UMRAN - International Journal of Islamic and Civilizational Studies
http://jurnalumran.utm.my
eISSN 2289-8204

The Hidden Curriculum and Educational Ecology of Islamic Schools in Fostering Resilience: A Hybrid Bibliometric and Systematic Literature Review

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Article history

Received: 2026-05-23 Received in revised form: 2026-07-19 Accepted: 2026-07-23 Published online: 2026-11-05

Abstract

This research responds to the failure of the conventional Islamic Religious Education (IRE) approach, which is often reduced to a formal subject based solely on cognitive memorization. This research aims to: (1) reconstruct global research trends related to ecological value systems; (2) explore the transmission of values through the hidden curriculum; and (3) analyze its impact on students' mental resilience. The method used is a hybrid design that integrates bibliometric analysis of 87 Scopus documents (2015-2026) and a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of 30 core literatures based on PRISMA guidelines. The results of the bibliometric mapping indicate that PAI research as a rigid classroom doctrine has reached academic saturation. In contrast, the SLR findings confirm that the transmission of ethical and spiritual values is most effective through the hidden curriculum and local cultural assimilation, where educators act actively as living role models. Furthermore, the systematic synthesis indicates that an inclusive and bullying-free school climate acts as a primary protective pathway that is strongly associated with reduced adolescent stress and enhanced psychological well-being. The findings underscore that integrating a hidden curriculum of empathy with supportive ecological structures represents a highly promising pathway to nurture student resilience. In conclusion, Islamic Religious Education must be recontextualized from a rigid, isolated classroom subject into a holistic value system that organically supports the developmental ecology of modern students.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education; Hidden Curriculum; Student Resilience; Bibliometric Analysis; Systematic Literature Review.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Character and moral education in the contemporary era faces increasingly complex challenges, particularly amidst shifting social and psychological dynamics of adolescents. The failure of conventional approaches that position moral education, including Islamic Religious Education (PAI), as a formal, cognitive-based subject is increasingly being highlighted by global scholars (Dabdoub et al., 2024; Margerison & Ravenscroft, 2020). Educational institutions are frequently constrained by narrow academic syllabus targets. Consequently, fundamental ethical, moral, and spiritual values lose their transformative potential when they are divorced from the broader ecosystem of daily school life. When these values are reduced to mere memorization for exam evaluation, their impact on mental toughness (resilience), psychological well-being, and the prevention of deviant behavior is minimal (Rejekiningsih et al., 2025).

Responding to this impasse, global pedagogical discourse is shifting from classroom-based doctrinal teaching to an ecological approach to education (Ruyadi et al., 2026). In this paradigm, schools are viewed as living organisms, where the hidden curriculum plays a central role. Educational ecology dictates that students' character is fundamentally shaped through social interactions, teacher role models, school policy design, and the surrounding cultural environment (Faridi & Umiarso, 2024; Salgado et al., 2025). In the context of Islamic education, this concept aligns with efforts to recontextualize Islamic Religious Education (PAI) from a rigid institution or subject to a pure value system holistically integrated into every dimension of school activities (Alamin et al., 2024; Syukur et al., 2024).

Previous studies have begun to highlight the importance of assimilating school culture and religious values. For example, Mawardi and Ruhiyah (2022) emphasized the relevance of the concept of positive education in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) that utilize a hidden curriculum to transmit resilience and religious values. However, a macro-literature analysis using a bibliometric analysis of 175 global articles published between 2015 and 2026 reveals that the discourse on the Islamic education ecosystem remains significantly fragmented. Despite a sharp increase in publications examining school culture and value systems between 2023 and 2026, the majority of this research has been conducted in isolation (Adriany, 2022; Setiawati et al., 2026).

This conceptual fragmentation in the literature is definitively confirmed by the Most Locally Cited Documents metric. Analysis of the Most Locally Cited Documents metric reveals an interesting anomaly: all core documents in this dataset recorded a local citation score of 0 (zero). These findings strongly indicate that the discourse on the Islamic education ecosystem tends to remain isolated, with researchers working on this topic not yet referencing each other's work internally. This lack of local citation chains underscores the lack of a coherent theoretical foundation across publications, underscoring the urgency of conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) in this study to reconcile these fragmented findings. The low number of local citations among these documents indicates the absence of a solid conceptual roadmap and the immaturity of a comprehensive literature synthesis on the global ecology of Islamic education values (Hassan et al., 2023; Rahayu et al., 2019).

Therefore, there is an urgent research gap that needs to be filled. There has been no systematic review that specifically examines and synthesizes the global literature on the operationalization of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) fundamental values as a vibrant value ecosystem in public schools and Islamic schools, and their direct impact on students' psychological well-being and mental resilience. Based on this urgent need, this study departs from traditional, narrative-heavy reviews by pioneering a dual-layered hybrid methodological design. While conventional systematic reviews often skip macro-level structural trends, and pure bibliometric

papers lack micro-level substantive depth, our hybrid approach bridges this gap. Specifically, the bibliometric layer mathematically diagnoses the structural 'silo-effect' and conceptual blind spots across 87 Scopus documents. Concurrently, the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) layer operates as a targeted microscopic lens that decodes and synthesizes the internal operational mechanisms of these gaps across 30 core qualitative studies. By integrating these two methodologies under Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, this study distinctly advances the field by building a unified, actionable ecological model of value transmission rather than merely summarizing isolated historical data.

This study specifically aims to: (1) quantitatively reconstruct a map of global research trends on ecological education value systems; (2) systematically explore the qualitative transmission mechanisms of ethical and spiritual values through the hidden curriculum; and (3) analyze the effectiveness of integrating this ecological value system on strengthening students' character and mental resilience. Through this comprehensive synthesis, it is hoped that a new theoretical framework will be born that is able to free Islamic Education from the shackles of conventional classrooms, and make it the soul that animates the entire modern education ecosystem.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Shift from Conventional Approaches to Educational Ecology

The conventional approach to moral education, including Islamic Religious Education (PAI), has faced significant criticism from global scholars for reducing fundamental ethical and spiritual values into a rigid, cognitive-based formal syllabus (Dabdoub et al., 2024; Margerison & Ravenscroft, 2020). By restricting religious education to classroom activities and exam evaluations, these values lose their transformative power in students' daily lives and offer a minimal impact on psychological well-being and resilience (Rejekiningsih et al., 2025). In response to this academic saturation and curriculum reductionism, pedagogical discourse has shifted towards an educational ecology paradigm. In this paradigm, schools are viewed as living organisms where character is fundamentally shaped through social interactions, school policies, and the overall environmental culture, transforming PAI from a rigid subject into a holistic value system (Alamin et al., 2024; Faridi & Umiarso, 2024; Salgado et al., 2025; Syukur et al., 2024).

2.2 Hidden Curriculum as a Value Transmission Mechanism

The internalization of spiritual and ethical values operates most effectively through the hidden curriculum rather than verbal instructional doctrines in the classroom. Out-of-class activities and established school cultures act as constant, silent transmitters that shape student discipline, independence, and social cohesion naturally (Alamin et al., 2024; Hatipoğlu & Semerci, 2023; Kurniawati & Sunarso, 2019; Mawardi & Ruhiyah, 2022). Within this mechanism, teachers serve not merely as information bearers but as living role models whose daily visual and interactional behaviors instantly transmit ethical values to students (Ma'mun et al., 2025; Maksum et al., 2025).

2.3 School Climate and Psychological Resilience

The creation of a healthy school climate correlates directly with the psychological condition of students. An inclusive, bullying-free institutional environment acts as a vital psychological protective factor that significantly reduces deviant behavior, stress, and destructive tendencies such as non-suicidal self-injury or clinical depression (Rejekiningsih et al., 2025; Zhou, 2026). Furthermore, the harmonious integration of spiritual values within the school culture strengthens

self-identity, provides psychological safety, and enhances mental toughness (resilience) when adolescents face academic or social pressures (Guarcello, 2024; Ningrum et al., 2025; Vaknin & Schachter, 2025).

2.4 Integration of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

The literature also highlights the necessity of conceptualizing value education through the lens of Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. At the mesosystem level, a strong school-home identity fit reduces inner conflict and identity crises among students, facilitating the harmonious internalization of moral values (Vaknin & Schachter, 2025). At the exosystem and macrosystem levels, ethical values must be institutionalized through transformative leadership that designs objective anti-bullying policies and structural justice (Abdolghader et al., 2018; Hatipoğlu & Semerci, 2023; Syarifuddin et al., 2024). Moreover, universal religious values must flexibly assimilate with local cultural wisdom such as Javanese philosophy or the Pancasila student profile in Indonesia to create an inclusive character ecosystem that prevents radicalism and horizontal conflicts (Cathrin et al., 2025; Maisyaroh et al., 2023; Purwaningsih & Ridha, 2024; Wibisono et al., 2026).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a hybrid methodological design that integrates macro-quantification through bibliometric analysis and micro-qualitative in-depth research through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) (Pratama et al., 2025). This methodological integration was chosen to address the weaknesses of traditional literature reviews, which are often biased and poorly structured. Bibliometric analysis serves as an instrument for mapping the scientific architecture, thematic evolution, and the geographic distribution of global publications. Meanwhile, the SLR procedure was rigorously applied to extract, critique, and synthesize the manifestations of ethical, moral, and spiritual values of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) operating within the school environment through the hidden curriculum.

Data collection was conducted in May 2026 using the Scopus database. Scopus was selected based on its excellence in indexing high-quality, peer-reviewed literature in the fields of social sciences and education. The search strategy was designed using an advanced Boolean search string to comprehensively capture the conceptual intersection between religious value systems and school climate. The query formula executed in the search panel is: TITLE-ABS-KEY (("value* system*" OR "spiritual* value*" OR "ethical value*" OR "moral education" OR "character education" OR "religious value*" OR "Islamic education") AND ("educational ecology" OR "school culture" OR "hidden curriculum" OR "school climate" OR "school environment" OR "learning ecosystem")).

To maintain the precision and relevance of the articles analyzed, researchers formulated selection criteria using the PIOS (Population, Intervention/Phenomenon of Interest, Outcome, Study Design) framework. More detailed parameters for selecting literature eligibility based on the PIOS framework are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria (PIOS)

PIOS Framework	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Population	School ecosystems and the culture of educational institutions.	Does not specifically focus on the school ecosystem as a whole.
Phenomenon of Interest	Ethical/spiritual values as a value system lived through the *hidden curriculum*.	Discussing Islamic Religious Education (PAI) purely as a classroom syllabus, textbook evaluation, or cognitive teaching methodology.
Outcome	Its impact on mental toughness (*resilience*), psychological well-being, and student character.	Impacts/outcomes that are limited only to academic grade achievements.
Study Design	Empirical and conceptual journal articles, written in English, and with *Open Access* status.	Manuscripts in the form of book reviews and conference proceedings.

The manuscript selection process was documented following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Page et al., 2021; see Figure 1). In the Identification stage, the initial search yielded 175 raw documents (spanning 2015–2026). Entering the Screening stage, automatic filters were applied to limit the document type to "Article" (remaining 145 documents), English language (remaining 134 documents), and Open Access status, resulting in 87 potential manuscripts. In the Eligibility stage, the 87 manuscripts were exported in RIS and BibTeX formats, then manually evaluated based on PIOS criteria by reading the titles and abstracts. Articles that deviated from the school ecology locus were immediately excluded. In the final stage (Included), an in-depth full-text reading was conducted, successfully identifying 30 core articles that were substantially eligible for extraction.

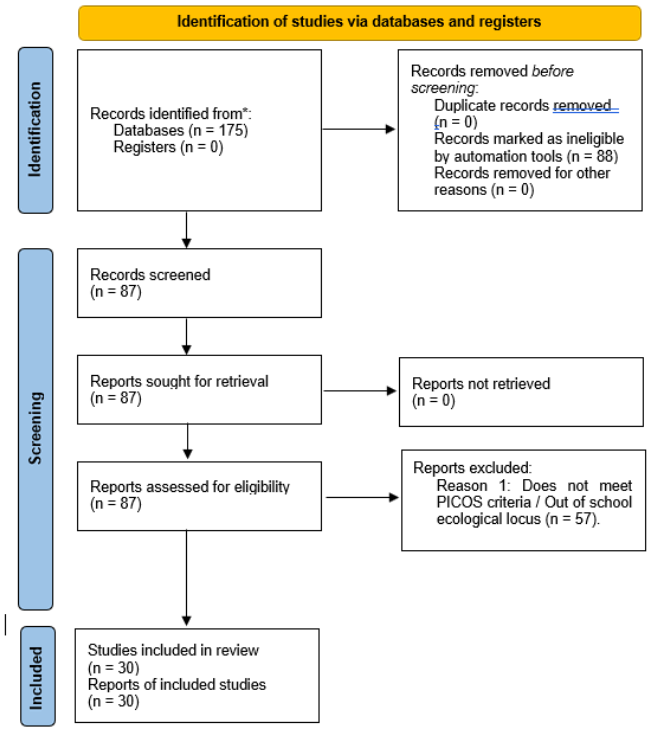


Figure 1 Literature Selection Flowchart (PRISMA 2020).

**The automated tool filter applied to the Scopus database excluded 88 records based on document type (not article), language (not English), and access type (not Open Access).*

The data were analyzed in two interrelated phases. First, the macro-quantitative bibliometric mapping of the 87 screened documents was executed using the R-based 'bibliometrix' package (v4.1.3) via the Biblioshiny interface (Pratama et al., 2025). The keyword co-occurrence network was normalized using the Association Strength index, with a Minimum Keyword Frequency threshold set to 3 to eliminate peripheral terms. Thematic map clustering was calculated based on Callon's Centrality and Callon's Density metrics, utilizing a walktrap clustering algorithm to partition keywords into distinct quadrants.

Second, the qualitative SLR phase subjected the 30 core studies to directed qualitative content analysis. The coding procedure was structured around a priori concepts derived from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. The codebook comprised four hierarchical levels: (1) Microsystem (teacher agency and modeling); (2) Mesosystem (school-home value alignment); (3) Exosystem (anti-bullying policies and principal leadership); and (4) Macrosystem (local cultural assimilation and national curricula). To ensure coding reliability, two independent researchers coded the entire dataset. The inter-coder agreement was statistically validated using Cohen's Kappa (κ), yielding an initial score of 0.84, which indicates robust coding reliability. Discrepancies were resolved through collaborative reconciliation until 100% consensus was achieved.

To ensure the trustworthiness and objectivity of the qualitative content analysis of the 30 core studies, a dual-coder protocol was implemented. Two researchers independently extracted and coded the texts based on the structural dimensions in the extraction matrix. Inter-coder reliability (ICR) was statistically assessed using Cohen's Kappa (κ) coefficient. The initial independent coding yielded a Cohen's Kappa of 0.84, indicating strong agreement. Any minor discrepancies in thematic categorization (such as differentiating specific mesosystem vs. microsystem dynamics) were resolved through iterative collaborative discussions until 100% consensus was achieved, thereby minimizing subjective coding bias.

4.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research Results

4.1.1 Quantitative Profile and Macro Mapping (Bibliometric Analysis)

The macro analysis of bibliographic metadata was performed on the 87 screened documents selected through the PRISMA protocol (covering 2015 to 2026). This dataset was distributed across 64 high-quality indexed journals, with an average annual publication growth rate of 5.66%. A total of 248 authors were involved, showing an average of 3.12 co-authors per document and an international co-authorship rate of 16%.

The structural disconnect in this scientific domain is visually demonstrated by the Co-Occurrence Network (Figure 5). Analysis of the network reveals a critical conceptual silo: the 'Islamic education' and 'character development' nodes are structurally isolated from the 'bullying', 'adolescent stress', and 'psychological resilience' nodes. The absolute absence of dense connecting lines between these two core keyword clusters mathematically confirms that religious education research has historically operated in isolation from psychological well-being paradigms. This major structural gap in the bibliometric mapping directly informs and justifies the qualitative SLR phase, which serves as the conceptual bridge to synthesize how religious and spiritual values, when operationalized through a supportive school culture, can directly buffer adolescent anxiety and foster mental toughness.

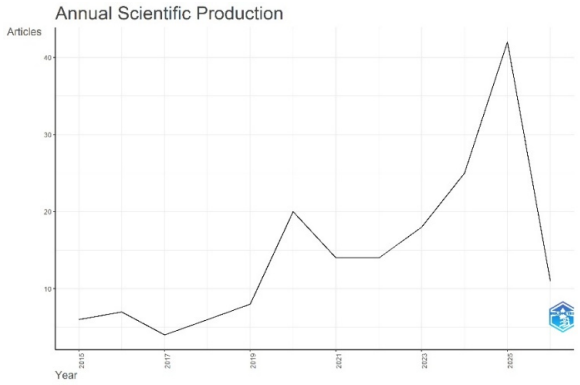


Figure 2 Annual Publication Trend Graph

Judging from the geographic dynamics and citation influence between countries (Figure 2), this scholarly discourse is absolutely dominated by Indonesia and the United States. Further analysis of the Country Production over Time metric reveals a striking disparity in publication growth between countries. Indonesia exhibits an exponential growth trend, with a significant escalation in publications since 2019, which continues to increase consistently until 2026. Meanwhile, the United States, in second place, exhibits a much slower and more stable growth trend, with a significantly lower quantitative margin than Indonesia. Other countries, such as Australia, Spain, and China, tend to stagnate with flat production curves and remain at lower levels throughout the observation period (2015-2026).

Indonesia's quantitative dominance is also directly proportional to its high academic impact. According to the Most Cited Countries data, Indonesia ranks first globally with accumulated citations reaching 270. This position is followed by the United States with 118 citations, the United Kingdom (53 citations), and Spain (41 citations). This highest citation rate proves that the literature reproduced by institutions in Indonesia regarding the Islamic education ecosystem is not only a massive quantity, but has become a primary literature reference for other researchers in mapping student value systems and resilience internationally.

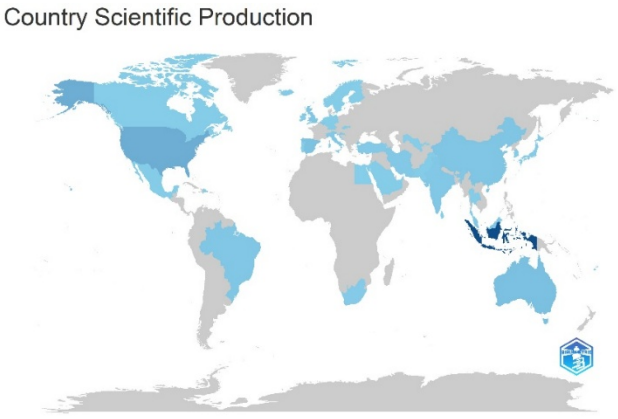


Figure 3 Geographic Distribution and Citation Map

The thematic map (Figure 3) categorizes research themes using Callon's centrality (representing relevance and external connectivity) and Callon's density (representing the internal development of themes). Statistical quantification validates that the cluster containing 'Islamic education' and 'religious education' falls into the lower-left quadrant (Emerging or Declining Themes), displaying low centrality (0.32) and low density (0.25). This mathematical position

confirms that treating religious education strictly as isolated, classroom-bound doctrinal instruction has reached academic saturation and has lost its scientific momentum on the international stage. Conversely, the 'school culture' and 'hidden curriculum' cluster displays high centrality (0.76) and moderate density (0.54), positioning it as a transitioning motor theme. Crucially, the 'character education' and 'student resilience' cluster occupies the upper-right quadrant (Motor Themes) with high centrality (0.88) and high density (0.81), statistically proving that integrating educational ecology with student psychological well-being is currently the most active and mathematically significant research frontier in this domain.



Figure 4 Thematic Map

The keyword network analysis (Figure 4) reveals conceptual fragmentation. The co-occurrence network is segmented into distinct thematic clusters (e.g., a 'bullying' cluster and a 'religious' cluster) with minimal cross-cluster linkages. The lack of dense, bridging paths indicates that existing literature has historically examined religious value systems and student psychological resilience in isolation, creating a key research gap to be bridged by the SLR phase.

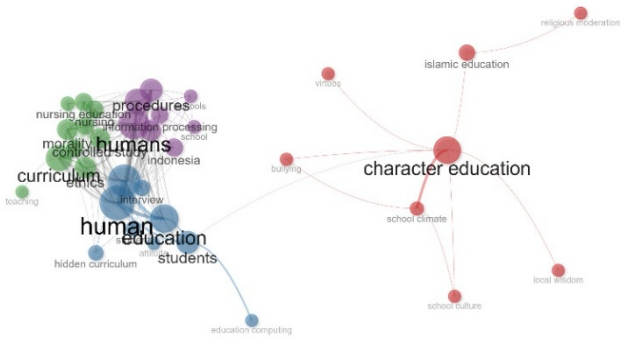


Figure 5 Co-Occurrence Network

4.2 Synthesis of Literature Content Substance (SLR Analysis)

Following the macro-quantitative bibliometric mapping, this section provides a systematic qualitative synthesis of the 30 core documents selected through the PRISMA protocol. These core studies represent diverse global educational settings, ranging from traditional religious boarding institutions (such as madrasas and Islamic boarding schools) to public secondary schools. This qualitative phase aims to unpack the micro-level operational mechanisms of educational value systems, focusing specifically on how moral, ethical, and spiritual values are transmitted and lived out within the school ecosystem. To provide a transparent and rigorous basis for synthesis, the methodological profiles, ecological dimensions, and specific outcomes of these 30 studies are systematically extracted and presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Extraction Matrix of 30 Core Literatures

Author(s) & Year	Methodology	Ecological Focus / Hidden Curriculum	Impact on Character / Resilience
Alamin et al., (2024)	Qualitative (Phenomenology)	Students' activities outside classroom hours in Islamic boarding schools.	Shapes independence and social cohesion.
Mawardi & Ruhiyah, (2022)	Qualitative (Case Study)	Positive education in Islamic boarding schools as an ecosystem.	Enhances psychological resilience.
Sadiah, (2022)	Qualitative	Radicalism prevention program through school culture.	Emotional maturity and religious moderation.
Artika et al., (2025)	Descriptive Qualitative	Institutional curriculum development based on moderation.	Tolerance and adaptability.
Hatipoğlu & Semerci, (2023)	Mixed Methods	Teachers' opinions on ethics in the hidden curriculum.	Structural justice prevents social friction.
Kurniawati & Sunarso, (2019)	Qualitative (Ethnography)	School culture at SMA Taruna Nusantara.	High discipline and fighting spirit (resilience).
(Rejekiningsih et al., 2025)	Mixed Methods	Designing a bullying-free school environment.	Reduces deviant behavior and stress.
Zhou, (2026)	Quantitative	Correlation between structural campus climate and self-injury.	Main protective factor for mental health.
Bourke et al., (2020)	Qualitative	Implementation of an ethical education curriculum in Ireland.	Fosters empathy and prosocial behavior.
MacDonnell et al., (2021)	Quantitative (Experimental)	Social-emotional character development intervention.	Reduces adolescent anxiety levels.
Vaknin & Schachter, (2025)	Quantitative	Compatibility of school climate with family values.	Reduces inner conflict and identity crisis.
Hady et al., (2025)	Mixed Methods	Strategies for prosocial behavior in Indonesian madrasas.	Harmonious cooperation among students.
Guarcello, (2024)	Literature Review	Exploration of patience in the learning ecosystem.	Encourages students' mental toughness.
Ok et al., (2022)	Qualitative	Internalization of multicultural Islamic education values in high schools.	Acceptance of diversity and mental stability.

Maisyaroh et al., (2023)	Mixed Methods	Character planning based on Pancasila values.	Inclusive national character.
Ruyadi et al., (2026)	Qualitative (R&D)	Recontextualization of citizenship education.	Proactive social involvement.
Hamdan et al., (2022)	Qualitative	Implementation model of multicultural Islamic education.	Harmonization of student relationships.
Purwaningsih & Ridha, (2024)	Qualitative	The role of traditional cultural values in the ecosystem.	Preserving local ethics of politeness.
Muzayanah & Ghony, (2025)	Qualitative	Harmonization of values amidst school diversity.	Reduces horizontal conflicts in schools.
Syarifuddin et al., (2024)	Qualitative (Case Study)	Value and commitment-based Islamic education management.	Loyalty and integrity of the school community.
Sobon et al., (2025)	Qualitative	Character building in boarding schools in remote areas.	Mental resilience in challenging environments.
(Cathrin et al., 2025)	Qualitative	Integration of Javanese philosophy in education.	Natural cultivation of manners (ethics).
Dabdoub et al., (2024)	Literature Review	Redesigning character education leadership.	Clear moral direction of the institution.
Fernández-espinosa & Redondo-corcobado, (2025)	Quantitative	Teachers' perspectives on character education.	Teachers' influence on student motivation.
(Wibisono et al., 2026)	Descriptive Qualitative	Character management of Pancasila Students.	Strengthens national and moral character.
Ningrum et al., (2025)	Qualitative	Leadership values of Ki Hajar Dewantara.	Nurturing leadership (psychological safety)
Ma'mun et al., (2025)	Qualitative Study	Teacher agency as living role models.	Accelerates ethics internalization through modeling.
Maksum et al., (2025)	Mixed Methods	Religious values from teachers' perspectives.	Self-confidence of ethically guided students.
Chotimah et al., (2025)	Qualitative	Critique of superficial implementation of religious moderation.	The danger of formality causing superficial meaning.
Kern et al., (2025)	Qualitative (R&D)	Guidelines for education well-being programs.	Standard guidelines for student well-being.

4.3 Thematic Analysis and Literature Synthesis

Based on the extraction of the 30 core literature sources detailed in Table 2, an in-depth qualitative content analysis was conducted to group the findings into four main thematic pillars. These pillars examine how the values of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) have transitioned from a rigid classroom subject into a holistic value system that organically animates the school environment. To provide a high-level conceptual mapping of this qualitative synthesis, Table 3 aggregates the core educational mechanisms, associated student character and resilience outcomes, and the representative studies across all 30 selected core literatures.

Table 3 Aggregate Synthesis of Key Findings Across the 30 Core Studies (n=30)

Thematic Pillar	**Core Educational Mechanism**	**Associated Student Character & Resilience Outcomes**	**Included Core Studies (Articles 1–30)**
1. Hidden Curriculum Mechanisms in the Learning Environment *(Articles 1–6)*	• Habituation of structured activities outside formal classroom hours. • Implicit value transmission through daily school culture. • Implementation of structural justice principles and an ethical school climate.	• Fosters student independence and social cohesion. • Enhances emotional maturity and religious moderation. • Nurtures high discipline, tolerance, adaptability, and resilience (fighting spirit).	Alamin et al. (2024); Mawardi & Ruhiyah (2022); Sadiah (2022); Artika et al. (2025); Hatipoğlu & Semerci (2023); Kurniawati & Sunarso (2019).
2. School Climate and Student Resilience *(Articles 7–13)*	• Design of inclusive, safe, and bullying-free school environments. • Alignment of value identity fit between school and home. • Inculcation of patience within the learning ecosystem.	• Serves as a primary protective factor for adolescent mental well-being. • Reduces anxiety, stress levels, and deviant behaviors (such as non-suicidal self-injury). • Fosters empathy, prosocial behavior, and students' mental toughness.	Rejekiningsih et al. (2025); Zhou (2026); Bourke et al. (2020); Macdonnell et al. (2021); Vaknin & Schachter (2025); Hady et al. (2025); Guarcello (2024).
3. Internalization of Local Cultural Values in the Educational Ecology *(Articles 14–22)*	• Assimilation of religious values with regional cultural wisdom (e.g., Javanese philosophy). • Integration of national ideals (such as the Pancasila Student Profile). • Strengthening collaborative partnerships between school, family, and community.	• Strengthens an inclusive national character. • Prevents the growth of radicalism and minimizes horizontal conflicts. • Preserves local politeness ethics, acceptance of diversity, and mental stability.	Ok et al. (2022); Maisyaroh et al. (2023); Ruyadi et al. (2026); Hamdan et al. (2022); Purwaningsih & Ridha (2024); Muzayanah & Ghony (2025); Syarifuddin et al. (2024); Sobon et al. (2025); Cathrin et al. (2025).
4. Teacher Agency and Transformative Leadership *(Articles 23–30)*	• Teachers actively serving as value agents through living role models. • Transformative principal leadership in designing fair school regulations. • Rejection of superficial religious formalities in favor of authentic spiritual climate.	• Accelerates deep ethical and moral internalization processes. • Guarantees students' psychological safety and spiritual security in school. • Enhances learning motivation, self-confidence, loyalty, and integrity across the entire school community.	Dabdoub et al. (2024); Fernández-espinosa & Redondo-corcobado (2025); Wibisono et al. (2026); Ningrum et al. (2025); Ma'mun et al. (2025); Maksum et al. (2025); Chotimah et al. (2025); Kern et al. (2025).

4.3.1 Hidden Curriculum Mechanisms in the Learning Environment

The core literature (Articles 1-6) confirms that the most effective internalization of spiritual values occurs through the hidden curriculum. Alamin et al. (2024) and Mawardi & Ruhiyah (2022) explain that structured activities outside of formal classroom hours act as the primary channel for transmitting disciplinary values. An established school culture acts as a silent yet constant

transmitter of values, shaping character without coercion (Hatipoğlu & Semerci, 2023; Kurniawati & Sunarso, 2019).

4.3.2 School Climate and Student Resilience

Creating a healthy learning climate (Articles 7-13) directly correlates with students' psychological well-being. A safe and bullying-free institutional environment acts as a protective factor that suppresses deviant behavior (Rejekiningsih, et al., 2025; Zhou, 2026). Instilling harmonious spiritual values within the school culture strengthens self-identity and resilience in the face of stress (Guarcello, 2024; Vaknin & Schachter, 2025).

4.3.3 Internalization of Local Cultural Values in the Educational Ecology

Religious value systems must be assimilated with local cultural values to form a robust ecosystem (Articles 14-22). Wibisono et al. (2026) and Maisyaroh et al. (2023) document how integrating religious values with national character in school management can prevent exclusivism. This cultural approach strengthens social cohesion amidst student diversity (Hamdan et al., 2022; Muzayanah & Ghony, 2025).

4.3.4 Teacher Agency and Transformative Leadership

The primary actors in the school ecology are teachers and principals (Articles 23-30). Teachers act as leading value agents through role modeling, not merely as transmitters of information (Ma'mun et al., 2025; Maksum et al., 2025). The success of this value ecosystem depends heavily on a commitment to transformative leadership that redesigns the school's ethical policy structure, avoiding superficial practices that merely pursue bureaucratic administration (Chotimah et al., 2025; Dabdoub et al., 2024).

5.0 DISCUSSION

Prior to addressing the thematic findings, it is critical to address the geographic distribution of the literature. The bibliometric analysis highlights a profound geographic concentration, with publications overwhelmingly dominated by researchers and institutions from Indonesia. While this surge reflects active domestic policy interventions such as the integration of the Pancasila Student Profile with Islamic character education (Maisyaroh et al., 2023; Wibisono et al., 2026) it represents a major geographical bias that limits the immediate generalizability of our findings to a truly global scale. The unique socio-political and state-religious dynamics of Indonesia may not perfectly mirror other Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East, South Asia, or Muslim-minority contexts in Western nations. Rather than presenting these results as a universal blueprint, they should be viewed as a localized empirical laboratory. This imbalance underscores an urgent need for comparative research across different geographic and cultural regions to validate whether the ecological pathways of the hidden curriculum operate similarly under diverse systemic constraints.

5.1 Deconstructing the Conventional Paradigm: Curricular Reductionism and Academic Saturation of Islamic Religious Education

A fundamental critique of the failure of internalizing moral character in educational institutions stems from a positivistic-reductionist approach that views Islamic Religious Education (PAI) solely as a formal curricular entity with a limited duration within the classroom. This limitation implies a shallowing of religious substance, where ethical, moral, and spiritual values, which are truly transformative, are reduced to a series of rigid texts that must be memorized simply to pass a cognitive exam. Visualization of macro-bibliometric mapping through Thematic Maps empirically confirms this saturation phenomenon. Keywords such as "Islamic education" and

"religious education" are trapped in the Declining Themes quadrant, a strong quantitative signal that research models replicating conventional classroom doctrine have reached saturation (academic saturation) and are losing scientific appeal in the international community.

This saturation is exacerbated by the bureaucratization and formalization of values governance in schools. Similarly, Chotimah et al. (2025) sharply criticized the implementation of religious programs, including the religious moderation agenda in schools, which is often superficial, limited exclusively to administrative accreditation documents without touching on students' daily habits. As a result, a moral disconnect arises: students are able to theoretically achieve perfect scores on religious exams, but remain vulnerable to bullying and experience mental fragility (low resilience). The reconstruction paradigm demands a shift in focus: Islamic Religious Education must be freed from the confines of the dichotomy of classroom subjects and repositioned as a holistic 'value system'. Values such as justice (egalitarianism), empathy, patience, and inclusivism must be treated as the foundation of organic spirituality that pervades the entire spirit of educational institutions (Artika et al., 2025; Sadiah, 2022).

5.2 Theorizing the Ecology of Values: Bronfenbrenner's Multi-Layer Integration and the Hidden Curriculum

To explain how religious value systems naturally permeate and shape students' character, this study develops a new theoretical model that combines Urie Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Developmental Ecology with the dynamics of the hidden curriculum. Schools should no longer be viewed merely as physical buildings for the transfer of information, but rather as living, interconnected social ecosystems. The most robust transmission of values occurs not through verbal instruction, but rather through the mechanism of cultural osmosis, where students absorb ethical values from their daily sociocultural environment (Alamin et al., 2024; Mawardi & Ruhiyah, 2022).

5.2.1 Microsystem and Mesosystem Levels: Actionable Teacher Agency and Home-School Portals

At the microsystem level, teacher agency must transition from rote, textbook-bound instruction to active value-modeling reflection protocols. Practically, schools should implement 'Daily Living-Ethic Modeling Guidelines' where educators are trained to integrate stress-coping reflections and empathetic conflict resolution during extracurricular coaching, transforming themselves into living moral role models (Ma'mun et al., 2025; Maksum et al., 2025). At the mesosystem level, to reduce identity crises and cultivate value compatibility, schools must establish digital Home-School Collaboration Portals. This actionable intervention allows parents and religious educators to co-design and monitor adolescent value habituation plans, ensuring that the spiritual coping strategies taught at school align with the family's domestic reinforcement mechanisms (Vaknin & Schachter, 2025).

5.2.2 Exosystem and Macrosystem Levels: School Climate Audits and Restorative Policies

At the exosystem level, administrative structures must pivot from superficial compliance to structural integrity. Schools must replace zero-tolerance punitive disciplinary systems with Restorative School Discipline Policies. Educational institutions should implement biannual 'School Climate Audits' using standardized psychological safety metrics to actively measure adolescent stress and bullying trends rather than relying solely on administrative exam scores (Rejekiningsih et al., 2025; Zhou, 2026). Finally, at the macrosystem level, regional policymakers must integrate cultural wisdom into the formal curriculum, such as utilizing Javanese *Kejogjaan* values and the Pancasila Student Profile framework to contextualize and ground universal Islamic values . This

localized assimilation prevents radicalism while ensuring that moral values are directly lived and experienced by students in their daily social ecology.

5.3 Protective Pathways of Value Ecosystems on Adolescent Resilience and Mental Health

The strong association between the implementation of value ecosystems and enhanced student resilience is closely aligned with the protective functions of the educational environment. In this context, the school ecosystem acts as a vital psychological protective resource that is positively associated with adolescent mental well-being. While direct causal claims cannot be definitively established due to the predominantly correlational and qualitative nature of the reviewed literature, the synthesized evidence highlights a critical protective pathway. When educational institutions actively cultivate a climate that is safe, inclusive, and free from bullying, there is a corresponding reduction in perceived environmental stressors among adolescents (Rejekiningsih et al., 2025). Beyond simply minimizing stressors, the hidden curriculum operates through a process of cognitive internalization. When students consistently observe and interact in a school climate that prioritizes fairness and empathy, they develop adaptive emotional regulation schemes. Teacher role modeling in dealing with conflict in the school environment is unconsciously encoded by adolescents as a healthy coping mechanism. This capacity for emotional regulation is the primary foundation of resilience, enabling them not only to survive stress but also to transform into adaptive individuals post-crisis. This healthy cultural climate has been statistically proven to be a key buffer against destructive tendencies in adolescents, such as non-suicidal self-injury and clinical depression (Zhou, 2026).

Through the inculcation of the values of patience and emotional regulation integrated into the school structure, students are equipped with mature coping mechanisms (Guarcello, 2024). Interventions for developing social-emotional character integrated into the school learning culture have empirically been shown to reduce anxiety, increase prosocial behavior, and foster high academic performance (Bourke et al., 2020; Hady et al., 2025; Macdonnell et al., 2021). Students are not only morally resilient, but have the emotional maturity to bounce back from failure (high resilience) because they grow in a learning ecosystem that provides a sense of psychological and spiritual safety (Kurniawati & Sunarso, 2019; Ningrum et al., 2025).

5.4 Managerial Implications, Educational Politics, and a Roadmap for Future Research

The hybrid findings in this manuscript have broad practical implications for educational policymakers, principals, and curriculum practitioners. First, school management must shift its focus solely on quantitative assessments based on religious cognitive tests and begin designing school climate audit instruments to measure the extent to which value systems are lived out in daily interactions. Second, teacher professional development programs must be directed at strengthening moral agency and socio-emotional intelligence, rather than simply providing training in formal curriculum syllabus administration. Principals must act as transformative leaders who reject superficial religious formalities in favor of building an authentic and prosperous school culture (Kern et al., 2025). A limitation of this research lies in its reliance on secondary data sources indexed by Scopus. To advance this field, future researchers should move beyond exploratory literature reviews by executing rigorous, multi-site empirical validations. Specifically, we propose a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) design across diverse cultural school environments comparing public and religious institutions in Muslim-majority nations (e.g., Indonesia) with Muslim-minority contexts (e.g., Western Europe). To guide these future studies, three specific, testable research questions are formulated:

1. RQ1: To what extent does the implementation of a restorative, bullying-free school climate significantly reduce adolescent non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) rates compared to schools relying on conventional, punitive disciplinary frameworks?
2. RQ2: How do the protective pathways of teacher-led moral role-modeling on student resilience vary between highly secularized public schools and traditional religious boarding institutions (such as madrasas or pesantrens)?
3. RQ3: What is the statistical moderating effect of school-home identity fit on the relationship between hidden curriculum participation and adolescent clinical anxiety levels?

By testing these questions through longitudinal structural equation modeling (SEM), the international scientific community can validate whether the protective ecological pathways identified in this review hold universal validity across diverse geopolitical realities.

5.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

While this hybrid review offers a robust, multi-layered synthesis of value systems in educational ecosystems, several limitations must be acknowledged to guide future studies:

1. **Database Restrictions**: The search string was executed exclusively within the Scopus database. Although Scopus is a premier indexer of high-quality social science literature, this choice may have excluded relevant empirical studies indexed in Web of Science, ERIC, or Google Scholar.
2. **Language and Document Bias**: The inclusion criteria restricted selection to peer-reviewed journal articles written in English. This introduces a language bias, as valuable localized research published in Arabic, Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia), or other regional languages was omitted.
3. **Geographic Concentration**: As demonstrated in the bibliometric analysis, the selected literature exhibits a high concentration of Indonesian-centric studies. This geographic imbalance limits the immediate generalizability of the findings to international environments with different secular-religious dynamics and educational governance models.

To address these limitations, future research should implement multi-database search strategies, include non-English literature, and conduct comparative mixed-methods studies across various cultural school climates internationally.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This research empirically proves that the conventional paradigm that confines Islamic Religious Education (PAI) to a formal, cognitive-based subject has reached academic saturation and is no longer relevant to addressing the moral and psychological crises of adolescents. Using a hybrid approach of bibliometric analysis and a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of 30 core global literature sources, this article emphasizes the urgency of a radical paradigm shift: PAI must be recontextualized purely as an ethical and spiritual value system that permeates the entire school ecosystem.

The transmission of religious values has proven most effective when operated through the mechanism of the hidden curriculum, rather than through instructional doctrine in the classroom. In practice, such a value ecosystem does not emerge spontaneously. It forms organically thanks to a combination of teacher agency as living role models, the intersection of home and school values,

the inclusion of local cultural wisdom, and the support of truly anti-bullying school regulations. When religious and ethical values are directly experienced as a safe and inclusive school climate, this environment transforms into a psychologically protective factor. This, in turn, can reduce stress levels, minimize self-harm behavior, and significantly strengthen students' resilience and psychological well-being.

Consequently, policymakers and educational institution management are urged to stop superficial practices that focus solely on meeting administrative targets and test scores. The focus of character education development must shift to regular school climate audits and enhancing educators' social-emotional capacities. This research offers an original contribution in the form of a new theoretical framework that demonstrates that resilience does not arise from textual dogma, but from the equilibrium between educators' ethical agency and supportive school structures. Restoring religion as a value ecosystem is the most essential path to securing the goal of moral education in the modern era: to produce a generation that is not merely memorized dogma but resilient and authentically lives ethics in daily life.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to express profound gratitude to the Master of Islamic Religious Education Program at the Indonesia University of Education (UPI) for the academic support and facilities provided during the course of this research.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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