



The Socio-Psychological Construction of Smoking Behavior among Students of *Pesantren* Salafiyah in Indonesia

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21580/rjtpd.v3i01.34264>

Abstract

This study aims to analyze variations in students' smoking behavior in three *Pesantren* with different regulatory systems: the permissive model at Ma'had Aly Walindo, moderate regulations at PDF Walindo, and strict sharia-based prohibitions at *Pesantren* Ribatul Muta'allimin. The study employed a qualitative case study design, collecting data through participant observation, in-depth interviews with caretakers, administrators, and students, and analyzing *pesantren* disciplinary documents. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The findings indicate that students' smoking behavior is not merely an individual choice, but a social practice formed through the construction of institutional values, peer conformity, and the strength of disciplinary mechanisms. At Ma'had Aly Walindo, permissive regulations foster open smoking behavior that is legitimized as a social culture; at PDF Walindo, smoking behavior is adaptive and negotiated according to the intensity of supervision; while at *Pesantren* Ribatul Muta'allimin, strict sharia-based discipline results in latent smoking behavior that is hidden and accompanied by moral-spiritual pressure. These patterns suggest that the degree of strictness or laxity of regulations significantly determines how smoking behavior is displayed in both public and private spaces. This research contributes to the sociology of *Pesantren* by offering an analytical model that integrates social learning theory, conformity theory, and institutional disciplinary mechanisms to understand how authority structures and moral orders shape the behavioral practices of *Pesantren* students.

Keywords:

Pesantren, Smoking, *santri*, Institutional Regulation, Peer Conformit

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A. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of smoking among Indonesian adolescents remains alarming and continues to increase. The 2018 Basic Health Research (Riskesdas), as reported by detik Heath (2018), recorded an increase in the prevalence of smokers aged 10-18 from 7.2% to 9.1%, while the 2022 National Socio-Economic Survey (Susenas) showed that 18.8% of male adolescents under 18 were active smokers. This trend is further complicated by the emergence of smoking in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), which are ideally designed to foster moral development and self-discipline (Ministry of Health, 2018). In some traditional Islamic boarding schools, smoking is perceived as part of a culture of masculinity or a symbol of camaraderie among students, as seen in the viral case of students smoking in a dormitory in Jember in 2023 (Rokhmah & Rif'ah, 2023). Conversely, there are Islamic boarding schools that are very strict, such as the Gontor Islamic boarding school, Tebuireng Islamic boarding school, and the Langitan Islamic boarding school in Tuban (Kuswandi, 2017). This diversity of responses demonstrates the interplay between institutional regulations, peer group culture, and internalization mechanisms, allowing smoking behavior to occur both openly and covertly (Osatuyi & Turel, 2018; Guan et al., 2025). Therefore, in-depth studies are needed to understand how this behavior is constructed, negotiated, and shaped within the daily lives of Islamic boarding school students (*santri*).

Various previous studies have examined adolescent behavior and smoking culture in educational settings, generally highlighting peer influence, weak family control, and a permissive social environment. However, studies specifically examining smoking behavior within the Islamic boarding school ecosystem are still very limited (Akintude & Gurumyen, 2022), particularly those that view it as a product of social construction shaped through the interaction of institutional regulations, religious authority, and patterns of conformity. A study by Muhith et al. (2024) found that some Islamic boarding schools tend to view smoking as a masculine culture; while Alwi & Manas (2023) demonstrated that bans within Islamic boarding schools are not always effective due to the emergence of latent behavior and strategies for avoiding sanctions. However, these studies have not compared how different regulatory systems produce different behavioral patterns. Few studies link smoking behavior to disciplinary mechanisms, social learning patterns, and power relations within Islamic boarding schools (Noviani & Azkar, 2024). This represents a significant academic gap, given the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, which reaches over 36,000, with diverse characteristics, traditions, and disciplinary systems (Husna & Arifin, 2025).

This study aims to analyze the social construction of students' smoking behavior within three different Islamic boarding school regulatory systems: Islamic boarding schools with permissive regulations, such as Ma'had Aly Walindo, which legitimizes smoking as part of social culture; Islamic boarding schools with moderate regulations, such as PDF Walindo, which permits smoking on a limited and conditional basis; and Islamic boarding schools with strict sharia-based prohibitions, such as Ribatul Muta'allimin, which prohibits smoking throughout the entire school premises. The research focuses on three main questions: first, how do regulatory systems shape students' smoking behavior patterns? Second, how social learning processes through observation, imitation, and legitimacy reinforce these behaviors; and third, how peer conformity and family influence act as behavioral reinforcement systems.

This research is important because these three Islamic boarding schools represent the full spectrum of permissive, moderate, and strict Islamic boarding school regulatory systems, providing a comprehensive picture of how students' behavior is shaped by institutional norms and disciplinary mechanisms. Furthermore, the sociocultural context of Islamic boarding schools, imbued with moral authority, religious traditions, and leadership hierarchies, makes them ideal social laboratories for understanding how certain behaviors are constructed, negotiated, and reproduced in everyday life (Solihin & Fajrussalam, 2020).

B. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Smoking behavior among adolescents is a global phenomenon that has long attracted the attention of public health and social science researchers. Numerous studies have shown that smoking habits do not develop in a vacuum, but are instead produced by a complex interaction between individual factors, the social environment, and institutional structures. Interestingly, this behavior also extends to Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*)—Islamic educational institutions that ideally serve as spaces for moral development and self-discipline. This phenomenon raises fundamental questions about how an environment steeped in religious values can become a place where medically risky and morally questionable behaviors can flourish, and in some cases, even be legitimized as part of the social culture.

Previous studies have examined adolescent smoking behavior through various theoretical perspectives. The most dominant approach is Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which asserts that behavior is formed through a process of observation, imitation, and social reinforcement. Within this framework, smoking is understood as a learned behavior when individuals observe models around them—whether parents, peers, or authority figures—and then imitate those behaviors for social rewards such as acceptance, recognition, or status (Bandura, 1986). Studies on adolescent smoking in schools and Islamic boarding schools consistently find that peer influence is the strongest predictor of smoking initiation and maintenance. Adolescents tend to smoke due to social pressure to be accepted within a group and because they view smoking as a symbol of maturity, independence, or masculinity. However, most of this research focuses on the context of public schools or the family environment, thus failing to adequately explain how the unique socio-cultural dynamics of Islamic boarding schools—with their *kiai* (Islamic cleric) authority, senior-junior hierarchies, and strong religious value systems—shape distinct smoking patterns.

On the other hand, research specifically highlighting Islamic boarding schools as a locus for the study of smoking behavior has emerged in the last decade, although it remains limited. These early studies tended to be descriptive-epidemiological, measuring the prevalence of smoking among students (students) and identifying risk factors such as educational level, perceptions of smoking, and access to cigarettes. For example, research at the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School (*Pesantren Lirboyo*) showed that the school permitted students to smoke, subject to certain rules stipulated in the school's code of ethics (Setyawan, 2022). Other studies have found that students' smoking behavior is influenced by age, education level, attitudes, values, and the availability of health facilities within the Islamic boarding school environment (Aziz, 2014; Abdulloh, 2018; Azizah, 2018). These findings are important as a starting point, but they remain atomistic—each variable is analyzed separately without considering how these factors are interconnected within a unified social system. Few studies have examined students' smoking behavior as a social construct formed collectively through the interaction of institutional regulations, disciplinary mechanisms, and peer group dynamics.

One of the most significant gaps in the existing literature is the limited attention paid to variations in regulations between Islamic boarding schools and how these variations produce different behavioral patterns. Yet, Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are remarkably diverse—ranging from those that strictly prohibit smoking to those that are permissive and even legitimize smoking as part of the culture. Research on the Al-Islah Islamic Boarding School in Kediri by Syaifulloh (2013) shows that smoking in Islamic boarding schools characterized by the Salaf is normal and considered commonplace, and most students smoke because they are influenced by those around them, including *Kiai* (Islamic scholars) who also smoke. On the other hand, there are Islamic boarding schools such as Gontor, Tebuireng, and Langitan Tuban that strictly enforce smoking bans (Kuswandi, 2017). This diversity of responses suggests that there is no single pattern in managing smoking behavior in Islamic boarding schools; each institution develops its own

moral logic and regulatory system. However, comparative studies that systematically compare how different regulatory systems—permissive, moderate, and strict—shape student behavior are still very rare. Consequently, our understanding of the relationship between institutional structures and individual behavior in Islamic boarding schools remains fragmented.

In addition to institutional regulations, disciplinary mechanisms and the internalization of values are also central themes in studies of student behavior. Several studies have shown that the effectiveness of smoking bans is largely determined by consistent supervision, the firmness of sanctions, and the involvement of authority figures such as *kiai* (Islamic scholars) and *ustadz* (Islamic teachers). Islamic boarding schools that implement gradual sanctions—from warnings to guidance, to more severe punishments—tend to be more successful in reducing violations than those with only written rules without clear enforcement mechanisms. However, research has also found that overly harsh sanctions without accompanying values development can actually foster latent behavior: students continue to smoke but in secret, creating a duality between compliance in public spaces and violations in private. These findings indicate that external discipline is insufficient to change behavior without a deep internalization of values. This internalization process is heavily influenced by authority figures—*kiai* (Islamic scholars) and *ustadz* (Islamic teachers)—who serve dual roles as behavioral models and moral therapists for students. When authority figures themselves engage in smoking, or when *pesantren* regulations are inconsistent with the daily practices of the caretakers, dissonance occurs that weakens the moral authority of those rules.

Finally, the dimensions of peer conformity and family influence have been identified as two reinforcing systems that work simultaneously in shaping the behavior of students. Peer conformity has a very strong power in the communal environment of Islamic boarding schools, where interactions between students are intensive throughout the day and social identity is largely determined by group acceptance. Sears, David O. & L. Anne Peplau, 2009 and Azizah, 2018, found that peer influence plays a dominant role in influencing students' decisions to smoke, due to social pressure and the desire to be accepted into the group. Smoking is often an "entry ticket" to social acceptance, especially for new students who want to be recognized by their seniors. Meanwhile, family influence plays a role as a value system that can strengthen or weaken the rules of the Islamic boarding school. Syaifulloh (2013) showed that students who smoke before entering the boarding school are influenced by their fathers, grandfathers, or playmates, while students who only smoke after entering the boarding school are influenced by other students and the *Kiai* who also smoke. Research also shows that when there is a conflict between parental and peer attitudes, children tend to adopt attitudes that align with the group's (Azwar, 1995). However, the interaction between these two reinforcing systems—how peer conformity and family influence converge, collide, or negotiate in shaping students' decisions to smoke—has rarely been explored in depth, especially in contexts where Islamic boarding school regulations exist between the two.

By addressing these gaps in the existing literature—limited comparative studies of regulations, minimal analysis of disciplinary mechanisms and value internalization, and the lack of systematic mapping of the interaction between peer conformity and family influence—this study aims to fill this void. By selecting three Islamic boarding schools representing different regulatory spectrums (permissive, moderate, and strict-sharia), this study offers a comprehensive comparative analysis of how the social construction of students' smoking behavior is shaped by the interaction of institutional structures, social learning processes, and group dynamics. The phenomenological approach used allows researchers to capture the lived experiences of the students in depth, including how they interpret, negotiate, and respond to the various social and regulatory pressures they face in their daily lives at the Islamic boarding school.

C. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study aims to analyze the construction of students' smoking behavior in the context of Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), specifically how the interaction between institutional regulations, peer pressure, and family influence shapes the meaning, motivation, and practice of smoking within the Islamic boarding school environment. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological design was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the lived experiences of the students in depth, including how smoking behavior is interpreted within a disciplined, hierarchical, and religiously entrenched communal life (Creswell, 2014; Moustakas, 1994). The phenomenological approach was deemed most appropriate because the research focus is directed at uncovering the structure of meaning behind smoking, the social pressures surrounding it, and the value dynamics at work in two Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools with different regulatory configurations: *Pesantren Ribatul Mutaallimin* and *Pesantren Walindo Boyoteluk*. By understanding the subjects' experiences directly, this study explores how strict prohibitions, dualistic policies, and the internal culture of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) shape students' smoking behavior, including the psychological and social dimensions that accompany it (Baron & Byrne, 2005; Bandura, 1977).

Fieldwork involved collecting primary data through in-depth interviews with student smokers, administrators, and caregivers; participant observation of students' daily activities, particularly in social spaces related to smoking; and document analysis such as *pesantren* regulations, violation records, and disciplinary guidelines. All data was analyzed thematically to identify intertwined patterns, relationships, and meanings that shape students' smoking behavior, both as individual practices and as social constructs within the *pesantren* community (van Manen, 2016). The choice of a qualitative phenomenological approach is highly relevant because it captures the complexities of social realities that cannot be explained through quantitative approaches. In addition, this approach provides a rich contextual understanding of how religious norms, Islamic boarding school authority, relationships between students, and family culture are integrated in the process of forming smoking behavior in the Islamic boarding school environment (Endy & Blokland, 2004; Setyawan, 2022).

Data Collection

This study collected data through three primary techniques: unstructured in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Unstructured interviews were chosen to provide informants with the opportunity to freely share their personal experiences, perceptions, and meanings of smoking behavior without the constraints of a format. The informants included six students who smoke, three Islamic boarding school administrators, and two caretakers from each Islamic boarding school. Interviews lasted a total of 162 minutes in stages in a comfortable setting, using Indonesian to facilitate natural communication and allow for deeper exploration of meaning. All informants provided informed consent for the use of their data for scientific publication, thus meeting ethical research requirements (Peter, 2015; Pollock, 2012).

This method enabled researchers to capture the emotional nuances, social pressures, experiential flows, and identity dynamics that accompany smoking behavior within the Islamic boarding school community—things that are difficult to capture through structured techniques (Breuer & Schreier, 2010; Abbott & Grady, 2011). Participant observation was conducted both inside and outside the Islamic boarding school, particularly in spaces identified as potential smoking locations, such as bathrooms, the back area of the kitchen, the path to the food stalls around the boarding school, and the area around the fence. In addition to interviews and observations, document analysis was conducted on the boarding school's regulations, violation records, minutes of disciplinary meetings, *kiai* (Islamic board) advisory materials on health, and internal records on student guidance. Document analysis

served to strengthen the validity of the findings through written evidence that supported the observation and interview data (Rofiah et al., 2023).

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants

No.	Initials	Position	Pesantren
1	S1	Student (Santri)	Ribatul Mutaallimin
2	S2	Student (Santri)	Ribatul Mutaallimin
3	S3	Student (Santri)	Ribatul Mutaallimin
4	S4	Student (Santri)	Walindo (PDF)
5	S5	Student (Santri)	Walindo (PDF)
6	S6	Student (Santri)	Walindo (Ma'had Aly)
7	P1	Student Committee Member (Santri Pengurus)	Ribatul Mutaallimin
8	P2	Student Committee Member (Santri Pengurus)	Walindo
9	P3	Student Committee Member (Santri Pengurus)	Walindo
10	K1	Caregiver (Pengasuh)	Ribatul Mutaallimin
11	K2	Caregiver (Pengasuh)	Walindo

Data Validation and Data Analysis

Data validation in this study was conducted through member checking and triangulation, two primary procedures to ensure the validity, credibility, and consistency of findings in a qualitative approach. Member checking was conducted by requesting confirmation from all informants—boarding school administrators, dormitory supervisors, smoking students, and non-smoking students—to review the interview results and the researcher's interpretations. This step is crucial to ensure the meaning captured by the researcher truly aligns with the informants' original intentions, experiences, and perceptions, while also preventing subjective bias on the researcher's part (Abdullah, 2021; Erliansyah, 2023). Through this process, several clarifications were obtained, for example, the affirmation that smoking in the Islamic boarding school environment is not considered a moral violation, but rather a long-standing social culture. Triangulation was conducted through cross-checking interview data, field observations, and analysis of Islamic boarding school documents. The Islamic boarding school administrator's statement that "smoking is a culture that is tolerated as long as it doesn't interfere with learning activities" was verified through direct observation in the dormitory environment, where students were seen smoking in certain areas deemed "safe," as well as through disciplinary documents that stated a smoking ban but lacked strict sanction mechanisms. This triangulation of sources, methods, and context provided a more objective and comprehensive picture of the social construction of smoking practices in Islamic boarding schools (Ilya & Kinesti, 2024).

Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman model, which proceeded interactively through three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (M.B., Miles & Huberman, A. M. Saldana J. (2014)). During the data reduction stage, researchers summarized, categorized, and focused information based on key themes such as "Islamic boarding school smoking culture," "social habits in the dormitory," "Islamic boarding school regulations," "perceptions of health," and "informal control mechanisms." This reduction facilitated the filtering of data that was most relevant to the research focus. Next, the data is presented in the form of thematic narratives, tables of field findings, key interview quotes, social interaction charts, and observation notes, allowing for the formation of patterns of relationships between categories. This data presentation helps researchers view the dynamics of smoking culture in a more systematic and structured manner (Utomo & Adiwijaya, 2022). Finally, conclusions are drawn iteratively, through a process of re-examining initial findings using new data until thematic saturation is reached. At this stage, the researchers assert that smoking culture in Islamic boarding schools is formed through a combination of historical factors, institutional tolerance, the influence of seniors, weak regulations, and the construction of social meaning that smoking is a sign of maturity for some students (Anwar et al., 2022).

D. Result

Variations in Smoking Behavior Patterns in Different Regulatory Systems

Research findings indicate that students' smoking behavior is shaped by differing regulatory systems between the two Islamic boarding schools, as well as differences in internal rules at each level of education within Walindo. These contrasting regulatory systems result in three main patterns of smoking behavior: legal and open smoking at Ma'had Aly Walindo, prohibited but socially tolerant smoking at PDF Walindo, and smoking that is totally prohibited by sharia law at Pesantren Ribatul Muta'allimin. These variations in patterns indicate that students' smoking behavior is contextual, adaptive, and heavily influenced by the regulatory structures of each institution.

The first pattern is legal and open smoking at Ma'had Aly Walindo. At the Ma'had Aly level, smoking is not only permitted but also institutionally legalized. Pesantrens provide designated smoking areas, and students are not required to conceal their smoking as long as they adhere to agreed-upon etiquette. This openness creates a pattern of smoking behavior that is normal and regulated, and is seen as part of the social culture and maturity of adult students. One administrator, P1, emphasized, "For the Aly level, smoking is part of student behavior. The important thing is to be polite, not disruptive, and know where to go." This statement demonstrates that the regulations are permissive yet still set ethical boundaries.

Field observations found that students smoke freely in designated areas, such as the back of the hall and in designated corners of the Ma'had. There was no pattern of secrecy, and smoking was carried out socially with peers. Senior students played a significant role as behavioral models, with some even openly smoking during discussions or during breaks. S5 stated, "At Aly, it's normal; everyone knows where to go. As long as you don't smoke in front of guests or the ustadz, it's safe." These findings demonstrate that smoking behavior at Ma'had Aly fosters an open culture organized by collective norms, not prohibitions.

The second pattern of prohibited but relaxed smoking behavior at PDF Walindo. Unlike Ma'had Aly, smoking is prohibited by written regulations at the Formal Diniyah Education (PDF) level, equivalent to Walindo's high school or Islamic junior high school (SMA-MTs), in the formal Islamic education system. However, the implementation of the ban is not accompanied by strict supervision or clear sanctions, creating a pattern of smoking behavior that is adaptive, situational, and often clandestine. G2 explained, "At PDF, it's indeed prohibited, but usually we just reprimand them. There are rarely any specific punishments." As a result, students adapt their behavior: they smoke in hidden areas, choose times when supervision is less lax, or follow the habits of their peer group. S2 explained, "PDF students usually smoke at night or when the ustadz isn't on duty. Everyone knows where they are."

The researchers' observations identified several informal zones of tolerance, such as behind the dormitory and near the south fence, which provide a space for social compromise between formal prohibitions and cultural realities. In this context, regulations are not presented as strict rules but rather as negotiable normative reminders. This creates a pattern of smoking behavior that is neither entirely hidden nor as open as at the Aly level. This adaptive pattern is stronger among students who follow the influence of their seniors, as expressed by S3, "When the upperclassmen move up to Aly, they'll be allowed to. So now many of them are joining even though they're still in the PDF class." This finding suggests a link between aspirations for seniority and smoking behavior.

The third pattern is the total prohibition of smoking at the Ribatul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School. At the Ribatul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School, the rules regarding smoking are significantly different. The boarding school administrators explicitly forbid smoking, not only as a disciplinary violation but also as an act contrary to Islamic values. This prohibition is accompanied by clear sanctions and intensive supervision. G3, one of the ustadz, stated, "Here, smoking is haram. There is no tolerance. If caught, we will

definitely be prosecuted." Similarly, the boarding school administrator once emphasized to the students, "Cigarettes are very harmful. We forbid them so that you are physically and mentally clean."

However, the study found that a small number of students still violated the prohibition. Smoking is done very secretly, only at certain times, and far from the main area of the Islamic boarding school. S4, a security officer, admitted, "Some people still smoke, but if they're caught, they can be punished immediately. So they really hide." Observations noted that the areas chosen by students for violations are usually dark spots outside the fence or the far corner of the back spring. This pattern suggests that the stricter the prohibitions and the higher the risk of sanctions, the more hidden the students' behavior patterns become. Unlike Walindo, at Ribatul Muta'allimin, there is no informal zone of tolerance or social compromise between teachers and students. The regulatory system is in line with the religious values espoused by the Islamic boarding school.

The Construct of Social Learning: Observation, Imitation, and Legitimacy

Research findings indicate that the formation of smoking behavior among Islamic boarding school students (*pesantren*) is influenced not only by institutional regulations but also by social learning mechanisms that operate powerfully through observation, imitation, and cultural legitimacy in two Islamic boarding schools. Daily interactions between students, administrators, and senior figures create a non-formal learning environment that underpins the emergence of smoking as a social identity and a symbol of maturity. In the context of Ma'had Aly Walindo, the legality of smoking allows for a powerful observational process; students observe seniors and peers smoking openly, fostering the perception that smoking is a normal, acceptable, and even "adult" practice. Conversely, at PDF Walindo and Ribatul Muta'allimin, which prohibit smoking by law, social learning processes continue, but with more hidden dynamics. Students learn from the behavior of seniors in finding safe locations, understanding certain social codes, and even imitating strategies to avoid supervision. In other words, smoking behavior is produced not through formal instruction, but through social interactions that shape collective norms and behavioral legitimacy.

Field data shows that students tend to start smoking after observing the behavior of seniors, whom they consider role models. S3, a student at Walindo Islamic Boarding School (PDF Walindo), stated, "The seniors who are already in Aly (Aly) smoke normally, so we just follow along. Over time, it feels normal." This pattern indicates that imitation occurs due to the presence of senior figures who wield symbolic authority. At Ma'had Aly, this condition is stronger because smoking is legal, allowing the imitation process to take place openly without moral or regulatory barriers. New students observe how seniors hold cigarettes, choose certain brands, smoke at times, and how they discuss while smoking. As S5 explained, "At Aly, when I see seniors smoking during discussions, it looks cool. So I join in smoking to be seen as mature." This behavior demonstrates that imitation does not exist in isolation but is accompanied by symbolic legitimacy, as smoking is part of an identity of intellectual maturity or social independence.

At Walindo Islamic Boarding School and Ribatul Muta'allimin, the process of observation and imitation occurs more covertly due to formal prohibitions. However, this actually creates a more subtle and strategic form of social learning. Students learn how to avoid the supervision of administrators, locations that are considered safe, and situational signs of lax supervision. A student from PDF Walindo said, "Following the seniors isn't just about smoking, but also about hiding. They know when the *ustadz* is on patrol, so we just follow suit." This suggests that social learning involves more than just smoking behavior, but also risk management techniques passed down through shared practices. In Islamic boarding schools with a total ban, such as Ribatul Muta'allimin, the imitation process becomes more symbolic; students notice subtle social cues like the smell of cigarettes or whispered stories about who's smoking and where. Student 4 stated, "Here, it's not allowed at all, but some people still smoke. We usually learn from stories, not from direct

observation." This mechanism demonstrates that observation isn't always visual, but also narrative, through collective stories that convey social norms about deviant behavior.

Another important finding is that the legitimacy of smoking culture is shaped by collective interpretations that develop within each Islamic boarding school. At Ma'had Aly, smoking is considered part of intellectual discourse and maturity, as expressed by G1, "Those who are Aly are considered adults. Smoking is not a problem, as long as it is polite." This legitimacy results in the construction that smoking is a symbol of masculinity, maturity, and independence. Meanwhile, at PDF Walindo, legitimacy is ambiguous: it is prohibited by law, but culturally it is never strongly condemned, so smoking remains tolerated as long as it does not disrupt Islamic boarding school activities. G2 emphasized, "We prohibit it, but it cannot be too strict because some ustadz also smoke." This inconsistency creates a space of social legitimacy that justifies smoking as part of "male customs" or a sign of closeness to seniors. However, at Ribatul Muta'allimin, cultural legitimacy is negative; smoking is positioned as morally and sharia-compliant behavior. The caretaker once told the students, "Cigarettes are haram because their harm is greater. No one should damage the Islamic boarding school environment." Nevertheless, the fact that violations still occur shows that moral legitimacy does not completely eliminate the desire of students to imitate behavior that they know is being carried out secretly by a small number of their friends.

The presence of significant figures (teachers, seniors, administrators) reinforces this social learning. Field observations show that when certain teachers or administrators smoke outside the pesantren area, it becomes a topic of conversation among students, which then loosens their moral boundaries regarding smoking. S1 explained, "If the ustadz smokes outside, we think it's okay, actually." Conversely, at Ribatul Muta'allimin, strong role models from non-smoking caregivers reinforce the prohibition, although they still fail to completely eradicate students' urges to imitate their peers' violating behavior. This suggests that behavioral identification is more easily achieved through emotionally close figures than through structurally dominant ones.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that smoking behavior is formed through a complex series of social processes: students observe the behavior of their environment, imitate individuals or groups perceived as influential, and accept social legitimacy arising from institutional culture and peer group consensus. While regulation plays a significant role, social learning mechanisms have proven more powerful in shaping students' daily behavior. Smoking behavior is not just an individual habit, but a social process rooted in interactions, role models, symbolization of maturity, and negotiation of norms in the Islamic boarding school environment.

Peer Conformity and Family Influence as Reinforcement Systems

The findings of this study indicate that peer conformity and family influence operate as two reinforcement systems that significantly shape students' smoking behavior choices in the two Islamic boarding schools studied. In the Ma'had Aly Walindo environment, where smoking is legalized and accepted as part of the culture of seniority, the peer group plays a key role in normalizing this behavior. Students perceive smoking not only as a personal habit but also as a symbol of maturity, authority, and social acceptance. S1 stated, "If I don't smoke, I feel like I'm not considered mature by my friends." This statement emphasizes that social acceptance is largely determined by an individual's willingness to conform to group norms. S3 added, "Our seniors often smoke in front of us, so it's natural for us to follow suit." These findings indicate that the behavioral models of seniors are not merely a spectacle but have become social scripts that guide students' conformity in an environment that institutionally provides legitimacy.

In contrast, the patterns emerging in the Walindo PDF demonstrate a more ambivalent dynamic. Although Islamic boarding school rules officially prohibit smoking, peer groups continue to negotiate norms through covert, resistive behavior. S2 stated, "The rules do prohibit it, but my friends still smoke secretly behind the dormitory." This finding confirms that when rules are not consistently enforced, peer influence becomes more dominant than

formal regulations. For some students, breaking the rules together becomes a form of solidarity and a symbol of togetherness. S4 stated, "Smoking together makes us more united." This narrative demonstrates how peer conformity not only challenges the authority of the Islamic boarding school but also builds a collective identity based on practices of structured resistance.

Meanwhile, at the Ribatul Muta'allimin Islamic Boarding School, which completely bans smoking and prohibits it as part of the kiai's moral strictness, peer conformity has a more hidden character. Most students follow the rules because of the strong moral authority and the clear threat of sanctions. S1 stated, "We're afraid of getting scolded by the kiai; he's very strict about smoking." However, the research also found a small group of "hidden deviants" who continued to smoke in secret. S3 recounted, "Some friends still smoke secretly, but don't dare to be seen." This suggests that despite strong and ideological rules, peer influence hasn't completely disappeared. It has simply shifted to a more subtle space, manifesting as a negotiation between personal drive, peer pressure, and institutional assertiveness. In this context, smoking is no longer a symbol of social status, but rather an escape or an old habit that is difficult to break.

In addition to peer influence, the family also plays a role as a value system that can strengthen or weaken Islamic boarding school rules. At Walindo, many students come from families where smoking is considered normal or part of their parents' habits. S2 said, "My father is a smoker, so I don't see it as a problem." This parenting style reinforces permissive attitudes and weakens the internalization of Islamic boarding school rules, particularly at Walindo Islamic Boarding School, which straddles the gray area between formal prohibition and cultural tolerance. Conversely, some students at Ribatul Muta'allimin come from families where smoking is strictly prohibited, both morally and religiously. S4 said, "My parents always strictly forbade smoking, so I was embarrassed if I broke the rules." The alignment between family values and Islamic boarding school rules created a strong barrier against peer influence, so the potential for deviance was smaller.

However, research also notes tensions when family values are not aligned with Islamic boarding school regulations. A student at Ribatul Muta'allimin said, "My father smokes, but it's strictly prohibited at the Islamic boarding school, so I'm confused about who to follow." This kind of contradiction can create internal dissonance and affect the stability of students' adherence to rules. Thus, the interaction between family influence and peer pressure is a key factor in determining whether students' behavior tends to comply with, negotiate with, or resist smoking regulations within the Islamic boarding school environment.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that peer conformity and family influence operate as two reinforcing systems that can strengthen or undermine the disciplinary structure of Islamic boarding schools. In institutions that provide a space for tolerance or have weak oversight, peer influence is the dominant factor driving deviant behavior. Conversely, in Islamic boarding schools with strong moral authority and the support of aligned family values, the potential for violations decreases, although it remains in a hidden form. Thus, students' smoking behavior is not simply an individual issue, but the result of a tug-of-war between complex and interconnected social systems.

Discipline Mechanisms Internalize Values

Research findings indicate that the disciplinary mechanisms implemented in three Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) shape different behavioral configurations and determine the level of internalization of values among students. At Ma'had Aly Walindo, disciplinary mechanisms are loose and oriented toward student maturity, allowing administrators to position smoking within the realm of "social tolerance" as long as it does not disrupt the Koran reading process. Administrators assert that "students are adults, they are given the responsibility to manage themselves," and this position fosters a more functional internalization of values, emphasizing that discipline is not about obeying prohibitions, but about maintaining harmony. Observations indicate that loose supervision allows smoking to be open, even becoming part of social interactions among students. A

student at MA4 stated, "The important thing is to be polite, not to smoke when the ustadz passes by." This pattern indicates that the internalization of disciplinary values is based on self-regulated behavior, not rule-based obedience.

In contrast, PDF Walindo implements a more structural yet adaptive disciplinary mechanism. The kiai (Islamic boarding school) and administrators establish the smoking ban as a formal rule, but its implementation is situational, depending on the context of the space and the intensity of supervision. A PDF2 administrator stated, "The ban remains in place, but we assess the situation; students need guidance, not pressure." This approach fosters a form of negotiative discipline: students strive to comply with the rules when supervised, but seek safe spaces when supervision is less lax. Observations show that students smoke in the back block or on paths leading to the rice fields, rather than in public areas of the Islamic boarding school. Student P3 stated, "If a religious teacher passes by, I immediately put it out. But when I'm free, it's normal." This mechanism results in an internalization of values that is not fully ingrained, but rather based on situational compliance, a form of obedience that arises from supervision, not moral awareness.

Meanwhile, at Ribatul Muta'allimin, the disciplinary mechanism is designed to be very strict and relies on sharia legitimacy. The smoking ban is positioned not simply as a *pesantren* rule, but as a religious moral institution. The administrator firmly states, "Cigarettes are forbidden here. Students must refrain from actions that are not blessed." This approach creates a moral environment constructed through vertical control (from the kiai and administrators), horizontal supervision (from fellow students), and symbolic pressure (sin, prohibitions, and the value of blessings). Daily supervision is intense, characterized by night patrols, surprise inspections, and reports between students. However, observations indicate that some students continue to smoke in secret, especially in the rice field embankments. Student R2 admitted, "I'm afraid of being scolded by the kiai, so if I want to, I stay far away." This very strict disciplinary mechanism creates an internalization of values characterized by fear-based compliance, namely compliance due to the threat of moral and spiritual sanctions. Although strict, this pattern tends to relegate behavior to a latent space, rather than eliminating it.

A comparison of these three disciplinary mechanisms shows that the internalization of values is determined not only by the existence of rules, but also by how they are implemented, monitored, and given meaning by the *pesantren* community. When discipline is understood as a space for maturity, internalization occurs through personal responsibility. When discipline is negotiated, internalization becomes half-baked and dependent on external conditions. When discipline is built on a moral-authoritative basis, internalization is symbolically strong, but it can give rise to hidden behavior that indicates latent resistance. Thus, the disciplinary mechanisms in each Islamic boarding school form different patterns of internalization of values, while also determining how students interpret the act of smoking, whether as a social culture, a negotiated violation, or an act that carries spiritual risks.

E. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the smoking behavior patterns of students in three Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) do not stand alone as individual choices, but are the result of social constructions shaped by the regulatory systems, disciplinary mechanisms, social relations, and authority structures within each institution. The striking differences between Ma'had Aly Walindo (permissive regulations), PDF Walindo (moderate regulations), and Ribatul Muta'allimin (strict-sharia regulations) indicate that smoking behavior is a product of the interaction between institutional norms, social learning patterns, and conformity pressures, not simply a matter of personal morality. This aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which asserts that behavior is formed through observation, imitation, and social legitimacy conferred by the environment (Bandura, 1986). When certain behaviors are repeatedly observed and not acted upon as violations, they are reinforced and become part of the group's identity.

In the context of Ma'had Aly Walindo, permissive regulations foster a pattern of internalization of

values based on maturity and self-regulation. Students learn that smoking is not a moral issue as long as it is done politely and with respect for the religious teacher. This finding is consistent with studies by Neubert (2021) and Albab et al. (2025), which show that adult groups tend to build a culture of self-governance based on collective ethics, rather than formal prohibitions. The open smoking behavior at Ma'had Aly demonstrates that social legitimacy is a powerful factor: behaviors that are not considered taboo by the community are easily institutionalized as culture. From the perspective of Berger & Luckmann's (1968) social construction theory, this legitimacy is the process of objectifying attitudinal values, initially individual, and then accepted as social reality.

In contrast, PDF Walindo exhibits a pattern of negotiative discipline: rules exist, but their implementation is situational and largely determined by the context of supervision. This pattern results in incomplete internalization of values, or, in Tyler's (2011) terms, compliance without commitment. Students adapt to the rules not out of moral conviction, but out of the need to avoid sanctions and maintain their image with the religious teacher. Smoking behavior that shifts to side rooms, gardens, or back areas indicates behavioral displacement, a common phenomenon that occurs when rules are not accompanied by strong symbolic control. This finding aligns with research by Mahmud et al. (2024), who found that semi-strict regulations in Islamic boarding schools often foster dual behavior: obedience in public spaces, freedom in private spaces. Thus, PDF Walindo represents an institution that produces situational morality as a result of an ambivalent regulatory structure.

Meanwhile, Ribatul Muta'allimin presents contrasting findings: strict disciplinary mechanisms, based on sharia legitimacy, and reinforced with moral-spiritual pressures, create a strong internalization of obedience values but have the potential to generate latent behavior. From the perspective of Hirschi's social control theory as cited in Kempf (2023), prohibitions associated with values of haram (forbidden), sin, and blessings have strong symbolic power, encouraging obedience out of fear or religious respect. However, as found in this study, some students continue to smoke in secret, creating a behavioral duality between public and private spaces. This pattern aligns with Da'as's (2025) findings, which state that the stricter a rule, the greater the likelihood of latent behavior developing due to unconsciously internalized moral pressure. Thus, strict disciplinary mechanisms don't automatically extinguish behavior, but rather shift the manner and space for its expression.

Further discussion reveals that these three Islamic boarding schools exhibit behavioral legitimacy dynamics influenced by authority figures, supervisory structures, and everyday culture. In Ma'had Aly Walindo, behavioral legitimacy emerges through modeling from senior students, musyrif (religious leaders), and the ngopi-muroja'ah culture, which normalizes smoking as a social practice. Meanwhile, at PDF Walindo, students imitate the behavior of peers who smoke in hidden spaces, demonstrating that peer modeling is stronger than structural control. At Ribatul Muta'allimin, the moral authority of the kiai exerts such strong symbolic control that behavioral legitimacy shifts: smoking becomes an act that must be hidden because it potentially threatens the spiritual relationship between students and their mentors. Within the framework of Weberian authority theory, Ma'had Aly tends toward traditional authority, PDF Walindo toward rational-legal authority, and Ribatul Muta'allimin toward charismatic-sharia authority, each resulting in distinct behavioral configurations.

The research also demonstrates how peer conformity serves as a primary reinforcement in the process of behavioral internalization. In Ma'had Aly, conformity creates normalization; in PDF Walindo, it creates negotiation and adaptive behavior; while in Ribatul Muta'allimin, conformity emerges in the form of mutual supervision and reminders due to shared moral pressure. These findings align with Asch's conformity theory in Capuano & Chekroun (2024), which states that individuals tend to adapt their behavior to group norms even when they do not fully agree. Within the framework of Islamic boarding schools, conformity has a deeper moral dimension because it is related to manners, obedience, and the desire to maintain group honor. The research findings reinforce the views of Islamic boarding school experts such as Halomoan et al., (2023) and Badrun (2024) that the Islamic boarding school ecosystem functions as a moral community that not only regulates outward behavior but also shapes ways of thinking, giving meaning, and negotiating identity. When it comes to smoking, each Islamic boarding school constructs its own "moral logic": the logic of maturity (Ma'had Aly), the logic of structural obedience (PDF Walindo), and the logic of sharia (Ribatul Muta'allimin). Therefore, smoking behavior cannot be understood as mere deviance, but rather as a form of adaptation to the

prevailing moral order.

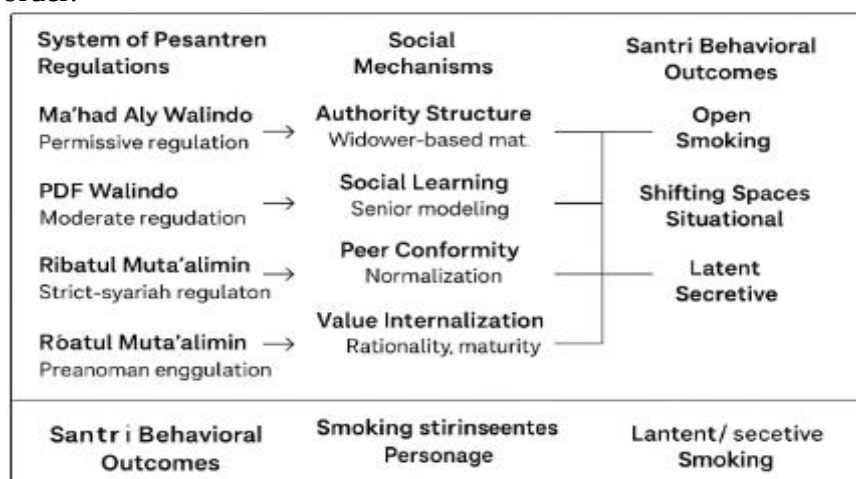


Figure 1. Institutional Construction of Santri Smoking Behavior

When compared with relevant studies, this research reinforces Hasan's (2025) findings on the role of authority in shaping santri's habitus, but offers new depth by demonstrating how variations in regulations produce systematically different behavioral patterns. These findings also enrich the study by Pratama et al. (2025), which views smoking in Islamic boarding schools as a culture of masculinity, adding that this culture is not universal and is highly dependent on institutional control structures. The uniqueness of this research lies in its ability to demonstrate three spectrums of pesantren regulation and how each spectrum produces different behavioral patterns, meaning constructions, and forms of value internalization. Thus, this research makes an important contribution to the sociological study of Islamic boarding schools and student behavior: that smoking behavior is not simply a matter of health or morality, but a representation of how values, discipline, authority, and conformity operate within the traditional education system. Understanding this context provides a theoretical basis for developing more realistic, humanistic, and socially appropriate student development policies based on each Islamic boarding school's characteristics.

F. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the smoking behavior of students in three types of Islamic boarding schools—the permissive Ma'had Aly Walindo, the moderate PDF Walindo, and the strict-sharia Ribatul Muta'allimin—is a social construct shaped by the interaction of institutional regulations, disciplinary mechanisms, authority figures, and the dynamics of group conformity. Variations in regulations are shown to determine how smoking behavior is interpreted and displayed: from overt behavior legitimized as social culture (Ma'had Aly), to adaptive-negotiative behavior dependent on supervisory situations (PDF Walindo), to latent behavior suppressed by strong moral and symbolic control (Ribatul Muta'allimin). This study emphasizes that student behavior cannot be understood solely as an individual problem, but rather as an expression of the structure of values and authority operating within the Islamic boarding school ecosystem. This research shows that each institution develops its own "moral logic" that shapes how students learn, model, and normalize certain behaviors in their daily lives.

These findings challenge the dominant view that positions Islamic boarding school students' smoking behavior as individual deviance, demonstrating that Islamic boarding school regulations produce these behavioral patterns through mechanisms of observation, legitimacy, social reinforcement, and moral-spiritual pressure. These findings also provide an analytical model that can be used to design more realistic and contextual behavioral interventions, particularly for health programs, moral development, and character building within Islamic boarding schools. However, this study is limited by its focus on three institutions with relatively homogeneous social characteristics, making the findings less generalizable. Further research is needed with comparative designs in more diverse Islamic boarding schools (traditional-modern, urban-rural, large-small) and longitudinal or

mixed-use approaches to assess the long-term impact of regulations and disciplinary mechanisms on students' behavior and internalization of values within a broader context.

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