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SECULARIZATION AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION MAINTAINING RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AT MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH MIFTAHUL ULUM TRIMOHARJO BANTUL

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Abstract

Amid globalization-induced secularization, Indonesian *madrasahs* such as MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo face growing challenges in preserving students' religious identity while integrating a national STEM-focused curriculum. Grounded in Berger's secularization theory, Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory, and al-Attas's *ta'dīb* framework, this qualitative single-case study examines the impact of secularization on religious identity and the counterstrategies deployed at the institutional level. Data were generated through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis involving the headmaster, Islamic education (PAI) teachers, and students, and were thematically analyzed following Braun and Clarke (2006), with trustworthiness ensured via triangulation and member checking. The findings reveal that secularization contributes to the erosion of *tawḥīd*-based values; however, the *madrasah* actively resists this trend through curriculum integration (e.g., infusing Islamic ethics into mathematics and science), daily worship habituation, Qur'anic literacy programs, teacher exemplarity, and structured partnerships with parents and the wider community. These strategies collectively

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foster improved religious awareness, discipline, and *tajwīd* performance, despite persistent gaps in teacher competency and variable levels of participation. Theoretically, the study enriches resilience models for Islamic education by illustrating how doctrinal, pedagogical, and communal resources can be mobilized to sustain religious identity under modernizing pressures. Practically, it offers contextually grounded and replicable strategies for similar institutions seeking to balance curricular modernization with robust Islamic formation. Acknowledging the limitations of its single-case design, the study points to the need for future multi-site and comparative research to deepen understanding of institutional responses to secularization in diverse Islamic educational settings.

Keywords: Secularization; Islamic Education; Religious Identity; Modernity; *Madrasah* Education.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of rapid globalization and modernity, Indonesia confronts profound challenges in preserving cultural and religious integrity, particularly within its education sector. This phenomenon manifests prominently through secularization—a process entailing the progressive separation of religion from public life, including educational systems (Casanova, 2019; Berger, 1967). In Islamic education, secularization risks transforming curricula traditionally rooted in religious values into more secular frameworks that prioritize general scientific knowledge at the expense of religious character formation (Sahin, 2018). Such shifts undermine students' holistic development, fostering a disconnect between spiritual identity and modern competencies.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) institutions, such as MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo in Trimoharjo, Bantul, Yogyakarta, exemplify this tension. Located in a region blending rural Islamic traditions with urban technological influences, this madrasah serves elementary students amid the advancement of science and technology. It faces the dilemma of maintaining religious identity while integrating contemporary curricula mandated by Indonesia's national education standards, which increasingly emphasize STEM over religious studies. This context underscores the urgency of empirical research examining how Islamic education maintains its relevance amid secular pressures (Mulyana, 2023).

Secularization, as conceptualized by Berger (1967), refers to the declining influence of religion on social institutions, including education, in which rationality and empirical

science eclipse religious norms. In Indonesian Islamic schools, this manifests as diluted religious instruction, impacting students' religious identity formation. Empirical evidence reveals that exposure to secular curricula correlates with weakened religious observance among pupils, as public education systems prioritize measurable outcomes over spiritual cultivation (Milligan, 2020).

Prior studies illuminate these dynamics. Akbarzadeh and Mansouri (2010) demonstrate how secularization in the country's state-managed schools marginalizes religious education, compelling faith-based institutions like madrasahs to counterbalance this erosion. Similarly, Youvan (2024) advocates integrating spiritual values with modern science to prevent religious dilution. However, these works largely address macro-level trends, with scant attention to micro-level contexts such as rural MI settings.

This gap is particularly evident in research on MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo, where localized strategies for resisting secularization remain underexplored. Unlike urban madrasahs, this institution navigates unique socio-cultural dynamics in Yogyakarta's *pesantren*-influenced periphery, blending national curricula with community-based religious practices. Existing literature overlooks such site-specific adaptations, leaving policymakers without actionable insights into grassroots resilience (Mfitumukiza et al., 2020).

This study addresses these lacunae by analyzing secularization's impact on Islamic education at MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo and exploring institutional strategies for preserving students' religious identity. Employing a qualitative approach, it investigates curriculum integration, pedagogical innovations, and stakeholder perceptions to delineate adaptive mechanisms. Theoretically and practically, this research contributes to Islamic education scholarship by offering context-specific models for countering secularization, applicable to similar MI contexts globally. It provides policy recommendations for curriculum developers, madrasah administrators, and educators, advocating balanced integration of religious values into modern pedagogies. Ultimately, findings aim to fortify religious character amid globalization, ensuring Islamic education's enduring relevance.

METHODS

This study aims to examine the influence of secularization on Islamic education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo, and to explore the strategies the madrasah has implemented to preserve students' religious identity amid modernity.

Employing a qualitative approach with a single-case study design (Sugiyono, 2017), this research focuses on the headmaster, Islamic Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam*/PAI) teachers, and students as primary participants. These subjects were selected purposively to capture diverse perspectives, experiences, and strategies for countering secularization in Islamic religious education. Data collection involves in-depth semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis related to the curriculum and instructional activities (Rukin, 2019).

Theoretical underpinnings draw primarily from Berger's (1967) secularization theory, which posits the decline of religious influence in modern societies, and Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory, which elucidates how group affiliations shape individual identities. These frameworks guide the analysis of how religious values are sustained within the madrasah's curriculum despite secular pressures. Complementing these, Lickona's (1991) character education theory informs the examination of efforts to strengthen students' moral and religious character. Data analysis proceeds through thematic coding, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process: familiarization with the data, initial coding, theme searching, theme review, theme definition, and report production.

To ensure trustworthiness, this study incorporates multiple validity procedures. Triangulation integrates findings from interviews, observations, and documents (Suwendra, 2018). Member checking involves sharing preliminary findings with participants for validation, while peer debriefing with two independent qualitative researchers enhances reflexivity. Prolonged engagement in the field—spanning three months—mitigates researchers' bias and captures contextual nuances. Through this rigorous methodology, the study provides an in-depth portrayal of MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo's strategies for safeguarding students' religious identity. Findings are expected to yield practical recommendations for other madrasahs navigating secularization and modernity, as well as theoretical contributions to the resilience of Islamic education in contemporary contexts.

RESULTS

Secularization of Education and Its Impact on Islamic Education

In his seminal work Islam and Secularism, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas defines "secularization" as the liberation of man from religious and metaphysical authority that regulates his language and reasoning (Fahrudin, Mulyadi, & Ichsan, 2020). This process

entails the world detaching itself from religious and religio-centric understandings, rejecting closed worldviews, and dismissing supernatural myths and sacred symbols (Fether, 2023). Al-Attas's conceptualization underscores a profound epistemic shift in which sacred narratives, once integral to human cognition, are supplanted by profane, anthropocentric frameworks. It not only erodes the linguistic structures imbued with divine meaning but also fragments the holistic rationality that integrates revelation (*wahy*) with intellect (*'aql*) (Muhammad & Norhazlin, 2010). In educational contexts, this manifests as a deliberate marginalization of *tawhidic* knowledge, paving the way for instrumental reason to dominate curricula and pedagogical practices.

Furthermore, Harvey Cox, in The Secular City, delineates key dimensions of secularization, including the desacralization of politics and the rejection of nature as a sacred domain (Dora, 2016). Cox portrays secularization not merely as a decline but as a dynamic urbanizing force that profane-izes public spheres, rendering them autonomous from divine mandates. It involves the technopolitan ethos, in which politics becomes a realm of pragmatic power rather than moral-theological stewardship, and nature shifts from a sign of the Divine (*ayat Allah*) to a mere resource for exploitation. In education, these elements translate into curricula that prioritize civic secularism over ethical theology (Porter, 2023), fostering a polity detached from prophetic governance models exemplified in Islamic history, such as the Medina Charter.

Secularization in education represents the systematic extrusion of religious values from the architecture of knowledge, learning practices, and institutional orientations. Sociologically, Peter Berger (1990) frames it as a cultural transformation that relocates religious authority from public to private domains, diminishing its societal plausibility structures. In modern schooling, this is evident in the sidelining of spiritual and normative values that once shaped students' character and identity (*insan kamil*) (Damon, 2013). Contemporary education, driven by instrumental rationality, efficiency, and output-oriented metrics tied to academic competition and labor-market demands, relegates religion to a peripheral status (Tilaar, 2002). Consequently, faith ceases to serve as the philosophical scaffold for integral human formation, reduced instead to an administrative elective devoid of transformative depth.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2009) incisively identifies the crisis's root in modern education's loss of spiritual orientation within its epistemological structure. Dominated by

secular-modernist paradigms, education elevates human reason as the sole arbiter of truth, deeming revelation irrelevant to scientific advancement. It engenders a stark dichotomy between religious sciences (*'ulum al-din*) and general sciences (*'ulum al-dunya*), fracturing the unitary pursuit of knowledge central to Islamic epistemology. Islamic education, grounded in the integration of reason and revelation (*tawhid al-ma'rifah*), now confronts existential epistemological challenges. Complementing this, Jasser Auda (2020) argues that Islamic educational epistemology is in crisis, ensnared by Western-derived secular structures that unwittingly import philosophical and ideological presuppositions, such as positivism and materialism, alien to *maqasid al-shari'ah*.

Secularization further erodes religious identity among students, manifesting in moral degradation, hedonistic behaviors, and unchecked digital culture dependency (Hidayat, 2020). Absent education's role as a moral agent, religious character formation falters, undermining its liberatory potential. Paulo Freire, in Takona (2025), posits that true education must liberate through critical consciousness rooted in humanistic values, yet secularized systems prioritize conformity over emancipation. In Islamic terms, this betrays the prophetic mission of *tarbiyah*, which nurtures the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) alongside intellect. Empirical studies from Indonesian *pesantren* reveal how secular curricula exacerbate identity dilution, with students excelling academically yet exhibiting spiritual anomie, highlighting the need for reintegrating *adab* as epistemic praxis (Ichsan, Samsudin, & Pranajati, 2021; Khabibullah, Ichsan, & Ashari, 2022; Rustam & Ichsan, 2020).

In Indonesia's context, national curricula emphasizing academic competencies often constrict space for religious value internalization. Religious instruction becomes cognitively overloaded, neglecting adab, akhlaq, and spiritual awareness. This paradox yields intellectually adept yet morally deficient graduates, contradicting classical Islamic ideals of education as moral refinement (*tahdzib al-akhlaq*), as articulated by Al-Ghazali in *Ihya Ulum al-Din*. *Pesantren* and *madrasah*, historically resilient against colonial secular incursions, now grapple with hybridized models that dilute *santri* identity. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2023) indicate rising secular influences in public madrasah, underscoring the urgency of curriculum decolonization to restore revelatory primacy.

Educational secularization transcends administrative or curricular phenomena, posing a philosophical threat to the essence of Islamic education. Market-driven orientations eviscerate noble aims like forging faithful, knowledgeable, and refined generations (*ummatan*

wasatan). Counter-strategies demand epistemological and cultural resistance through the bolstering of religious identity in institutions like *madrasah*s, fortresses of tradition and spirituality. These spaces must pioneer integrative pedagogies that blend modern sciences with tawhidic paradigms, ensuring cultural continuity in Muslim Indonesian society. Ultimately, revitalizing *madrasah* could model global Islamic renewal, safeguarding against epistemic imperialism.

The Role of Madrasah as an Identity of Islamic Education

In the socio-religious landscape of Indonesia, madrasahs transcend their role as mere providers of formal education; they function as pivotal social institutions tasked with safeguarding moral values and religious traditions within community life. As community-based educational entities rooted in Muslim praxis, *madrasahs* play a critical role in internalizing Islamic values through structured pedagogical processes and character formation initiatives, thereby laying the groundwork for civilized societal development. It aligns seamlessly with Al-Attas's (2020) conceptualization of Islamic education's primary objective as *ta'dib*—the holistic cultivation of *adab*, or moral personality, which integrates intellect, emotion, and spirituality into a cohesive ethical framework. Such an approach not only fosters individual moral agency but also reinforces communal cohesion, positioning madrasahs as bulwarks against ethical erosion in pluralistic societies. Empirical observations from Indonesian madrasahs, including those in rural settings, underscore how this *ta'dib*-oriented education counters secular influences by embedding religious epistemology into daily learning paradigms.

Madrasahs emerge as strategic arenas for shaping students' ethics and character through value-based education rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, particularly amid the moral crises afflicting youth in the context of globalization and modernization. In this capacity, they serve as moral centers, transmitting ethical precepts not solely through formal Islamic Education (PAI) subjects but via habitual practices such as congregational prayers, teacher exemplarity, and pervasive school religious cultures. It resonates with the Islamic paradigm of character education, where behavior and *adab* constitute the paramount educational aims (Lahmar, 2020). A deeper analysis reveals that these mechanisms operate at multiple levels: cognitive (through doctrinal instruction), affective (via emotional modeling), and behavioral (through reinforcement rituals). In the Indonesian context, where rapid urbanization

exacerbates identity fragmentation, madrasahs mitigate risks of delinquency and ethical relativism by cultivating resilience against consumerist ideologies, thus ensuring moral continuity across generations.

At MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo, moral education manifests concretely through routines such as congregational prayers, pre-lesson Qur'anic recitations (*tadarus*), cultivation of interpersonal *adab*, and instilling politeness and responsibility. These practices transform the *madrasah* from a knowledge-transfer hub into a locus for the tangible internalization of Islamic ethics, as evidenced by students' behavioral transformations. Such implementation exemplifies Bandura's social learning theory, adapted to religious contexts, in which observational learning from educators and peers reinforces ethical dispositions (Osman, 2021). Moreover, longitudinal assessments in similar institutions indicate sustained impacts, such as reduced behavioral infractions and heightened prosocial behaviors, affirming madrasahs' efficacy as agents of character formation responsive to modern moral exigencies.

As social institutions, madrasahs also act as agents of religious cultural transmission, preserving Islamic values, local religious traditions, and communal identities against modernity's disruptions. Berger (1990) aptly describes religion-based education as a "social carrier of tradition," an institution that sustains the continuity and meaningful structures of tradition within society. Madrasahs bridge generational religious legacies, ensuring the perpetuation of Islamic identity amid sociocultural shifts. This function gains depth when viewed through Bourdieu's lens of cultural capital, in which madrasahs accrue and transmit symbolic capital—religious knowledge and practices—that bolster social reproduction and resistance to homogenizing global forces (Tohme, 2014).

At MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo, this transmissive role unfolds through Islamic holiday commemorations (PHBI), studies of foundational religious texts, *shalawat* sessions, and community-oriented religious programs. These collective traditions fortify Islamic social identity and cultivate awareness that religion transcends normative doctrine, embodying lived cultural practices (Mala & Hunaida, 2023). Beyond preservation, madrasahs exert social control by influencing behavioral norms to align with religious and moral standards. Durkheim's (1995) sociology of education posits religious educational institutions as mechanisms for value stabilization and social order maintenance. In Indonesia's secular cultural milieu, madrasahs counter moral deviations—such as materialism or hedonism—by providing ethical and spiritual guidelines, thereby stabilizing societal equilibrium.

MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo operationalizes social control through robust partnerships with parents and communities, encompassing religious study circles (*pengajian*), communication forums for committees, and family-based character mentoring. This collaborative framework engenders collective moral education spaces, amplifying communal consciousness on nurturing pious generations. Consequently, madrasahs not only enlighten students but also nurture socio-religious identities. Amid secularization pressures in education, their institutional role intensifies as fortresses defending Islamic values and cultures, while serving as sites of resistance against modernity's spirituality-eroding currents (Sanyal & Farah, 2018). This dual function underscores madrasahs' indispensable contributions to Indonesia's resilient religious ecosystem, warranting policy support for their expanded integration into national educational frameworks.

Table 1. *Documentation of Field Research Results at MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo*

No	Type of Activity / Strategy Implementation	Description of Implementation in the Field	Empirical Data / Evidence Findings	Success Analysis	Weakness Analysis
1	Integration of Religious and General Curriculum	Teachers integrate Islamic values into general subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Indonesian, and Social Studies.	Classroom observation (Jan 2025), Integrated lesson plan document, Teacher interview	Students' understanding of religion increases; teachers can connect the concept of monotheism with science.	Not all general teachers have integrative skills; further training is needed.
2	Habituation of daily worship	Performing Dhuha prayer in congregation, 15 minutes of tadarus, and reading of shalawat	Regular schedule of religious activities, daily student attendance, and documentation of photos	Students' discipline and religious character improved; rule violations decreased.	Some students follow mechanically without deep spiritual awareness.
3	Religious culture based on teacher role models	Teachers are role models of morals, companions in worship, and examples of good speech.	Observation of teacher behavior and interactions at school	Teacher role models increase the internalization of moral values in students	There are still inconsistencies in time discipline and mentoring by some teachers.
4	Al-Quran Literacy Program and PHBI	Tahfiz every Friday, Prophet's Birthday, Isra Mi'raj, Islamic Boarding School	Data on increasing the value of reading the Qur'an, documentation of activities	Improving the ability to read the Qur'an and collective religious identity	The limited number of tahsin teachers makes the tahfiz program less intensive.

No	Type of Activity / Strategy Implementation	Description of Implementation in the Field	Empirical Data / Evidence Findings	Success Analysis	Weakness Analysis
5	Collaboration between parents and the community	Committee meetings, student guardians' study groups, and joint village activities	Meeting attendance, interviews with community leaders	Character education runs continuously between home and madrasah	Parental participation is uneven, ±20% are still passive
6	Strengthening the religious physical environment	Islamic values poster, Qur'an reading corner, representative prayer room	Classroom and environment documentation	Supporting the religious atmosphere and Islamic identity of the school	Need maintenance and facility updates

DISCUSSION

Madrasah Strategies in Maintaining Religious Identity

The implementation of strategies at MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo to preserve religious identity is evidenced through tangible programs integrated into both instructional and cultural school activities. The madrasah employs a thematic curriculum integration approach, seamlessly blending general subject competencies with Islamic values, which aligns with the national *Kurikulum Merdeka* framework while countering secularization pressures in Indonesian elementary education. For instance, in Grade 5 Mathematics, teachers incorporate *zakat* and *infak* calculations into problem-solving exercises, fostering financial literacy rooted in Islamic ethics; in Science lessons, natural phenomena are linked to *tadabbur* (contemplation of creation) and *tauhid* (oneness of Allah), transforming empirical knowledge into spiritual insight. Routine curriculum meetings, held twice per semester, ensure material alignment and pedagogical consistency, preventing fragmented implementation (Briggs, 2016). Evaluation data reveal a marked rise in students' religious awareness, with teacher-assessed average scores improving from 78 in 2024 to 87 in 2025, indicating enhanced spiritual-intellectual synthesis. However, integration remains uneven, as some general-subject teachers lack competence in integrating religious perspectives, often delegating this to Islamic Education (PAI) instructors. It highlights the urgent need for structured professional development, such as workshops on interdisciplinary Islamic pedagogy, to achieve holistic internalization and avert academic-religious dualism.

Daily religious activities, including congregational Dhuha prayer, 15-minute morning *tadarus* (Quranic recitation), and salawat chanting, are mandatory before lessons commence,

fostering a pervasive religious atmosphere. Documentation from activity logs shows stable and rising student participation, peaking in the odd semester of 2025/2026, with attendance rates exceeding 95%. This habituation not only instills discipline but also triggers observable behavioral transformations, such as increased punctuality, courtesy in interactions, and proactive moral initiatives, as noted in classroom observations. The principal reports a 30% decline in disciplinary violations, attributing it to the role of routines in reinforcing *Islamic akhlak* (morals). Drawing on habitus theory in Bourdieu's framework, adapted to Islamic education, these practices embed religiosity as a "second nature," mitigating external secular influences such as digital distractions (Tohme, 2014). Yet not all students exhibit intrinsic motivation; some participate mechanically out of routine enforcement, signaling incomplete internalization of value. To address this, the *madrasah* should introduce personalized spiritual mentoring that blends emotional engagement with cognitive reinforcement to foster deeper commitment.

The madrasah organizes Quranic literacy enhancement programs every Friday, alongside PHBI (*Penguatan Hari Besar Islam*/Islamic Holiday Commemoration) events such as Maulid Nabi celebrations, *Hijriyah* New Year observances, and *Ramadan Pesantren Kilat* (a short-term boarding program). Photographic and video documentation captures robust involvement from students, teachers, and parents, with over 90% attendance in major events. The Quranic literacy initiative yields measurable gains, evidenced by a 25% improvement in average tajwid (proper recitation) scores from baseline assessments. PHBI activities bolster collective Islamic identity and sense of belonging, fostering communal solidarity against individualism prevalent in modern society. These align with Al-Attas' Islamization of knowledge paradigm, where rituals reinforce epistemological foundations (Muhammad & Norhazlin, 2010). Nevertheless, intensive *tahfiz* (memorization) programs falter due to a shortage of *tahsin*/*tahfiz*-specialized teachers, resulting in only target achievement; expanding this through external partnerships or teacher certification could optimize long-term scriptural fluency and resilience to cultural erosion.

Teachers are obligated to exemplify Islamic conduct in speech, punctuality, and civility, serving as living curricula for student moral formation. They consistently accompany students during worship, employ Islamic greetings in formal interactions, and model *akhlak* practices like seeking forgiveness and respecting differences, which Bandura's social learning theory posits as pivotal for observational imitation. Interviews with parents confirm transference of habits homeward, with children leading family prayers or reciting mealtime

doas, indicating ripple effects beyond school walls. This teacher exemplarity significantly bolsters student morality, with surveyed parents noting positive character shifts. However, minor inconsistencies—such as occasional teacher absences at worship initiations—undermine modeling efficacy, potentially normalizing laxity (Little, 2020). Institutional measures, such as performance-linked incentives and peer accountability, are essential to ensure unwavering consistency and thereby maximize role-model impact in identity preservation.

Collaboration with the school committee and community leaders underpins child development initiatives, with monthly parent-teacher meetings and parental *majelis ta'lim* (religious study circles) discussing character progress. This triadic involvement accelerates the internalization of spiritual values, as parents extend school habits into the home, creating a seamless educational continuum. Parental testimonials affirm efficacy, with reports of sustained home practices such as family *tadarus* that fortify character against secular media influences. Such partnerships reflect Epstein's school-family-community model, enhancing ecological support for holistic development (Sadovnik & Coughlan, 2019). Yet, participation lags for about 20% of parents due to work demands, disrupting continuity. Targeted strategies, such as virtual sessions or flexible scheduling, could mitigate this and ensure equitable involvement.

MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo demonstrates comprehensive efforts to safeguard religious identity amid challenges posed by educational secularization, blending curriculum, routines, events, exemplarity, and partnerships into a multifaceted strategy. While achievements in awareness, discipline, and literacy are evident, gaps in teacher competence, depth of motivation, resources, consistency, and inclusivity persist. Strengthening institutional frameworks—through competency-building training, emotional-spiritual programs, *tahfiz* expansions, accountability mechanisms, and inclusive collaborations—will elevate strategies from ritualistic to substantively internalized, ensuring an enduring Islamic identity among students.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the secularization of education at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (MI) Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo, as conceptualized by Berger (1967), al-Attas (2020), and Cox, has eroded students' religious identity through the dominance of a secular curriculum that

marginalizes *tawhidic* values and Islamic character formation. At the same time, the *madrasah* has successfully resisted these pressures through multifaceted strategies, including thematic curriculum integration, daily worship practices, *Qur'an* literacy programs and PHBI, teacher role modelling, and parent–community collaboration. Evidence from interviews, observations, and document analysis indicates increased religious awareness, student discipline, and *tajwid* literacy, although challenges remain in the form of uneven teacher competency, low intrinsic student motivation, and limited parental participation.

Theoretically, this study enriches secularization theory with micro-contextual evidence from rural Indonesian *madrasahs* by integrating Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory and al-Attas's *ta'dib* to explain institutional resilience as a "fortress of tradition." It thus clarifies how religious educational institutions can negotiate secularizing pressures while maintaining a coherent religious identity. Practically, the strategy developed by MI Miftahul Ulum Trimoharjo offers an adaptive model that can be replicated in similar *madrasahs* to support the Independent Curriculum through the infusion of Islamic values, thereby preventing academic–spiritual dualism. The study also highlights concrete recommendations for practice, including interdisciplinary training for Islamic Education (PAI) and general subject teachers, expansion of the *tahfiz* program through external partnerships, the implementation of accountability mechanisms for teacher role models, and virtual collaborative sessions for parents to enhance inclusiveness and shared responsibility.

The limitation of this study lies in its single-case design in one rural *madrasah*, which constrains the generalizability of the findings. Accordingly, a comparative multi-*madrasah* survey is needed to test the transferability of this adaptive model across diverse institutional, socio-economic, and cultural contexts. Such further research would deepen understanding of the role of *madrasahs* as agents of religious identity preservation amid globalization and strengthen the sustainability of holistic, globally relevant Islamic education.

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