
FOSTERING SANTRI MENTAL RESILIENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF RAHMATAN LIL-'ALAMIN EDUCATIONAL MODEL

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Received: 17th March 2026; Revised: 31st May 2026; Accepted: 28th June 2026

Abstract

Life in a *pesantren* can place substantial emotional demands on adolescents. This study examined how Muhammadiyah Boarding School (MBS) Pleret, Yogyakarta, applies the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* educational framework in relation to *santri* resilience. Using interpretive qualitative phenomenology, the study involved eleven purposively selected participants: four high school *santri* as primary informants and seven institutional leaders, teachers, and counselors as supporting informants. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant naturalistic observation, and institutional documents, then analyzed through data condensation involving selection, simplification, abstraction, and transformation. Three recurring patterns were identified: the integration of compassionate values into learning, the use of *dhikr*, *muhasabah*, and reflective journaling to manage emotional strain, and peer and mentor support in daily residential life. The findings indicate that daily religious and relational practices were experienced by participants as resources for coping and emotional balance. The study offers a context-sensitive account of faith-based student support without making clinical claims.

Keywords: mental resilience, *rahmatan lil-'alamin*, qualitative phenomenology, spiritual psychoeducation, modern pesantren

Abstrak

Kehidupan di pesantren dapat menimbulkan tuntutan emosional bagi remaja. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana Muhammadiyah Boarding School (MBS) Pleret Yogyakarta menerapkan kerangka pendidikan *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* dalam kaitannya dengan resiliensi santri. Penelitian menggunakan fenomenologi kualitatif interpretatif dengan sebelas partisipan yang dipilih secara purposif, terdiri atas empat santri sebagai informan utama dan tujuh pimpinan, guru, serta konselor sebagai informan pendukung. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi naturalistik nonpartisipan, dan analisis dokumen institusi, kemudian dianalisis melalui kondensasi data: menyeleksi, menyederhanakan, mengabstraksi, dan mentransformasi data. Tiga pola utama ditemukan: integrasi nilai kasih sayang dalam pembelajaran, penggunaan zikir, muhasabah, dan jurnal reflektif untuk mengelola tekanan emosional, serta dukungan teman sebaya dan pendamping dalam kehidupan asrama. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa praktik keagamaan dan relasional sehari-hari dipersepsikan partisipan sebagai sumber coping dan keseimbangan emosional. Studi ini memberikan gambaran kontekstual tentang dukungan siswa berbasis nilai agama tanpa mengajukan klaim klinis.

Kata kunci: ketahanan mental, *rahmatan lil-'alamin*, fenomenologi kualitatif, psikoedukasi spiritual, pesantren modern

How to Cite: Sutarman, Kistoro, H. C. A., Parjiman, Hakim, A. L., & Pabbajah, M.. (2026). Fostering Santri Mental Resilience: A Phenomenological Study of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Educational Model. *TARBIYA: Journal of Education in Muslim Society*, 13(1), 109-126. doi:10.15408/tjems.v13i1.51673

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Introduction

Adolescents living in *pesantren* may face substantial emotional demands. Dense schedules, academic workload, separation from family, and dormitory discipline can contribute to distress and anxiety. When these pressures are not addressed, social adjustment may become more difficult. Modern educational research supports the integration of mental health initiatives into school systems (Hoover & Bostic, 2021). Traditional boarding institutions, however, may face challenges in aligning theological education with structured socio-emotional support (Hidayati et al., 2022). This creates an important gap in student support.

Religious practice can shape how *santri* cope with daily pressures. When religious values are embedded in residential routines, they provide a useful context for understanding how *santri* interpret and manage emotional strain. However, the lived spiritual dimensions of coping in *pesantren* remain underexplored. Research on adolescent spirituality and religious education indicates that faith can provide resources for coping, meaning-making, and connectedness when integrated sensitively within educational settings (Kim & Esquivel, 2011; Estrada et al., 2019). Accordingly, this study examines how *santri* experience the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* educational model in relation to coping and resilience.

Previous studies have documented stressors, psychological symptoms, burnout, and factors that affect student adaptation in educational and faith-based settings (Barnes, 2022; Chu et al., 2022; Hoffmann et al., 2022; Edwards et al., 2021; Komalasari & Yakubu, 2023; Parviniannasab et al., 2022; Zakaria et al., 2021). This literature is useful for identifying vulnerability, but gives less attention to how students experience everyday devotional practices, residential relationships, and religious meaning-making as possible coping resources. A phenomenological approach is therefore appropriate for examining how *santri* and educators interpret these practices within daily *pesantren* life.

In Muhammadiyah Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), the value of *rahmatan lil-'alamin* is implemented through the curriculum of *Al-Islam*, *Kemuhammadiyah*, *Arabic*, and integration with 21st-century skills. The educational approach in this *pesantren* is holistic and integrative, instilling the values of compassion, tolerance, and social care in the learning process and character building of *santri* (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022). Thus, *pesantren* is not only a center of Islamic teaching but also an agent of social change, presenting Islam as a mercy for all of nature.

To address this gap, this study examines the implementation of the *rahmatan lil-'alamin* educational model as a faith-based psychoeducational framework at Muhammadiyah Boarding School (MBS) Pleret, Yogyakarta. The principle of *rahmatan lil-'Alamin* encapsulates universal compassion, justice, and holistic human development (Mohamed & Ofteringer, 2015). When operationalized within Islamic education, it provides a philosophical and pedagogical foundation that aligns with the higher objectives of Islamic jurisprudence (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*), specifically the preservation of soul (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs*) and intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*) (Ma'arif et al., 2025).

The values associated with *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* provide the conceptual background for the practices examined at MBS Pleret, particularly compassion, justice, and concern for human well-being (Mohamed & Ofteringer, 2015). At the school, these values are reflected in daily religious routines, residential life, and teacher mentoring. The interpretation also draws on *maqāṣid al-*

syarī'ah, especially the protection of the soul (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs*) and intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*) (Ma'arif et al., 2025). The study focuses on how *santri* experience this value-based environment in relation to emotional and spiritual resilience.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework used in this study. The framework is limited to the educational domain and does not represent a clinical or psychotherapeutic intervention. It links the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* educational model, the ISMUBA curriculum, reflective practices, and daily *pesantren* guidance as components through which participants described support for *santri* resilience.

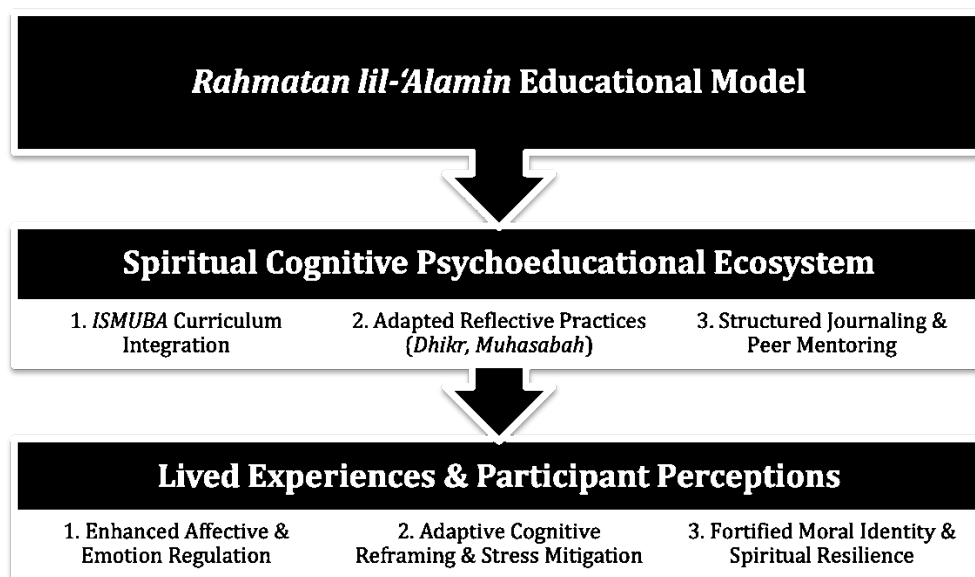


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Consequently, this study aims to explore the *rahmatan lil-'alamin* educational model through a qualitative phenomenological design guided by three research questions: 1) How is the curriculum of the *rahmatan lil-'alamin* educational model constructed to support *santri* mental resilience in a modern *pesantren*? 2) What distinct qualitative features define this spiritual-cognitive psychoeducational approach within the *pesantren* context? 3) How do *santri*, ustadz/ustazah, and *pesantren* leaders experience and perceive the psychoeducational implications of this model on *santri* well-being?

This study treats the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* educational model as a faith-integrated framework through which *santri* and educators interpret daily routines, mentoring, and spiritual guidance. The analysis therefore focuses on how these practices are experienced in relation to resilience and well-being within the *pesantren* setting.

Method

Unit of Analysis

MBS Pleret, Bantul, Yogyakarta, served as the research site because it has an established *santri* guidance system (*pengasuhan santri*) rooted in Muhammadiyah's integrative and interconnective approach (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022). In this study, Islamic Cognitive Spiritual Reframing

(ICSR) refers to a nonclinical educational practice through which *santri* are guided to reconsider personal and academic difficulties using *husnuzzan*, *sabr*, and *tawakkul*. The routine includes dormitory mentoring by *ustadz* and *ustadzah*, *muhasabah* after prayer, and a curriculum that combines ISMUBA, consisting of Al Islam, Kemuhammadiyah, and Arabic, with general science and digital skills. Within this study, *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* functions as the broader educational framework for interpreting resilience and wellbeing in a Muhammadiyah boarding school setting.

Research Design

Interpretive phenomenology guided the study (Creswell, 2015). Within a constructivist orientation, the analysis focused on how participants understood and gave meaning to their experiences. The study sought shared thematic patterns across participant accounts rather than separate idiographic profiles. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's data condensation model was used to organize and refine these narratives while retaining their contextual meaning.

Duration and Setting

Fieldwork was conducted over four academic semesters, from September 12, 2023, to April 24, 2025, at MBS Pleret, Yogyakarta. The extended period allowed the researcher to observe recurring practices and changes across the residential and educational setting. Observation time was not quantified by hours. Instead, field notes were collected throughout the 20 month period as part of sustained qualitative engagement.

During observation, the researcher maintained a nonparticipant role and recorded field notes without directing activities. Observations covered morning *halaqah*, residential routines, guidance counseling, ISMUBA lessons, and extracurricular activities such as archery and Hizbul Wathan. Field notes also documented changes in how coping practices were organized over the study period. By 2025, participants described these practices as being more systematically integrated into the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* educational model.

Informant Selection

Participant selection followed purposive criteria appropriate to the phenomenological focus of the study. Four *santri* were selected as primary informants because of their extended residency, willingness to reflect on their experiences, and direct involvement in ICSR routines. Seven stakeholders, consisting of the director, deputy director for student affairs, two counselors, and three ISMUBA teachers, served as supporting informants for institutional and relational triangulation (Creswell, 2015). No participant withdrew from the study. Student interviews were conducted privately, away from school personnel, and participant identities were protected through anonymized codes. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics and roles of the informants.

Table 1. Profile of Informants in Modern Islamic Boarding School

No.	Code	Institutional Role	Gender	Age	Educational Level	Fieldwork Role
1	CIA	<i>Santri</i> (student)	Female	17	Senior high school	Primary key informant: Active resident and journaling participant
2	ZNS	<i>Santri</i>	Male	16	Senior high school	Primary key informant: Active resident and peer mentee
3	SMZ	<i>Santri</i>	Male	17	Senior high school	Primary key informant: Active resident and student leader

No.	Code	Institutional Role	Gender	Age	Educational Level	Fieldwork Role
4	NDR	<i>Santri</i>	Female	16	Senior high school	Primary key informant: Active resident and peer mentee
5	KMD	Director of Islamic Boarding School	Male	52	Master's degree in Islamic Studies	Supporting informant: Institutional strategy and oversight
6	NWT	Deputy Director of Student Affairs	Male	45	Bachelor's degree in Education	Supporting informant: Student discipline and character mentoring
7	ISL	Guidance and Counseling Teacher	Female	34	Bachelor's degree in Psychology	Supporting informant: Psychoeducational and counseling facilitator
8	ARM	Guidance and Counseling Teacher	Female	36	Bachelor's degree in Psychology	Supporting informant: Student wellbeing and peer mentoring
9	IMR	Al Islam Teacher	Male	42	Bachelor's degree in Islamic Education	Supporting informant: Religious and tafsir instructor
10	RYL	Al Islam Teacher	Male	38	Bachelor's degree in Islamic Education	Supporting informant: Spiritual mentoring facilitator
11	NIZ	Al Islam Teacher	Female	33	Bachelor's degree in Islamic Education	Supporting informant: Female <i>santri</i> alumna and spiritual mentor
Total number of informants				11		

Sources of Data

Primary data were drawn from in depth interviews, nonparticipant naturalistic observation, and documentation of daily *pesantren* activities. Secondary sources included curriculum manuals, activity records, and relevant academic literature on Islam and psychology. Triangulation combined these sources and methods, while member checking was used to confirm the accuracy of the findings.

Data Collection Techniques

This study employed three qualitative data collection techniques within a phenomenological framework.

- Nonparticipant naturalistic observation was conducted during students' daily activities, including learning, *dhikr*, journaling, mentoring, and *muhasabah*, to capture their lived spiritual and social experiences within the *pesantren* environment.
- Eleven participants were interviewed. Four *santri* (CIA, ZNS, SMZ, and NDR) served as primary informants and described their experiences of residential life, coping, and resilience. Seven supporting informants consisted of the *pesantren* director (KMD), deputy director for student affairs (NWT), two guidance counselors (ISL and ARM), and three Islamic studies teachers (IMR, RYL, and NIZ). They provided institutional, pedagogical, and contextual perspectives (Creswell, 2015; Miles et al., 2020).
- Institutional documents, including curriculum manuals and activity records, were examined to contextualize the interview and observation data and to identify how relevant educational and guidance practices were formally described.

Data Analysis

Qualitative phenomenological analysis was conducted using the data condensation framework of Miles et al. (2020). Within an interpretive phenomenological orientation, the analysis proceeded iteratively through four steps: (a) selecting statements related to mental resilience and Islamic cognitive reframing; (b) simplifying experiential accounts into psychological and spiritual meaning

units; (c) abstracting these accounts into themes and subthemes; and (d) transforming the coded material into structured analytical matrices. Trustworthiness was supported through method and source triangulation, an audit trail reviewed by the coauthors, and member checking conducted on March 23, 2025, with KMD, ISL, and CIA to confirm the accuracy of transcripts and themes.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted as nonclinical educational research involving adolescent participants. It followed institutional procedures and established ethical guidance for educational research (American Educational Research Association, 2011; British Educational Research Association, 2018). Academic authorization was obtained from the Research and Innovation Division of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan (Ref: U12.3/918/IX/2023). The research began with institutional discussions at MBS Pleret in 2023 and was later formalized through written permission in 2025. Site approval was granted by the Director of MBS Pleret (Permit No: 569/IV.4.AU/F/2025). For participants under the age of 18, *in loco parentis* proxy consent was used together with voluntary student assent.

Student participation was voluntary and based on assent, with no coercion (British Educational Research Association, 2018). All research records were deidentified and coded alphanumerically to protect participant privacy. No clinical intervention was involved.

Results and Discussion

Results

Curriculum Construction for Fostering Mental Resilience based on the *Rahmatan Lil 'alamin* Educational Model in Modern Islamic Boarding School

Analysis of participants' accounts identified socio-emotional strain among newly enrolled *santri* as an important early experience. Participants linked this strain to adjustment to the institution's structured routines and to differences between students' prior backgrounds and *pesantren* expectations. A senior *ustadz* described how some new *santri* initially cried at night because they found the schedule difficult, but gradually became accustomed to it: "Santri baru pada awalnya kadang menangis diam-diam di malam hari karena tidak tahan dengan agenda *pesantren* dari jam 3:30 pagi sampai jam 21.00 malam yang padat, namun dalam perkembangannya menjadi terbiasa." (New students sometimes cry quietly at night at first, unable to cope with the rigorous *pesantren* schedule that runs from 3:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; however, over time, it became a habit.) (Interview with KMD, April 23, 2025). This account suggests that adjustment to the intensive daily schedule was a recurring concern for Grade 10 *santri* and became one consideration in the school's approach to resilience support.

The curriculum at MBS Pleret is designed not only to provide religious and general knowledge but also to develop students' capacity for emotion regulation, stress management, and resilience (KMD, Director, interview, March 23, 2025).

Participants described the *Rahmatan lil'-Alamin* educational model as being reflected in Qur'anic reflection, *muhasabah*, and discussions that connect religious and general knowledge. According to the deputy director, these practices were intended to support students' emotional

regulation and character development (NWT, deputy director, interview, October 22, 2023). Table 2 summarizes how religious understanding, general knowledge, and practical skills are brought together within the curriculum.

Table 2: Curriculum Construction for Fostering Mental Resilience based on the *Rahmatan lil'alam* Educational Model in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools

Curriculum	Statement	Informants
Integration of Islamic values, general science, and cognitive-reflective psychoeducation	"The <i>Rahmatan lil-Alamin</i> model combines Islamic values, general science, and modern approaches such as cognitive-reflective psychoeducation."	(KMD, Director, Interview on 23 March 2025).
Ustadz's role in strengthening the mental health of students.	"Ustadz here is not just teaching, but being a role model who must show calmness, patience, empathy, and good emotional control."	(NWT, Deputy Director, Interview on 22 October 2023).
Teacher's Experience as a Spirituality Facilitator	" <i>Santri</i> are invited to reflect on their daily activities, feelings, and how they are connected to God's love."	(ISL, Counselor, Interview on 05 November 2023).
Psychoeducative Counselor	"We guide them by choosing <i>dhikr</i> or verses from the <i>Qur'an</i> that they feel can help them absorb and calm their hearts."	(ARM, Counselor, Interview on 05 November 2023).
Extracurricular activities of <i>santri</i> : a model of <i>rahmatan lil alamin</i> in strengthening <i>santri</i> mental resilience	"In <i>pesantren</i> , there are <i>Hizbul Wathan</i> and archery programs. <i>Hizbul Wathan</i> teaches togetherness and leadership, while archery trains focus and patience. Both programs are open to all students from various generations."	(KMD, Director, Interview on 23 March 2025).

Table 2 shows that the curriculum combines religious learning with attention to emotional regulation, stress management, and character development. Within the *pesantren* context, these elements are integrated into everyday learning and guidance rather than treated as separate programs. Participants described this integration as relevant to students' intellectual, emotional, and spiritual adjustment.

Three dimensions are evident in Table 2. First, religious and social values such as *sabr* (patience), *syukur* (gratitude), and *tawakkul* (reliance on God) are incorporated into daily routines. Second, teachers are described not only as instructors but also as role models and sources of emotional support. Third, counselors and mentors provide preventive guidance and opportunities for students to discuss socio-emotional concerns. Together, these elements illustrate how the curriculum links religious formation with everyday support for *santri* well-being.

The Distinction of Fostering Mental Resilience based on the *Rahmatan lil 'alamin* Educational Model in Modern Boarding Schools

The findings indicate that the *Rahmatan lil'-Alamin* approach at MBS Pleret combines psychological, spiritual, and social dimensions of student support. The director related this approach to universal compassion and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, particularly the protection of the soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) and intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*). Table 3 presents the main features identified by participants.

Table 3. The Distinction of Strengthening Mental Resilience based on the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* model in modern Islamic boarding schools

Approach	Statement	Informant
Basic Paradigm: Holistic and Integrative	"The educational approach in this <i>pesantren</i> is holistic and integrative, based on the value of universal compassion as the spirit of <i>Rahmatan lil 'Alamin</i> . The principle of <i>maqashid sharia</i> becomes the main foundation, which includes the protection of religion, soul, mind, offspring, and property. Therefore, strengthening the mental health of <i>santri</i> is not only focused on psychological aspects but also strengthened through spiritual and social dimensions."	(KMD Director, March 23, 2025)
Psychological: Integration of the daily program of Islamic Cognitive-Spiritual Reframing (ICSR)	"Here, we learned that Islam teaches calmness and self-control. Islamic values are present in daily lessons and activities, plus the Cognitive-Spiritual Reframing (ICSR) is supplemented. So in times of stress, we can reflect on ourselves in an Islamic and psychological way."	(<i>Santri</i> (student), interview, 22 October 2023).
Psychoeducative: Structured and Preventive	"There is a structured and preventive psychoeducational program supplement for students, such as <i>muhasabah</i> , mentoring with peers, emotional management exercises with <i>tadzabur</i> verses of the <i>Qur'an</i> , and counseling that is more towards prevention. Everything is guided with a clear and non-judgmental method."	(Counseling Teacher, interview, 22 October 2023).
Inclusivity: Friendly to Students' Characters and Backgrounds	"This <i>pesantren</i> is open to all. Although we have different characters and backgrounds, we are all welcome. We are actually invited to understand and strengthen each other."	(Counseling Teacher, interview, 22 October 2023).
Subject: <i>Santri</i> (Student) as Growing Partners	"The <i>ustadz</i> and <i>ustadzah</i> not only teach but also serve as role models and mental-spiritual mentors. They assist us in the process of growing, not just giving orders. It makes us feel cared for and empowered."	(<i>Santri</i> (student), interview, 22 October 2023).
Data Provenance and Translation Fidelity. Original Bahasa Indonesia transcript: " <i>Di sini kami belajar bahwa Islam mengajarkan ketenangan dan kontrol diri. Nilai-nilai Islam ada dalam pelajaran dan kegiatan sehari-hari, ditambah dengan pendekatan reframing kognitif-spiritual Islam. Jadi saat stres, kami bisa merefleksikan diri secara islami dan psikologis.</i> " (Interview with <i>Santri</i> , October 22, 2023). The English quotation above is a close translation of the original statement and was checked against the transcript to avoid adding analytical terminology not used by the participant.		

Table 3 summarizes the features that participants associated with the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* approach. These include the integration of psychological, spiritual, and social support, together with an emphasis on compassion and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. In participants' accounts, these values provided a religious frame for understanding student well-being and everyday guidance. The following paragraphs explain how these features were reflected in daily educational and residential practices.

The practices described in this study are educational and non-clinical. ICSR is used within daily boarding routines through reflective journaling, morning and evening *dhikr*, and guided *muhasabah*. Participants described these activities as helping them pause, reflect, and regulate their

responses to stress. This arrangement is consistent with Hamami and Nuryana's (2022) description of Muhammadiyah's holistic-integrative educational approach, while remaining distinct from psychotherapy.

Preventive support is built into the weekly schedule. Peer mentoring, guided Qur'anic reflection, and counseling are offered regularly rather than only after problems become severe. Participants described these routines as opportunities to develop coping strategies before academic or residential pressures intensified. This is consistent with research showing that institutional structures can influence student adaptation and access to school-based support (Fitriani et al., 2023; Hidayati et al., 2022; Hoover & Bostic, 2021).

Participants also described mutual acceptance as an important part of dormitory life. Santri come from varied socio-cultural backgrounds, and daily communal living requires empathy and communication across individual differences. This environment can support informal peer relationships, consistent with research linking empathy to inclusive educational settings (Kudrnáč et al., 2024).

The role of *ustadz* and *ustadzah* extends beyond classroom instruction because they also interact with *santri* in the residential setting. Participants described them as daily role models (*bi'l-qudwah*), mentors, and companions. One *santri* summarized this relationship as "accompany rather than command." Such relational mentoring is consistent with approaches to character formation and student well-being in modern Islamic boarding education (Arroisi et al., 2025). In this study, the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* framework is therefore understood as a non-clinical educational system in which mentoring, peer relations, and religious routines support everyday coping. It should not be interpreted as a medical or psychiatric intervention.

The Implications of Fostering Santri Mental Resilience based on the *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* Educational Model in Pesantren

These findings have practical implications for *pesantren* education. Participant accounts suggest that the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* model can inform faith-based approaches to student support by connecting religious values with reflective practices and mentoring. In this study, ICSR is used as a non-clinical educational framework rather than a form of CBT or psychotherapy. Table 4 summarizes how participants perceived these practices in relation to coping, well-being, and daily learning.

Table 4. The Implications of Nurturing Mental Resilience Based on the *Rahmatan lil alamin* Educational Model in Modern Islamic boarding schools

Implications	Statement	Informant
Students' experience of the implementation of the Basic Paradigm: Holistic and Integrative	"In the <i>pesantren</i> , we learn that life is not just about worship or studying, but also about keeping the heart and mind healthy. The curriculum is integrated as a whole, combining religious knowledge, general knowledge, morals, soft skills, and positive thinking. It makes us feel more balanced and less alone."	(<i>Santri</i> (student), interview, 18 October 2023).
Students' experience of spiritual, daily program, and psychological approaches:	"Every day, we do <i>dhikr</i> , journaling, and <i>muhasabah</i> , in addition to learning general knowledge. It makes us calmer and more self-aware. When there is a problem, we are invited to write about our feelings and find their	(<i>Santri</i> (student), interview, 22 October 2023).

Implications	Statement	Informant
Spiritual Islamic values and ICSR	meaning through the verses of the <i>Qur'an</i> . Ustadz also guided us to think clearly, not immediately be negative. Integrating general knowledge, religious values, and mental resilience."	
Students' experience of Psychoeducative implementation: Structured and Preventive	"The program is regular. Apart from learning in class, we also participate in <i>muhasabah</i> , mentoring, and emotional management exercises. <i>Ustadz and ustadzah</i> often invite discussions to assist us before the problem becomes heavy. That's very helpful for maintaining a healthy mind."	(<i>Santri</i> (student), interview, 29 October 2023).
Students' experience of the implementation of Inclusivity: Character-friendly	"Here, every <i>santri</i> has a different character, but we are still accepted. Some are quiet, some are active, and we can learn from each other. <i>Ustadz</i> also does not compare; instead, he often says that each student has their own strengths. So I feel comfortable and don't need to be someone else."	(<i>Santri</i> (student), interview, 2 November 2023).

Table 4 summarizes participants' perceptions of how the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* model relates to daily *santri* life at MBS Pleret. Their accounts describe learning as combining academic study, religious practice, moral formation, and attention to emotional well-being. Four implications recur across the interviews:

Holistic and Integrative Approach

Santri engage in a learning process that integrates academic content, religious practice, and emotional-cognitive development. The combination of religious knowledge, moral values, and mindset training helps students build resilience in the face of life's challenges. "We learn not only general and religious subjects, but also how to think positively and manage emotions. It makes me feel stronger and not alone." (Student Interview, 18 October 2023).

Spiritual Integration and Cognitive-Spiritual Reframing (ICSR)

Daily activities such as *dhikr*, journaling, and *muhasabah* are merged with principles of ICSR, offering structured and reflective emotional regulation strategies. "When I feel anxious or sad, I write down my feelings and reflect on a verse from the *Qur'an*. It's very calming." (Student Interview, 22 October 2023)

Preventive and Structured Psychoeducation

Mentoring sessions, emotional exercises, and regular *muhasabah* are embedded into daily routines, emphasizing early intervention and emotional support. "We have regular mentoring with the *ustadz*, so we can share problems before they get worse." (Student Interview, 29 October 2023).

Inclusivity and Self-Acceptance

The *pesantren* environment values character diversity, enabling students to grow authentically without pressure to conform. "I'm a quiet person, but I feel accepted. I don't have to be someone else." (Student Interview, 2 November 2023).

Overall, participants described the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* model as combining educational, spiritual, and relational forms of support within daily *pesantren* life. They associated these practices

with emotional balance and resilience, but the study did not test their effectiveness as an intervention.

Taken together, the findings show how *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* values, spiritual practices, and ICSR-related reflection are combined within daily *pesantren* life. In participants' accounts, mental resilience was linked to shared values, religious routines, and relationships with peers and mentors rather than to a single isolated program.

Discussion

In this study, mental health is discussed as one dimension of broader student well-being, including emotional stability, spiritual balance, and social functioning. Participants described support at MBS Pleret as emerging from the combination of Islamic values, curriculum, intra- and extracurricular activities, and contextually adapted ICSR practices. This interpretation is consistent with broader accounts of mental health as more than the absence of psychological disorder (Keyes, 2002; Vijayakumar et al., 2023). It also supports a multidimensional, value-sensitive perspective on student well-being (Levitt et al., 2007).

Adolescent anxiety, academic stress, and social isolation remain important concerns in the post-pandemic period (World Health Organization, 2022). Within this context, *pesantren* may provide a community setting in which religious education, character formation, and non-clinical reflective practices are integrated into daily support. This emphasis is consistent with research that highlights the importance of community support and spiritual resources in adolescent help-seeking and well-being (Sanghvi & Mehrotra, 2022). Participants' accounts at MBS Pleret similarly linked well-being with spiritual and social connectedness (Ghufron et al., 2024; Manderscheid et al., 2009).

The curriculum is organized around *rahmatan lil-'alamin* values such as compassion, social responsibility, and exemplarity. Participants described intellectual, spiritual, and emotional guidance as part of everyday educational practice, consistent with value-based approaches in Islamic education (Abiddin et al., 2024). *Muhasabah*, spiritual mentoring, and *Qur'anic journaling* were used as reflective practices that participants associated with self-awareness and emotion regulation. This interpretation is compatible with broader accounts of well-being as a meaningful, value-oriented way of living (Westerhof & Keyes, 2010).

The model is organized around communal rather than individual support. Reflective *dhikr*, *Qur'anic halaqah*, and peer mentoring take place within shared residential routines. Ghufron et al. (2024) found that spiritual well-being can mediate relationships among peer support, coping strategies, and mental health in another Indonesian context. The present findings similarly point to the importance of personal, relational, cultural, and institutional resources, consistent with social-ecological accounts of resilience (Masten et al., 2021; Ungar et al., 2019).

At MBS Pleret, reflective support is embedded in shared residential routines rather than delivered only through individualized sessions. This communitarian approach is consistent with the social and religious character of *pesantren* life (Mujahid, 2021; Zulmuqim et al., 2020). More broadly, culturally responsive student support requires attention to religious identity and socio-cultural context (Patel et al., 2018).

A limited comparison with Turkey's Imam Hatip Schools provides institutional context. Imam Hatip Schools combine religious and general education within Turkey's state-regulated education system (Aşlamacı & Kaymakcan, 2017). By contrast, MBS Pleret is a residential setting in which the ISMUBA curriculum, religious routines, and non-clinical ICSR practices are integrated into everyday communal life. Participants described *dhikr*, personal journaling, and mentor support as resources they used during stressful periods. Table 5 presents these contextual differences.

Table 5. Literature-Based Contextual Comparison of MBS Pleret, Yogyakarta (Indonesia) and Imam Hatip Schools (Turkey)

Aspects	MBS Pleret Yogyakarta (Indonesia)	Imam Hatip Schools (Turkey)
Model Approach	Holistic, spiritual, and community-based; framed by <i>Rahmatan lil-'Alamin</i> values and <i>maqāṣid al-syarī'ah</i> .	State-regulated religious secondary education within Turkey's national education system (Aşlamacı & Kaymakcan, 2017).
Integration of Religion Education & Psychology	Integration of Islamic Education values and the Cognitive-Spiritual Reframing (ICSR) approach in coaching students.	Religious and general education are institutionally integrated; the cited literature does not provide a directly comparable ICSR framework.
Daily Activities of Santri	Reflective practices: <i>dhikr</i> , Qur'anic journaling, <i>muhasabah</i> , and affective mentoring.	Religious and general academic instruction follows a nationally regulated school structure; residential routines are not directly comparable from the cited source.
Teacher & Caregiver Roles	Teachers serve as spiritual guides and resilience mentors within the residential setting.	Teacher roles operate within a formal school system; the cited literature does not support a direct comparison with residential mentoring at MBS Pleret.
Social Inclusiveness	Participants described the environment as accepting of differences in <i>santri</i> backgrounds and psychosocial needs.	Not directly comparable from the cited literature used in this article.
Key Value Principles	Compassion, justice, spiritual responsibility, and role modeling.	Religious education operates within Turkey's national education framework (Aşlamacı & Kaymakcan, 2017).
Contribution to Mental Resilience	Participants associated the model with psychological resilience, spiritual awareness, and contextualized emotion regulation; no causal effect was tested.	The cited literature does not directly evaluate student resilience outcomes in a form comparable with this study.
Cognitive-Spiritual Reframing (ICSR) Approach	ICSR is used preventively and reflectively within daily religious and educational routines.	No direct ICSR equivalent is reported in the cited literature; no claim is made about the relative quality of counseling approaches.

Note: This is a non-empirical, literature-based comparison for institutional contextualization. Claims about Turkey are limited to dimensions supported by Aşlamacı and Kaymakcan (2017) and should not be read as a comparative evaluation of mental-health service quality.

Table 5 highlights institutional differences between the two settings rather than differences in effectiveness. At MBS Pleret, participants described relational mentoring, communal living, and religious routines as central features of student support. Because *ustadz* live within the *pesantren* environment, their role extends beyond classroom teaching to daily guidance and mentoring. This relational form of education is consistent with scholarship on Islamic school leadership and value-based educational relationships (Amatullah, 2024; Brooks & Mutohar, 2018).

The study contributes to Islamic educational psychology by describing how value-based education, communal routines, and non-clinical reflective practices are combined in one *pesantren*

setting. Practically, the framework may inform similar forms of student support in other Islamic educational settings, although such adaptation requires further validation. The comparison with Imam Hatip Schools is included only to situate MBS Pleret within a different institutional model of Islamic education.

This comparison is used only for institutional contextualization. MBS Pleret is a residential Muhammadiyah setting in which religious education, mentoring, and daily communal routines are closely connected, whereas Imam Hatip Schools operate within Turkey's state-regulated secondary education system (Aşlamacı & Kaymakcan, 2017). The available sources cited here do not support a direct comparison of counseling quality or mental-health service effectiveness between the two systems.

One feature emphasized by participants is the relationship between *ustadz* and *santri*. *Ustadz* were described as teachers, spiritual mentors, and sources of everyday support, while *santri* were treated as active participants in their own development. This relational pattern helps explain how the model operates within a residential setting. Its relevance to other cultural contexts should be examined through further comparative research.

The conceptual contribution of the study lies in its use of ICSR within the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* educational framework. Here, ICSR refers to a preventive, community-oriented educational practice rather than individualized therapy. The participant accounts suggest that routine faith-based practices may provide resources for coping in residential school life. This interpretation is consistent with literature identifying spirituality as a potential resource for adolescent coping and resilience (Kim & Esquivel, 2011).

Overall, the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* model can be understood as an Islamic educational psychology framework that connects religious education, reflective practices, and social support in the everyday life of *santri*. Within this study, its contribution is described in terms of perceived support for spiritual-cognitive resilience rather than clinical effectiveness.

Conclusion

The findings show that *santri* at MBS Pleret experienced the *Rahmatan lil-'Alamin* model (which connects religious instruction, general education, and non-clinical ICSR) as a source of emotional, spiritual, and social support. Because the study is based on participants' lived experiences, it does not establish causal psychological effects. Instead, it documents how structured residential routines, reflective practices, and mentoring were perceived in relation to coping and stress management.

These findings contribute to discussions of Islamic educational psychology by showing how relational leadership and daily reflective practices operate within *pesantren* life. The study is based on eleven informants in one institution, so the proposed framework should be treated as context-specific rather than universal. Replication or policy adoption would require multi-site research and outcome-based validation in different socio-cultural settings.

The model's main contribution lies in integrating Islamic values, preventive psychoeducational practices, and relational support within the curriculum and residential environment. Compared with the state-regulated structure described for Imam Hatip Schools, MBS Pleret places greater emphasis on communal residential relationships and daily religious practice. These findings may inform the development of Islamic value-based student-support curricula in institutions with similar characteristics, but adaptation to other settings requires further empirical validation.

The study has two main limitations. It was conducted in a single institution, which limits transferability, and it did not measure psychological outcomes quantitatively. Future studies could use mixed methods across several *pesantren* and include cross-country comparisons, including Indonesia and Turkey, to examine the model's applicability and outcomes in different contexts.

Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, for supporting this research through its Professor Grant Program. The authors also thank the Director, teachers, counselors, and santri of Muhammadiyah Boarding School Pleret, Yogyakarta, for granting access to the research setting and for their willingness to participate in the study. Their cooperation and openness contributed significantly to the completion of this research.

Declarations

S contributed to the conceptualisation of the study, data collection and analysis, preparation of the original draft, and correspondence. HCAK contributed to manuscript review, formatting, and research supervision; P contributed to research administration and supervision; ALH contributed to conceptual refinement and language editing; and MP contributed to manuscript review and research supervision. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript. This research was supported by Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, through its Professor Grant Program, and the authors declare no conflicts of interest related to the study. Generative Artificial Intelligence, specifically ChatGPT by OpenAI, was used only for language editing and readability support during manuscript preparation and was not used to generate research data, conduct interviews or observations, perform qualitative analysis, determine themes, interpret empirical findings, or formulate scientific conclusions. All substantive decisions, interpretations, verification of quotations and references, and final editorial judgments remained under the responsibility and control of the authors. The study was conducted as non-clinical educational research involving minimal risk to participants. Institutional research authorization was obtained from the Research and Innovation Division of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan (Ref. U12.3/918/IX/2023), and permission to conduct the study was granted by the Director of Muhammadiyah Boarding School Pleret (Permit No. 569/IV.4.AU/F/2025). Participation was voluntary, student participants provided assent, and the applicable institutional and proxy consent procedures for underage participants were followed. Participant confidentiality was maintained through anonymisation and the use of alphanumeric codes throughout data collection, analysis,

and reporting. The qualitative data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to appropriate confidentiality and ethical safeguards because the dataset contains information derived from interviews and observations involving student participants.

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