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MAKING STUDENTHOOD LEGIBLE: DISCIPLINARY INFORMATION AND SUBJECT POSITIONING ACROSS CONNECTED SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL SPACES

Ayu Dwi Lestari[1a*], M. Ridhah Taqwa[2b], Dadang Hikmah Purnama[3c]

[123] Universitas Sriwijaya, Indonesia

[a]*E-mail: ayudwilestari149@gmail.com*
[b]*E-mail: ridhotaqwa@fisip.unsri.ac.id*
[c]*E-mail: dadanghikmahpurnama@unsri.ac.id*

(*) Corresponding Author
ayudwilestari149@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT
Educational institutions do more than regulate conduct. They make students visible, comparable, and recognisable within institutional categories. This article examines that process at Sekolah Rakyat Menengah Atas (SRMA) 7 Palembang, Indonesia. The qualitative case study analyses hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and examination. It draws on interviews with one principal, one teacher, one caregiver, and seven students. Two institutional student reports supplement these accounts. The findings show that routines distribute opportunities for observation. Normative standards differentiate everyday conduct. Examination converts selected conduct into institutional information through assessment, documentation, and reporting. Such information can extend the relevance of conduct beyond the encounter where it was observed. Student accounts also reveal habituated adherence, situational non-compliance, avoidance, and performed compliance. The "disciplined student" therefore emerges as a situated subject position rather than a fixed identity. Institutional recognition therefore cannot be equated with internalised discipline. The article specifies an identity-oriented dimension of Foucauldian discipline. Selected conduct can become portable information and make studenthood recognisable across organisational relations. The study does not establish causal behavioural change, stable identity transformation, or generalisation beyond the case.

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INTRODUCTION

Schools are institutional sites where students are taught, observed, evaluated, differentiated, and addressed through expectations about conduct. These practices matter because institutional judgements can make particular forms of studenthood recognisable to others. Recognisability is not equivalent to a fixed identity. A student may be treated as punctual, orderly, compliant, troublesome, or in need of guidance in particular encounters. Such treatment does not permanently define the student. The analytical problem is how institutions make studenthood recognisable. The analysis avoids reducing studenthood to a stable trait or private self-definition (Çeven et al., 2021).

The institutional context of Sekolah Rakyat Menengah Atas (SRMA) 7 Palembang reflects Indonesia's policy commitment to expanding educational opportunities for children from economically disadvantaged households through a publicly funded residential schooling programme. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs (2025), the Sekolah Rakyat programme prioritises children from households classified within the lowest two socioeconomic deciles of the national social and economic database. Official information released by the Office of the Vice President (2025) indicates that SRMA 7 Palembang commenced educational activities in July 2025 and accommodated 100 students, comprising 58 male and 42 female students, supported by 31 teaching and educational personnel as reported in September 2025. The residential structure integrates formal education with everyday routines intended to develop independence, responsibility, and discipline, extending institutional expectations beyond conventional classroom activities. This setting provides a particularly relevant empirical context for examining how institutional observation, behavioural evaluation, and documented assessments contribute to making particular forms of studenthood recognisable within school life.

Foucault's account of disciplinary power provides a framework for examining this problem. Discipline organises bodies in space and time, distributes visibility, establishes norms, and links observation to examination (Foucault, 2016). These mechanisms are productive because they generate knowledge about individuals as conduct is observed, compared, assessed, and recorded. The relevant question is therefore not simply whether an institution controls student behaviour. The more specific question is how institutional arrangements transform selected conduct into forms of knowledge through which students can be differentiated and addressed (Zomer et al., 2026). Within this theoretical framework, disciplinary power constitutes the overarching perspective, while hierarchical observation, normalisation, and examination operate as interconnected institutional mechanisms. These mechanisms generate disciplinary information through which selected observations and evaluations can be documented, circulated, and made relevant beyond their original contexts, a process conceptualised here as informational portability. Such portability contributes to institutional legibility by enabling students to become recognisable through institutionally established categories and expectations. Institutional legibility, however, does not imply a fixed or fully internalised identity; rather, it positions the disciplined student as a situated subject whose recognition depends on particular institutional practices and interactions. Students may respond to these arrangements through habituated adherence, situational non-compliance, avoidance, or performed compliance, indicating that institutional recognition and individual responses remain analytically distinct.

Foucauldian research in education has established the importance of surveillance, normalisation, examination, and student subjectivity. Studies of school surveillance show how visibility can regulate conduct. Research on classroom rules shows how preferred forms of studenthood can be communicated and negotiated (Drew, 2020; Worthman & Troiano, 2019). Work on examination and assessment also links evaluation to institutional representations of individuals. Less specified is the organisational link between disciplinary knowledge and identity-relevant recognition. When can evaluated conduct remain relevant beyond the immediate encounter?

This question becomes consequential in boarding education, where educational and residential life are institutionally connected. Boarding can bring learning, meals, religious routines, cleanliness, movement, rest, and peer interaction within overlapping expectations. Recent research shows that routines, surveillance, authority, and peer

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regulation can shape identity negotiation and belonging (Berk, 2025; Kyei, 2025; Zhou, 2024). These studies mainly address identity formation, cultural negotiation, or lived experience. They specify less clearly how conduct becomes portable across institutional spaces. The gap is therefore narrower than a general lack of research on discipline or identity. It concerns how disciplinary information can acquire reach across connected institutional relations.

SRMA 7 Palembang offers a useful case because it combines formal schooling with residential provision. The empirical material describes scheduled activities, supervision, reporting, assessment, and residential routines. Students encounter teachers, caregivers, school leaders, security personnel, and peers across different periods and spaces. Its value lies in this institutional configuration. A student can be encountered repeatedly by different organisational actors. Selected information about conduct may remain relevant beyond the setting where it was produced.

The article uses institutional legibility to connect disciplinary power with identity-oriented analysis. Here, institutional legibility means that selected conduct becomes visible, comparable, recorded, and consequential within a particular institutional position. The term does not imply that institutional accounts are complete or objective. It highlights how some aspects of conduct become more available for recognition than others. The article examines disciplinary information as the mechanism of portability. Selected conduct becomes portable when records, assessments, or reports preserve its institutional relevance (Xu & Chen, 2024).

Within this framework, the "disciplined student" is treated as a situated subject position rather than a stable psychological or social identity. The position is assembled through recurring expectations concerning punctuality, cleanliness, dress, participation, attendance, organisation, religious routines, and rule compliance. Students may inhabit, negotiate, avoid, or perform this position differently according to situation. This formulation retains student agency without treating student variation as external to institutional power. Students respond to a field of expectations whose categories and consequences have already been institutionally organised.

The article asks: How do disciplinary practices make studenthood institutionally legible across connected school and residential spaces at SRMA 7 Palembang? It also asks how students respond to the resulting subject position. The analysis focuses on hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and examination. It examines how selected observations become institutional information through assessment, documentation, and reporting. Such information may remain relevant across organisational encounters. The empirical material is primarily interview-based. The article therefore treats organisational reach as a participant-described possibility, not as continuously observed information flow.

The article makes three contributions. First, it reframes the 'disciplined student' from an assumed outcome of discipline into a situated position of institutional recognition. Second, it specifies an organisational dimension of Foucauldian examination. When selected conduct is rendered durable as institutional information through assessment, documentation, or reporting, its relevance can extend beyond the immediate encounter in which it was observed. Third, it shows that institutional recognition does not entail uniform internalisation, because students describe habituated adherence, situational non-compliance, avoidance, and performed compliance. Taken together, these contributions connect disciplinary power to educational governance by showing how established mechanisms can make studenthood recognisable across connected organisational spaces.

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

Disciplinary power and institutional legibility

Foucault (2016) conceptualises discipline as productive power. It organises bodies in space and time through visibility, normalisation, and examination. These mechanisms do not simply prohibit conduct. They make individuals observable and comparable while generating knowledge for evaluating conduct. In education, discipline can operate through schedules, spatial arrangements, rules, assessments, records, and supervision. It therefore exceeds punishment alone (Çeven et al., 2021; Markoff, 2025).

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Hierarchical observation concerns the organisation of visibility. Surveillance does not require one observer to see everything at all times. Rather, institutional arrangements distribute points from which conduct can become observable. Research on school surveillance shows how such arrangements can regulate student conduct and connect visibility to performance (Perryman, 2006). In this article, hierarchical observation is therefore examined as a distributed arrangement involving different institutional roles rather than as a synonym for CCTV.

Normalisation concerns the standards through which observable conduct becomes differentiable. Rules establish reference points against which students can be described as punctual or late, clean or untidy, compliant or problematic (Drew, 2020). The analytical concern is not simply the existence of rules but their classificatory effect: repeated standards provide criteria through which conduct becomes recognisable and potentially consequential.

Examination connects visibility and normalisation to institutional knowledge. For Foucault (2016), examination combines observation with judgement and produces records through which individuals become knowable. Meadmore (1993) similarly shows how examination participates in the institutional production of individuality. Recent assessment research similarly demonstrates that evaluative practices can shape how students are recognised and positioned. In this study, examination refers to processes through which selected conduct is assessed, documented, reported, or communicated. The analytical emphasis is not on assuming that every observation becomes information, but on identifying the institutional practices through which some observations are made durable enough to be represented, retrieved, and potentially used in subsequent encounters (Nieminen, 2025).

Subject positioning, recognition, and performed compliance

The identity relevance of disciplinary power becomes clearer when subject positioning is distinguished from stable identity. Worthman & Troiano (2019) show how an adolescent negotiates a “good student” subject position, demonstrating that institutional categories can be occupied without being passively or uniformly internalised. The present study uses subject position to mean an institutionally recognisable way of being a student that emerges through relations among expectations, visibility, evaluation, and response. The concept therefore captures a relational position rather than a psychological essence (Liu et al., 2022; Rose, 2023).

Recognition is central to this formulation. An institutional category becomes identity-relevant when it organises how a student is described, addressed, evaluated, and treated. Institutional legibility names the process through which selected conduct becomes available for such recognition. Legibility is not equivalent to truth: institutional information is selective, situated, and produced through particular practices of observation and evaluation. The article therefore treats institutional recognition as an organisational accomplishment rather than as proof that a student possesses a stable underlying identity.

Goffman’s (1959) account of self-presentation provides a complementary lens for interpreting performed compliance. When students adjust visible conduct in the presence of an observer, the behaviour can be understood as management of appearance within a social encounter. This does not replace Foucault’s account of disciplinary power. It specifies a different dimension of the same episode: students can manage how they appear within institutional conditions that have already established visibility, standards, and consequences. Visible compliance therefore cannot, by itself, be treated as evidence of internalisation.

Boarding education and connected institutional space

Kyei (2026) shows how routines and surveillance shape discipline, belonging, and identity work across ten Ghanaian boarding schools. Zhou (2024) examines similar dynamics in a rural Chinese boarding school. These studies establish the importance of residential experience. They do not resolve the narrower organisational question addressed here: how selected conduct becomes informationally portable across connected institutional spaces.

The argument is not that boarding schools are inherently more disciplinary. Rather, the institutional connection between learning and residence creates conditions in which the same student may become visible to different actors at different times. What is distinctive is therefore not surveillance intensity as such, but the possibility that selected

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assessments or records remain relevant across organisational encounters. This makes boarding education analytically useful for examining the relationship between disciplinary knowledge and institutional recognition.

From disciplinary mechanisms to institutional information

The three mechanisms are treated as relational rather than isolated. Hierarchical observation makes conduct observable; normalising judgement provides standards through which conduct can be differentiated; and examination converts selected conduct into institutional information. When represented in records, assessments, or reports, that information can remain available beyond the immediate encounter. The analytical sequence is therefore: visibility → normative differentiation → examination/documentation → institutional information → potential organisational reach → institutional recognition. This is an analytical model rather than a deterministic causal chain.

The final step is identity-relevant because it concerns how students become recognisable within institutional categories. The concepts have distinct roles. Institutional legibility names the identity-relevant process. Disciplinary information names its informational mechanism. Organisational reach explains its possible persistence beyond the immediate encounter. Student responses remain contingent. The position may be inhabited through habituation, negotiation, avoidance, or performance. The article therefore specifies an informational link within established Foucauldian mechanisms. It does not propose a new disciplinary mechanism. Analytical model: visibility → normative differentiation → examination/documentation → institutional information → potential organisational reach → institutional recognition → situated subject positioning. Student responses are treated as contingent modes of occupying the position.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine disciplinary practices and student subject positioning at Sekolah Rakyat Menengah Atas (SRMA) 7 Palembang, located at Sentra Budi Perkasa, Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia. The case encompassed both formal schooling and residential settings during May–August 2026, including educational activities, residential routines, supervision, reporting, assessment, and students' accounts of everyday conduct. The analysis was theoretically informed by Michel Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, particularly hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and examination. The study did not treat SRMA 7 Palembang as representative of other Sekolah Rakyat sites but as a bounded case through which disciplinary mechanisms could be examined within a specific institutional configuration.

The dataset comprised semi-structured interviews with ten purposively selected participants: one principal, one teacher, one caregiver, and seven students, with the student participants approximately 16 years old. Interviews addressed institutional routines, monitoring, rules, sanctions, supervision, documentation, assessment, and student responses. Two institutional student reports were also analysed as documentary materials concerning assessment and recording. To clarify the documentary analysis, the two reports were examined for identifiable assessment fields, recorded behavioural categories, and evaluative descriptions that could demonstrate how selected aspects of student conduct were transformed into institutional information. Where present in the original documents, anonymised entries concerning cleanliness, discipline or compliance, and responsibility were treated as potential examples of how behavioural expectations were classified and documented. The analytical sequence distinguished the assessment of conduct (examination), its inscription in report fields (documentation), its conversion into retrievable evaluative records (institutional information), and its potential relevance across subsequent institutional interactions (informational portability). However, the existence of recorded assessments was not treated as sufficient evidence that such information had actually circulated or influenced decisions beyond the original reporting context. Interview accounts were treated as participants' descriptions and experiences rather than as direct observations; consequently, practices such as CCTV monitoring, reporting, sanctions, and institutional routines were presented as reported practices unless supported by documentary evidence. The interview and documentary corpus was analysed manually through interpretive coding. Relevant passages were organised around hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and examination, while data-driven codes captured habituation, avoidance, non-compliance, and

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performed compliance. These codes were subsequently compared and grouped into broader analytical categories concerning disciplinary mechanisms, institutional recognition, and student responses.

Interpretive credibility was strengthened by comparing convergent and divergent accounts across institutional leadership, teaching, residential care, students, and documentary materials. Convergent accounts were treated as recurring patterns rather than evidence of universal practice, while divergent accounts were retained to avoid assumptions of uniform compliance or internalisation. Participant confidentiality and anonymisation were maintained by identifying participants through institutional roles or codes rather than personal names, consistent with their permission for the research use of interview information. Because additional procedures such as formal ethics approval, parental permission, student assent, member checking, inter-coder reliability, and external audit were not documented in the available materials, no such procedures are claimed. The ethical clearance status could not be independently verified from the available research documentation; therefore, the study does not claim approval by an institutional research ethics committee. Accordingly, the evidentiary scope remains limited to ten interview accounts and two institutional reports, and the study does not claim representativeness, generalisability, saturation, continuous surveillance, causal behavioural change, uniform internalisation, or stable identity transformation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Producing a distributed field of visibility

The empirical material shows that disciplinary visibility at SRMA 7 Palembang is distributed across time, space, and institutional roles. Students described routines that begin in the early morning and continue through prayer, meals, preparation, assemblies, classroom learning, extracurricular activities, cleaning, evening routines, and scheduled rest. JH explained: “Even if we are two minutes late for the assembly, we will definitely be punished.” (student JH; translated from Indonesian). The significance of these routines is not simply that students follow a schedule. Repeated schedules create recurrent occasions in which students must appear at specified places and times, making punctuality and lateness available for institutional recognition.

Students also described adaptation to institutional time. One student explained that early rising was initially difficult but later became familiar. This account is treated as evidence of adaptation to routine rather than proof of uniform internalisation. The principal’s description of organisational divisions across curriculum, residential affairs, security, and quality assurance further indicates that institutional responsibilities extend across different periods of the day. Teachers and caregivers therefore encounter students in different settings while remaining within one organisational arrangement.

Visibility is not concentrated in one observer. The principal stated, “Everyone here is involved, from teachers and caregivers to me as the principal and the security staff.” (principal DN; translated from Indonesian). He also described CCTV and unannounced rounds as ways of checking institutional activity. The teacher described classroom observation and additional information from students, other teachers, and caregivers. The caregiver described direct observation, patrols, cleanliness monitoring, and reporting. Student accounts referred to CCTV, attendance, room-level reporting, and peer responsibilities (Zomer et al., 2026).

Taken together, these accounts indicate a distributed field of visibility rather than a single panoptic gaze. Conduct can become observable from different institutional positions at different times, including adult supervision and peer reporting. The evidence does not establish continuous observation of every student. Its significance lies instead in the organisational distribution of opportunities for conduct to be noticed, reported, and potentially considered in subsequent interactions.

From visibility to normative differentiation

Visibility alone does not determine how conduct is interpreted. Participants described expectations concerning punctuality, cleanliness, dress, participation, organisation, religious routines, and compliance. The caregiver described

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the expected conduct of a disciplined student. "A disciplined student usually follows the schedule, is punctual, maintains cleanliness, dresses according to the rules." (caregiver RS; translated from Indonesian)

These standards operate across school and residential settings. Students referred to punctuality, clean rooms, organised belongings, religious routines, appropriate dress, and participation. Sanctions and rewards further establish distinctions between preferred and dispreferred conduct. Students reported consequences such as cleaning tasks and push-ups for violations, as well as rewards associated with diligence and neatness. The category of the disciplined student is therefore assembled through a bundle of observable practices rather than academic achievement alone.

The analytical significance of normalisation lies in comparison rather than in the mere existence of rules. Institutional standards provide reference points through which conduct can be described as punctual or late, clean or untidy, compliant or problematic. The data do not show that the institution assigns permanent identity categories to students. They show instead that repeated standards make some forms of studenthood more readily recognisable within everyday institutional interaction. In this sense, normalisation contributes to institutional legibility.

From examination to portable institutional information

The third pattern concerns examination: the point at which selected aspects of conduct become recorded, assessed, and communicated. The caregiver stated, "Every activity carried out by the children is documented, so there is evidence." (caregiver RS; translated from Indonesian). The caregiver further explained that residential performance is assessed across several dimensions. "Everything in the dormitory is assessed, from neatness and cleanliness to responsibility, self-development, and daily activities." (caregiver RS; translated from Indonesian). Student accounts referred to school and residential reports. One student explained that residential and academic grades are communicated through report cards, while another described assessment of cleanliness, compliance, and discipline. "In the dormitory there are grades for cleanliness, compliance, and discipline." (student FRA; translated from Indonesian).

These accounts indicate that selected conduct does not necessarily remain confined to the moment in which it is observed. Through documentation, assessment, and reporting, conduct can become institutional information. Examination therefore links visibility to organisational knowledge: punctuality, cleanliness, compliance, participation, or responsibility can become representable within records or assessments rather than remaining an ephemeral observation.

The accounts also indicate differentiated institutional responses. The caregiver reported that students who were already independent and disciplined required fewer reminders, whereas students who repeatedly violated rules received closer monitoring and support. One student similarly reported that rule violations could lead to closer supervision. At the same time, the principal stated that the school did not formally place students into fixed identity categories. The evidence supports a bounded claim: selected information about conduct can become relevant to subsequent attention and interaction without becoming a permanent institutional label.

Becoming recognisable as the "disciplined student"

The preceding findings converge on a recognisable institutional position: the disciplined student. This position is not defined by one rule or attribute. It is assembled through punctuality, cleanliness, appropriate dress, participation, attendance, organisation, religious routines, and compliance. These characteristics become institutionally meaningful because they are repeatedly made visible, compared against expectations, and, in selected cases, recorded or communicated.

The disciplined student is therefore best understood as a situated subject position rather than a fixed identity. Institutional arrangements make particular ways of being a student recognisable and consequential. A student can be addressed as punctual, clean, responsible, compliant, or in need of further guidance. Such recognition may also enter students' own descriptions of themselves. The evidence nevertheless does not establish that these descriptions represent permanent or uniform identity change.

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The analytical shift is from asking whether discipline successfully changes students to examining how institutional practices establish recognisable forms of studenthood. Subject positioning emerges through the relationship among visibility, normative differentiation, examination, and recognition. The mechanisms matter because they connect conduct to institutional information and, potentially, to subsequent treatment (Noviani & Azkar, 2024).

Occupying, negotiating, and performing the position

The data do not support a uniform account of internalisation. Some students described following rules even when direct teacher supervision was absent. FRA explained, "I still follow the rules because I have become used to them, so it is easier to follow them." (student FRA; translated from Indonesian). This account suggests habituation to institutional routines, although it does not establish uniform internalisation. Other accounts were explicitly situational. ES stated, "Sometimes I follow the rules, and sometimes I do not. It depends on the situation." (student ES; translated from Indonesian).

Most significantly, the dataset contains an explicit account of performed compliance: "I have pretended to comply. When the caregiver is there, we immediately tidy the room so we are not scolded." (student JH; translated from Indonesian). The account distinguishes visible compliance from complete internalisation. Compliance can be habitual, situational, avoided, or strategically performed when observation becomes salient.

Performed compliance matters because a recognisable student position can be enacted at the level of appearance. The evidence does not establish full internalisation of the underlying norm. In Goffman's (1959) terms, the student manages an interactional presentation. In Foucauldian terms, that presentation remains conditioned by a disciplinary field. The field establishes what counts as acceptable conduct. The two perspectives illuminate different dimensions of the episode. Neither reduces disciplinary power to coercion or individual strategy.

Students who avoid or perform compliance are not positioned outside institutional power. Their responses remain intelligible within the field of standards and visibility that defines the disciplined student. The evidence therefore supports a contingent account of subject positioning: the institutional position is available and consequential, but its occupation is neither uniform nor permanently secured (Madsen, 2023).

Discussion

From disciplinary regulation to institutional legibility

The findings locate the identity relevance of disciplinary power in institutional legibility, rather than uniform discipline. Visibility brings conduct into institutional attention. Normative standards differentiate it. Examination renders selected conduct as institutional information. In the state-organised residential setting, these processes connect educational governance to everyday subject formation. The institution regulates conduct while establishing informational conditions for recognisable studenthood. The 'disciplined student' is not a pre-existing type that the institution simply discovers. It is a situated position assembled through institutional practices.

This formulation extends rather than replaces the conventional Foucauldian account. Surveillance enables observation, but observation alone does not explain identity relevance. The additional step is converting selected conduct into information that can remain available beyond the immediate encounter. Institutional legibility describes this identity-relevant mode of recognition. It does not require the stronger claim that a stable identity has been produced (Beighton & Naz, 2026; Estélles, 2025).

From panoptic gaze to distributed visibility

The case also complicates a simple reading of the panopticon as a single central gaze. Participants described multiple and partial observers: teachers, caregivers, security personnel, school leadership, peer reporting arrangements, and reported CCTV. No single account establishes total or continuous surveillance. Instead, disciplinary visibility is distributed across organisational positions and times. This is analytically important because the student can encounter different observers without any one observer possessing a complete view of the student (Markoff, 2025).

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The contribution is therefore not to replace the panopticon with a new model of surveillance, but to specify an organisational configuration through which Foucauldian visibility can operate. The school–residential connection creates spatial continuity: the same student moves through multiple settings in which different fragments of conduct can become visible. The relevance of these fragments depends on what institutional practices do with them. Visibility is consequently best understood as the enabling condition for, rather than the equivalent of, institutional knowledge.

Normalisation and the assembly of recognisable studenthood

Normalisation gives distributed visibility classificatory force. Punctuality, cleanliness, dress, participation, organisation, religious routines, and compliance are mundane standards, but their repetition allows conduct to be compared and differentiated. The empirical pattern suggests that recognisable studenthood is assembled cumulatively. No single behaviour defines the disciplined student, but a recurring bundle of conduct indicators makes that position intelligible. This moves the analysis beyond the existence of rules toward the organisational work performed by repeated comparison (Çeven et al., 2021).

Identity relevance here is relational rather than transformational. A student can become recognisable as orderly, responsible, compliant, or in need of guidance without possessing a permanent internal trait corresponding to that description. Institutional recognition is therefore not evidence of an essential identity; it is a situated consequence of how conduct is interpreted, recorded, and addressed. This distinction is particularly important for identity scholarship because it avoids equating institutional categorization with durable selfhood.

Examination and the portability of disciplinary information

The strongest theoretical implication concerns examination. Foucault (1995) shows that examination joins visibility and normalisation by producing knowledge about individuals. The present case adds an organisational specification to that insight. Participants described documentation, residential assessment, reports, and grades concerning cleanliness, responsibility, compliance, and discipline. Through these practices, selected conduct can become representable beyond the immediate moment in which it is observed. The key property is therefore not circulation as a universally observed event, but portability. Once conduct has been rendered into an institutional record or assessment, it can remain available for later organisational consideration (Madsen, 2023).

This distinction strengthens the evidentiary basis of the argument. The study directly supports the existence of documented and assessed conduct through participant accounts and institutional reports. It does not directly map every pathway by which such information moves between actors. Accordingly, potential organisational reach is treated as an analytical implication of informational portability rather than as a continuously observed process. The argument is that examination can make selected aspects of student conduct durable enough to matter beyond the immediate encounter.

This adds an organisational dimension to Foucauldian examination. Examination does not merely individualise a student at the moment of assessment. When its products take the form of records, reports, or grades, selected conduct can become retrievable within later institutional encounters. The organisational significance of disciplinary knowledge therefore depends partly on its capacity to persist. The contribution is thus to connect examination not only to knowledge of the individual but also to the organisational durability that can make such knowledge relevant across connected educational spaces.

Performed compliance and the limits of internalisation

The evidence of performed compliance places a necessary limit on interpretations of disciplinary success. When a student reports tidying a room when a caregiver is present to avoid being scolded, visible compliance cannot be treated as straightforward evidence of internalised discipline. Goffman's (1959) account of self-presentation helps specify the interactional dimension: students can manage how they appear when a particular audience is present. Foucault remains necessary for explaining why that audience matters, because institutional arrangements have already

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established visibility, standards, and consequences. The episode therefore demonstrates agency within, rather than outside, disciplinary conditions (Robinson et al., 2013).

The pattern is nevertheless heterogeneous. Other students describe habituated adherence, including following rules when direct supervision is absent, while another explicitly describes situational non-compliance. The appropriate conclusion is not that compliance is "only performance," but that the same institutional position can be inhabited through different modes. Habituation, strategic performance, avoidance, and non-compliance coexist. This variability is evidence against treating the disciplined student as a uniform psychological outcome.

Toward an identity-oriented account of disciplinary recognition

The theoretical contribution can now be stated precisely. Institutional legibility names the identity-relevant process through which selected conduct becomes recognisable and consequential. Disciplinary information is the mechanism that links the Foucauldian examination to this process. Visibility makes conduct observable, normalisation makes it differentiable, examination makes selected conduct representable as information, and the portability of that information gives it potential organisational reach. The article therefore does not propose a new disciplinary mechanism. It specifies how established mechanisms can become identity-relevant when their informational products persist beyond the immediate encounter (Nieminen, 2025).

The contribution of boarding education is not simply that students are "watched more." Students move through multiple institutional spaces where expectations are reiterated. Selected conduct can also be documented or assessed across these spaces.The study does not establish a universal model of student identity. It does not establish causal behavioural transformation, continuous surveillance, or long-term internalisation. Nor does it equate studenthood with socially significant identity categories such as race, ethnicity, or nation. Its contribution is narrower. It shows how situated studenthood can become identity-relevant when selected conduct is visible, differentiated, and represented as institutional information.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how disciplinary practices make studenthood institutionally legible across connected school and residential spaces at SRMA 7 Palembang. The findings indicate that disciplinary power operates through distributed visibility, normative differentiation, and examination. In this state-organised residential setting, these mechanisms matter for subject formation not simply because they regulate conduct, but because selected conduct can be rendered into institutional information through assessment, documentation, and reporting.

The central contribution is an identity-oriented account of institutional legibility. Disciplinary information provides the mechanism through which selected conduct can become portable: visibility makes conduct observable; normalisation provides standards for differentiation. Examination renders selected conduct into records, assessments, or reports; and the resulting information can potentially remain relevant across institutional encounters. Through this process, the "disciplined student" emerges as a situated subject position rather than a fixed identity.

Student responses remain uneven. The accounts include habituated adherence, situational non-compliance, avoidance, and performed compliance. These variations prevent institutional recognition from being treated as equivalent to internalised discipline. Students can inhabit, negotiate, avoid, or perform the available subject position while remaining within the conditions established by institutional power.

The contribution is deliberately bounded by the evidence. The study does not establish causal behavioural change, stable identity transformation, continuous surveillance, or generalisation beyond the case. It instead specifies a case-based mechanism through which disciplinary power can become identity-relevant in an interconnected educational and residential setting. Selected conduct is made visible, differentiated, represented as institutional information, and potentially rendered consequential across organisational relations. Future research can test this

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proposition through longitudinal observation, direct mapping of information pathways, and comparison between residential and non-residential educational settings.

From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that school administrators, teachers, and residential caregivers should critically examine how behavioural assessments and disciplinary reports are produced, interpreted, and communicated across institutional settings. Assessment records should be used as contextual information to support student development rather than as definitive labels that establish fixed judgements about individual identities. Furthermore, disciplinary practices should incorporate opportunities for student participation, constructive feedback, and recognition of diverse responses to institutional expectations, thereby supporting educational guidance without reducing students to categories of compliance or non-compliance.

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