



Resilience in Santri: The Impact of Social Support on the Quran Memorization Journey

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Abstract: Memorizing the Qur'an is a spiritual endeavor that is noble yet filled with significant challenges. Many Qur'an memorizers face various obstacles throughout this journey. This study investigates the role of social support in fostering resilience among Qur'an memorizers who simultaneously fulfill dual roles as students. Conducted with 180 santri from five *pondok pesantren* in Central Java, aged 15-19, the study adopts a non-experimental quantitative design. Findings indicate that emotional support ($\beta=0.306$, $p < 0.01$) and informational support ($\beta=0.237$, $p < 0.01$) significantly predict resilience, while instrumental support does not ($\beta=0.154$, $p > 0.05$). Adding companionship increased the explained variance of resilience to 42.7% ($R^2=0.427$, $F(1,175) = 9.730$, $p < 0.001$). These findings underscoring the importance of peer support, guidance from *kyai* (religious mentors), and a supportive environment in sustaining the challenging process of Qur'an memorization. This study implies that for Qur'an memorizers, resilience is strengthened by companionship, guidance, and emotional support, which collectively enable them to navigate the spiritual and academic challenges of their journey.

Keywords: Resilience; Quran memorizers; Social Support

Abstrak: Menghafal Al-Qur'an adalah upaya spiritual yang mulia namun penuh tantangan. Banyak penghafal Al-Qur'an menghadapi berbagai rintangan sepanjang perjalanannya. Studi ini mengeksplorasi peran dukungan sosial dalam membangun resiliensi di kalangan santri penghafal Al-Qur'an yang juga menjalani peran ganda sebagai pelajar. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada 180 santri dari lima pondok pesantren di Jawa Tengah, berusia 15-19 tahun, dengan menggunakan desain kuantitatif non-eksperimental. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dukungan emosional ($\beta=0.306$, $p < 0.01$) dan dukungan informasional ($\beta=0.237$, $p < 0.01$) secara signifikan memprediksi resiliensi, sedangkan dukungan instrumental tidak signifikan ($\beta=0.154$, $p > 0.05$). Penambahan dukungan rekan sebaya (*companionship support*) meningkatkan varians resiliensi

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menjadi 42.7% ($R^2=0.427$, $F(1,175) = 9.730$, $p < 0.001$). Temuan ini menunjukkan pentingnya dukungan dari teman sebaya, bimbingan dari kyai, dan lingkungan yang mendukung dalam menjaga proses menghafal Al-Qur'an yang penuh tantangan. Studi ini menyiratkan bahwa bagi penghafal Al-Qur'an, resiliensi diperkuat oleh kebersamaan, bimbingan, dan dukungan emosional yang secara kolektif memungkinkan mereka menghadapi tantangan spiritual dan akademik.

Kata Kunci: Resiliensi; Penghafal Quran; Dukungan Sosial

Introduction

Memorizing the Qur'an is a spiritual endeavor that is noble yet filled with significant challenges. Many Qur'an memorizers face various obstacles throughout this journey, such as difficulty in memorization, psychological pressure, and temptations to give up. These challenges become more complex when individuals who memorize the Qur'an also have to juggle other roles, such as being students in formal educational institutions. Balancing spiritual activities and academic commitments can lead to high levels of stress, requiring special effort to maintain motivation and perseverance in the memorization process (Haque, 2018).

In facing such dual challenges, Qur'an memorizers require resilience, which is the ability to endure and recover from difficulties. Resilience is a critical concept in positive psychology, referring to an individual's mental and emotional strength in the face of adversity (Masten, 2001). From an Islamic perspective, resilience is not only viewed from a psychological standpoint but also from a spiritual one. In Islam, strong resilience can be nurtured through faith and piety, which serve as sources of strength for individuals when encountering life's hardships (Ahmed, 2015). Resilience becomes even more crucial for Qur'an memorizers who are also pursuing formal education. Previous research indicates that students with high resilience are generally better equipped to manage stress and overcome both academic and spiritual obstacles (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). This situation presents a significant challenge for student memorizers who must divide their attention between memorizing the Qur'an and fulfilling academic responsibilities. Hence, it is important to explore the factors that support their resilience, both internal factors such as spiritual support and external factors like social support from their environment (Grotberg, 1995).

Qur'an memorizers often face a series of highs and lows during their memorization journey. The exhaustion that comes with these difficulties can be overwhelming, and many require a substantial source of strength to persevere and complete their memorization goals (Ariyati, 2016). The numerous challenges encountered during this demanding process necessitate the development of skills and abilities to withstand hardship. In such circumstances, Qur'an memorizers must cultivate what is known as psychological resilience—an inner strength that enables them to endure adversity and remain committed to their ultimate objective of completing the memorization of the Qur'an.

Resilience, in psychological terms, is the capacity of individuals to cope effectively with stress and adversity (Javanmard, 2013). Connor and Davidson (2003) describe resilience as a dynamic process that involves adapting and problem-solving when facing significant difficulties and distress. Reivich and Shatté (2002) further define it as an individual's ability to adjust and sustain themselves through life's challenges and hardships. Grotberg (1995) emphasizes that resilience encompasses an individual's

ability to evaluate, confront, and effectively handle negative or difficult situations, either by improving oneself or by fortifying one's strength to endure harsh conditions.

Research supports the idea that resilience is not merely about enduring difficulties but also involves learning and growing from these experiences. The concept is rooted in an individual's capacity for psychological flexibility, which allows them to adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining a sense of purpose and direction (Bonanno, 2004). Moreover, for Qur'an memorizers, spiritual practices and faith play a crucial role in bolstering resilience, as spiritual beliefs provide a framework for meaning-making and emotional support (Pargament, 1997). This integration of psychological and spiritual resilience is particularly relevant for individuals who seek to balance the rigorous demands of memorizing the Qur'an with other life responsibilities.

In addition, the protective factors that contribute to resilience—such as social support and positive coping strategies—are vital for Qur'an memorizers. According to Masten (2001), the presence of a supportive community and an individual's belief in their own ability to overcome obstacles are critical components of resilience. These factors can help Qur'an memorizers navigate the struggles of memorization while finding motivation and purpose in their spiritual journey. The ability to remain steadfast and committed despite difficulties highlights the significance of resilience in achieving long-term memorization success. Continuous support from one's social environment, including family, friends, and community networks (such as *pesantran* environment), has been shown to enhance psychological well-being and stress coping abilities (Wu et al., 2021). Social support serves as a vital buffer against adversity, enabling individuals to persist in their goals and recover more rapidly from setbacks (Luthans et al., 2006; Masten, 2001; Masten et al., 1990).

Social support refers to the perception or reality of assistance provided by others, which can manifest in various forms. Sarafino and Smith (2017) categorize social support into four primary types: emotional support, instrumental support, informational support, and companionship. These types of support collectively enhance an individual's psychological strength and resilience, particularly in contexts that require sustained effort, such as Quran memorization.

Islam provides specific guidance on managing stress and strengthening resilience. The concept of *tawakkul*, or complete reliance on Allah after making maximum effort, is one way to fortify the soul. Likewise, practicing acts of worship such as prayer, dhikr (remembrance of Allah), and reciting the Qur'an are believed to bring inner peace and increase one's ability to withstand life's pressures (Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014). In Islam, those who memorize the Quran and overcome various trials and challenges to build resilience are promised significant rewards in the Hereafter. As illustrated in the verses, Allah (SWT) grants positive outcomes to those who show patience and perseverance, providing ease, relief, and ultimately a higher standing in the afterlife (Surah Al-A'la: 8-9; Surah Al-Sharh: 5-6; Surah Al-Baqarah: 155; Surah Ali 'Imran: 195). Such individuals are assured of peace and honor in the Hereafter as a reward for their steadfastness and dedication. This divine promise encourages resilience among Muslims, as they understand that their efforts in this world contribute to their ultimate success in entering jannah (paradise), with Allah's (SWT) mercy and blessings. The journey of resilience, strengthened by faith, *tawakkul* (trust in Allah), and perseverance, reflects a path toward both personal and spiritual fulfillment (Dzulkifli & Mahudin, 2021).

Based on previous research, resilience in individuals is sustained through continuous support, often framed as protective factors, including a supportive social environment (Wu et al., 2021; Luthans et al., 2006; Masten, 2001; Masten et al., 1990). Studies have shown that social support from family, friends, and mentors is crucial in helping individuals adapt to challenging situations and maintain psychological well-being (Zautra, Hall, & Murray, 2010). For *santri*—students in Islamic boarding schools dedicated to memorizing the Quran—resilience becomes particularly essential due to the demanding nature of their dual roles as students and Quran memorizers. Here, social support can help them persist in their memorization journey and cope with the stressors inherent in this unique environment.

Most research on resilience and social support has focused on individuals who have immediate access to family and close friends, often in a familiar, comfortable environment (Garmezy, 1991; Werner & Smith, 1992). However, *santri* live in a distinctive cultural setting that requires adaptation to communal life, adherence to structured routines, and separation from family for extended periods. This cultural context is significantly different from conventional educational settings, as *santri* are immersed in a strict, religious environment with minimal direct parental involvement. These factors create a unique social ecosystem where resilience is fostered through peer support, mentorship from teachers (*kyai*), and the overall boarding school community rather than through traditional familial structures.

The novelty of this study lies in its exploration of resilience within the context of *pondok pesantren* culture, where social support mechanisms function differently from typical school environments. Since *santri* are often far from their families, the *pondok* community must fill the role of emotional, social, and instrumental support that would traditionally be provided by parents. This study investigates how resilience is cultivated in such a setting, where students are encouraged to rely on communal bonds and mentorship from their teachers and peers. While previous studies have highlighted the role of parental support in adolescent resilience (Werner & Smith, 2001; Hunter & Chandler, 1999), there is limited research on how resilience develops in youths who are physically distanced from their primary caregivers. This research aims to address this gap by examining the social supports that emerge within the unique cultural and communal environment of the *pondok pesantren*, where students are guided to rely on social and spiritual resources as they navigate the challenges of memorizing the Quran.

This study employs a non-experimental quantitative design to examine the effect of social support on the resilience of Quran memorizers. The subjects of this study are 180 Quran memorizers in Central Java who also have dual roles as students, aged between 15 and 19. The participants were selected through convenience sampling, based on accessibility and availability, with five Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) serving as the research sites. The instruments used include a resilience scale adapted from the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) by Connor & Davidson (2003) and a social support scale based on the social support theory by Sarafino & Smith (2017). The resilience scale showed a good reliability coefficient (α) of 0.816 with a total of 21 items, while the social support scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.719 and item discrimination indices ranging from 0.348 to 0.753, totaling 11 items. Hypothesis testing was conducted using linear regression analysis to assess the relationship between aspects of social support and resilience. All analyses were performed using IBM SPSS 22 software on Windows OS.

Results and Discussion

Data Overview

The participants in this study, as shown in Table 1, consisted of 180 individuals from five Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in Central Java. The majority of participants were female, with 170 female participants (94%) and 10 male participants (6%). The age distribution of the participants ranged from 15 to 19 years. Most participants were 17 years old (31%), followed by 16 years old (21%), 19 years old (20%), 15 years old (19%), and 18 years old (9%). In terms of the duration of Quran memorization, 20 participants (11%) had been memorizing for less than 1 year, 105 participants (58%) for 1-2 years, 28 participants (16%) for 2-3 years, and 27 participants (15%) for more than 3 years.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics

Characteristics	N	Percentage
Gender		
Male	10	6%
Female	170	94%
Age (Years)		
15	34	19%
16	37	21%
17	56	31%
18	17	9%
19	36	20%
Years of Memorizing		
< 1	20	11%
1-2	105	58%
2-3	28	16%
>3	27	15%

Assumption Tests

Before conducting the hypothesis test, the researcher performed assumption tests to examine the characteristics of the research variables. The multicollinearity test showed a tolerance value of 0.905 (VIF = 1.1, <10), indicating no multicollinearity. The normality test using Shapiro-Wilk yielded $p = 0.977 (>0.05)$, indicating that the regression model is normally distributed. Additionally, the scatterplot visually demonstrated homoscedasticity in the regression model. The linearity test resulted in a value of 1.43, $p = 0.104 (>0.05)$, indicating that the variables in this model are linear. These results confirm that the assumptions are met, allowing for regression analysis to be conducted.

Table 2. Assumption Tests

Assumption	Value	Results
Multicollinearity	0.905 (VIF = 1.1, <10)	No multicollinearity
Normality	$p = 0.977 (>0.05)$	Normal distribution
Linearity	1.43, $p = 0.104 (>0.05)$	Linear

Hypothesis Tests

The hypothesis testing was conducted using hierarchical linear regression, aimed at examining whether the aspects of the Social Support variable (Emotional Support, Informational Support, Instrumental Support, and Companionship) have an impact on Resilience in Santri. The regression analysis was performed using the Enter method, where predictors were added one by one into the regression model. The results of the hierarchical regression are summarized in Table

Table 3. Summary of Hierarchical Regression

Predictor/s	Resilience		
	b	β	t
Step 1			
Emotional support	2.015	0.306	4.285**
R ² = 0.306, F(1, 178) = 18.359***			
Step 2			
Emotional support	1.397	0.212	2.794**
Informational support	1.438	0.237	3.127**
R ² = 0.375, F(1, 177) = 14.522***			
Step 3			
Emotional support	1.120	0.170	2.165*
Informational support	1.110	0.183	2.272*
Instrumental support	0.615	0.154	1.892
R ² = 0.398, F(1, 176) = 11.016***			
Step 4			
Emotional support	0.811	0.123	1.532
Informational support	0.682	0.113	1.316
Instrumental support	0.493	0.123	1.512
Companionship	0.884	0.194	2.259*
R ² = 0.427, F(1, 175) = 9.730***			

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

In Step 1, emotional support was a significant predictor of resilience (β=0.306, p < 0.01), accounting for 30.6% of the variance in resilience (R²=0.306), F (1,178) =18.359, p<0.001. In Step 2, adding informational support increased the explained variance to 37.5% (R²=0.375), and both emotional support (β=0.212, p < 0.01) and informational support (β=0.237, p < 0.01) emerged as significant predictors of resilience, F (1,177) =14.522, p < 0.001. In Step 3, the addition of instrumental support further increased the explained variance to 39.8% (R²=0.398), F (1,176) =11.016, p < 0.001. Here, emotional support (β=0.170, p < 0.05), and informational support (β=0.183, p < 0.05) were all predictors, but instrumental support was not significant and instrumental support (β=0.154, p > 0.05).

In the final model (Step 4), companionship was added, increasing the explained variance to 42.7% (R²=0.427), F (1,175) =9.730, p < 0.001. In this model, emotional support (β=0.123, p > 0.05), informational support (β=0.113, p > 0.05), instrumental support (β=0.123, p > 0.05), and companionship (β=0.194, p < 0.05) contributed to predicting resilience, though only companionship reached statistical significance. This pattern suggests that while each type of support adds some predictive value for resilience, companionship appears to be the strongest and most consistent predictor when all factors are included in the model.

Table 4. Further Analysis

Predictor/s	Resilience		
	F	Sig	Note
Gender	0.819	0.44	n.s
Age	1.716	0.149	n.s
Years of Memorizing	15.80	< 0.001	sig

This research has demonstrated the roles of different types of social support in predicting resilience among students memorizing the Quran in a boarding school context. The findings show that emotional support initially emerged as a significant predictor of resilience, aligning with the notion that students far from their families may benefit significantly from empathy and encouragement from peers (Wong et al., 2006; Rahim & Rosli, 2019). This type of support includes expressions of empathy, understanding, and encouragement. Emotional support is vital for Quran memorizers as it provides comfort and validation, reducing feelings of isolation and emotional distress. When family members or peers show genuine concern and empathy, it strengthens the memorizer’s resolve and fosters a sense of belonging (Sarafino & Smith, 2017). In a similar vein, studies indicate that emotional support plays a crucial role in helping students cope with the psychological demands of their academic commitments, particularly in contexts where they are separated from their families (Sari & Supardi, 2020).

Informational support also plays an important role, as guidance and shared knowledge are valuable in the learning environment of Quran memorization. Research shows that informational support can enhance students’ confidence and problem-solving skills, helping them navigate complex or stressful situations in educational settings (Kurniawati & Fauzi, 2021; Putri et al., 2020). This type of support fosters a sense of security and preparedness, especially in academic or religious studies, where students benefit from peer-to-peer knowledge exchange (Santoso et al., 2019). However, instrumental support, which involves material or financial aid, appears less relevant in this context, likely because the students’ primary needs are met within the boarding school environment, and their focus is on spiritual and educational pursuits rather than material gains (Setiawan & Nugroho, 2021).

Companionship or friendship emerged as the strongest and most consistent predictor of resilience. This finding suggests that students in this unique educational setting rely heavily on the social bonds they form with peers who are also striving toward similar religious and academic goals (Wahyudi et al., 2022; Syahputra & Yusuf, 2020). Since these students spend most of their time away from family, their daily interactions, shared routines, and collective experiences with friends in the dormitory environment provide a critical source of strength and resilience (Fadhilah et al., 2021). Research has shown that companionship in such settings not only promotes a sense of belonging but also helps students develop emotional resilience by building close-knit, supportive friendships (Lestari & Rahayu, 2023).

We conducted a further analysis to examine whether there were differences in resilience among Quran memorizers based on age, gender, and years of memorization. The results, as shown in Table 4, indicate that gender and age were not significant predictors of resilience, with F-values of 0.819 ($p = 0.44$) and 1.716 ($p = 0.149$), respectively, both of which were not statistically significant (n.s). However, the years of memorizing the Quran were a significant predictor of resilience, with an F-value of 15.80 and a p-value of less than 0.001. This suggests that resilience levels are significantly associated with the length of time spent memorizing the Quran, while gender and age do not have a substantial impact.

The length of time spent memorizing the Quran can enhance resilience due to the continuous adaptation and mental discipline it requires. Resilience is closely linked to an individual's capacity to adapt to challenges, and the repetitive nature of Quran memorization involves overcoming cognitive demands such as retention, focus, and recall. According to Karatsoreos and McEwen (2013), resilience is shaped by the brain's ability to adapt through processes like allostasis, which achieves "stability through change" in response to environmental stressors. Long-term Quran memorization may activate similar adaptive mechanisms, strengthening neural circuits related to memory and concentration. This sustained mental training promotes stability in the face of stress and builds resilience by fostering neurobiological adaptations associated with prolonged cognitive effort.

Conclusion

This research highlights the significant role of social support in bolstering the resilience of students in a boarding school setting, emphasizing the importance of nurturing close peer relationships as a protective factor against the academic and personal challenges of a *pesantren* learning environment (Hidayat & Prasetya, 2023; Rahmawati et al., 2019). Emotional support emerged as an initial significant predictor of resilience, underscoring the importance of empathy and encouragement in mitigating feelings of isolation. Informational support also played a significant role by offering guidance and sharing knowledge, which enhanced students' confidence and improved their ability to solve problems. However, instrumental support, such as material aid, had a limited impact, reflecting the self-sufficient and spiritually focused nature of the boarding school context.

In Islam, social support is highly valued, with a strong emphasis on the concept of Islamic brotherhood, which reinforces solidarity and mutual care among Muslims. Islamic teachings advocate for interpersonal relations grounded in shared faith (*Iman*) and a collective ideology of life, promoting a supportive community that can help individuals navigate life's difficulties through unity and shared beliefs. This principle is further underscored in various Hadits, such as the one that states, "You will see the believers in their mutual kindness, love, and sympathy just like one body. When a limb complains, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever" (Sahih Muslim). Another Hadits teaches, "A Muslim is a brother to a Muslim: Neither he wrongs him, nor hands him over (to another). And whosoever meets the need of his brother, Allah (SWT) meets his need; and whosoever removes a calamity from a Muslim, Allah (SWT) will remove a calamity from him on the Day of Resurrection; and whosoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah (SWT) will conceal his faults on the Day of Resurrection" (Sahih Bukhari). This emphasis on social support and brotherhood reinforces the resilience of students by creating a sense of unity and shared purpose that is central to Islamic values.

Further analysis revealed that resilience was significantly associated with the years spent memorizing the Quran, suggesting that the prolonged cognitive effort and discipline required for memorization enhance adaptive capabilities. In contrast, gender and age did not significantly predict resilience. These results highlight the importance of fostering close peer relationships and long-term commitment to spiritual and academic goals, aligning with Islamic values of brotherhood and mutual support as central components of resilience in this context.

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