

Between Claim and Practice: Delegating the Function of Adolescent Character Formation in Rural Families in Jeneponto

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ABSTRACT

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Adolescent character formation is commonly studied as a normative role of the nuclear family, while the distance between the role that is claimed and the practice that is actually carried out is rarely examined. This article explores how parents in a rural hamlet in Jeneponto Regency, South Sulawesi, articulate responsibility for adolescent character formation, and how they describe their own practice. The study employs a single-site qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews and observation involving thirteen participants comprising parents, adolescents, and local religious actors. Data were analysed [S1.1]thematically with source triangulation across role groups. Three findings emerge. First, participants consistently locate character formation as the primary responsibility of the nuclear family. Second, in the practice they themselves acknowledge, part of this function is carried out by other parties, namely residential religious educational institutions, extended family, and local religious actors. Third, participants link this transfer to livelihood demands, communication gaps with their children, the assumption that adolescents can already judge for themselves, and the absence of parenting guidance and adolescent development forums in their surroundings. In two participants, the normative statement and the admission of reduced involvement appeared within the same interview session. These findings offer functional delegation as a lens for reading

caregiving practice in rural communities, while indicating that family strengthening programmes targeting parental knowledge alone risk missing the actors who actually perform the function.

INTRODUCTION

The family holds a privileged position in Indonesian discourse on character formation. It is described as the first educational environment, as the child's first school, and as the party primarily responsible for cultivating the moral disposition of the younger generation. This formulation appears both in the literature on Islamic education and in family resilience policy, and it is almost never questioned. The normative consensus rests on solid ground: the family is the first setting in which children absorb values, and daily interaction within it shapes moral disposition long before formal educational institutions assume any role (Berns, 2016; Lickona, 1991).

A strong consensus, however, carries its own methodological risk. When a normative proposition is widely accepted, research tends to stop at the stage of confirmation. A large number of Indonesian studies on the family's role in character formation follow a similar pattern: they identify the parental roles of educator, motivator, and exemplar, and then conclude that these roles matter and should be strengthened. The pattern produces descriptions that are accurate but add little new knowledge, because the question posed already presupposes its own answer.

The difficulty lies not in the truth of that proposition but in what is lost when it is taken for granted. An interview instrument built around the question "what is your role in shaping your child's character" will almost certainly harvest normative answers, since the question asks participants to state what ought to be, not to recount what is. As a result, the distance between the role that is claimed and the practice that is actually carried out is rarely recorded. Yet it is precisely within that distance that the substantive problems of caregiving reside.

The sociology of the family has long shown that caregiving practice is not determined solely by parental intention or knowledge. Household material conditions, type of employment, and the availability of time shape what parents are able to do, regardless of what they believe they ought to do (Conger & Donnellan, 2007; Kohn, 1977; Lareau, 2003). Work that demands a full day of physical presence elsewhere, for instance, restricts the opportunity to interact with children during the hours when children are at home. Limited parental educational capital narrows the repertoire of caregiving strategies available. Within this framework, the gap between claim and practice is not a sign of individual hypocrisy but a symptom of constraints that lie beyond individual control.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological framework adds that child development unfolds across interconnected layers of environment, so that the caregiving function never rests entirely with a single actor. The concept of social capital clarifies the mechanism: families can draw on resources beyond themselves to perform functions they cannot perform alone, and the availability of those resources varies across communities (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Furstenberg, 2005). Where community resources are thin, the options available to families narrow accordingly, and that constraint rarely surfaces in studies that stop at the normative level.

In Indonesian Muslim communities, transferring part of the caregiving function to other parties has deep historical roots. Pesantren, or Islamic boarding schools, have long served as institutions that assume responsibility from families for religious instruction and the cultivation of discipline (Azra, 2012; Dhofier, 2011). The same applies to extended family and local religious actors, who in many rural communities perform supervisory and moral guidance functions informally. Such transfers are usually read as a cultural strength, as evidence that caregiving is collective. That reading is not mistaken, but it overlooks an important question: is the transfer a choice made deliberately, or a way out of constraints that are not openly acknowledged?

This article begins from a paradox recorded in a rural community in Jeneponto Regency, South Sulawesi. In interviews, parents consistently asserted that character formation is the primary responsibility of the nuclear family and must not be handed over to others. Yet when they described their daily practice, some of them acknowledged that the function was in fact being carried out by a pesantren, by grandparents and extended family, or by religious actors in their surroundings. In two participants, both kinds of statement emerged within the same interview session.

The research question guiding this article is therefore: why do parents in this community assert adolescent character formation as the primary responsibility of the nuclear family, while in the practice they themselves acknowledge part of that function is carried out by parties outside the nuclear family?

The article offers three contributions. Empirically, it records the gap between normative claim and acknowledged practice from the same source, something rarely captured because research instruments generally leave no room for admissions of limitation. Conceptually, it offers the delegation of the character formation function as a descriptive lens for reading caregiving practice in communities marked by high economic pressure and low educational capital. Practically, it shows that family strengthening programmes aimed at parental knowledge and

awareness risk missing their target, because part of the function they seek to strengthen has already shifted to other actors who hold neither mandate, resources, nor programmes.

It should be stated at the outset that this article does not measure adolescent character and does not assess the success or failure of caregiving. What is analysed is the account of practice, not outcomes in adolescents themselves. Nor does the article treat delegation as a moral failing. On the contrary, it reads delegation as a reasonable response to circumstance, and it is precisely for that reason that it calls for a policy response different from the one customarily offered.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a single-site design. The choice rests on the aim of the research, namely to understand how participants formulate and describe their caregiving practice in their own context, rather than to test relationships between variables or measure the distribution of a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Context and Site

The research was conducted in a hamlet within Balangloe Tarowang Village, Tarowang District, Jeneponto Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The village has a population of 1,749 living in 452 households, all of whom are Muslim. Livelihoods rest chiefly on farming and fishing, and formal educational attainment is generally low. These structural characteristics are presented in the findings section because they serve as a ground for interpretation rather than as mere administrative description.

Participants

Thirteen participants took part, distributed across three role groups: nine parents, two adolescents, and two local religious actors. Involving three role groups was intended to allow parental accounts to be cross-checked against the accounts of others who observe or experience the same practice.

Participants were selected on the basis of accessibility and willingness, through the field researcher's social network at the site. The study did not apply a formally predetermined participant selection procedure. This limitation is reported openly because it bears on the reach of the findings: participants do not represent all families at the site, and consequently no claim is made about how widely any pattern holds within the community.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observation between February and April 2025. Interview guides were prepared in three sets matched to the role groups. Interviews took place in participants' homes in a conversational manner, with opening questions of a normative character and follow-up questions directed at everyday practice. This structure matters for the findings of the article: follow-up questions asking participants to recount concrete episodes opened space for admissions that did not surface in response to the opening questions.

Observation covered the daily life of participating families, particularly practices of worship and parent-child interaction. Observational data were used as a point of comparison against interview accounts rather than as a source of separate findings.

Interviews were conducted in Indonesian. The quotations presented in this article were translated by the authors and lightly edited for readability without altering their meaning.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed thematically following the stages set out by Braun and Clarke (2006): repeated reading of the whole dataset, generation of initial codes, collation of codes into themes, review of themes against the data, and definition of final themes. The coding scheme drew a firm

distinction between two kinds of statement: normative statements, concerning who ought to bear responsibility; and acknowledged practice, concerning what participants actually do or fail to do. This distinction is what allowed the gap between the two to be read as a pattern rather than as noise to be tidied away.

A subsequent stage of analysis mapped each character formation function mentioned by participants onto the actor who, by their account, performs it. This mapping produced the categories of delegation recipient presented in the findings.

Trustworthiness was pursued through source triangulation, comparing accounts across role groups regarding the same phenomenon (Denzin, 1978; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Parental accounts of their own involvement were examined against adolescents' accounts of how their parents raise them, and against religious actors' accounts of caregiving conditions in the area. Observational data were further used to check consistency between stated and observed practice.

Researcher Positionality

The field researcher comes from the community under study and has close kinship ties with some participants. This position carries both advantages and limitations. It afforded relatively high access and openness, which likely contributed to the emergence of admissions rarely recorded in comparable research. At the same time, such proximity may shape what participants consider appropriate to say, and may influence the researcher's interpretation of the data. This limitation is stated openly and forms part of the basis on which the findings should be read.

Ethical Considerations

All participants are referred to by randomly assigned codes that do not follow the order of interviews. Names, specific positions, the names of children's educational institutions, and individual interview dates are not disclosed. For the small group of religious actors, the site is described at village rather than hamlet level in order to reduce the possibility of re-identification within a small community.

For quotations that display tension between a normative statement and an acknowledgment of practice within the same participant, individual codes are deliberately withheld. This decision allows the finding to be reported as a corpus-level pattern without giving readers the means to cross-reference the two statements to a single individual.

Limitations

Several limitations should be stated. First, the number of participants is small and drawn from a single site, so the findings cannot be generalised. Second, the participant selection procedure was not formally established at the outset. Third, only two adolescents took part, so their accounts are used as illustrations of convergence rather than as a basis for claims about adolescent perspectives. Fourth, the study did not measure outcomes in adolescents, so no claim is made regarding the effectiveness of the caregiving practices described.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Structural Context of the Research Site

Before the findings are presented, the structural characteristics of the site warrant attention, since they form the ground against which participants' stated reasons are interpreted. Table 1 summarises the educational and livelihood profile of the village in which the research site is located.

Table 1. Structural Profile of the Research Village

Indicator	Number	Share	Note
Total population	1,749	—	452 households

Primary school or below	1,358	77.6%	incl. never schooled
Lower secondary completed	222	12.7%	
Upper secondary completed	135	7.7%	
Diploma and degree holders	31	1.8%	
Farmers	232	—	principal livelihood
Fishers	21	—	
Homemakers	520	—	
Civil service, army, police	8	—	

Source: compiled from Balangloe Tarawang Village Office data. Note: sex-disaggregated totals differ between the two source tables, so only aggregate figures are presented here.

Two figures deserve attention. First, more than three-quarters of the population have completed primary school or less, while fewer than two per cent hold a higher education qualification. Second, livelihoods rest on farming and fishing, forms of work that require a full day of physical presence away from home and that observe no fixed working hours. Neither condition explains caregiving practice directly, but both are consistent with the reasons participants gave, as set out below.

Table 2. Participant Profile

Code	Role group	Sex	Number
OT-01 to OT-06	Parents	Female	6
OT-07 to OT-09	Parents	Male	3
RM-01, RM-02	Adolescents	Male and female	2
AK-01, AK-02	Religious actors	Male	2
Total			13

Source: primary research data, processed.

Normative Articulation: Character Is Formed at Home

The first finding is consistent and admits almost no variation. Asked about responsibility for adolescent character formation, all parent and religious-actor participants located it within the nuclear family. The home was named as the point of origin, and institutions beyond the home were described as complements rather than substitutes.

As a parent, my main task is to teach my child religion and good conduct. Religious values play a large part in shaping the attitudes and character of adolescents. If they are accustomed to good teaching from an early age, their personality and character take shape accordingly. Character education begins at home; it is not something simply handed over to the school or the pesantren.

(AK-01)

This statement runs parallel to the accounts of parent participants. A mother whose children study at universities outside Sulawesi explained that physical distance does not dissolve her responsibility:

Because I live far from my two children, every day I call them simply to ask how they are, so that they do not feel neglected. Now and then I work advice into our

conversation about the importance of honesty, of feeling that Allah is watching, and of taking responsibility for every decision they make.

(OT-03)

Other participants stressed that character education demands nothing elaborate, only the habituation of small things: asking permission before leaving the house, offering greetings, and helping with household work. Several emphasised a manner of correction that protects the child's dignity, namely not reprimanding a child in front of others and deferring the conversation until circumstances allow.

The accounts of the two adolescent participants corroborate this picture from a different angle. Both described parents who convey values deliberately and in a manner they experienced as respectful:

Our parents taught us the importance of protecting other people's dignity. One way is that they do not reprimand us in public; instead, once we are home, they talk with us calmly about things we should not have done outside.

(RM-01)

My mother always taught me the importance of good conduct, especially in the way I speak and behave towards those older than me. My father placed more emphasis on taking responsibility for whatever I choose in daily life.

(RM-02)

Convergence across parents, adolescents, and religious actors on this theme is strong. Up to this point, the data confirm what the literature has widely reported: families position themselves, and are positioned by others, as those primarily responsible for character formation. Had the analysis stopped here, this article would have arrived at the same conclusion as dozens of comparable studies.

The Practice of Delegation: Three Recipients of the Function

The picture changes once participants are asked to describe everyday practice. At this point, accounts emerge of parties outside the nuclear family who carry out part of the character formation function. The analysis identifies three recipients of delegation.

Residential religious educational institutions. The most explicit recipient is the pesantren. One participant stated directly that entrusting her children to a pesantren formed part of her effort to shape their character:

Entrusting the children to a pesantren is also one of the things that helps us shape adolescent character, because there the children's studies are better supervised, both in religious subjects and in general subjects.

(OT-03)

It is worth noting that the same participant had earlier affirmed her own responsibility through long-distance communication. The two statements do not cancel each other out; together they show that the caregiving function is divided. The operative word in the quotation above is "supervised", which refers to daily oversight — a function that in practical terms cannot be performed by parents when the child is not at home.

Extended family. The second recipient comprises relatives beyond the nuclear family. One participant described character formation as the work of the whole kinship network:

In our family it is not only my husband and I who give the children good teaching, but also their grandfather, grandmother, and the extended family generally. They too often teach the importance of keeping to prayer times and of not using social media for negative purposes.

(OT-01)

Such accounts are usually read as a supporting factor, and rightly so. Yet read alongside the theme that follows, they also show that part of the supervisory and value-transmission function has shifted to parties who are not normatively named as primarily responsible.

Local religious actors. The third recipient comprises religious actors in the immediate locality. Their role emerges chiefly in accounts of adolescent guidance outside the home. One religious-actor participant described the state of the provision available:

Many of the children here actually have talent; there is simply no place or activity to accommodate it. Every Ramadan there are usually religious competitions, but as far as I can see there is no preparation beforehand. I hope there can be a guidance programme that runs more regularly, at least a few times a week and not only seasonally, so that the children can keep developing.

(AK-02)

This account matters because it comes from the recipient of delegation. It shows that the religious actor is aware of the expectation directed at him, and states at the same time that he has neither programme, schedule, nor resources with which to meet it. The provision available is seasonal and is not preceded by any continuous process of preparation.

A parent participant's account reinforces the same picture from the family's side:

In this hamlet the children prefer to gather outside the house, and so we find it difficult to supervise them. Positive activities such as religious study groups, competitions, or youth programmes are very rarely held here. They have no place or forum in which to channel their interests, and no setting in which they might learn religious values in an engaging way.

(OT-06)

The three recipients therefore differ in character. The pesantren is the most institutionalised and the most capable of performing the function transferred to it. The extended family is an informal recipient whose availability depends on the kinship structure of each household. The local religious actor is the weakest in capacity: he receives the expectation without receiving mandate, resources, or programme.

Acknowledged Reduction of Involvement and the Reasons Given

The third theme is the one most rarely recorded in comparable research: participants' own acknowledgment that their involvement has diminished. These admissions surfaced in response to follow-up questions asking for concrete episodes, not in response to the normative opening questions. Four reasons were given.

Livelihood demands. The reason most frequently raised is time constraint arising from work. One participant described how exhaustion from work leads to the relaxation of rules previously agreed within the household:

Because of work, I am rarely at home to be present as the children grow up, so I also communicate little with my wife about the discipline she has set. Things like playtime, bedtime, and so on — I often grant the children a great deal of latitude when I do not want to be disturbed because I am tired after work.

(parent participant)

Another participant's account reveals the same phenomenon from a spouse's perspective:

Another challenge is my husband's limited part in shaping adolescent character. He leaves in the morning and returns at night to provide for us, so he has little time to interact with the children at home. As an example he does set one, such as praying in congregation at the mosque, but in terms of communication or discussion with the children it is very limited, so they are not emotionally close to their father.

(OT-02)

Both accounts show a pattern consistent with the structural context in Table 1. Work grounded in farming and fishing demands physical presence away from home over long stretches of the day, so that the hours when children are at home are precisely the hours when parents are absent or exhausted. Notably, ritual exemplarity persists — congregational prayer is still modelled — while the functions of communication and supervision are the ones most affected. What has diminished, in other words, is not commitment but opportunity.

Communication gaps with children. The second reason concerns the difficulty of opening conversation with a child entering adolescence:

As a mother I feel my children are closer to their friends than to me, especially now that they have reached adolescence. If I ask something or try to start a conversation, the answers are brief or there is no answer at all. So in the end I simply leave them to their own world.

(OT-05)

The closing sentence marks a shift from effort to withdrawal. It is important to note that this withdrawal is presented as the outcome of repeated failure rather than as a choice made from the outset.

The assumption that adolescents can already judge for themselves. The third reason takes the form of a belief that the child has acquired the capacity to judge, so that parental intervention is no longer required:

I do not discuss things with my child very often, because I feel my child already knows what is good and what is bad, so I do not interfere. Besides, adolescents nowadays sometimes will not listen to their parents' advice because they can already access all the information they want on the internet.

(parent participant)

Limited parenting guidance. The fourth reason was raised from the recipient's side, concerning the scarcity of parenting knowledge available to parents in the area:

Here, some parents still think that education can simply be left to the school. Yet in my view a child's character is also formed at home, and that is the more important part. But education about parenting is very scarce in this area; some parents do not even understand how to set a good example for their children.

(AK-02)

A parent participant added a broader dimension, concerning prevailing local views about what matters for a child's future:

One of the obstacles we face in raising children is that local custom does not particularly support character education. Children are steered towards working early or marrying young rather than towards better character formation. We feel there needs to be a specific programme in this hamlet to reshape how young people think, so that they come to value what is good.

(OT-02)

Tension Between Normative Claim and Acknowledged Practice

This section presents the finding at the core of the article. When normative statements and acknowledgments of practice were mapped at the individual level, it emerged that in two participants both kinds of statement appeared within the same interview session. A participant who asserted that character education begins at home and must not be handed over to others stated, elsewhere in the same interview, that he does not interfere in his child's affairs. Another participant who described a patient, explanation-based approach to raising children

acknowledged, elsewhere in the same interview, granting considerable latitude because of exhaustion from work.

In line with the ethical considerations set out in the method section, individual codes for these two pairs of statements are withheld, and the finding is reported at corpus level.

This tension can be read in several ways. The easiest reading, and in the authors' view the most mistaken, treats it as personal dishonesty or inconsistency. The data do not support that reading, since participants volunteered these admissions unprompted, and offered them together with reasons of a structural character — work, exhaustion, the absence of forums, limited knowledge.

A reading more faithful to the data is that the two constitute distinct layers of the same experience. The first layer is the normative discourse participants hold and that circulates in their community: character is formed at home. The second layer is the circumstance they face daily: time consumed by earning a living, communication with children that has stalled, and the absence of any other party that can be relied upon in a programmed way. Participants do not resolve the tension between the two; they live it. And the way they live it is by transferring part of the function to others while continuing to hold the discourse that the function is theirs.

It is this reading that gives rise to the working concept offered here: the delegation of the character formation function. Delegation in this sense does not mean the relinquishing of responsibility, since normative responsibility is in fact held firmly. What is transferred is the performance of part of the function — particularly daily supervision and habituation — to actors who are in practical terms better placed to carry it out.

Discussion: Delegation as a Structurally Constrained Practice

These findings align with a proposition long advanced in the sociology of the family, namely that caregiving practice is shaped by household material conditions and not by held values alone (Conger & Donnellan, 2007; Kohn, 1977; Lareau, 2003). In the present context, the demands of earning a living through farming and fishing, compounded by low formal educational attainment, produce a narrow field of manoeuvre for parents. Within that narrow field, delegation is a reasonable response rather than negligence.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological framework helps situate the finding more precisely. Character formation proceeds across several environmental layers at once, and it is the interaction between those layers that shapes the outcome. When the community layer is thin — in this case, when no regularly functioning forum for adolescent development exists — the burden on the family layer rises precisely when family capacity is most constrained. The concept of social capital explains the compensating mechanism: families draw on resources beyond themselves to perform functions they cannot perform alone (Coleman, 1988; Furstenberg, 2005). Those resources, however, are not evenly available.

A comparison across the three recipients makes this clear. The pesantren is an institutionalised recipient with a schedule, rules, and staff, so the function transferred to it is genuinely performed (Azra, 2012; Dhofier, 2011). Yet access requires means and a willingness to be separated from the child, so not every family can take that route. The extended family imposes no financial cost, but its availability depends on whether relatives live nearby and are willing to become involved. The local religious actor is the recipient most open to all families, yet the weakest in capacity — he receives expectation without mandate, budget, or programme, so the guidance he can offer remains seasonal.

From this follows the practical implication that constitutes the article's applied contribution. Family strengthening programmes in Indonesia generally take the form of parenting outreach aimed at parental knowledge and awareness. If the findings here hold, such

programmes address a party whose functions have in part already shifted elsewhere. Outreach can raise knowledge, but it does not add hours to the day of a parent who works from morning until night, and it does not create a forum where none exists. The data indeed suggest that several participants already possessed adequate normative knowledge — they were the ones who articulated the formulation that character is formed at home — while what they lacked was opportunity and support.

The implication that follows is that family strengthening needs to be accompanied by strengthening the recipients of delegation. If adolescent character guidance is in practice carried out by local religious actors, those actors require a clear mandate, a regular schedule, and resource support. The account of the religious-actor participant indicates that willingness is already present; what is absent is the structure to sustain it. This shifts the form of intervention from periodic outreach events towards institutional capacity building at village level.

The findings also carry a methodological implication for comparable research. The gap between claim and practice emerged only because the interviews continued beyond normative questions into questions about concrete episodes. Where an instrument stops at the opening question, only the discursive layer is recorded. Research on the role of the family that seeks to move beyond normative description will need to design its instruments with this in mind.

Several interpretive limits bear restating. First, these findings apply to participants' accounts at a single site and cannot be generalised to other communities. Second, the structural conditions in Table 1 function as a ground consistent with the reasons participants gave, not as a cause demonstrated empirically; the study was not designed to test causal relationships. Third, the article does not measure adolescent character, so no claim is made as to whether delegation produces better or worse outcomes. What is shown is that delegation occurs, how it is described, and what reasons participants offer to explain it.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined the distance between claimed role and acknowledged practice in adolescent character formation within a rural community in Jeneponto Regency. Three findings emerged. First, participants consistently locate character formation as the primary responsibility of the nuclear family and state that the process begins at home. Second, in the practice they themselves acknowledge, part of that function is performed by other parties: residential religious educational institutions, extended family, and local religious actors. Third, participants attribute this transfer to livelihood demands, communication gaps with their children, the assumption that adolescents can already judge for themselves, and the scarcity of parenting guidance together with the absence of adolescent development forums.

In two participants, the normative statement and the acknowledgment of reduced involvement appeared within the same interview session. This is read not as personal inconsistency but as tension between a discourse held and a circumstance lived. The way participants live that tension is by transferring the performance of part of the function to others while continuing to hold its normative responsibility.

On that basis, the article offers the delegation of the character formation function as a descriptive lens for reading caregiving practice in communities marked by high economic pressure and low educational capital. The lens shifts the research question from "what is the role of the family" towards "who actually performs this function, and why". That shift opens up problems that remain invisible for as long as the family's role is examined only at the normative level.

The practical consequence is that family strengthening programmes aimed solely at parental knowledge and awareness risk missing the actors who actually perform the function. The recipients of delegation — local religious actors above all — receive expectation unaccompanied by mandate, resources, or programme, so the guidance they are able to provide remains seasonal and discontinuous.

RECOMMENDATION

Several courses of action follow from these findings. For village government and local religious institutions, strengthening a regularly functioning forum for adolescent development deserves priority, rather than confining activity to seasonal events around Ramadan. The willingness of religious actors is already present; what is not yet in place is the schedule, mandate, and resource support to sustain it.

For those designing family resilience programmes, the findings suggest that intervention should not stop at parenting outreach. Outreach raises knowledge, but it adds no hours to the day of a parent who works from morning until night and creates no forum where none exists. Interventions that take parental time constraints into account — for instance, activities scheduled at hours genuinely available to them — are likely to fit the circumstances more closely.

For future research, three directions are worth pursuing. First, testing similar patterns at other sites with comparable structural characteristics, in order to assess how far the concept of functional delegation transfers. Second, research that treats the recipients of delegation as a unit of analysis in their own right, particularly local religious actors, who are studied far less often than parents and teachers in the Indonesian character education literature. Third, research designed to separate normative questions from questions about concrete episodes deliberately, so that the gap between claim and practice can be recorded systematically.

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