

Revitalization of *irsyad's da'wah*: Transformation of Santri through *riyadhah an-nafs*

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study was to examine the revitalization of Irsyad's da'wah through the implementation of riyadhah an-nafs as a means of transforming the character and spirituality of santri in Islamic boarding schools

Method – The population of this study consisted of santri from a modern Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. The study employed a qualitative approach, utilizing phenomenological methods. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The data analysis employed thematic analysis to identify patterns of spiritual transformation.

Result – The results showed that the practice of riyadhah an-nafs, including self-discipline, muhasabah, and spiritual exercises, significantly contributed to santri's moral awareness, self-regulation, and da'wah orientation. These changes reinforced the essence of Irsyad's da'wah as a guidance-based, transformative process.

Implication – This method suggests that integrating Riyadhah an-nafs into pesantren curricula can effectively enhance the spiritual resilience and leadership capacity of santri in carrying out da'wah missions.

Originality/Value – This study offers a novel integration between classical Islamic spiritual training and contemporary da'wah revitalization, emphasizing the role of inner transformation as a foundation for sustainable character development.

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Kata kunci:

Dakwah Irsyad,
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Abstrak

Tujuan – Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji revitalisasi da'wah Irsyad melalui penerapan riyadhah an-nafs sebagai sarana transformasi karakter dan spiritualitas santri di pesantren Islam.

Metode – Populasi penelitian ini terdiri dari santri dari sebuah pesantren Islam modern di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode fenomenologis. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data menggunakan analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola transformasi spiritual.

Hasil – Hasil menunjukkan bahwa praktik riyadhah an-nafs, termasuk disiplin diri, muhasabah, dan latihan spiritual, secara signifikan berkontribusi pada kesadaran moral, pengaturan diri, dan orientasi dakwah santri. Perubahan ini memperkuat esensi dakwah Irsyad sebagai proses transformatif berbasis bimbingan.

Implikasi – Metode ini menyarankan bahwa integrasi Riyadhah an-nafs ke dalam kurikulum pesantren dapat secara efektif meningkatkan ketahanan spiritual dan kapasitas kepemimpinan santri dalam melaksanakan misi da'wah.

Orisinalitas/Nilai – Studi ini menawarkan integrasi baru antara pelatihan spiritual Islam klasik dan revitalisasi da'wah kontemporer, dengan menekankan peran transformasi batin sebagai landasan untuk pengembangan karakter yang berkelanjutan.

Introduction

Education in pesantren plays a strategic role in shaping the character, moral integrity, and spirituality of students through the integration of Islamic values sourced from the Qur'an, Hadith, and Islamic scientific traditions (Asrofi et al., 2022). In the Islamic education system, pesantren not only function as an institution for the transmission of knowledge, but also as a center for moral and spiritual development. The typical pesantren environment that blends life and learning allows the internalization of leadership values and religious ethics (Nurdin & Rasyid, 2022), while instilling a moderate view in facing the challenges of radical ideologies (Khojir, 2020; Mujahid, 2021; Sah & Fuad, 2024)

The number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia continues to increase, with more than 27,722 institutions and approximately 4.2 million students registered as of 2023. Notably, Central Java, including Pati Regency, is the center of traditional Islamic education (Amirudin et al., 2023; Wicaksono et al., 2023). Most Islamic boarding schools still retain a salafiyah character that emphasizes the recitation of the Qur'an, while modern Islamic boarding schools are beginning to integrate general and religious curricula to respond to complex social demands (Stellarosa et al., 2022; Wicaksono et al., 2023). Islamic boarding schools play a strategic role in shaping the morality, spirituality, and resilience of students, as well as being a fortress of moderation in the midst of modern ideological challenges (Husni Rahiem, 2024; Khojir, 2020; Rohim, 2023)

In Indonesia, pesantren play a strategic role in the moral-spiritual education of millions of students, but several studies show that learning practices in some institutions are still strongly influenced by rote patterns and normative delivery; recent document observations even note that conservative pesantren are still highly dependent on memorization with minimal emphasis on applications beyond the mastery of the text (Jannah, 2019). Non-formal Islamic education is often criticized because emphasizing memorization and acceptance of authority that does not encourage critical thinking (Altinyelken, 2021). The latest pedagogical literature encourages the integration of critical pedagogy in Islamic education, ensuring it extends beyond mere textuality (Abdurahman & Saputra, 2021). At the same time, evidence-based studies show that sufistic practices such as *riyadhah an-nafs* can support mental health and build spiritual-moral resilience of students (Bassar & Hasanah, 2020)

Da'wah is essentially an effort to invite people to understand and practice Islamic teachings through various forms, such as *tabligh*, which emphasizes the delivery of messages orally, *ta'lim*, which focuses on teaching religious knowledge, *tazkirah*, which functions as a moral warning, and *irsyad*, which emphasizes guidance. *Irsyad da'wah* is different from other forms of da'wah because it is more oriented towards mentoring, guidance, and personality transformation, rather than just delivering information. With its foundation in the education of Sufism's values and traditions, *irsyad da'wah* is operationalized through spiritual practices such as *mujahadah*, *muraqabah*, and *mahasabah*, which aim to strengthen the resilience of students by fostering spiritual resilience, regulating emotions, and promoting healthy coping strategies.

One of the important methods in this guidance is *irsyad da'wah*, a form of da'wah that provides educational and religious guidance to foster the correct understanding and practice of Islam. *Irsyad da'wah* is an important method in pesantren education that emphasizes the development of students' character through the integration of moral guidance and cognitive learning based on

Islamic teachings (Tabroni et al., 2022). This method not only conveys religious knowledge but also instills ethical and spiritual values, thereby forming a complete Muslim personality (Kasmawati et al., 2023). The imbalance between cognitive and moral aspects in Islamic education is the reason for the need for an integrative approach, such as *irsyad*, which is strengthened through a holistic religious education curriculum (Hidayat, 2023). *Irsyad da'wah* should ideally be a means that can form religious awareness, direct behavior, and foster the moral commitment of students in depth.

The practice of *irsyad da'wah* in many Islamic boarding schools is still dominated by a cognitive approach that emphasizes memorization of texts, normative lectures, and verbal mastery of the material, often ignoring the reflective, affective, and spiritual dimensions essential for the formation of students' character. This pattern aligns with the findings of Altinyelken (2021), who emphasized that Islamic education in Indonesia still tends to be oriented towards memorization and acceptance of authority, without providing sufficient space for the development of students' critical thinking skills. Nilan (2018) also showed that, despite pesantren being a center for spiritual strengthening, many students experience boredom and difficulty in balancing the demands of memorization with a deeper religious experience. In fact, according to Bassar (2020), Sufistic practices, such as *riyadhah an-nafs*, have been proven to build spiritual resilience while increasing self-discipline. Therefore, the integration of Sufistic aspects into *irsyad da'wah* is seen as important to overcome the limitations of cognitive models alone.

However, the reality in many boarding schools shows that the practice of *da'wah irsyad* is still dominated by a cognitive approach that emphasizes aspects of verbal teaching, memorization of religious texts, and normative delivery. The practice of *irsyad da'wah* in many Islamic boarding schools is still dominated by a cognitive approach, which relies on verbal teaching, memorization, and normative delivery, thus raising concerns about the effectiveness of character education and broader spiritual development (McLaren et al., 2022). Although important for preserving religious texts, this approach often results in a superficial understanding and lacks personal reflection and critical thinking skills (Farah Nasir et al., 2021). Although this method is important, it lacks the aspect of soul transformation and deep spiritual formation. As a result, many students experience spiritual saturation, difficulties in developing self-discipline, and a lack of religious experience rooted in daily life.

Irsyad da'wah in pesantren is the development of students as a whole, which includes cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. One approach that can be used to bridge this gap is to integrate the practice of *riyadhah an-nafs* in the *da'wah* process. The integration of the concept of *riyadhah an-nafs*, or spiritual training, is a promising solution because this approach not only emphasizes cognitive mastery but also fosters the development of self-discipline, resilience, and ethics based on Islamic principles (Fitri et al., 2023). By combining reflective and spiritual practices in *da'wah*, as well as integrating digital resources with traditional methods, the learning environment becomes more interactive and supports the holistic understanding and internalization of values (Mashudi & Hilman, 2024). In addition, the adjustment of *da'wah* activities to the characteristics of participants and socio-cultural context through *riyadhah an-nafs* helps build strong spiritual resilience in the face of modern challenges, as well as deepen the understanding of Islamic teachings as a whole (R Jauhari, 2023)

Riyadhah an-nafs is a method of training and soul control that has become an integral part of the Islamic Sufism tradition. This practice involves spiritual practices such as mujahadah (earnestly fighting lust), muraqabah (realizing the presence of Allah), muhasabah (self-introspection), and tafakur (contemplating Allah's creation and greatness). Through Riyadhah, students are not only invited to understand Islamic teachings in theory, but also to experience and feel these values in real life.

Existing research indicates that there have been few studies specifically discussing the integration between da'wah irsyad and riyadhah an-nafs in the context of pesantren education. Most studies still separate the aspects of da'wah and spiritual formation, or only highlight riyadhah as part of the Sufism tradition without associating it with da'wah strategies and character education of students in an applicable manner. The literature on the integration of irsyad da'wah and riyadhah an-nafs in pesantren education remains limited, often discussing the two concepts separately, with a focus on riyadhah in the Sufi tradition, without directly linking it to practical da'wah strategies or student character education (Wirmanhanizon et al., 2023). This gap is evident in the lack of research that links the spiritual practice of riyadhah with contemporary da'wah methods, resulting in an incomplete discussion of holistic moral and ethical development in Islamic education (Hidayat, 2023). Therefore, further research is needed to develop a holistic framework that integrates Riyadhah an-nafs into irsyad da'wah, accompanied by case studies of the application of integrative practices in Islamic boarding schools and cross-disciplinary collaboration between scholars of education, Sufism, and Islamic studies to create a curriculum that integrates cognitive instruction with overall spiritual and character development (Basit et al., 2022). Therefore, this research is important for filling the study gap and offering a model of irsyad da'wah that is more transformative and relevant to the spiritual development needs of today's students.

This article differs from other articles because it offers an integrative approach that combines *irsyad da'wah*, which has tended to focus on cognitive and normative aspects, with the practice of *riyadhah an-nafs*. This Sufistic tradition emphasizes self-control, reflection, and spiritual resilience, resulting in a more holistic and transformative pesantren education model. Suppose previous research tended to discuss the two separately. In that case, this article presents a new framework that bridges the gap between textual teaching and spiritual formation, and is also relevant to the context of Indonesian pesantren, which face challenges such as globalization, radicalism, and the spiritual saturation of students. Thus, this article not only provides a theoretical contribution in the form of the development of a sufistic-based irsyad da'wah framework, but also a practical contribution in strengthening the moral and spiritual resilience of students through integrative education.

Research Methods

This study employs a narrative literature review approach, chosen because it aligns with the study's object and focus, namely, exploring a deep understanding of phenomena that cannot be measured statistically (Creswell, J.W., & Poth, 2018). The review involved collecting information and data from a wide range of scholarly sources, including peer-reviewed journals, academic books, theses, and relevant historical documents (MacDonald, 2014; Snyder, 2019). The researcher identified appropriate keywords and conducted searches across established databases, including

Google Scholar, Scopus, and digital libraries. The retrieved literature was then screened based on relevance to the themes of Santri Resilience and Riyadhah An-Nafs as a psychological intervention, as well as on quality indicators and year of publication. Relevant sources, including peer-reviewed journals, academic books, theses, and credible online databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus, were systematically searched using predefined keywords related to Santri Resilience and Riyadhah An-Nafs.

Between January and March 2024, literature searches were conducted using predefined keywords and Boolean operators such as “*Santri Resilience*” AND “*Islamic boarding school*” OR “*Pesantren*” and “*Riyadhah an-Nafs*” OR “*spiritual self-discipline*” AND “*counseling*” OR “*psychological intervention*”, with search strings adapted for each database to ensure comprehensive coverage. The databases selected included Scopus, to ensure high-quality peer-reviewed publications, and Google Scholar, to capture broader sources such as theses and locally published journals not indexed in Scopus; this combination was justified to balance academic rigor with contextual inclusivity, especially since much literature on pesantren and Islamic spiritual practices is published in local outlets. A total of 276 records were retrieved, with 48 duplicates removed, leaving 228 titles and abstracts for screening, of which 143 were excluded for irrelevance; the remaining 85 full-text articles were assessed, and 69 were excluded due to lack of methodological rigor (n=25), purely theological focus (n=22), or insufficient empirical/conceptual depth (n=22). Finally, 16 articles met all inclusion criteria—relevance to *Santri Resilience* or *Riyadhah an-Nafs*, publication between 2009 and 2024, and availability of full text—and were included in the synthesis. The data extraction template recorded bibliographic information, study objectives, methodology, key findings, and thematic relevance. The extracted data were then analyzed using content analysis, which enabled systematic comparison, categorization, and identification of recurring themes and research gaps. This process ensured transparency, replicability, and a stronger scholarly contribution.

Results and Discussion

What is da'wah, and what is its relationship to irsyad?

Da'wah is a pivotal concept in Islamic tradition, defined as the effort to invite individuals to understand and apply Islamic teachings in their daily lives. It employs a wide range of methods, from interpersonal dialogue to mass media, to enhance public comprehension of Islam and foster moral and ethical growth within communities. A core aspect of da'wah is its social and educational engagement, as exemplified by organizations like Jemaah Tarbiyah, which emphasizes community development as part of their religious mission. The integration of digital tools such as social media and artificial intelligence has also become essential, expanding the reach and accessibility of da'wah initiatives. These technological shifts require da'i to be adaptable and responsive to modern cultural contexts while upholding Islamic values (Salam et al, 2024).

Da'wah is the act of inviting individuals to follow the teachings of Islam and guiding them towards spiritual and moral improvement, which includes verbal communication, written discourse, and the practical embodiment of Islamic values. Rooted in the principles of the Qur'an, particularly Da'wah al-Khair, Tadhkir, and Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar, its purpose is not only to spread religious teachings but also to encourage moral transformation and promote social welfare.

Historically, da'wah has served as a tool for social empowerment, helping to overcome poverty and ignorance. This role continues in the form of developmental da'wah, which focuses on equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in society. It can be concluded that da'wah is an integral part of the Islamic tradition, aiming to enable individuals to understand, believe in, and practice Islamic teachings in their daily lives. More than just conveying teachings, da'wah encompasses educational, social, and spiritual approaches that aim to foster moral awareness and promote the welfare of the people (Muslim, 2022).

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The Essence of Irsyad's Da'wah in Islamic Boarding School Education

Irsyad da'wah is a form of da'wah that emphasizes the aspects of advice, moral guidance, and spiritual enlightenment wisely and lovingly. In contrast to the confrontational or coercive da'wah approach, Irsyad's da'wah is rooted in the values of rahmah (affection), hikmah (wisdom), and uswah hasanah (example). In the context of pesantren education, this approach serves as the primary foundation for fostering students as a whole, encompassing not only cognitive aspects and rituals of worship, but also the development of a strong personality and spirituality.

Irsyad's approach to the students emphasizes the importance of a profound transformation of the heart through understanding their psychological and emotional conditions, rather than simply demanding behavioral change. Irsyad prioritizes da'wah that is full of wisdom (da'wah bi al-hikmah), as emphasized by Zaenuri (2023), which requires speakers to be sensitive to the intellectual and emotional context of the audience. This approach aligns with effective contemporary discourse methods, as outlined by Ciappara (2024), which emphasize the importance of structure and rhetoric in evoking emotional responses. Irsyad's efforts also reflect the recommendations of Amirudin et al. (2023) for implementing a psychosocial approach to address the social and psychological challenges faced by students. Support for mental health through emotional connectedness is also emphasized by Ernala et al. (2018), highlighting the importance of the relationship between speakers and audiences, particularly in digital spaces. In addition, Xiao et al. (2024) emphasize that sensitivity to emotional states is essential in creating authentic change. Thus, Irsyad's approach aims to create a space of da'wah that resonates with the heart, prioritizing a deep understanding of students' life experiences as the foundation for their spiritual and emotional growth.

In practice, Irsyad's da'wah is an approach to moral and spiritual development that is internal and deep. Irsyad's approach emphasizes the holistic internalization of moral and spiritual values to transform the hearts of students, aligning with the views of Ningsih et al. (2024) on value education in Islamic universities. Irsyad also encourages the practice of Islamic teachings in life, as emphasized by Tabroni et al. (2021), as well as improving moral character through religious understanding, as shown by Rusdi et al. (2023). This spiritual aspect also supports mental health (M. Estrada et al., 2019; Mubarak & Karim, 2022) and encourages collaboration between families and institutions, as proposed by Ghinea (2020), creating an inclusive and transformative educational ecosystem.

Riyadhah An-Nafs as a Means of Soul Formation

Riyadhah an Nafs, which translates to the training or discipline of the soul, is a fundamental concept in Islamic spirituality and education. It refers to the process of self-purification and moral development, aiming to cultivate virtues and control over one's desires and impulses. This practice is particularly emphasized in Islamic boarding schools, known as pesantren, where students, or santri, engage in various spiritual and educational activities designed to enhance their character and spiritual intelligence.

The concept of Riyadhah an Nafs is closely linked to the broader Islamic principles of Tazkiyah, which involves the purification of the soul and cultivating good character traits. Tazkiyatun Nafs, or the purification of the soul, is a vital concept in Islamic spirituality that aims to cleanse the soul from negative traits and cultivate positive attributes. This process is crucial for personal growth and spiritual development. Scholars often categorize Tazkiyatun Nafs into two primary methods: Riyadhah an Nafs (the training of the soul) and Muhasabah (self-reflection). To illustrate this classification, Figure 1 presents the structure of Tazkiyatun Nafs as outlined by Al-Ghazali, showing how it comprises both Riyadhah an Nafs and Muhasabah as core components.

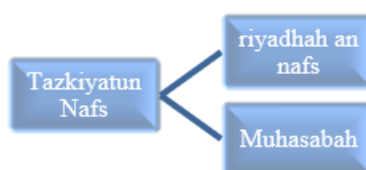


Figure 1. Riyadhah an nafs in takzkiyatun nafs according to Al-Ghazali

This figure illustrates the two core components of Tazkiyatun Nafs (purification of the soul), namely Riyadhah an Nafs (discipline of the soul) and Muhasabah (self-reflection), as emphasized in classical Islamic scholarship, particularly by Imam Al-Ghazali. These two practices serve as foundational methods in the spiritual formation process within pesantren. Through disciplined spiritual exercises (Riyadhah) and continuous self-evaluation (Muhasabah), students are guided toward moral refinement and spiritual growth, making these components integral to their holistic development of character.

This process is essential for students in pesantren, as it helps them develop a strong moral compass and resilience against negative influences (Saparudin et al., 2021). Research indicates that

the practice of Riyadhah, including fasting and other forms of self-discipline, significantly contributes to the enhancement of self-control and emotional regulation among students (Fauziyah, 2021; Khoiriyah et al., 2023). For instance, fasting is often practiced as a form of Riyadhah, where students learn to abstain from food and drink, thereby training themselves to manage their desires and emotions effectively.

Riyadhah an Nafs is closely associated with the concept of Tazkiyatun Nafs, which refers to the purification of the soul. According to Imam Al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyah, Tazkiyatun Nafs involves a systematic process of self-purification that is crucial for drawing closer to Allah and developing good character traits (Arifin et al., 2022). This process is not merely theoretical; it is operationalized through various practices in boarding schools, such as regular spiritual activities, prayer, and moral education, which are designed to instill discipline and enhance spiritual well-being among students (Hasan, 2019). The effectiveness of these practices has been demonstrated in various studies, showing a positive correlation between spiritual activities and students' moral development (Ridwan et al., 2023).

The implementation of Riyadhah an Nafs in pesantren is not limited to fasting; it encompasses a range of spiritual practices, including prayer, dhikr (remembrance of God), and the study of Islamic texts. These activities are designed to foster a deep connection with God and instill a sense of purpose and discipline in the students' lives (Ningsih et al., 2022). To further elucidate these diverse practices and their roles in character formation, Figure 2 visually represents the multi-dimensional implementation of Riyadhah an Nafs in pesantren.



Figure 2. Implementation of Riyadhah an Nafs in Pesantren

This figure illustrates the integration of various spiritual practices, including fasting, prayer, dhikr, and the study of Islamic texts, alongside the mentorship role of the kyai. Together, these elements contribute to a holistic educational experience that nurtures both the intellectual and spiritual dimensions of the students. The curriculum in many pesantren is structured to include these spiritual practices, ensuring that students engage in a holistic educational experience that promotes both intellectual and spiritual growth (Ningsih et al., 2022). The character development aspect of Riyadhah an Nafs is particularly significant in shaping the identity of santri. The title of “santri” is not merely a designation for students but signifies a commitment to higher moral standards and a distinct character that sets them apart from the general populace (Saparudin et al., 2021). This transformation is facilitated through the rigorous training and mentorship provided by the kyai (religious leaders) in the pesantren, who play a crucial role in guiding students on their spiritual journeys (Ningsih et al., 2022). Through this comprehensive approach, Riyadhah an Nafs becomes not only a spiritual discipline but also a transformative process that molds santri into morally upright, disciplined, and spiritually resilient individuals, ready to contribute positively to society.

Development of Psychological Resilience through Riyadhah an Nafs

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The Circumplex Coping model developed by Stanisławski(2019) explains that coping strategies can be mapped into two main dimensions, namely problem-focused coping which emphasizes solving or avoiding problems directly, and emotion-focused coping which focuses on emotion regulation; These two dimensions are then combined with the approach–avoidance approach and emotional balance versus emotional imbalance, thus providing an integrative framework in understanding the structure of coping with stress. These findings are reinforced by Veisi (2024), who shows that problem-oriented, emotion-oriented, and avoidance-based coping styles have a significant relationship with psychological well-being, confirming that the diversity of coping strategies has direct implications for the quality of an individual's mental health. In the context of religiosity, Dolcos (2021) found that religious coping plays a crucial role in enhancing resilience through psychological mechanisms, such as cognitive reappraisal and coping self-efficacy, which enable individuals to reinterpret difficulties more positively and trust their capacity to face challenges. However, Surzykiewicz (2022) adds an important nuance by showing that positive religious coping (e.g., prayer, surrender to God, and the search for spiritual meaning) can strengthen the relationship between resilience and mental well-being, while negative religious coping (e.g., feeling abandoned by God or seeing suffering as punishment) actually weakens the relationship.

Psychological resilience is characterized by an individual's ability to cope with challenges and recover from difficulties. Research has shown that resilience can be fostered through structured interventions and practices that promote emotional regulation and coping strategies (Serrão et al., 2021; Ran et al., 2020). In the context of Riyadhah an Nafs, practices such as regular prayer, fasting, and engaging in dhikr (remembrance of God) serve as foundational activities that not only strengthen spiritual ties but also enhance emotional stability and resilience (Zhang et al., 2023). For instance, the discipline cultivated through fasting can lead to improved self-control and emotional regulation, which are essential components of psychological resilience (Madkur et al., 2024; Megawati et al., 2024; Molla Jafar et al., 2015; Purba et al., 2024; Riduwan et al., 2024; Seiler & Jenewein, 2019; Suwendi et al., 2024). The communal aspect of boarding school life plays a vital role in building resilience. The supportive environment created among peers and mentors in pesantren fosters a sense of belonging and social support, which are critical for resilience (Adelinejad et al., 2022; Agustina et al., 2024; Ayubi & Masruri, 2025; Hatami & Shekarchizadeh, 2022; Ishizuka et al., 2017; Molla Jafar et al., 2015; Nayman, 2021; Purba et al., 2024; Riduwan et al., 2024; Supriani et al., 2023; Tavandashti et al., 2024). Studies indicate that social support significantly contributes to an individual's ability to cope with stress and adversity, thereby enhancing their psychological resilience (Lim et al., 2014). In this regard, the relationships formed within the pesantren community can provide emotional backing that helps students navigate personal challenges more effectively. The teachings and mentorship provided by kyai (religious leaders) in pesantren are instrumental in shaping the psychological resilience of students. These leaders often emphasize the importance of patience, gratitude, and reliance on God, which are essential virtues that contribute to a resilient mindset. By instilling these values, students learn to

approach difficulties with a constructive attitude, viewing challenges as opportunities for growth rather than insurmountable obstacles.

Additionally, the integration of psychological principles into the pesantren curriculum can further enhance resilience. For example, incorporating discussions on mental health literacy and coping strategies can equip students with the tools necessary to manage stress and adversity effectively (Karacabey, 2023). This educational approach aligns with contemporary research that highlights the importance of resilience training in various populations, including students and healthcare workers (Bore et al., 2016). Table 1 presents the core aspects that contribute to the development of psychological resilience among santri (students) in pesantren. These aspects include spiritual practices such as fasting, which enhance emotional regulation and self-control; communal support systems that foster a sense of belonging and security; the influential role of religious leaders (*kyai*) in instilling patience, gratitude, and reliance on God; and structured social support mechanisms that buffer the effects of stress and adversity. Furthermore, the integration of psychological education into the pesantren curriculum equips students with essential coping strategies, thereby strengthening their ability to manage life's challenges.

Table 1. There are aspects of resilience in Islamic boarding school students

Aspect			Description	Source
Fasting and Regulation	Emotional		Fasting cultivates self-control and emotional regulation, both of which are essential for psychological resilience.	Madkur et al., 2024; Megawati et al., 2024; Molla Jafar et al., 2015; Purba et al., 2024; Riduwan et al., 2024
Communal Support in Boarding Schools			Supportive peer and mentor relationships in pesantren foster a sense of belonging, social support, and resilience.	Adelinejad et al., 2022; Agustina et al., 2024; Ishizuka et al., 2017; Supriani et al., 2023
Role of Religious Leaders (Kyai)			Religious leaders instill patience, gratitude, and reliance on God, shaping a resilient mindset and fostering a constructive approach to difficulties.	Ishizuka et al., 2017; Nayman, 2021; Purba et al., 2024
Social Support and Coping Mechanisms			Social support mitigates stress and adversity, enhancing resilience through communal living in pesantren.	Lim et al., 2014; Purba et al., 2024
Psychological Education in Pesantren			Incorporating mental health literacy and coping strategies into curricula enhances students' resilience by providing practical tools to manage stress and adversity.	Karacabey, 2023; Bore et al., 2016

The Impact of Riyadhah an Nafs on Mental Health and Coping Mechanisms

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The impact of Riyadhah an Nafs on mental health and coping mechanisms is significant, particularly in the context of Islamic spirituality and personal development. Riyadhah an Nafs, which refers to the disciplined training of the soul through various spiritual practices, is crucial in enhancing psychological resilience and overall mental well-being. Engaging in Riyadhah an Nafs involves regular spiritual activities such as prayer, fasting, and dhikr (remembrance of Allah). These practices serve as effective coping strategies that help individuals manage stress and anxiety. Research has shown that individuals who regularly engage in these spiritual practices report improved mood and reduced symptoms of depression, Sayeed. The structured nature of these activities promotes self-discipline and emotional regulation, which are crucial for navigating life's challenges. For example, the act of prayer (Salah) has been linked to positive mental health outcomes, as it provides individuals with a sense of peace and connection to a higher power, thereby alleviating feelings of isolation and despair Sayeed & Prakash, 2013)

Moreover, the communal aspect of Riyadhah an Nafs, particularly in Islamic boarding schools (Islamic boarding schools), creates a supportive environment where individuals can share their experiences and challenges. This sense of community is vital for mental health, as social support has been shown to mitigate the effects of stress and enhance coping mechanisms(Shamblaw et al., 2021). The relationships formed within these communities provide emotional backing that helps individuals navigate personal challenges more effectively.

Riyadhah an Nafs, the practice of Muhasabah, or self-reflection, complements the spiritual training by encouraging individuals to engage in introspection. This practice enables individuals to critically evaluate their thoughts, actions, and intentions, resulting in increased self-awareness and accountability. By recognizing their shortcomings and seeking forgiveness through Tawbah (repentance), individuals can cultivate a sense of humility and resilience. Studies indicate that self-reflection is associated with better mental health outcomes, as it enables individuals to align their behavior with their values and beliefs (Shamblaw et al., 2021).

The integration of Tazkiyatun Nafs into daily life has been linked to enhanced psychological resilience, which is the ability to adapt and recover from adversity. Individuals who engage in these spiritual practices often report feeling more equipped to handle life's challenges, thereby reducing the risk of mental health issues such as stress and anxiety. The practice of Riyadhah an Nafs offers significant benefits for mental health by fostering psychological resilience and providing effective coping mechanisms rooted in Islamic spirituality. The communal and introspective aspects of these practices not only enhance individual well-being but also contribute to a supportive environment that mitigates the effects of stress and anxiety.

Conclusion

This research found that the irsyad approach in pesantren not only serves as a means of delivering Islamic teachings but also as a process of soul development that focuses on heart transformation, character strengthening, and the mental health of students. Through the practice of riyadhah an-nafs, such as fasting, dhikr, and muhasabah, students experience deep spiritual and

emotional development. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of the da'wah approach, the values of Sufism, and the principles of educational psychology, making irsyad a transformative da'wah model relevant to the needs of today's young generation.

The main advantage of this research is its interdisciplinary and contextual approach; however, it remains limited to conceptual studies without field data. For this reason, further research can be directed toward empirical studies in the pesantren environment, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In addition, the development of irsyad-based training modules and the expansion of studies to modern Islamic boarding schools or digital platforms will enrich the application of da'wah, making it more adaptive and effective.

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