








Recitation of *Seurembek*, psychological well-being, and community resilience from the perspective of positive psychology

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Abstract: The *Seurembek* tradition is a collective Qur'an recitation practice with deep spiritual and social meaning for the local Muslim community in Pidie Regency, Aceh. This practice not only functions as a form of worship but also as a space for social interaction that strengthens community ties and provides meaning to life for its practitioners. This study aims to examine the contribution of the *Seurembek* tradition to individual psychological well-being and community resilience through a positive psychology framework. A descriptive, qualitative approach was employed, with data collection conducted through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving *Seurembek* practitioners, religious leaders, and local community members. The research findings indicate that *Seurembek* strengthens several dimensions of psychological well-being, including providing meaning and purpose in life, increasing positive emotions, and fostering intense social connectedness. In addition, this practice plays an essential role in strengthening community resilience to various social and spiritual pressures by fostering solidarity, social cohesion, and collective coping mechanisms rooted in religious and cultural values. This finding confirms that preserving the *Seurembek* tradition has strategic value for improving mental health and social resilience, grounded in local wisdom. The implications of this research open opportunities to develop contextual and culturally oriented positive psychology interventions for Muslim communities in Indonesia.

Keywords: Aceh tradition; community resilience; positive psychology; psychological well-being; Qur'an recitation; *Seurembek*

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Introduction

The Qur'an holds a central place in the daily lives of Muslim communities worldwide, particularly in Indonesia, where it is not only regarded as a divine revelation and source of law, but also as a living cultural resource that permeates all aspects of society. It functions not only in the legal and theological domains, but also as a dynamic cultural force which shapes spiritual, social, political, and intellectual life (Martin, 1982). In this way, the Qur'an becomes what RasMussen (2017) terms a *living reading*, a text that is continuously actualized through ritual practices and social traditions, connecting individuals to God, to their community, and the broader Islamic civilization.

Within Muslim communities in Indonesia, collective Qur'an recitation has long held significance as both a spiritual and cultural practice. Forms such as *tadārus*, *sima'an*, *mujāhadah*, *kenduri blang*, *tarkam*, and the reading of Surah Yasin embody the integration of Islamic values within local cultural expressions. *Tadārus* constitutes a communal practice of Qur'anic recitation, particularly during Ramadan, that functions both as an act of devotion and a medium of social bonding, while *sima'an* embodies the collective listening to a *qārī*'s recitation as a means of reinforcing memorization and seeking blessings. *Mujāhadah* represents a structured gathering of *dhikr* and prayer led by a religious figure, intended to cultivate spiritual discipline, protection, and inner tranquility. In Acehese society, *kenduri blang* serves as a ritual feast marking the agricultural cycle of rice planting, integrating Islamic prayers with local cultural expressions of gratitude and communal solidarity. Complementing these religious and ritual observances, *Tarkam*, or intervillage sports tournaments, operates as a sociocultural arena that both provides entertainment and reinforces neighborhood cohesion (Badriyan et al., 2024; Maskur, 2021; Rakhman, 2019; Riski & Dora,

2023; Sulaeman, 2024). These practices reinforce personal spirituality, strengthen social cohesion, and preserve Indonesia's Islamic cultural heritage (Firdaus, 2025; Fitriyani et al., 2024). Far from being static rituals, they reflect the dynamic interplay between religion and culture, providing both continuity and adaptation within changing historical and social contexts. Theoretically, this phenomenon can be explained as a *living Qur'an*.

One of the distinctive manifestations of this living Qur'anic tradition in Aceh is *Seurembek*, a communal practice of collective Qur'an recitation that is widely observed in regions such as Pidie. As Anismar et al. (2021) note, *Seurembek* is more than a personal act of devotion; it is a communal event that blends religious, cultural, and social elements. It represents both continuity with the broader Islamic tradition and, in particular, its localized expression. In this sense, *Seurembek* functions as a cultural idiom through which Acehese communities embody Islamic teachings while simultaneously reaffirming their collective identity.

The practice typically involves groups of villagers or community members coming together to recite the Qur'an in unison. It is often embedded within broader ritual contexts such as harvest celebrations, memorial prayers, or village gatherings. While the act of reciting scripture is at its core a form of *'ibadah* (worship), *Seurembek* also serves as a mechanism for social interaction, mutual assistance, and cultural preservation. It brings people together across generations and social classes, reinforcing a sense of solidarity and shared purpose that is essential for communal resilience. Nevertheless, these enduring communal values are increasingly challenged by the transformations of modern life, which have reshaped how people connect and find meaning within their communities. The forces of globalization, rapid urbanization, digital technology, and migration have transformed social structures and patterns of interaction, often

weakening the interpersonal bonds that sustain communal life (Abdelzaher et al., 2020; Kaun, 2021). Such transformations contribute to increasing social isolation and the rise of individualism, conditions that have been linked to a host of adverse mental health outcomes.

Cacioppo and Cacioppo (2018a, 2018b) have demonstrated that loneliness and the erosion of social ties are among the strongest predictors of psychiatric problems, including depression, anxiety, and insomnia, as well as heightened risks of early mortality. Van Orden et al. (2010) further highlight that such conditions exacerbate tendencies toward self-isolation, suicidal ideation, and self-harm, particularly among individuals with limited social support. Neuropsychological research confirms that isolation has profound biological consequences, altering brain structures, stress responses, and cognitive functioning (McEwen, 2007, 2013; Spreng et al., 2020; Tomova et al., 2020). In a global context, where loneliness is increasingly described as a “public health epidemic,” the resilience of communal traditions such as *Seurembek* becomes highly significant. These growing psychological and social challenges underscore the need for an alternative framework that moves beyond pathology and focuses on human potential.

In response to such challenges, a positive mental health framework provides a valuable lens. Unlike traditional models of psychology that focus primarily on pathology and deficit, positive psychology emphasizes human strengths, resilience, and the cultivation of well-being (Colford et al., 2019; Keyes, 2007; Seligman, 2011). Central to this approach is the recognition that protective factors, such as belonging, social support, and spiritual engagement, are critical resources that enable individuals and communities to flourish in the face of adversity.

Seligman’s PERMA model (Donaldson et al., 2022; Seligman, 2011) outlines five key components of well-being: positive emotion, engage-

ment, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Each of these is highly relevant to communal practices such as *Seurembek*. Positive emotions derived from collective recitation can enhance empathy and trust among participants (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004, 2013). Engagement is reflected in the immersive and participatory nature of group recitation, which can create a state of “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Relationships are strengthened through the bonds of fraternity and cooperation (Ryff, 2014), with meaning deeply embedded in the connection to scripture and communal heritage (Huta & Ryan, 2010). Finally, accomplishment is achieved not only through mastery of recitation but also through collective success, reinforcing pride and identity (Huppert & So, 2013).

This psychological understanding of collective recitation finds deep resonance in classical Islamic thought, where the Qur’an is viewed not only as a source of divine guidance but also as a medium for spiritual purification and social cohesion. The significance of *Seurembek* is also highlighted when examined through the lens of classical Islamic scholarship. Recitation of the Qur’an, along with group *dhikr*, is a means of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul) (al-Ghazālī, n.d.). This purification removes spiritual impurities and strengthens communal bonds of unity and fraternity (Hawwa, 1998). Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah, a famous medieval spiritual writer, similarly stressed the Qur’an’s power to soothe the soul and fortify resilience in the face of life’s trials (al-Jauziyah, 1999). For Ibn Miskawayh, Moslem philosopher, the welfare of society (*maṣlaḥah*) rests upon the cultivation of brotherhood and social peace; without these, moral crisis and social disintegration are inevitable (Taqwa & Septrianto, 2023).

This is in line with Durkheim’s classical sociological perspective, which posits that religious rituals serve as the “social glue” of society, fostering solidarity, shared identity and moral

cohesion (Arrindell, 2003; Berkman et al., 2000). In the case of *Seurembek*, collective Qur'an recitation not only purifies the soul but also reinforces social order, identity, and resilience.

Building upon this sociological understanding, a resilience perspective further reveals how such traditions provide essential social resources that enable communities to adapt to challenges and sustain their well-being. Community resilience refers to its capacity to withstand, adapt to, and recover from adversity (Norris et al., 2008). Key indicators include strong social networks, trust, organizational capacity, and shared resources (Friedman et al., 2007). Religious practices are integral to this process, serving as forms of social capital that build solidarity, trust, and mutual support (Hamid, 2017; Koenig, 2012).

Empirical studies in various Muslim societies have demonstrated that collective spiritual practices, such as group recitation, enhance resilience by providing meaning, shared values, and emotional support during times of difficulty (Gökür, 2008; Xu, 2016). In the Aceh context, *Seurembek* fosters social cohesion, sustains cultural continuity, and strengthens psychological well-being through its unique integration of spirituality, aesthetics, and sociality.

This integrative character suggests that the impact of *Seurembek* extends beyond its spiritual and social functions to its aesthetic dimension, which plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective experiences. Beyond its spiritual and social significance, Qur'anic recitation also possesses an aesthetic dimension that contributes to psychological and cultural well-being. The practice of *tajwīd* and the melodic intonations of recitation provide a profound sensory and emotional experience (Abdullah & Omar, 2011). Melodic Qur'an recitation with proper *tajwīd* (*tartil*) has been empirically linked to states of relaxation and tranquility, activating brain alpha and theta waves in a similar way to meditative practices (Malek et al., 2022). This aesthetic

experience serves not only as a personal source of peace but also as a medium of cultural expression, reinforcing communal identity and heritage.

In Aceh, *Seurembek* therefore represents a holistic practice: spiritual in its devotion; social in its communal engagement; and aesthetic in its sensory impact. Its multifaceted nature underscores its potential to foster psychological resilience and cultural continuity in the face of rapid social change.

However, despite its significance, scholarly attention to *Seurembek* remains limited, particularly concerning its contributions to mental health and social resilience. Studies have mainly focused on its ritual and cultural aspects, with less emphasis on its psychological and sociological implications (Anismar et al., 2021). At the same time, contemporary mental health research increasingly recognizes the importance of cultural and spiritual practices in fostering well-being yet often lacks ethnographic depth in exploring local Muslim contexts.

This study employs a qualitative ethnological approach to examine the meanings and functions of *Seurembek* in Pidie, drawing on insights from positive psychology, classical Islamic scholarship, anthropology, and sociology. By tracing participants' subjective experiences, the research highlights how collective religious rituals can contribute to the promotion of mental health, social resilience, and community well-being. *Seurembek* is presented as a local tradition that not only strengthens social bonds but also offers culturally grounded strategies for addressing contemporary challenges, such as social isolation, individualism, and mental health issues.

By situating *Seurembek* within the frameworks of positive psychology and community resilience, this study demonstrates the broader relevance of traditional spiritual practices in fostering human flourishing. Unlike previous works that have focused primarily on the theological or identity-forming aspects of Qur'anic recitation, this research emphasizes its psycho-

social significance and potential as a community-based resource for mental health. In doing so, it contributes to the anthropology of Islam and ritual studies, while providing practical insights for supporting well-being in Muslim-majority contexts, demonstrating how religion and culture continue to serve as vital sources of meaning, solidarity, and resilience.

However, despite a growing body of research on religious coping, spirituality, and community resilience, limited attention has been paid to how collective Qur'anic recitation traditions function as frameworks for psychological well-being within local Muslim contexts. Previous studies tend to emphasize either the theological or sociological aspects of such rituals, leaving a conceptual gap related to understanding their psychological dimensions.

Accordingly, this study aims to explore how *Seurembek*, as a *living Qur'an* tradition, nurtures individual well-being and strengthens communal resilience in the contemporary social context of Aceh, Indonesia. It offers a novel contribution by integrating the principles of positive psychology with the local Islamic tradition of *Seurembek*. Previous studies on well-being and resilience have largely been framed within Western, individual-oriented paradigms that emphasize personal agency and cognitive adaptation (van Zyl et al., 2022). Such approaches often overlook the collective, spiritual, and culturally embedded dimensions of human flourishing that are central to non-Western societies. Scholars have noted that positive psychology, although globally influential, reflects Western epistemologies that insufficiently account for local religious practices and communal values as sources of psychological strength (Anli, 2025; Gaffaney & Donaldson, 2025). As a result, culturally-grounded pathways to well-being within Muslim communities remain under-explored (Saleh et al., 2024).

Addressing this gap, this study examines *Seurembek*, a collective Qur'anic recitation practice

deeply rooted in Acehnese Islamic culture, as an indigenous model of positive psychology and community resilience. By situating psychological well-being within the spiritual and relational fabric of local religious life, the research challenges Western-centric assumptions and contributes to the growing discourse on decolonizing positive psychology through culturally contextualized, faith-based practices (Anli, 2025; van Zyl et al., 2024).

Building upon this conceptual foundation, the study aims to explore how *Seurembek* fosters psychological well-being and community resilience among its practitioners, and to identify the specific religious, social, and cultural mechanisms that sustain these outcomes. The following research questions are addressed: How do the participants experience and interpret *Seurembek*? What social, psychological and spiritual functions does *Seurembek* serve for the community? How can these insights inform culturally-grounded approaches to mental health and community resilience?

Methods

Research Design

The research employs ethnomethodology in the field of psychology to examine the practice of *Seurembek*, a tradition of collective Qur'an recitation, in Pidie Regency, Aceh (Anismar et al., 2021). The focus is on how community members actively construct social meaning through the verbal interactions, ritual routines, and everyday situational structures that form the basis of psychological well-being and community resilience.

Ethnomethodology is particularly relevant in this psychological study because it examines how individuals' everyday actions, conversations, and ritualized behaviors create shared social realities that shape collective mental and emotional states (Garfinkel, 1967). By focusing on naturally

occurring interactions, the approach provides insights into psychological well-being and community resilience that cannot be captured through surveys or standardized measures alone (Liddicoat, 2020; Maynard & Clayman, 1991; Perera, 2024). In studying *Seurembek*, ethnomethodology reveals how communal religious practices function as lived experiences that influence mood, social support, and emotional regulation within the community.

Respondents

The location of Pidie was chosen because it is the cultural center of *Seurembek* and has strong traditional roots. The selection of participants was made using purposive sampling to ensure the involvement of recitation practitioners, religious leaders and local community members (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The informants consisted of local imams (T = *Teungku*), village heads (KG = *kepala gampong*), farmers (F), and community members (M) who participated in the *Seurembek* recitation, as they represent the primary actors and witnesses of its religious, social, and cultural dimensions. In addition, traditional leaders and local scholars were included as key informants to provide deeper insights into the meanings and transformations of the practice.

Data Collection

The data collection process encompassed three primary methods: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and focus group discussions (FGDs). In-depth interviews were conducted to capture individuals' narratives and how they interpreted ritual interactions. Participatory observation was used to record the practice of *Seurembek* naturally in the field, while FGDs were employed to uncover social dynamics and the impact of rituals on community resilience (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Kvale, 1994; Tannenbaum & Spradley, 1980).

Data Validity

To enhance internal validity and credibility, according to Patton (2015), a triangulation framework was adopted, which encompasses method triangulation (the combination of interviews, observations, and focus group discussions); source triangulation (the engagement of multiple categories of informants); and theory triangulation (the integration of perspectives from positive psychology, Islamic thought, anthropology, and sociology). Drawing on positive psychology, classical Islamic values, anthropology, and sociology, this strategy allows for more in-depth interpretations and enhances the consistency of the findings (Bhandari, 2023).

In practice, data triangulation was applied through a combination of interviews, observations, and focus group discussions to validate the insights across the methods. Source triangulation was achieved by involving local imams, village heads, farmers, and community members, allowing perspectives from different social roles to be compared. Finally, theory triangulation was employed by analyzing the data through the lenses of positive psychology, Islamic thought, and socioanthropological frameworks, thereby enhancing the depth and credibility of the findings.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to examine the data, focusing on how the participants created and responded to ritual "accounts" during their interactions throughout the preparation, execution, and post-ceremony reading of the *Seurembek* tradition (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To strengthen interpretative validity, a member-checking procedure was also used, whereby the transcription results and initial findings were reconfirmed with the participants to verify the accuracy and representation of their perspectives. By combining several principles of ethnomethodology and qualitative validity protocols, the research presents a more valid and compre-

hensive picture of how *Seurembek* functions as a mechanism for mental well-being and social resilience in the Aceh community.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The interview and FGD transcripts were first transcribed verbatim and then repeatedly read to ensure familiarity. Initial codes were generated inductively and then clustered into broader categories, such as spirituality, emotion and social cohesion. These categories were further refined and interpreted in consideration of the PERMA framework. To ensure credibility, codes were cross-checked by multiple researchers and compared against observational notes.

Results

This section presents the research findings, which are based on the stages of analysis, including data familiarization, coding, theme generation and review, theme definition, and report production, followed by a discussion.

Data Acquaintance

Seurembek is a 30-volume Qur'anic manuscript created at the end of the 17th century by Tengku Chik Dipasi, a revered scholar in Waido (Anismar et al., 2021). It is regarded as a sacred text and preserved carefully, displayed only during *kenduri Bintang*. As KG and T stated:

"The *Seurembek Mushaf* holds significant sacred value and is exclusively reserved for the *Kenduri Bintang* ceremony. Reading it requires careful attention and respect, as it represents not merely a book, but also a spiritual legacy from our ancestors," (personal interviews, March 2023).

The ritual begins with communal prayers and *peusijek* for purification, followed by a ceremonial procession. Family members read the *mushaf*, while children and teenagers practice *tajwid*. Water poured over the *mushaf* is considered spiritually blessed (observation, March 2023).

Three main themes emerged: spirituality, community emotions, and social collectivity.

Spirituality included religiosity, recitation, purity, belief, and protection; emotions comprised tranquility, pride, nostalgia, and poignancy; while social collectivity consisted of mutual assistance, participation and communal interaction (see Table 1). In the first theme, spirituality and blessing, *Seurembek* serves as a medium to seek blessings for agriculture, illustrating the connection between humans, nature, and the transcendent. The participants emphasized collective hope: "We pray together, hoping our fields are always blessed with rain, abundant harvests, and protection from pests," (FGD, March 2023).

Regarding the second theme, emotional response, feelings of peace, emotion, and trembling indicate a profound engagement with the ritual. During the reciting event, participants reported feeling peaceful, calm, and spiritually uplifted, with their daily worries fading away. They also expressed gratitude, joy, and a deep sense of connection and comfort with the community, sometimes even moved to tears (observation during the event, March 2023). In the third theme, social cohesion, *Seurembek* fosters social collectivity by bringing community members together in shared recitation, creating a sense of belonging and mutual support. Through this collective ritual, the participants reinforce intergenerational bonds, solidarity, and collective coping strategies, strengthening both social cohesion and communal resilience. From the results of observations during reading, interviews, and FGDs, it can be said that *Seurembek* not only strengthens spiritual devotion but also fosters social cohesion, mutual support, and a sense of collective well-being among participants.

Theme Review

Spirituality emerged as the central concept, encompassing blessings and the human-transcendent connection. Internal coherence, external heterogeneity and data sufficiency support its validity. The theme of emotion captures participants' inner responses, such as

calm and pride, while social collectivity reflects cooperation, communal meals, and integrated participation, demonstrating strengthened community cohesion.

Defining the Theme

Spirituality binds religious activities into a cohesive meaning, emphasizing blessings and connection with the transcendent. Emotional experiences are internal reactions to the ritual rather than superficial descriptions, while social collectivity demonstrates practical efforts in cooperation and relationship building. These three themes complement each other, providing insight into both individual and collective experiences.

This definition is in line with the notions of spirituality (Lucchetti et al., 2021), emotional process (Pizarro et al., 2022), and social collectivity (McNamara, 2024).

Report Production

The themes were validated for coherence, heterogeneity and adequacy. Spirituality addresses religious practice; emotions reflect psychological depth; and social cohesion emphasizes participation and togetherness. Together, they form a robust framework for understanding the meaning and impact of *Seurembek*.

Table 1

Emergent Themes from Seurembek Ritual Practices

Spirituality and Blessing	Emotion Response	Social Cohesion
Religious, ritualistic, <i>Seurembek</i> -recitative, faithful, spiritually surrendered, <i>tawhidic</i> , symbolic (<i>panji</i>).	Calm, touched, proud, emotional, hopeful, optimistic	Cooperative, participatory, cross-sectoral, socially warm

Table 2

Mapping of PERMA Elements in Relation to Seurembek Ritual

PERMA Element	Research Theme	Connection with the <i>Seurembek</i> Ritual
Positive Emotion	Emotion	Participants experience feelings of peace, emotion, pride, devotion, and gratitude for the harvest outcome.
Engagement	Spirituality	Full concentration in the ritual, approaching a state of "flow," confident that the rice fields are safe from pests solely due to prayer and faith in Allah.
Relationships	Social Cohesion	Interaction and solidarity within the community are fostered through mutual assistance, as seen in the reading procession around the tent.
Meaning	Spirituality	Rituals provide deep meaning: blessings, spiritual wealth, and agricultural continuity.
Accomplishment	Spirituality and Emotion	Gratitude for the harvest.

Integration with the PERMA Framework

In relation to the alignment of themes with PERMA (see Table 2), spirituality and blessings relate to meaning and engagement; emotional atmosphere to positive emotion; social cohesion to relationships; and accomplishment to successful harvests. Positive emotions foster mental health (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004); engagement reflects flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014); and relationships enhance collective well-being (Seligman, 2011). Overall, *Seurembek* supports spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions, enhancing individual and community resilience.

Discussion

Meaning and Purpose: Searching for the Meaning of Life and Strengthening Spirituality

This dimension serves as a fundamental foundation for interpreting *Seurembek* within the Waido community. The tradition is not only followed as a ritual obligation, but also as a means of searching for the meaning of life, which awakens spiritual and existential awareness. In the context of positive psychology, the meaning of life is the central pillar of happiness and self-fulfillment (Steger et al., 2006, 2012). Park et al. (2010) further emphasize that the notion of meaning in life is strongly associated with greater happiness, proactive coping, life satisfaction, and reduced psychological distress. T and F told a story that when they read *Seurembek*, they felt a strength that renewed their souls and gave them a powerful reason to endure and continue their lives with full hope (interview, March 2023). The statement illustrates how *Seurembek* serves as a medium of spiritual reinforcement, connecting individuals with the transcendent dimension while simultaneously forming a narrative of meaning that overcomes feelings of emptiness and life's uncertainties (see Figure 1).

Positive Emotion: Calm, Peace, and Happiness

Involvement in the *Seurembek* tradition triggers vital, positive emotional experiences that

help maintain mental balance. The participants reported a sense of tranquility and peace that transcended daily experiences, especially when facing life's pressures. As one M said: "After participating in *Seurembek*, I felt an indescribable peace, as if the burdens of life became lighter." (interview with M, March 2023). The findings are consistent with Broaden-and-Build Theory, which posits that positive emotions expand the propensity for creative thoughts and adaptive behaviors, enabling individuals and communities to better cope with stress (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004).

Empirical studies also show that positive emotions enhance resilience and proactive coping through the development of psychological resources (Tugade et al., 2004); initiate upward spirals in affective well-being and coping capacities (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005); support self-regulation in stressful contexts (Moskowitz et al., 2012); and even accelerate physiological recovery from stress responses (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998). Psychologically, the tradition serves as a natural emotional regulator, improving mood and enhancing the mental health of the community.

Engagement: Rituals with Wholeheartedness

Engagement in reading *Seurembek* marks a "flow" experience, in which individuals are truly immersed in the ritual activity. This is not just a passive process, but an active experience that simultaneously touches on cognitive and emotional dimensions. KG explained that "When reading the *muṣḥaf* together, I feel completely focused, as if my mind is drawn into the reading. The energy is very strong." (interview, March 2023).

This phenomenon of engagement is pivotal in positive psychology, offering an optimal experience that enhances satisfaction and fosters sustained participation (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Self-Determination Theory further reinforces this by suggesting that when individuals' needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are met,

engagement becomes intrinsically motivated and deeply fulfilling (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Moreover, Maslow's concept of peak experience concerns states of profound fulfillment and transcendence that parallel the experiential qualities of flow, highlighting engagement as central to human self-actualization (Maslow, 1970).

Empirical studies also confirm that flow leads to enhanced intrinsic motivation, well-being, and long-term engagement across various activities, including exercise, creative pursuits, and educational tasks (Mao et al., 2016; Swann et al., 2019). Collectively, shared engagement in traditions also builds stronger social bonds and reduces feelings of isolation.

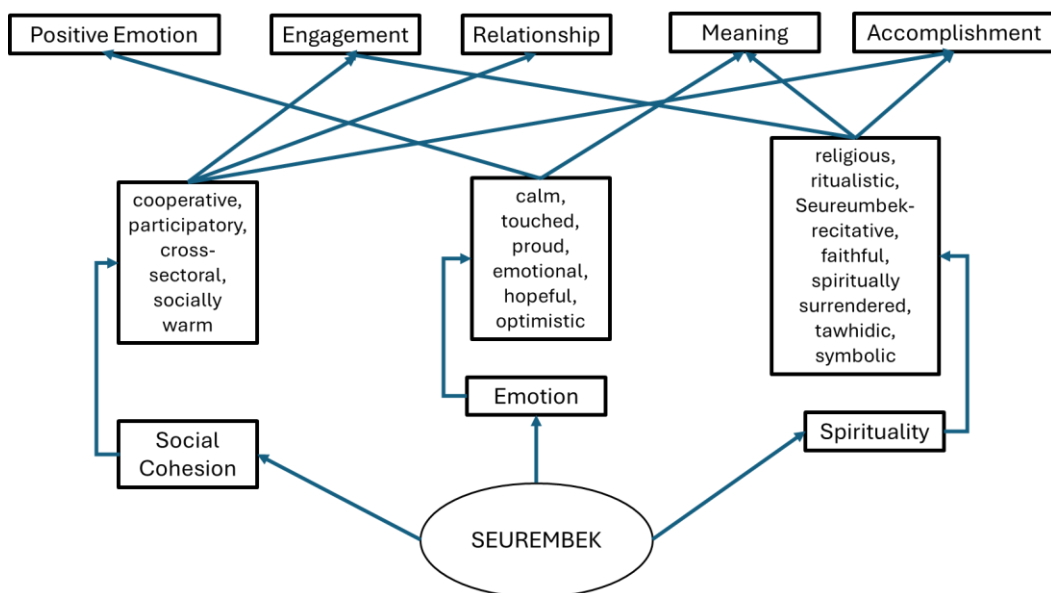
Relationships: Social Connections and Communal Solidarity

Seurembek not only strengthens the individual dimension but also reinforces the community's social network. The collective reading of the *muṣḥaf*

creates a warm space for social interaction, building solidarity and trust among members. Informant M stated: "We do not just read the *muṣḥaf*, but we support each other, feeling like one big family. That is what makes us strong" (interview, March 2023). In the framework of social psychology, strong interpersonal relationships are a primary source of well-being and emotional support (Alsarrani et al., 2022). Research has shown that high-quality friendships significantly predict happiness and life satisfaction (Demir & Weitekamp, 2007), while social support directly contributes to well-being and buffers against stress (Simone et al., 2019). Moreover, close relationships serve as secure bases for personal growth and thriving, extending beyond stress management (Feeney & Collins, 2015). The *Seurembek* tradition serves as social capital that strengthens social cohesion and maintains harmony within the community, especially in facing external challenges.

Figure 1

PERMA Framework and its Relevance to Seurembek Ritual



Resilience: Enduring and Rising from Difficulties

The *Seurembek* ritual also serves as an effective coping mechanism to enhance individuals' psychological resilience. Through spiritual and emotional processes, practitioners can better manage the pressures and difficulties of life. As was expressed, "When facing heavy problems, we return to *Seurembek* to find strength and tranquility" (interview with T, KG, M, and F, March 2023). Religious and spiritual practices are key resources in building resilience. The tradition provides a framework of meaning and spiritual support that enables individuals to endure and grow in the face of difficulties (Xu, 2016).

Community Resilience as a Sociocultural Pillar

More than just individual resilience, *Seurembek* collectively strengthens the Waido community's resilience. In the context of social change and economic challenges, the tradition is a crucial social resource. T and KG stated, "In difficult times, *Seurembek* serves as a reminder that we are not alone, that together we can overcome any trial" (interview, March 2023). Community resilience refers to the collective capacity to adapt and recover from adversity. Through rituals involving multiple generations, *Seurembek* facilitates the transfer of values, knowledge, and social support, thereby preserving cultural continuity and strengthening communal solidarity, a role consistent with previous findings that intergenerational rituals sustain cultural memory and reinforce social cohesion (Causadias et al., 2022; Norris et al., 2008; Stein et al., 2021; Viscogliosi et al., 2022). Therefore, the tradition serves as a social foundation that strengthens the Waido community's stability and collective identity.

Integration, PERMA Findings, and Community Resilience

The study findings demonstrate that the *Seurembek* tradition encompasses the five pillars of PERMA (Positive Emotion, Engagement,

Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment). The meaning dimension is central, in which *Seurembek* provides a foundation of life meaning and spiritual reinforcement that is crucial in facing the uncertainties of life (Park et al., 2010). The positive emotional experience presented by the ritual includes feelings of calm, peace, and happiness, which contribute to enhancing the mental well-being of participants (Brackett et al., 2019).

Engagement in reciting the *mushaf* demonstrates a flow experience, in which participants are fully immersed in the ritual practice (Mao et al., 2016). The social ties strengthened during the tradition build strong relationships, reinforcing the social capital that forms the foundation of community resilience (Lee, 2020). Finally, *Seurembek* serves as a mechanism for developing psychological resilience, thus helping individuals and communities cope with life's pressures and challenges. Community resilience, as a collective consequence of tradition, makes *Seurembek* a form of sociocultural capital capable of maintaining social stability and strengthening the collective solidarity of the Waido community. This highlights the crucial role of cultural and religious practices in offering comprehensive psychosocial support, both individually and communally (see Figure 1).

Seurembek and Religion-based Sociocultural Interventions

Seurembek can be understood as a unique form of sociocultural intervention, placing religious values at the center of psychological and social reinforcement. Unlike clinically-based mental health interventions, *Seurembek* offers a holistic approach that combines religious rituals, social practices, and cultural identity into a unified experience. This enables individuals not only to achieve spiritual tranquility but also to cultivate a profound sense of social connection. Such interventions have the potential to become an alternative or complementary model in the

development of mental health programs in communities with strong cultural and religious backgrounds (Abu-Ras et al., 2024; McLaren et al., 2021; Razali et al., 1998; Tondok et al., 2022). By utilizing religious and traditional values, interventions such as *Seurembek* can minimize the social stigma associated with mental disorders and strengthen the motivation for active participation in the healing process. Moreover, the model, as in Figure 1, can be developed into a welfare improvement empowerment model based on the Qur'anic recitation tradition packaged in the PERMA model.

Comparison with Similar Practices

The *Seurembek* phenomenon bears similarities to other religious ritual practices, such as the tradition of *dhikr* in Islamic communities (Sulistyawati et al., 2019); communal prayers in Christian communities (Callender et al., 2022); or meditation in Buddhist traditions (Basso et al., 2019). The main similarity lies in the role of ritual in creating positive emotional experiences, full engagement, and the strengthening of social bonds. The uniqueness of *Seurembek* lies in its local context and specific performative form, namely the recitation of the handwritten *muṣḥaf* by Tgk. Chik Dipasi, which has become a sacred symbol and cultural identity of the Waido community. This highlights the significance of the local context in spiritual practices, while also serving as a platform for social cohesion and cultural resilience. Studies in the psychology of religion and spirituality demonstrate that culture- and religion-based interventions are effective in promoting psychological and social well-being, provided that such interventions respect local values and community traditions.

Culture- and Religion-based Mental Health Programs

The findings are highly relevant for the development of culturally and religiously sensitive mental health programs, especially in traditional communities that uphold religious values. By

adopting a tradition-based intervention approach, such as *Seurembek*, mental health programs can be more easily accepted because they utilize practices that are already familiar and meaningful in daily life. This is in line with the findings of several studies focused on the individual and family level, which suggest the need for strong programs based on community values within a framework of building mindfulness, psychological well-being, and adaptive capacity in achieving a strong community (Aini et al., 2021; Surijah et al., 2021).

The strengthening of community resilience gained through participation in *Seurembek* becomes an important form of social capital for preventing mental disorders and enhancing collective well-being. The findings suggest that the program could be further developed and integrated into capacity-building training for religious and community leaders as facilitators of religion- and culture-based mental health. Intervention models such as *Seurembek* may serve as a bridge between modern psychology and local wisdom, potentially expanding the scope of inclusive and holistic mental health services.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings create a constructive dialogue between positive psychology, particularly the PERMA model, and local Islamic spiritual traditions, highlighting how religious values and cultural rituals contribute to holistic psychological well-being and community resilience. In practical terms, *Seurembek* has strong potential as a community-based mental health intervention, grounded in local traditions and religious values, which is likely to be accepted and effective in promoting well-being, reducing stigma, and strengthening community participation.

However, despite offering in-depth insights, the study is limited to a single community using qualitative methods, which limits its broader generalizability and long-term applicability. Participants' responses may also reflect social

desirability, and further empirical and comparative studies are needed to validate the integration of positive psychology with Islamic traditions.

Cultural Significance and Future Research

Preserving religious and communal traditions such as *Seurembek* is crucial for maintaining cultural identity, solidarity, and social cohesion, making revitalization efforts integral to cultural and social policies. Further research is needed to explore cross-cultural and religious psychology aspects; to conduct comparative studies with other traditions; and to use quantitative or longitudinal methods to measure the long-term

impact on individual mental health and community resilience.

Conclusion

The *Seurembek* tradition significantly contributes to individuals' psychological well-being, while strengthening community resilience in Waido society. It provides a profound spiritual space where participants can find meaning in life, inner peace, and positive emotional experiences. The practice also fosters active engagement, social bonds and community solidarity, serving as an important source of social capital that supports psychosocial resilience.[]

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Author Contribution Statement

Abdul Rahman Shaleh: Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Investigation; Methodology; Validation; Visualization; Writing Original Draft; Writing, Review & Editing. **Samsul Bahri:** Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Investigation; Methodology; Project Administration; Validation; Visualization; Writing, Review & Editing. **Muhammad Nuzul Abraar:** Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Investigation; Methodology; Project Administration; Validation; Visualization; Research Assistant. **Ali Abdurahman Simangunsong:** Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Investigation; Methodology; Project Administration; Validation; Visualization; Research Assistant. **Salwa Mahalle:** Methodology; Writing, Review & Editing; Analysing Enhancing Draft and Writing Collaborator.

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