and pausing when teachers or caregivers pass by, maintaining respectful interactions with teachers and caregivers, and treating books and religious texts with reverence as an expression of respect for knowledge. Second, *ta'dzim* is learned, habituated, and reproduced through observation, imitation, teacher and senior-student role modeling, guidance, mentoring, and repeated participation in everyday pesantren life. Third, these practices function as a form of hidden curriculum because values are transmitted not only through explicit instruction but also through routines, social relationships, institutional culture, and unwritten expectations. From Bourdieu's perspective, repeated participation in *ta'dzim* practices may contribute to the formation of relatively enduring dispositions, although the process varies according to students' prior experiences and adaptation to pesantren culture. This study contributes to non-formal education by demonstrating how character and values are cultivated through sustained social and cultural experiences within everyday pesantren life.

**Keywords:** Ta'dzim; Hidden Curriculum; Character Formation; Pesantren; Non-Formal Education

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## INTRODUCTION

Pesantren are Islamic educational institutions that function not only as spaces for transmitting religious knowledge but also as social and cultural environments where values, norms, and patterns of behavior develop through communal life. Educational processes within pesantren occur through interactions among kyai, ustaz, administrators, senior students, and other students and therefore extend beyond formal instructional activities. Daily routines, interpersonal relationships, institutional traditions, and shared practices provide students with continuous opportunities to learn particular ways of thinking, behaving, and relating to others. In this sense, pesantren constitute distinctive educational environments in which value formation occurs through both organized learning and everyday social experiences (Gusmian & Abdullah, 2022; Latif et al., 2025; Salim et al., 2024).

One value that characterizes pesantren life is *ta'dzim*, an attitude of respect and reverence toward teachers, mentors, knowledge, and the sources through which knowledge is transmitted. Within the Islamic educational tradition, *ta'dzim* is understood not merely as social etiquette but also as an important aspect of students' moral orientation, learning attitudes, and character formation. This principle is reflected in Az-Zarnuji's *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, which emphasizes proper conduct in seeking knowledge, including respect for teachers and appropriate relationships with knowledge and its sources (Azizah & Syaie, 2024; Faridah, 2023; Fatoni, 2025; Mariati & Walidin, 2025). In everyday pesantren life, *ta'dzim* may be manifested through

practices such as lowering one's head or pausing when a teacher or caregiver passes, maintaining respectful speech and behavior when interacting with teachers, and treating books and religious texts with reverence.

The practice of ta'dzim shows that value education in pesantren does not occur solely through formal, structured instruction. Students also acquire values through social experiences, observing others' behavior, participating in daily routines, and engaging with the institution's cultural practices. This process is closely related to the concept of the hidden curriculum, which refers to the transmission of values, norms, expectations, and behavioral patterns through institutional culture, social relationships, and everyday practices that extend beyond the formally prescribed curriculum (Amin et al., 2024; Halid, 2019; Hanif et al., 2025; Syarifah et al., 2025). Recent studies similarly indicate that hidden curriculum processes in Islamic boarding schools operate through institutional culture, social interaction, routine practices, and exemplary behavior that shape students' moral and social conduct (Carnawi et al., 2024).

In the context of pesantren, the hidden curriculum appears in how students gradually learn culturally expected forms of conduct through participation in everyday social life. Newly enrolled students may become familiar with ta'dzim by observing senior students, following established practices, receiving guidance from teachers and administrators, and repeatedly participating in daily routines. Through these processes, students encounter not only explicit expectations for respectful behavior but also implicit norms embedded in the pesantren's social and cultural environment. Previous studies similarly indicate that pesantren culture, daily routines, interpersonal relationships, and exemplary behavior provide important spaces for transmitting religious and moral values (Hefner, 2022; Suryani & Nadira, 2025).

To understand how these practices may gradually become embedded in students' ways of acting, this study draws on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Habitus as a system of relatively durable dispositions formed through sustained participation in particular social environments. Habitus does not develop instantaneously but emerges through repeated experiences, interactions, and practices. In the pesantren context, students may initially enact ta'dzim by observing others, responding to guidance, or conforming to institutional expectations. Through continued participation in pesantren life, these practices may become increasingly familiar and help form dispositions that shape students' everyday conduct (Bourdieu, 1990).

The concepts of hidden curriculum and habitus therefore provide complementary perspectives for examining ta'dzim. The hidden curriculum helps explain how values are transmitted through institutional culture, interpersonal relationships, routines, role modeling, and everyday practices beyond formal instruction, whereas habitus provides a framework for understanding how repeated participation in these practices may contribute to the formation of relatively enduring dispositions. The use of habitus in this study does not assume that all students develop identical forms or levels of ta'dzim. Rather, it enables the analysis of how students' prior experiences, social interactions, and continued participation in pesantren life may shape different processes of adaptation and disposition formation.

Previous studies have examined character education, pesantren culture, and hidden curriculum practices in Islamic educational institutions (Habibi et al., 2025; Laila et al., 2022; Suhara et al., 2024). However, much of this literature discusses hidden curriculum and character formation at the broader level of institutional culture. Relatively little attention has been given to ta'dzim as a specific everyday social practice, particularly its concrete manifestations, the processes through which students learn and habituate these practices, and how repeated participation may contribute to the formation of dispositions. This gap matters because viewing ta'dzim only as a normative religious value may overlook the social and educational mechanisms through which it is enacted, learned, reproduced, and gradually embodied in everyday pesantren life.

Therefore, this study analyzes the tradition of ta'dzim in the character formation of students at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. Specifically, it examines the forms of ta'dzim manifested in everyday pesantren life, the processes through which these practices are learned, habituated, and reproduced, and how ta'dzim operates as a hidden curriculum that shapes students' dispositions through the lens of Bourdieu's concept of habitus.

## **METHODS**

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of ta'dzim as a form of hidden curriculum in students' character formation at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang. The case study design was selected because the study focused on a specific social and educational practice situated within a particular cultural and institutional context, namely the tradition of ta'dzim as practiced in the everyday life of the pesantren. A qualitative approach enables researchers to examine experiences, meanings, interactions, and social processes within their natural settings (Moleong, 2017; Yin, 2017). In this study, the concepts of hidden curriculum and habitus were not treated

as predetermined categories imposed on the data. Instead, they served as analytical perspectives for interpreting how ta'dzim was transmitted through everyday social practices and how repeated participation in these practices shaped students' dispositions.

The research was conducted at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School, Tambakberas, Jombang, Indonesia. The research site was purposively selected because ta'dzim constitutes a recurring and observable part of students' everyday social and educational experiences within the pesantren. Respect for teachers, caregivers, knowledge, religious texts, and institutional traditions is embedded in daily routines and interpersonal relationships. These characteristics made the site particularly relevant for examining how values are transmitted beyond formal instruction through observation, modeling, guidance, social interaction, and repeated participation in pesantren life.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in and experience with ta'dzim practices within the pesantren environment. Participants were selected not to achieve numerical representation but to provide information-rich accounts from different positions within the pesantren social structure. The selection of informants considered their experience with pesantren life, involvement in value transmission or mentoring processes, familiarity with ta'dzim practices, and ability to describe how these practices were learned, performed, and interpreted. The study gave particular attention to perspectives from both senior and newly enrolled students because differences in length of participation in pesantren life were considered relevant to understanding processes of observation, imitation, habituation, and adaptation.

A total of seven informants participated in the study, consisting of one pesantren leader (kyai), two female teachers (ustazah), two senior students who also held organizational or mentoring responsibilities, and two newly enrolled students. The kyai was included because of his knowledge of pesantren values, traditions, and expectations regarding student conduct. The ustazah were selected because of their involvement in teaching, mentoring, and supervising students' everyday behavior. Senior students were included because they had longer experience with pesantren culture and were involved in modeling and transmitting daily practices to newer students. Newly enrolled students were selected to provide perspectives on their initial encounters with ta'dzim, adaptation to pesantren culture, and the process through which unfamiliar practices gradually became part of their daily behavior.

**Table 1. Characteristics and Roles of Research Informants**

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Informant Status</b>   | <b>Basis for Inclusion</b>                                                                                                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| K           | Pesantren leader (kyai)   | Knowledge of pesantren values, institutional traditions, expectations regarding ta'dzim, and the broader cultural context of student formation   |
| U           | Female teachers (ustazah) | Direct involvement in teaching, guidance, mentoring, supervision, and the reinforcement of students' everyday conduct                            |
| SS          | Senior students           | Extended experience of pesantren life, familiarity with ta'dzim practices, and involvement in modeling, mentoring, or guiding newer students     |
| NS          | Newly enrolled students   | Recent experience of entering the pesantren environment and ability to describe processes of observation, adaptation, imitation, and habituation |

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The use of multiple data collection techniques was intended to obtain complementary information regarding the forms of ta'dzim practiced in everyday pesantren life, the processes through which students learned and habituated these practices, and the social and cultural conditions that supported or challenged their continuity. Data collection was guided by three main analytical concerns: the forms of ta'dzim manifested in students' daily behavior, the processes through which ta'dzim was transmitted and habituated, and the ways these practices could be interpreted as part of the hidden curriculum and the formation of habitus.

In-depth interviews were conducted using semi-structured interview guidelines adapted to the role and experience of each informant group. Interviews with the kyai explored the meaning of ta'dzim within pesantren culture, expected forms of respectful conduct, the role of pesantren traditions in value formation, the relationship between formal teaching and everyday practices, and the mechanisms through which students were introduced to and guided in practicing ta'dzim. The interviews also examined how the

pesantren responded to students who entered with different behavioral habits and how continuity of ta'dzim practices was maintained within the institution.

Interviews with ustazah focused on their experiences in teaching, guiding, and supervising students, particularly in relation to respectful behavior toward teachers, caregivers, knowledge, books, and religious texts. Questions explored the ways students were introduced to ta'dzim, the use of role modeling and direct guidance, differences between newer and more experienced students, and changes observed in students' behavior during their participation in pesantren life. The interviews also examined challenges encountered in helping students adapt to culturally expected forms of conduct.

Interviews with senior students explored their experiences of learning ta'dzim when they first entered the pesantren, the practices they considered important expressions of respect, the role of teachers and older students in shaping their behavior, and the extent to which practices initially performed through imitation or compliance had become more familiar or spontaneous over time. Particular attention was given to their role as models or mentors for newer students and to the ways they reproduced pesantren norms through everyday interaction.

Interviews with newly enrolled students were conducted to understand their initial experiences of encountering ta'dzim practices within the pesantren. Questions focused on behaviors they initially perceived as unfamiliar, the people they observed and followed, guidance they received from teachers or senior students, difficulties encountered during adaptation, and changes in their understanding of ta'dzim over time. These interviews were particularly important for examining the process through which culturally expected practices were first encountered, interpreted, imitated, and gradually incorporated into students' everyday conduct.

Observation was conducted within the everyday setting of pesantren life to examine ta'dzim practices as they occurred naturally. Observation focused on interactions between students and teachers or caregivers, students' responses when teachers or caregivers passed by, forms of verbal and nonverbal respect, behavior during learning and religious activities, and students' treatment of books and religious texts. Observation also considered interactions between senior and newly enrolled students, particularly situations in which senior students modeled, reminded, or guided newer students regarding expected forms of conduct. Attention was given not only to visible practices but also to the contexts in which they occurred, including routines, social expectations, and responses from other members of the pesantren community.

Documentation was used as supporting data to contextualize and verify information obtained through interviews and observations. Documentary materials included photographs of pesantren activities, institutional records where relevant and accessible, schedules of religious and learning activities, internal guidelines or rules, and other documentation related to daily routines and value education. These materials were used primarily to understand the institutional context, identify recurring activities in which ta'dzim practices were embedded, and triangulate information obtained from other data sources rather than as independent units of analysis.

The researcher served as the primary research instrument, supported by semi-structured interview guidelines, observation guidelines, audio-recording devices, field notes, and documentary records. Field notes recorded contextual information, interaction patterns, nonverbal behavior, and situations that audio recordings could not fully capture. Reflective notes were also maintained throughout the research process to distinguish empirical observations from emerging interpretations and to support reflexivity, particularly because the researcher's familiarity with pesantren culture could influence the interpretation of field data.

Data were analyzed using Miles et al. (2018) interactive model, consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials were read repeatedly to identify meaningful segments related to forms of respect, interactions with teachers and caregivers, attitudes toward knowledge and religious texts, observation of senior students, role modeling, guidance, repetition, adaptation, and changes in students' behavioral tendencies. Initial coding remained close to the empirical data so that theoretical concepts were not prematurely imposed on participants' experiences.

The second stage of analysis involved organizing related codes into broader analytical categories guided by the research objectives and recurring patterns in the data. Categories included manifestations of ta'dzim in everyday behavior, observation and imitation, role modeling, guidance and mentoring, repetition and habituation, adjustment to pesantren culture, and conditions that supported or challenged the continuity of ta'dzim practices. These categories were then interpreted using the concepts of hidden curriculum and habitus.

The hidden curriculum was used as a sensitizing concept to examine how ta'dzim was transmitted through institutional culture, interpersonal relationships, everyday routines, role modeling, and practices that

extended beyond formally stated learning content. A practice was interpreted as part of the hidden curriculum only when recurring evidence demonstrated that students learned or reproduced particular values through social and cultural experiences rather than solely through explicit formal instruction. This analytical approach enabled the study to distinguish between formally communicated expectations and values acquired through everyday participation in pesantren life.

The analysis generated three overarching thematic areas corresponding to the objectives of the study: (1) Forms of Ta'dzim in Everyday Pesantren Life, which describes expressions of respect toward teachers, caregivers, knowledge, books, religious texts, and pesantren traditions; (2) Learning, Habituation, and Reproduction of Ta'dzim, which examines processes of observation, modeling, guidance, mentoring, imitation, repetition, and adaptation; and (3) Ta'dzim as Hidden Curriculum and the Formation of Dispositions, which interprets how everyday social and cultural practices contribute to the transmission of values and the gradual formation of behavioral tendencies among students. Data were displayed through narrative descriptions and thematic matrices to facilitate comparison across informants, data collection techniques, and emerging themes.

Source and technique triangulation strengthened the credibility of the findings. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from the *kyai*, *ustazah*, senior students, and newly enrolled students. Particular attention was given to comparing accounts from senior and newly enrolled students to examine similarities and differences in their experiences of learning, practicing, and interpreting *ta'dzim*. Information from the *kyai* and *ustazah* was used to contextualize and verify findings concerning institutional expectations, guidance practices, value transmission, and students' adaptation to pesantren culture. The study triangulated techniques by comparing interview findings with observational and documentary evidence. This process reduced reliance on single-source accounts and strengthened interpretations of both visible practices and participants' accounts.

Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research setting, participant characteristics, *ta'dzim* practices, and the social and cultural context in which the study was conducted. Dependability was strengthened through systematic documentation of data collection procedures, consistent use of interview and observation guidelines, coding records, and thematic matrices. Confirmability was supported through field notes, reflective notes, repeated comparison between interpretations and empirical evidence, and clear differentiation between participants' statements and researchers' interpretations. Where appropriate, interpretations were also reviewed through member checking and peer discussion to strengthen the consistency and credibility of the findings.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Forms of Ta'dzim in Students' Everyday Pesantren Life

The findings show that *ta'dzim* at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School is expressed through concrete, recurring practices embedded in students' everyday lives. Based on interviews, observations, and documentation, the forms of *ta'dzim* identified in this study can be grouped into two main orientations: *ta'dzim* toward educators and caregivers, and *ta'dzim* toward knowledge and its sources. These practices were not limited to formal learning situations but were also visible in ordinary interactions and daily routines within the pesantren environment.

The first form of *ta'dzim* concerns students' attitudes toward the *kyai*, *nyai*, *ustaz*, and *ustazah*. Respect was expressed through verbal and nonverbal behavior, including standing, lowering the head, pausing briefly, or stepping aside when a teacher or caregiver passed by. The *kyai* described *ta'dzim* as an attitude of honoring and respecting one's teacher, while one of the *ustazah* explained that students commonly lower their heads slightly and pause when a teacher passes. Observations also showed that such behavior occurred naturally in everyday encounters between students and educators, indicating that respect was expressed not only through spoken language but also through bodily gestures and spatial behavior.



**Figure 1. Students Demonstrating Ta'dzim through Respectful Bodily Gestures**

These findings suggest that *ta'dzim* is embodied through recognizable interactional practices that communicate students' awareness of their relationship with teachers and caregivers. In the Islamic educational tradition, respect toward teachers is an important dimension of *adab* and learners' moral orientation (Fadlillah, 2023; Malikah & Muchlis, 2024; Richardson, 2019). The present findings, however, show that such respect is not expressed merely as an abstract moral principle but is translated into small, repetitive actions that structure everyday interaction within pesantren life.

A second expression of *ta'dzim* appears in students' behavior when they visit or interact directly with caregivers and mentors. Students were expected to regulate their posture, speech, and manner of interaction in accordance with culturally recognized forms of respectful conduct. The documentation of students visiting a caregiver, for example, shows students sitting politely and maintaining an appropriate demeanor during the interaction. This indicates that *ta'dzim* operates not only when students respond to teachers' physical presence in shared spaces but also in more direct interpersonal encounters.

The findings also reveal that *ta'dzim* is directed toward knowledge itself. Students demonstrated respect in how they handled books and religious texts, including keeping them in appropriate places, avoiding careless treatment, and treating them as valued sources of knowledge. In this sense, the object of *ta'dzim* extends beyond the teacher to include the knowledge being transmitted and the material sources associated with learning. This orientation aligns with the teachings in *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, which emphasize not only respect for teachers but also proper conduct toward knowledge and its sources (Husni & Hayden, 2024; Pallathadka et al., 2023).



**Figure 2. Students' Practice of Reverence for Knowledge**

**Table 2. Forms of Ta'dzim Practiced in Everyday Pesantren Life**

| <b>Forms of Ta'dzim</b>                                  | <b>Empirical Manifestations</b>                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ta'dzim toward <i>kyai</i> , <i>nyai</i> , and teachers  | Students stand, lower their heads, pause briefly, or step aside when teachers or caregivers pass                  |
| Ta'dzim in direct interaction with caregivers or mentors | Students regulate posture, speech, and behavior when visiting or communicating with caregivers                    |
| Ta'dzim toward knowledge                                 | Students handle books and religious texts carefully, place them appropriately, and avoid treating them carelessly |
| Ta'dzim as everyday cultural conduct                     | Respectful behavior is repeatedly enacted in ordinary interactions and daily pesantren routines                   |

The findings demonstrate that the meaning of *ta'dzim* is produced through both explicit and implicit educational processes. Some aspects of *ta'dzim* are directly communicated through advice, guidance, and the study of religious texts such as *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*. Other aspects are learned through observing established practices and participating in daily pesantren routines. This distinction is important because not every form of value transmission should automatically be classified as hidden curriculum. Explicit instruction represents consciously organized value education, whereas hidden curriculum becomes particularly visible when students learn expected patterns of behavior through institutional culture, social relationships, routines, and unwritten expectations.

From a hidden curriculum perspective, the forms of *ta'dzim* identified in this study show how educational values are embedded in the social organization of everyday life. Students learn what is considered respectful not only because others explain it to them but also because they repeatedly encounter these practices in interactions with teachers, caregivers, and senior students. The pesantren environment therefore provides a cultural setting in which values become visible through concrete practices and are continuously reproduced in daily interactions. Similar studies have shown that hidden curriculum in pesantren operates through institutional culture, routines, interpersonal relationships, and exemplary behavior (Dweirj, 2023; Rakhmawan et al., 2023).

This study shows that the hidden curriculum does not operate only at the broad level of institutional culture. It is also enacted through specific micro-practices, such as lowering the head, pausing when a teacher passes, regulating one's posture when meeting a caregiver, and carefully handling religious texts. These seemingly simple actions function as everyday educational experiences through which students encounter and reproduce culturally valued forms of conduct. Thus, *ta'dzim* in this pesantren is better understood not merely as a behavioral rule, but as a socially practiced form of value education embedded in everyday communal life.

### **Learning, Habituation, and Reproduction of Ta'dzim**

The findings show that *ta'dzim* is not acquired through a single instructional process but develops gradually through students' participation in everyday pesantren life. Based on interviews and observations, this process involves several interconnected mechanisms: observing established practices, imitating senior students, receiving guidance from teachers and more experienced students, repeating expected behaviors, and gradually becoming accustomed to them. The process therefore reflects both social learning and cultural habituation within the pesantren environment.

For newly enrolled students, the initial encounter with *ta'dzim* often begins with observation. Several informants explained that new students first recognize expected forms of conduct by watching how senior students behave toward teachers, caregivers, and other sources of authority. One new student described seeing senior students lower their heads when a teacher passed and then imitating the same behavior. Another student similarly explained that senior students became an immediate reference for understanding how students were expected to behave in the pesantren environment. These accounts indicate that students may begin to reproduce *ta'dzim* before fully understanding its normative meaning.

This finding is important because it shows that behavioral participation can precede conceptual understanding. At the beginning, students may follow a practice because it is visibly established in the surrounding environment rather than because they already understand its religious or moral significance. The process of learning *ta'dzim* therefore begins not only with explicit instruction but also with exposure to culturally recognized behavior.

Senior students and teachers play an important role in this process. Senior students explained that new students commonly observe the behavior of those who have lived in the pesantren longer and subsequently follow the same patterns. Teachers also noted that newly enrolled students tend to observe, ask questions, and gradually receive explanations about expected forms of conduct. In this context, senior students function

not merely as peers but also as everyday models who make institutional expectations visible through their behavior.

The learning process is further strengthened through guidance and social reinforcement. Informants explained that students not yet accustomed to expected forms of *ta'dzim* were usually reminded, advised, corrected, or shown appropriate examples. The *kyai* described this process as gradual guidance, while the *ustazah* emphasized the importance of setting examples and explaining mistakes. These findings show that habituation is not purely spontaneous. It is reinforced through interpersonal interaction with figures who clarify, model, and maintain culturally expected behavior.

Repetition constitutes another central element in the development of *ta'dzim*. Informants repeatedly emphasized that respectful behavior needed to be practiced continuously to become familiar. Students were reminded to repeat forms of conduct in everyday situations until these practices required less external prompting. In this sense, habituation can be understood as a process in which initially guided or imitated behavior becomes increasingly routine through repeated enactment.

**Table 3. Process of Learning and Habituating Ta'dzim**

| Process Stage                | Empirical Manifestation                                                              | Main Social Actors             |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Encountering pesantren norms | New students observe how others respond to teachers, caregivers, and religious texts | New students, senior students  |
| Observing and imitating      | Students reproduce behaviors demonstrated by more experienced students               | New students, senior students  |
| Receiving guidance           | Teachers and senior students explain, remind, and correct appropriate conduct        | Kyai, ustazah, senior students |
| Repeating practices          | Students enact the same forms of behavior repeatedly in everyday situations          | Students                       |
| Developing familiarity       | Ta'dzim is performed with less external prompting                                    | Students                       |
| Reproducing the practice     | More experienced students become models for newer students                           | Senior students                |

Although the process follows a recognizable pattern, the findings also show that habituation does not occur uniformly among all students. Prior experience before entering the pesantren influences how quickly students adapt to its cultural expectations. One student reported that adaptation was relatively easy because of previous experience in a pesantren environment, whereas another described the initial period as an adjustment because the existing practices were still unfamiliar. This variation indicates that students enter the pesantren with different social experiences that shape their responses to the same environment.

One senior student estimated that becoming accustomed to *ta'dzim* could take about one year. However, this account should not be interpreted as a universal period applicable to all students. Rather, it shows that habituation is gradual and may vary with individual experience, prior socialization, and the intensity of participation in pesantren life.

The findings also show that repeated behavior does not always indicate complete internal acceptance. One senior student acknowledged that students who had lived in the pesantren for a long time could still experience some resistance to certain norms. This finding is important because it prevents an overly simple interpretation of habituation. Observable conformity does not necessarily mean that every student has fully internalized the same meaning or value.

From the perspective of hidden curriculum, learning *ta'dzim* shows how values are transmitted through daily interaction, modeling, routines, and unwritten expectations rather than through formal instruction alone (Ainiyah & Muhid, 2025; Ramadhani et al., 2025). Students learn not only from what teachers explicitly explain but also from what they repeatedly see, experience, and practice within the pesantren environment. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that pesantren culture, daily routines, social interaction, and role modeling play important roles in the transmission of moral and religious values (Salim et al., 2024; Alamin et al., 2024). However, the present study provides a more specific explanation of the process by showing how *ta'dzim* develops through a sequence of observation, imitation, guidance, repetition, habituation, and reproduction.

The continuity of *ta'dzim* is therefore supported by the combined influence of the pesantren environment, teacher exemplification, senior student modeling, direct guidance, religious learning, and repeated opportunities to practice respectful conduct. At the same time, the process can be challenged by differences in students' prior habits, unfamiliarity with pesantren culture, and variation in individual acceptance. These

conditions are not separate from habituation but form part of the social process through which students gradually learn how *ta'dzim* is expected to be practiced.

Overall, the findings indicate that *ta'dzim* is learned through participation in a social environment where expectations are continuously demonstrated, reinforced, and reproduced. Students do not merely receive the value of *ta'dzim* as verbal instruction; they encounter it as a lived practice embedded in everyday relationships. This process provides the foundation for understanding how repeated social experiences may gradually contribute to the formation of dispositions, which is discussed in the following section through Bourdieu's concept of habitus.

### **Ta'dzim as a Hidden Curriculum and the Formation of Habitus**

The findings indicate that *ta'dzim* can be understood as part of the hidden curriculum because students learn and reproduce its values not only through explicit instruction but also through everyday social interaction, institutional routines, observation, and repeated participation in pesantren life. In this study, the hidden curriculum is visible in the gap between what is formally taught and what is gradually learned through participation in the social environment. Students encounter *ta'dzim* not only in religious texts or direct advice from teachers, but also in the unwritten expectations embedded in daily relationships and cultural practices.

This distinction matters because not all forms of *ta'dzim* transmission operate the same way. Formal instruction, such as studying *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, teacher advice, and direct reminders, represents explicit value education. By contrast, observing senior students, recognizing culturally appropriate gestures, following established routines, and adjusting one's behavior in response to others constitute implicit learning processes. These latter processes are closely associated with the hidden curriculum, in which values and norms are transmitted through institutional culture, social relationships, and everyday practices beyond formally stated learning content (Al-Mujahid & Hussain, 2025; Husna & Hamid, 2025; Maulana & Fuad, 2024).

The empirical data show that the hidden curriculum operates through specific micro-practices. Students learn that lowering their heads when a teacher passes, pausing briefly in a caregiver's presence, regulating posture and speech, and handling religious texts carefully are appropriate forms of conduct. These practices may appear simple, but their repeated enactment gives them educational significance. Through daily repetition, students come to recognize the social meanings attached to these behaviors and the expectations associated with their position within the pesantren community.

This finding supports previous studies showing that hidden curriculum in pesantren develops through institutional culture, daily routines, interpersonal relationships, role modeling, and unwritten expectations (Bustami et al., 2026; Yani et al., 2026). However, this study adds a more specific contribution by showing that hidden curriculum operates not only at the broad level of organizational culture but also through repeated micro-interactions in everyday life. The transmission of *ta'dzim* therefore occurs through the cumulative effect of small practices that are continuously observed, enacted, reinforced, and reproduced.

The process can be further interpreted through Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Bourdieu (1977) describes habitus as a system of relatively durable dispositions formed through repeated participation in particular social conditions. From this perspective, *ta'dzim* becomes part of students' conduct not simply because they are told to behave respectfully. Rather, dispositions develop through sustained exposure to norms, repeated enactment of expected behavior, interaction with significant others, and continued participation in the pesantren's social environment.

The findings suggest a gradual movement from externally oriented behavior toward increasingly familiar forms of conduct. Newly enrolled students may initially lower their heads, pause, or regulate their behavior because they observe senior students, receive reminders, or recognize that such actions are expected. At this stage, behavior may still depend strongly on external cues. Over time, however, repeated participation allows students to become more familiar with the meaning and practice of *ta'dzim*, and some behaviors begin to be performed with less direct prompting.

This transition reflects how social practices may become embodied as dispositions. In this study, the formation of *ta'dzim* as habitus can be understood as a movement from observation and imitation toward habituation and increasingly spontaneous enactment. However, the data do not support the conclusion that all students develop the same level or form of *ta'dzim*. Differences in previous experiences, adaptation processes, individual acceptance, and duration of participation influence how students respond to and internalize pesantren norms.

This variation is theoretically significant because habitus should not be understood as a mechanism that automatically produces uniform behavior. Bourdieu's perspective emphasizes that dispositions are shaped through the relationship between experience and present social conditions (Bourdieu, 1977). Therefore,

students who enter the pesantren with different backgrounds may respond differently to the same cultural expectations. Some students adapt relatively quickly because they are already familiar with pesantren norms, while others need a longer adjustment period.

The findings also show that repeated behavior does not always indicate complete internalization. One senior student reported that even students who had lived in the pesantren for a long time could still experience some resistance to norms. This suggests that habitus formation is not identical to unquestioned acceptance. Rather, it is an ongoing process in which social expectations, repeated practices, prior experiences, and individual interpretations interact.

From this perspective, the hidden curriculum and habitus provide complementary explanations. The hidden curriculum explains how values such as *ta'dzim* circulate through everyday institutional life, while habitus explains how repeated participation in these practices may gradually shape students' dispositions. The first concept focuses on the social mechanisms of value transmission, whereas the second focuses on how those social experiences become embedded in tendencies of perception and action.

This relationship is particularly relevant to character formation. The findings suggest that character is not shaped solely through formal moral instruction, but through repeated participation in culturally structured experiences. Students learn respect by being situated in an environment where respectful conduct is continuously modeled, expected, corrected, and practiced. Character formation therefore emerges through the interaction between institutional culture and individual participation rather than through a single instructional intervention. The study also highlights the relevance of pesantren as a learning environment in which non-formal and informal educational processes occur alongside formal instruction. Learning takes place through communal life, social interaction, routines, and participation in shared cultural practices. This aligns with perspectives that emphasize learning embedded in everyday social experience beyond formally structured teaching (Badrun, 2023; Taufiq & Suryo, 2024).

In synthesis, the findings of this study show that *ta'dzim* cannot be understood merely as a norm of politeness or an explicitly taught moral precept, but rather as a social practice shaped, learned, and reproduced through everyday life in the pesantren. Forms of respect for teachers, caretakers, knowledge, and learning resources acquire meaning through observation, imitation, guidance, repetition, and participation in pesantren culture. In this process, the hidden curriculum explains how values are transmitted through routines, social relationships, role modeling, and expectations that are not always written down, while the concept of habitus helps explain how repeated engagement in these practices can develop into relatively enduring dispositions. Thus, the formation of students' character in this context does not occur solely through instructional mechanisms, but through the dynamic interaction of the pesantren's cultural structure, everyday social experiences, and the students' individual backgrounds. This synthesis presents *ta'dzim* as a social, cultural, and ongoing educational practice, while also emphasizing that its internalization does not occur uniformly among all students.

Overall, the findings indicate that *ta'dzim* functions as a hidden curriculum through a sequence of interconnected processes. First, culturally valued forms of respect are made visible through everyday practices. Second, students learn these practices through observation, imitation, guidance, and repetition. Third, sustained participation may help form dispositions that make respectful behavior increasingly familiar and embodied. In this way, *ta'dzim* can be understood not only as a normative value but as a socially reproduced educational practice that contributes to students' character formation through the interaction of hidden curriculum and habitus.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the tradition of *ta'dzim* at Al Hikmah Bahrul Ulum Islamic Boarding School functions as a form of hidden curriculum that shapes students' character through everyday social and cultural practices. *Ta'dzim* manifests in concrete behaviors, particularly respect toward teachers and caregivers, as well as reverence for knowledge and religious texts. These practices are learned gradually through observation, imitation, guidance, repeated participation, and habituation within pesantren life. The findings also show that this process is not uniform, as students' prior experiences and adaptation to pesantren culture influence how quickly and deeply *ta'dzim* becomes familiar in their conduct. Viewed through Bourdieu's concept of habitus, repeated participation in these practices can contribute to the formation of relatively enduring dispositions, although such dispositions do not develop identically among all students. Overall, the study demonstrates that character formation in pesantren occurs not only through formal instruction but also through the hidden curriculum embedded in routines, interpersonal relationships, role modeling, and communal life.

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