



IMPLEMENTATION OF PUNISHMENT IN THE  
FORMATION OF STUDENT ATTITUDES IN  
MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH: A CASE STUDY OF A  
TOURISM-BASED COMMUNITY IN NORTH  
SUMATRA INDONESIA

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**Abstract**

Praktik hukuman edukatif dalam pendidikan Islam terus menjadi isu penting karena madrasah dituntut menegakkan disiplin tanpa mengabaikan martabat dan perkembangan psikologis peserta didik. Persoalan ini menjadi semakin kompleks di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Bukit Lawang, Kabupaten Langkat, Sumatera Utara, yang berada di kawasan ekowisata internasional dengan paparan nilai sosial dan budaya yang sangat beragam. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi hukuman dalam pembentukan sikap siswa, menelaah pengaruh lingkungan pariwisata terhadap pergeseran nilai, serta mengevaluasi efektivitas hukuman berdasarkan prinsip pedagogi Islam. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan kepala madrasah, guru bimbingan dan konseling, guru pendidikan agama Islam, dan siswa dari beberapa tingkat kelas. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hukuman diterapkan secara bertahap mengikuti tujuh tahapan pedagogis Abdullah Nasih Ulwan, mulai dari nasihat, teguran, isyarat nonverbal, hingga sanksi edukatif dan keagamaan. Hukuman yang dilaksanakan secara adil, penuh kasih sayang, dan konsisten terbukti memperkuat kesadaran normatif, rasa tanggung jawab, serta perubahan perilaku siswa, sehingga berfungsi sebagai instrumen kontrol moral dan sosial yang efektif dalam menjaga identitas keagamaan madrasah.

**Kata kunci:** *Punishment; Sikap Siswa; Pendidikan Islam; Madrasah; Komunitas Pariwisata*

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### Abstract

Educational punishment in Islamic schooling remains a critical issue because madrasahs are expected to enforce discipline without undermining students' dignity and psychological development. This challenge becomes more complex at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Bukit Lawang, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, which is located in an international ecotourism area marked by intensive exposure to diverse social and cultural values. This study aims to analyze the implementation of punishment in shaping student attitudes, examine the influence of the tourism environment on value shifts, and evaluate the effectiveness of punishment through the lens of Islamic pedagogy. The study employed a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving the madrasah principal, guidance and counseling teachers, Islamic education teachers, and students from several grade levels. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings reveal that punishment is implemented in stages according to Abdullah Nasih Ulwan's seven pedagogical phases, ranging from advice, reprimands, and nonverbal cues to educative and religious sanctions. When administered with justice, compassion, and consistency, punishment strengthens students' normative awareness, sense of responsibility, and behavioral change, allowing it to function as an effective instrument of moral and social control while preserving the madrasah's religious identity.

*Keywords: Punishment; Student Attitudes; Islamic Pedagogy; Madrasah; Tourism Community*

### INTRODUCTION

Islamic educational institutions in the contemporary era are not merely spaces for knowledge transmission, but also strategic arenas for shaping students' moral, social, and spiritual character in the midst of rapid social change. Within the framework of Islamic pedagogy, character formation is positioned as a central goal of education because the success of learning is not only measured by cognitive mastery, but also by the ability of students to internalize ethical values in daily life (Rachman et al., 2023).

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In the Indonesian context, Madrasah Tsanawiyah carries an important mandate to preserve students' religious identity while responding to modernization, globalization, and the increasingly open flow of cultural influences (Hamami & Nuryana, 2026). One of the most crucial issues in this context is the implementation of punishment as a disciplinary instrument to regulate student behavior and strengthen compliance with institutional norms. Academically, this issue is important because punishment remains a debated concept in educational discourse, especially regarding its position between pedagogical necessity and psychological risk. Practically, it is equally significant because madrasahs must maintain order and discipline without neglecting students' dignity, emotional development, and long-term moral formation.

From the perspective of contemporary educational research, punishment is understood as a disciplinary strategy that may produce both constructive and harmful effects depending on its form, intensity, and context of application. Studies show that harsh and disproportionate punishment tends to correlate with externalizing behaviors, aggression, and resistance among learners, whereas educational and restorative punishment may contribute more positively to long-term behavior formation (Wiggers & Paas, 2022; Vargo & Gushanas, 2024). In Islamic educational discourse, punishment is ideally grounded in justice, compassion, and moral guidance rather than teacher anger or coercive domination (Rambe et al., 2024). However, most previous studies have focused on punishment practices in pesantren settings or in general school environments, leaving limited analysis of how punishment is implemented in madrasahs located in tourism-based communities with high exposure to external cultural values (Damopolii et al., 2023). In addition, earlier studies tend to emphasize disciplinary effectiveness in a general sense, but they have not sufficiently examined how punishment contributes specifically to the formation of student attitudes across cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions in socio-culturally complex environments (Widianti & Oktaviani, 2024).

This study responds to those limitations by examining the implementation of punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, a madrasah situated within an international ecotourism destination. The social setting of Bukit Lawang is particularly significant because students are not only shaped by formal educational structures within the madrasah, but also by intensive interaction with a heterogeneous tourism environment that introduces alternative lifestyles, communication patterns, and behavioral models from outside the local religious culture



(Damopolii et al., 2023). Such conditions make student discipline a more complex matter than in ordinary school settings, because violations may reflect not only personal disobedience but also wider processes of value negotiation and cultural exposure. Therefore, this article specifically aims to: first, describe the staged implementation of punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang; second, analyze how the tourism environment influences shifts in students' values and attitudes; and third, evaluate the effectiveness of punishment in shaping disciplined student character in ways that remain consistent with Islamic pedagogical principles and the protection of human dignity (Rachman et al., 2023; Rambe et al., 2024).

Based on the foregoing discussion, this article advances the argument that punishment can function as an effective pedagogical instrument for attitude formation when it is applied gradually, proportionally, and consistently within the ethical framework of Islamic education. The study departs from the assumption that punishment does not merely deter misconduct, but also influences students' attitudes by strengthening their understanding of norms, generating emotional awareness of responsibility, and encouraging behavioral compliance through repeated disciplinary experience. In this sense, the article hypothesizes that the effectiveness of punishment is determined not by its severity, but by the extent to which it is perceived as fair, educative, and morally meaningful by students. When punishment is administered according to the principles of justice, compassion, and pedagogical dialogue, it is expected to contribute positively to the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of student attitudes while preserving the religious identity of the madrasah in the face of external socio-cultural pressures (Vargo & Gushanas, 2024; Rambe et al., 2024). Conversely, punishment that lacks pedagogical grounding risks producing resistance rather than internalized discipline (Wiggers & Paas, 2022).

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent scholarship has shown that the relationship between punishment and student attitude formation has been addressed from several intersecting directions, although not yet in an integrated manner. First, a strong body of literature in Islamic education frames punishment as a pedagogical instrument that must be subordinate to moral formation, discipline, and the cultivation of adab rather than mere coercive control (Rachman et al., 2023; Damopolii et al., 2023; Rambe et al., 2024). Second, studies in educational psychology and classroom management tend to examine punishment through the lens of behavioral outcomes, especially whether sanctions strengthen discipline or instead trigger resentment,



aggression, and other negative externalizing responses (An, 2022; Wiggers & Paas, 2022; Vargo & Gushanas, 2024). Third, another strand of research focuses on the broader process of attitude and identity formation, emphasizing that behavior is shaped not only by formal school discipline but also by the interaction between cognition, affect, environment, and social expectations (Chen et al., 2023; Marginson, 2024; Findyartini et al., 2022). A fourth, though less developed, tendency addresses rule implementation in schools as an administrative and institutional process, often emphasizing compliance and school order rather than deeper value internalization (Widianti & Oktaviani, 2024). Taken together, these studies confirm that punishment is linked to student attitude formation, but they approach the issue from different conceptual and methodological starting points.

The first tendency is predominantly represented by studies rooted in Islamic pedagogical and normative frameworks. In this line of research, punishment is generally conceptualized not as an act of retaliation, but as a corrective educational mechanism designed to restore discipline and guide learners back to morally acceptable conduct. Damopolii et al. (2023), for example, show that punishment in Islamic educational settings is often justified through the concepts of *ta'zir*, self-improvement, and moral accountability, thereby placing disciplinary action within a broader religious and ethical system. Similarly, Rambe et al. (2024) emphasize that punishment in Islamic boarding schools is effective only when it is gradual, proportionate, and oriented toward strengthening students' discipline rather than humiliating them. Rachman et al. (2023) further situate discipline within the larger project of building students' religious character, where every educational intervention is expected to support noble conduct and value internalization. Thematically, this first tendency is concerned with moral legitimacy, disciplinary ethics, and the educational purpose of sanctions. Conceptually, it draws on Islamic pedagogy and religious values. Methodologically, it is often qualitative, descriptive, or normative, relying on textual interpretation, field description, and context-based explanation rather than systematic analysis of attitude components or socio-cultural pressures outside the institution.

The second tendency is found in educational psychology and classroom-based behavioral research, where punishment is treated as a variable affecting observable student conduct, emotional response, and long-term behavioral outcomes. In this strand, the central concern is whether punishment functions as an effective behavioral intervention or instead generates unintended negative consequences. Wiggers and Paas



(2022), through a systematic review, demonstrate that harsh physical discipline is consistently associated with increased externalizing behaviors in children, including aggression and defiance. This suggests that punishment cannot be evaluated solely in terms of immediate obedience, but must also be assessed in relation to psychological and developmental risks. Vargo and Gushanas (2024) similarly argue that punishment-based procedures in the classroom require careful pedagogical consideration because their effectiveness depends on appropriateness, intensity, and contextual sensitivity. An (2022) also indicates that teacher discipline and normative enforcement may influence both instructional effectiveness and students' psychological responses. Thematically, this second pattern focuses on the effect of punishment on behavior and psychology. Conceptually, it is grounded in behavioral regulation, classroom discipline, and child development. Methodologically, it is dominated by psychological studies, reviews, and applied educational analysis, often favoring causal explanation and measurable outcomes over contextual interpretation rooted in Islamic educational values.

The third tendency emphasizes attitude formation, identity development, and the influence of social environment on behavioral orientation. This literature departs from the assumption that student behavior cannot be fully understood through disciplinary measures alone because attitudes are produced through the interaction of knowledge, emotion, experience, and surrounding social structures. Chen et al. (2023) describe moral education as a multidimensional process in which values are built through continuous institutional and social reinforcement, rather than one-time interventions. Suh and Ahn (2022) reinforce this perspective by conceptualizing attitudes as structured through interconnected cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, implying that any disciplinary practice may influence learners at more than one level. Marginson (2024) further argues that self-formation is deeply shaped by environmental and existential factors, while Findyartini et al. (2022) show that identity formation in formal education is both internal and relational, influenced by communal expectations and contextual experience. In a related way, Kusumojanto et al. (2021) demonstrate that social environment strongly shapes attitudes and intentions. Thematically, this tendency is concerned with identity, agency, and value formation. Conceptually, it privileges the interaction between person and environment. Methodologically, it often uses mixed, conceptual, or context-sensitive designs, but it rarely examines punishment specifically within religious schools exposed to tourism-driven cultural interaction.



Despite their contributions, these three tendencies leave several important issues insufficiently explored. The first tendency, while strong in moral and normative justification, often assumes that punishment is educational when it conforms to Islamic principles, but it does not always examine how students actually perceive and internalize such punishment in lived school contexts (Damopolii et al., 2023; Rambe et al., 2024). The second tendency, although rigorous in identifying behavioral and psychological effects, tends to generalize punishment as a classroom management variable without paying sufficient attention to the religious, communal, and cultural specificities of madrasah environments (Wiggers & Paas, 2022; Vargo & Gushanas, 2024). The third tendency richly explains how attitudes are shaped by environment, identity, and social interaction, yet it often treats discipline only indirectly and does not place punishment at the center of analysis (Chen et al., 2023; Marginson, 2024). More importantly, these streams of research have not adequately addressed madrasahs located in international tourism-based communities, where students encounter external values in immediate and routine ways. In such contexts, punishment is not only a matter of rule enforcement, but also a mechanism for negotiating cultural exposure, institutional identity, and moral boundaries. This gap marks the novelty space of the present study.

Based on these limitations, this study proposes a new analytical direction by placing punishment, student attitudes, and socio-cultural environment within one integrated framework. Rather than viewing punishment merely as a disciplinary procedure or as a psychological stimulus, this article examines it as a pedagogical practice embedded in the moral project of the madrasah and tested within a tourism-based community characterized by strong external cultural influence. The focus is therefore not limited to identifying forms of punishment, but extends to understanding how punishment operates in shaping students' cognitive awareness of norms, affective responses of responsibility and shame, and conative tendencies toward disciplined conduct. In this sense, the study combines the Islamic pedagogical perspective on justice, compassion, and moral correction with the educational-psychological perspective on attitude formation and the sociological perspective on environmental exposure (Rachman et al., 2023; Suh & Ahn, 2022; Marginson, 2024). By investigating MTS Bukit Lawang as a case of a madrasah situated in an international ecotourism area, the article advances a more contextual reading of punishment as an instrument of character formation, cultural boundary maintenance, and institutional identity preservation. This is the specific



perspective through which the present research seeks to contribute to the literature.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The unit of analysis in this study is the institutional practice of punishment in shaping student attitudes at MTS Bukit Lawang, with particular attention to how disciplinary measures are formulated, interpreted, and implemented within a madrasah located in a tourism-based community. Although the study involves individual participants such as the principal, teachers, and students, the analytical focus is not limited to personal experiences alone, but extends to the broader organizational and pedagogical process through which punishment functions as a disciplinary and moral instrument within the institution. This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design because the research seeks to generate an in-depth and context-sensitive understanding of a phenomenon embedded in a specific socio-cultural setting rather than to test variables statistically or generalize findings to a wider population (Lim, 2025). The case study orientation is particularly relevant because MTS Bukit Lawang represents a distinctive educational context, namely a madrasah situated in an international ecotourism area where student behavior is shaped by both internal religious norms and external social influences. Through this design, the study captures the complexity, natural setting, and contextual uniqueness of punishment as an educational practice in the madrasah environment (Ahmed, 2024).

The sources of data in this study consisted of primary and secondary materials. Primary data were obtained from key informants who were directly involved in the disciplinary system of the madrasah, namely the principal, the guidance and counseling teacher, the Islamic Religious Education teacher, and six students from different grade levels selected purposively on the basis of their relevance to the research problem. Secondary data were drawn from school documents, including the madrasah rules, student violation records, warning letters, and institutional profile documents. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted in strategic spaces such as the school gate, classrooms, the school field, and the counseling room to record disciplinary practices in their natural setting. Interviews were guided by an interview protocol that allowed both consistency and flexibility in exploring participants' experiences and interpretations (Fan et al., 2024). Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. To ensure

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trustworthiness, the study applied source triangulation, technique triangulation, and researcher reflexivity so that the findings could be assessed in terms of credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Ahmed, 2024; Chakma & Li, 2025).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### **Tourism-based social environment as the source of disciplinary change and tension**

Bukit Lawang is not an ordinary school environment, but a tourism-based social space in which students' everyday experiences are shaped by economic dependence on visitors, informal work routines, and intensive contact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Field observations indicate that many families around MTS Bukit Lawang rely on tourism-related income, such as trading, guiding, or participating in river-based tourist activities. This condition directly affects students' school readiness because some of them are involved in family economic activities after class hours. One statement from the principal clearly illustrates this condition: "Many of our children come home late because they accompany their parents to trade in tourist areas. This often leaves them unprepared for class in the morning." Restated more plainly, the data show that disciplinary problems at the madrasah cannot be understood as merely individual misconduct; they are closely linked to the social and economic rhythm of a tourism area. Three patterns emerge from this evidence: students experience fatigue caused by after-school labor, school discipline is disrupted by tourism-based family obligations, and the madrasah must manage behavior shaped by both educational and economic environments.

The second layer of evidence comes from interviews and observational records showing that the tourism environment influences not only student schedules, but also their perceptions of rules, style, and acceptable conduct. The counseling teacher explained that "the hardest part is changing the perspective of children who have been interacting with tourists for so long. They sometimes feel that school rules are too rigid compared to life outside." This testimony is reinforced by the observation matrix summarized in Table 1, which records five dominant violations: tardiness, long hair among male students, impolite language, bringing mobile phones without permission, and failure to join congregational prayer. Restated briefly, these violations reflect more than technical breaches of school rules; they indicate a broader process of adaptation to external social models encountered in the tourism sphere. Four tendencies can be identified from these data: time-related violations are the most



dominant, bodily appearance becomes a site of imitation, language behavior is influenced by heterogeneous social contact, and religious discipline is weakened when supervision decreases. Thus, the tourism context produces not only behavioral variation, but also a normative tension between madrasah discipline and outside social freedom.

Table 1. Types of Violations and Causal Factors at MTS Bukit Lawang

No	Type of Violation	Frequency	Main Causal Factors
1	Late arrival	Very high	Students stay up late in tourist areas, helping their parents trade until the evening.
2	Long hair (male students)	Tall	Want to imitate the style of tour guides or foreign tourists
3	Use of impolite language	Currently	Interaction with a heterogeneous tourism market environment
4	Bringing a cell phone without permission	Tall	The need to connect with economic/tourism activities outside of school
5	No congregational prayer	Low-Medium	Lack of supervision during recess and peer influence

Source: Processed from observation and interview data from MTS Bukit Lawang (2025).

The table above shows that the most frequent violations relate to time discipline. In Bukit Lawang, the phenomenon of tardiness is exacerbated by teenagers' habit of staying up late at night in accommodations or public areas in tourist areas until the early hours of the morning.

A third piece of evidence further confirms that the most visible disciplinary trend concerns time management and morning readiness. According to the observation data, tardiness was categorized as the most frequent violation, and one eighth-grade student admitted, "Last night I helped my mother sell food in front of the inn until eleven o'clock at night, so I overslept this morning." This quotation makes visible what might otherwise be misread as simple laziness. In restated form, the data indicate that lateness is often rooted in household survival strategies and not solely in students' unwillingness to comply with school regulations. At the same time, the evidence also suggests that tourism exposure creates a chain effect: late-night activities reduce rest time, insufficient rest lowers concentration and punctuality, and repeated lateness then becomes a disciplinary issue handled by the school. Three main descriptive conclusions can be drawn.



First, the strongest disciplinary pressure appears in the domain of daily routine and punctuality. Second, family economic involvement mediates school behavior. Third, the madrasah faces a context-specific emergency in which discipline must respond to social realities beyond the classroom. This establishes the first major result: the tourism environment is a real and measurable driver of disciplinary tension.

**Punishment is Implemented as a Staged and Educational Solution**

The next finding concerns the form of punishment itself. Data from school documents, field observations, and teacher interviews show that MTS Bukit Lawang does not implement punishment randomly, but through a structured and tiered system. The school applies seven stages of punishment derived from Abdullah Nasih Ulwan’s pedagogical model, beginning with advice and nonverbal cues, followed by verbal reprimands, temporary distancing, educational physical sanctions, religious assignments, and finally parental summons for repeated or serious violations. Restated simply, punishment in this madrasah is organized as a sequence of escalating responses rather than an immediate harsh reaction. This evidence is important because it shows that punishment is treated as an educational process rather than a spontaneous emotional act. From these data, at least four patterns can be identified. First, the school prioritizes low-intensity corrective measures before moving to stronger sanctions. Second, punishment is progressive, which means severity depends on repetition and seriousness. Third, the stages combine social, physical, and religious dimensions. Fourth, the system reflects institutional consistency because the same model guides different actors in the school. The result demonstrates that punishment operates as a planned solution to the disciplinary pressures generated in the tourism-based environment.

Table 2. Stages of Punishment Implementation at MTS Bukit Lawang

Stage	Form of Action	Implementation Description
1	Direction/advice	Done collectively during ceremonies and classically in class
2	Non-verbal cues	The teacher makes a displeased face or shakes his head
3	Verbal criticism/reprimand	Firmly calling a student's name or giving a direct verbal warning
4	Termination of relationship	Silence the student temporarily to feel regret
5	Educational physical sanctions	Running on the field, limited push-ups, or standing in front of the class



6	Religious sanctions/duties	Memorizing verses from the Koran or short letters, cleaning the mosque
7	Calling parents	Final steps for serious or repeat violations

Source: *Synthetic analysis of Ulwan theory and MTS Bukit Lawang field observations (2025)*.

The educational character of this punishment model becomes even clearer when the type of sanction is examined more closely. Observations and school records show that some violations, especially those related to worship and school ethics, are answered not with corporal force but with religiously meaningful assignments. Students who neglect congregational prayer, for instance, are asked to memorize Qur'anic verses or short surahs and may also be assigned mosque-related cleaning tasks. A teacher of Islamic Religious Education explained the reasoning behind this practice: "If we just scold him, he might be afraid for a moment. But if we ask him to memorize verses about prayer, he will remember for the rest of his life why prayer is important." Restated more analytically, the school attempts to redirect punishment from physical suffering toward moral cognition and spiritual reflection. Three descriptive tendencies are visible here. First, religious sanctions are not supplementary but central in the disciplinary process. Second, punishment is expected to produce remembrance, not only fear. Third, the school links behavioral correction with value internalization. This finding shows a significant transformation of punishment from a deterrent mechanism into an educative-religious solution rooted in the moral identity of the madrasah.

A further result concerns the actors who make the punishment system effective. Interview data show that punishment is not perceived as legitimate merely because rules exist, but because the teachers implementing them are expected to act as moral examples. One homeroom teacher stated, "I can't reprimand students about discipline if I'm late myself. Being a role model comes before punishment." Field observations also show that the madrasah involves external authority figures, particularly the local police chief, who occasionally attends ceremonies and reinforces the importance of discipline in a socially risky tourism area. Restated clearly, the data reveal that punishment in this setting is supported by two forms of authority: internal moral authority from teachers and external symbolic authority from public institutions. Four patterns emerge from this evidence. First, teacher exemplarity strengthens students' acceptance of sanctions. Second, punishment is more persuasive when delivered by respected figures. Third, school discipline is reinforced



through collaboration with community authority. Fourth, legitimacy matters as much as the sanction itself. This result confirms that punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang is not only a technical procedure, but also a socially supported educational solution grounded in example, trust, and institutional authority.

### **Punishment Produces Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Change In Students**

The third major result concerns the impact of punishment on the formation of student attitudes. The data indicate that punishment contributes first to the cognitive dimension, namely students' understanding of the logic of school rules. Interviews show that students who have experienced punishment begin to reinterpret regulations not as arbitrary restrictions, but as part of the moral identity of the madrasah. One ninth-grade student stated, "I used to think the hair rules were over the top. But after being called in and explained, I understood that it was about identity as a student, not just hair." Restated simply, the student's statement shows a movement from resistance to understanding. The rule is no longer seen only as an external demand, but as something linked to who the student is expected to become. Three descriptive patterns emerge from this evidence. First, explanation is crucial in transforming punishment into learning. Second, students respond more positively when rules are connected to identity and purpose. Third, punishment becomes cognitively effective when it clarifies why certain conduct is unacceptable. Thus, the first attitudinal effect of punishment in this study is the strengthening of normative awareness through rational and dialogical explanation.

The second attitudinal impact appears in the affective domain, particularly in the emergence of responsibility, shame, and self-reflection. Observational evidence shows that sanctions such as standing in front of the class, cleaning school areas, or being temporarily distanced from peer interaction create discomfort that encourages students to reflect on their behavior. In restated form, these sanctions work not because they physically hurt students, but because they activate an emotional response that connects misconduct with social and moral consequences. However, the data also show an important limit: when punishment is perceived as disproportionate or unfair, students may experience resentment rather than constructive shame. This means that emotional outcomes depend heavily on students' sense of procedural justice. Four tendencies are visible from these findings. First, moderate discomfort can motivate self-correction. Second, public accountability contributes to emotional awareness. Third, fairness determines whether shame becomes constructive or destructive.



Fourth, emotional acceptance is closely tied to how well teachers communicate the purpose of punishment. This result indicates that punishment shapes student attitudes affectively only when it is measured, comprehensible, and experienced as fair rather than humiliating.

The final evidence concerns the conative or behavioral dimension, namely visible changes in action after punishment has been implemented. School attendance records and daily monitoring reportedly show a decline in tardiness after the madrasah applied memorization-based sanctions for students arriving after 7:15 a.m. In addition, observations indicate improved neatness in wearing complete uniforms and more consistent compliance with school regulations under conditions of firm supervision and clearly communicated consequences. Restated more directly, the data suggest that punishment did not stop at awareness or emotion, but extended to practical behavioral adjustment. Three patterns can be identified from this final set of findings. First, repeated sanctions linked to specific violations help reduce recurring misconduct. Second, behavior improves more consistently when sanctions are predictable and understandable. Third, the effectiveness of punishment is cumulative because it combines explanation, emotional response, and routine enforcement. Overall, the evidence shows that punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang functions not simply as a disciplinary reaction, but as an integrated mechanism of student attitude formation. The third result, therefore, confirms that fair and educational punishment contributes simultaneously to cognitive recognition, affective responsibility, and conative behavioral change in the madrasah context.

## DISCUSSION

### *Punishment as a Pedagogical Instrument in the Context of Tourism*

The implementation of punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang has proven to be an effective behavioral control instrument in the socio-cultural context of a madrasah directly exposed to the external values of the international tourism industry. Student self-formation is an active process and is influenced simultaneously by existential factors and the individual's environment. (Marginson, 2024). The value tension generated by daily interactions between students and international tourists creates challenges to identity formation that cannot be resolved through an instructive approach alone, but rather requires consistent and continuous corrective mechanisms.

Students' external environment is the strongest explanatory factor for the formation of attitudes and behavioral intentions, even exceeding the direct influence of formal education in the classroom. (Kusumojanto et al.,



2021)In Bukit Lawang, the dynamic tourism environment creates competitive alternative role models for madrasah students. The tiered punishment applied in this context serves not only as a mechanism for correcting individual behavior, but also as a normative institutional boundary guard that separates the madrasah's religious identity from the free flow of values brought by the tourism industry.

### **Attitude Components and Behavior Change Mechanisms**

An analysis of the impact of punishment on three components of attitudes provides a comprehensive picture of the mechanisms of student behavior change. The cognitive, affective, and behavioral components operate as dynamically interacting constructs and cannot be modified separately.(Suh & Ahn, 2022)The tiered punishment approach implemented at MTS Bukit Lawang addresses the cognitive dimension through rational explanations, the affective dimension through sanctions that foster a sense of responsibility, and the conative dimension through tangible and measurable behavioral consequences. This approach is theoretically more robust than sanctions that target only one attitudinal dimension.

Spiritual-psychological factors and social factors are two main groups of determinants of value development in adolescents that cannot be ignored in designing character development programs.(Kozlova & Pikhart, 2021)This finding directly correlates with the punishment model at MTS Bukit Lawang, which integrates religious sanctions such as memorizing the Quran and cleaning the mosque as the primary form of punishment, rather than relying solely on physical sanctions. By targeting this spiritual-psychological dimension, the madrasah indirectly utilizes a deeper and more lasting value modification mechanism than conventional punitive sanctions.

### **Identity Formation and Its Relevance to Student Character Formation**

The process of attitude and character formation at MTS Bukit Lawang shows structural similarities to the Professional Identity Formation (PIF) process in other formal educational contexts. Identity formation is longitudinal, influenced by internal factors such as personal values and abilities, as well as external factors such as the learning environment and communal expectations.(Findyartini et al., 2022)At MTS Bukit Lawang, strong communal expectations from parents and local religious leaders act as external reinforcements that strengthen the effectiveness of punishment in directing student behavior toward the norms expected by the madrasah.

Exposure to a meaningful transformative experience can be enough to start the process of identity formation in a person, even from a single



event.(Madgwick et al., 2024)In the context of this research, punishment applied appropriately, fairly, and accompanied by meaningful explanation can serve as a transformative experience that triggers a deep internalization of values, rather than simply fear-based obedience. This is particularly relevant during the verbal advice and reprimand stages of the Ulwan model, where pedagogical communication between teacher and student opens up space for authentic self-reflection.

### **Dialectics of Tourism and Madrasah Identity**

The implementation of punishment in Bukit Lawang faces a challenge known as the "Tourism Paradox," where tourism simultaneously serves as a source of economic progress and a source of pressure on students' religious identities. Daily interactions with international tourists have led some students to question the relevance of madrasah regulations, which they perceive as contradicting the freedoms they witness in their surroundings. In response to this challenge, MTS Bukit Lawang developed an approach that goes beyond simply enforcing rules, with teachers actively explaining the wisdom behind each sanction within the framework of Islamic values.

From Max Weber's perspective on social action, teachers' punishment is a rational, purposeful action (zweckrational) aimed at maintaining order in the madrasah organization. The success of this approach depends heavily on students' perceived fairness of the sanctions they receive. Motivation born from a deep understanding of values, rather than fear, provides a much stronger foundation for developing long-term behavioral intentions.(Pham et al., 2023)This principle applies not only in the context of entrepreneurship, but also in the context of religious character formation in the madrasa environment.

### **Student Attitudes, Acceptance, and Agency**

The factors of acceptance and a sense of personal responsibility are the strongest predictors for the formation of a person's positive attitude towards a new system or policy implemented in their environment.(Acosta-Enriquez et al., 2024). This finding has direct methodological implications for the implementation of punishment in madrasas: students who understand and accept the rationale behind the disciplinary system being implemented tend to respond with a more positive and cooperative attitude than students who perceive sanctions as something imposed without adequate explanatory basis.

The primary concerns of intervention recipients generally center on aspects of self-control, supervision, and loss of personal agency.(Moldt et al., 2023)This finding is relevant because it demonstrates a universal pattern



that recipients of interventions, whether in the context of technology or disciplinary systems, tend to have positive attitudes when treated as subjects with agency, rather than simply objects of control. This underscores the importance of dialogic communication between teachers and students at every stage of punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang to prevent the discipline process from becoming a demeaning experience.

### **Relation to Previous Research Findings**

A low level of understanding of a concept is correlated with an attitude that is only at a moderate level, even though exposure to the concept has been going on for quite a long time.(Younis & Ahmed, 2024)A similar pattern can be observed in the context of this study: students who do not receive adequate explanations about the purpose of punishment tend to demonstrate only superficial compliance without truly internalizing the values. This finding strengthens the argument that the cognitive component, namely understanding the reasons for sanctions, is an absolute prerequisite for the formation of authentic and lasting attitudes.

Compared to research in urban schools, the implementation of punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang is much more procedurally flexible yet more intensely personal and religious. In urban areas, punishments are often procedural-administrative, such as point deductions, while in rural-tourist madrasas like MTS Bukit Lawang, punishments are more personal-religious, including in-depth advice and religious duties. This is due to the stronger emotional bond between teachers and parents in rural environments, so a family approach is prioritized before imposing formal sanctions. The relational and communal conditions surrounding an individual are important determinants of the depth of the self-formation process that takes place within educational institutions.(Marginson, 2024).

### **CONCLUSION**

This study yielded three main findings that are systematically interrelated. First, the implementation of punishment at MTS Bukit Lawang was carried out in stages following Abdullah Nasih Ulwan's seven pedagogical stages, starting from verbal guidance to educational physical sanctions and religious duties, in response to the complexity of violations influenced by the dynamics of the international tourism environment. Second, punishment applied based on the principles of justice, compassion, and consistency was proven to be able to modify three components of student attitudes simultaneously: the cognitive component through strengthening normative awareness, the affective component through building a sense of responsibility and self-awareness, and the conative



component through a measurable decrease in the frequency of disciplinary violations. Third, the effectiveness of punishment is largely determined by students' perceptions of the fairness of the sanctions received, so that dialogic pedagogical communication between teachers and students is an absolute prerequisite for punishment to function as an instrument for internalizing values, not simply a mechanism for fear-based obedience.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of an understanding of the instrumental function of punishment in the context of madrasas exposed to external values from the international tourism sector, a gap that has not been widely explored in previous Islamic education literature. These findings also emphasize that a disciplinary approach that integrates spiritual-religious dimensions into sanction mechanisms has a deeper and more lasting effect on attitude change than conventional punitive sanctions.

For further research, it is recommended that comparative studies be conducted across madrasas in various tourism areas in Indonesia to test the generalizability of these findings. Furthermore, longitudinal studies that periodically measure changes in student attitudes following punishment would enhance understanding of the long-term resilience of value internalization. Mixed-method studies that integrate quantitative psychological measurements are also needed to evaluate the impact of punishment on students' psychological well-being more comprehensively and measurably.

### **Practical Implications and Suggestions**

The results of this study have implications for madrasah management policies in tourist areas. It is recommended that MTS Bukit Lawang continue to update its violation point system to make it more transparent and accessible to parents in real-time. The madrasah should also provide regular training for teachers on adolescent developmental psychology to ensure that punishments never deviate from the path of compassion. Parents are advised to fully support disciplinary efforts at school and not become defensive when their children face the consequences of their mistakes. Collaboration between schools, families, and community leaders in Bukit Lawang is essential to creating a supportive ecosystem that protects adolescents from the negative influences of a free-spirited lifestyle, without isolating them from the economic benefits of tourism. Thus, MTS Bukit Lawang can continue to be an institution that produces graduates with Islamic character and a global perspective, while remaining grounded in the values of local wisdom of North Sumatra.



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