

# MENTAL HEALTH OF SANTRI IN INDONESIAN PESANTREN: A SCOPING REVIEW ON RISK, PROTECTIVE AND INTERVENTION FACTORS

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**Abstract.** The mental health of adolescent santri is a crucial issue that requires attention, because the unique pesantren environment can be a source of psychological challenges as well as strengths for them. The scoping review was conducted by systematically mapping the existing literature on risk factors, protective factors and mental health intervention models in adolescent santri. This review analyzed 30 qualitative, quantitative and literature review articles from three electronic databases (google scholar, researchgate, and crosreff). The results found that pesantren are simultaneously a source of risk factors and protective factors. The main risk factors include academic-spiritual double burden, social adaptation challenges such as homesickness, bullying anxiety and systemic limitations in the form of strict rules and lack of formal mental health services. On the other hand, pesantren have strong protective factors, especially in spirituality and religious practices (suluk, dhikr and burdah recitation) as the main coping mechanism. Social support, especially from peers who function as a substitute family, as well as internal factors such as gratitude and self-efficacy also significantly increase the resilience and psychological well-being of santri. In conclusion, the mental health of santri is determined by the balance between pressure and available resources. The implication is that a holistic approach is needed that integrates formal counseling guidance services with interventions based on local pesantren wisdom and aspects of spirituality. It is also necessary to implement a prevention program through self-screening, psychoeducation and empowerment of peer counseling to create a healthy pesantren environment.

**Keywords:** Mental health, adolescents, Santri, Pesantren, protective factors, risk factors, intervention.

## 1 Introduction

Mental health has become a crucial issue that attracts national and global attention. Adolescents are vulnerable to various psychological stresses due to the transitional period [1], [2], with the complexities of the digital era they face. Data shows that one in three Indonesian adolescents (34.9%) or equivalent to 15.5 million people experience mental health problems, while one in twenty adolescents (5.5%) experienced mental disorders in the past 12 months [3]. In line with this, Riskesdas (2018) found that the prevalence of mental emotional disorders among adolescents aged 15 years and above reached 9.8%. [4], and as many as 6.2% of adolescents aged 15-24 years experienced depression [5]. Disorders such as anxiety, stress and depression not only impact an individual's well-being, but also their academic performance and socialization skills [1].

Islamic boarding schools as a boarding Islamic educational institutions play a vital role [6]. Not only does it function as a formal educational institution, but it also offers a character-building environment that aims to form independence, solidarity and deep spirituality [5]. However, this immersive and structured environment inherently presents a series of psychosocial challenges to adolescents [7]. The complex adaptation process, separation from family that often triggers homesickness, dual academic demands from formal schools and intensive religious studies in pesantren, and the need for dense social interaction in communal life [7], [8] can trigger mental health issues in adolescents. The combination of the pressure experienced, coupled with the issue of bullying puts students at a higher risk of experiencing stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms [5], [9].

In addition to having various risks, the pesantren environment, which has spiritual resources and is full of local wisdom, can also function as a stronghold of mental resilience. Spiritual values such as *tawakkal*, patience and gratitude become a strong emotional coping mechanism for santri [10]. Social support between students, structured routines and guidance from caregivers can also be protective factors that have proven effective in helping to cope with pressure and build resilience. [11], [12]. This duality of pesantren's role as stressor and source of strength creates a complex psychological landscape that urgently needs to be understood in depth.

A comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the mental health of santri is crucial to designing effective and culturally relevant support systems. Although there have been many studies that examine separate aspects of santri life such as the effectiveness of group counseling [9], spiritual approach [13] or certain risk factors [8], However, there is no comprehensive review that systematically maps the entire research landscape.

A scoping review is needed to identify, synthesize, and map the existing literature. The purpose of this study is to map the research landscape on the mental health of adolescent santri in Indonesia with a primary focus on: 1) identifying risk factors that

contribute to the mental health of santri, 2) identifying protective factors that contribute to the mental health of santri and 3) mapping various intervention models that can be implemented to support the mental health of santri. By mapping the existing evidence, this review is expected to identify gaps in research and provide a foundation for the development of holistic and evidence-based interventions in the future.

## 2 Method

This review used a scoping review approach with PRISMA-SCR to identify and map relevant evidence from a wide range of literature from Google Scholar, Researchgate, and Crossref. This method was chosen as it allows a broad synthesis of different types of studies to provide a comprehensive overview of the research. The review process involved searching for relevant research articles in the last five years (2020 - 2025) that specifically addressed mental health, protective factors, risks and interventions in adolescents in pesantren settings. The researcher used the keywords ("*kesehatan mental*" OR "*kesehatan jiwa*" OR "*mental health*" OR "*psychological well-being*") AND (*santri* OR "*siswa pesantren*" OR *adolescent* OR "*pesantren students*") AND (*pesantren* OR "*islamic boarding school*") AND ("*faktor risiko*" OR "*faktor protektif*" OR "*risk factor*" OR "*protective factor*" OR *intervensi* OR *intervention*) AND "*Indonesia*" dalam pencarian data. Adapun kriteria inklusi dan eksklusi Adalah sebagai berikut:

### 2.1 Inclusion Criteria

The researcher determined the criteria for articles to be reviewed by considering the questions that had been formulated to guide this scoping review and using the PCC strategy (Participant, concept, and context). The inclusion criteria were defined as follows:

- a. Participant - articles targeting students aged 10 to 19 years old.
- b. Concept - a study of risk factors, protective factors and interventions/programs to prevent and overcome mental health problems of students in pesantren.
- c. Context - all empirical research and literature reviews published to access broader information. The research reviewed is research conducted in pesantren in Indonesia in the last 5 years (2020 - 2025).

## 2.2 Search strategy

The review was carried out by searching three electronic scientific databases (google scholar, researchgate and crosreff) with keywords ("*kesehatan mental*" OR "*kesehatan jiwa*" OR "*mental health*" OR "*psychological well-being*") AND (*santri* OR "*siswa pesantren*" OR "*adolescent*" OR "*pesantren students*") AND (*pesantren* OR "*islamic boarding school*") AND ("*faktor risiko*" OR "*faktor protektif*" OR "*risk factor*" OR "*protective factor*" OR *intervensi* OR *intervention*) AND "*Indonesia*". Subsequently, relevant articles were identified and included in the scope of this review.

**Table 1.** Studies retrieved based on search terms and electronic databases

Search	Google scholar	Researchgate	Crossref
Remaja	2.000.000 article	28.110 article	478.880 article
Remaja santri	105.000 article	37.590 article	644.16.754.14380 article
Pesantren	805.000 article	17.390 article	311.260 article
Kesehatan mental santri	29.800 article	59.460 article	13.901.640 article
Kesejahteraan psikologis santri	22.200 article	47.740 article	352.200 article
Factor protektif Kesehatan mental santri	631 article	71.830 article	753.138 article
Factor risiko Kesehatan mental santri	12.600 article	73.900 article	77.163 article
Intervensi Kesehatan mental santri	5.500 article	60.690 article	16.754.143 article
Promosi Kesehatan mental santri	4.490 article	61.430 article	17.147.826 article
Edukasi Kesehatan mental santri	7.740 article	61.890 article	17.155.634 article
Penggabungan semua kata kunci	120 article	250 article	200 article

### 2.3 Study selection

The research obtained was entered and analyzed using Mendeley desktop and Microsoft excel. The selection process consisted of two levels of article screening, namely: a) title and abstract review, and 2) full text review.

The article selection process is carried out independently by researchers by considering the eligibility criteria that have been previously set. Full text was reviewed when the title and abstract did not provide the required information.

### 2.4 Data extraction

Data were extracted from full-text articles that met the inclusion requirements, using a researcher-created instrument, according to the Joanna Briggs Institute model modified to align with the purpose of the review. The data extracted from the articles were as follows: author, year of publication, research location, research objectives, design, participants, methods, data collection instruments, and main results.

## 3 Result

Initially, 570 articles were found in the search of the three databases. After removing duplicates and applying all procedures, 29 articles were found (including 13 articles describing risk factors, 12 describing protective factors, and 13 describing interventions). The results of the article selection process are summarized in Figure 1 in the PRISMA diagram.

Articles included in the review were published from 2020 - 2025. 1 article was published in 2020, 4 articles in 2021, 4 articles in 2022, 9 articles in 2023, 5 articles in 2024, and 6 articles in 2025.

From the 29 articles reviewed, 11 were quantitative studies, 11 qualitative studies, 1 action research, 2 community services, and 4 literature reviews.

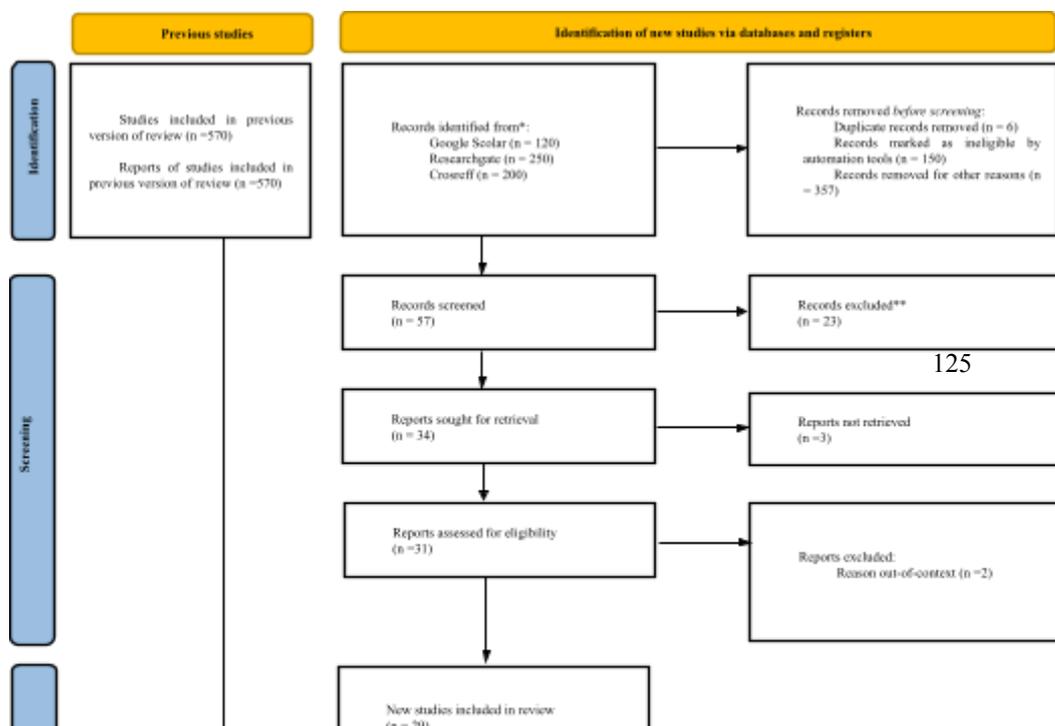


Figure 1. Study search results with PRISMA

Table 2: Incorporated Studies

No	Author & Year	Location	Study Design	Population (Age, Gender)	Number of Subjects	Instrument/ Method	Focus Domain	Key Findings	Research Title
1	Wahyuni & Ernawati (2022)	Pesantren Jember	Qualitative	principal, ustadz adan ustadzah as well as boarding school administrators	Not mentioned	Observation, interview	Risk	Bullying occurs in physical & verbal forms that have an impact on mental hygiene (anxiety, depression, withdrawal). Environment-based prevention can minimize bullying behavior that affects students' mental hygiene.	Bullying dan Mental Hygiene Santri di Pondok Pesantren Jember
2	Firdausi, H. A., Sulistiana, D., & Nugraha, A. (2023)	Pondok Pesantren At-Tajdid Islamic Boarding School, Tasikmalaya	Descriptive quantitative	7th-XI grade students (Adolescents, Male & Female)	226 santri	Social anxiety questionnaire (referring to La Greca and Lopez theory)	Risk	The majority of santri (88%) experienced social anxiety at a moderate level. There was a significant difference in the level of social anxiety between male and female santri, which implies the need for counseling guidance services to reduce this anxiety.	Profil Kecemasan Sosial Santri dan Implikasinya Terhadap Layanan Bimbingan dan Konseling
3	Nabilah, E., Arifin, B. S., & Tarsono. (2022)	Pondok Pesantren Sukamiskin, Bandung, Indonesia	Qualitative case study	Adolescent first-year students (11-12 years old), Male & Female	4 santri	In-depth interviews and participant observation	Risk	The obligation to memorize many books (5 books) affects the psychological well-being of new students. The pressure of memorization, coupled with the difficulty of adapting to the regulations, is the main factor that makes students feel unat home and causes their psychological well-being to be unstable.	Kesejahteraan Psikologis Pada Remaja Santri (Fenomena Hafalan di Pondok Pesantren Sukamiskin)

4	Hamidiyah (2024)	Pesantren (Banyuwangi, Jatim)	Cross-sectional	Santri (teen, L/P)	357	SDQ (Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire)	Risk (Gender)	Gender is associated with a number of mental health problems when viewed from the SDQ results. Female students have more mental problems (emotional, behavioral, hyperactivity, peer problems) than males.	Gender Analysis of Santri's Mental Health in Islamic Boarding Schools
5	Fadilah et al., (2023)	Asrama X Pesantren Darul Ulum Jombang	Kuantitatif analitik	New students (Santri) aged 13-16 years old	59 santri	Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI)	Risk	There is a significant relationship between stress levels and poor sleep quality in new students (P-value <0.05). The majority of students (59.3%) experienced moderate stress levels and the majority (84.7%) had poor sleep quality. Stress due to adaptation in the pesantren environment has a negative impact on students' sleep patterns and quality.	Relationship between Stress Level and Sleep Quality of New Santri in Dormitory X of Darul 'Ulum Islamic Boarding School Jombang
6	Asri, Y. (2023)	Several pesantren in East Java (Malang, Jombang, Mojokerto, Bojonegoro)	Cross-sectional	Santri (aged 10-18 years), majority female (75.1%)	425 responden	Kuesioner Depression Anxiety Stress Scales-21 (DASS-21)	Risk	The level of anxiety in post-Covid-19 pandemic students is very high (92.9%). Of the various factors analyzed, only the frequency of family visits significantly affected anxiety levels (OR=4.30). Infrequent family visits increase the risk of anxiety.	Faktor yang mempengaruhi kecemasan pada santri setelah Covid-19 pandemi di pondok pesantren

7	Anwar, F., & Julia, P. (2021)	Unspecified (Literature Review)	Literature study (documentati on method)	Santri	-	Analyze documents, books, and journal articles	Risk	Identified common problems in pesantren such as missing, violent skipping, and homosexuality as mental health risk factors. Strict rules are the main reason for these problems. Suggested that pesantren adopt a mental health perspective in coaching to address these issues so that santri feel comfortable and at home.	The Application of Mental Health at Islamic Boarding Schools
8	Rizqullah, R. D., & Ansyah, E. H. (2023)	Pesantren Ar-Raudhatul Ilmiyah, Kertosono, Indonesia	Quantitative correlation	Madrasah Aliyah students (15-19 years old)	229 santri	Social Support Scale, Academic Stress Scale	Risk & Protective	There is a significant negative relationship between social support and academic stress (correlation -0.682, $p < 0.05$ ). The higher the social support received by students from family, friends, and teachers, the lower the level of academic stress they experience due to the busy school and boarding school activities.	Pengaruh Efikasi Diri, Social Support dan Stress Akademik pada Santri Pondok Pesantren An-Nur Tanggulangin
9	Ratodi et al. (2025)	PP Darussalam Martapura (Kalsel)	Qualitative (Case Study)	Santri, ustadz, administrators	40 santri	Interview, observation, document analysis	Protective & Risk	The mental resilience of santri is supported through religious coping (82%), peer support (74%), organized routines (68%). There were 62% of santri experiencing stress due to strict discipline and only 32% had access to professional psychological services. Incorporating mental health education increases resilience.	Mental Health Resilience Among Santri: A Salutogenic Perspective on Psychological Well-Being in Pesantren

10	Faizah, A., & Widyastuti. (2021)	Pondok Pesantren di Mojokerto, Indonesia	Quantitative correlation	Santri SMP	108 santri	Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE), Skala Dukungan Sosial Teman Sebaya	Protective	There is a significant positive relationship between peer social support and subjective well-being of santri ( $p=0.004$ ). The higher the social support from peers, the higher the subjective well-being of the students.	Hubungan Antara Dukungan Sosial Teman Sebaya dengan Subjective Well-Being pada Santri Yang Tinggal di Pondok Pesantren
11	Hitiyaut, M., Hatuwe, E., & Tunny, R. (2025)	Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Kamal, Indonesia	Quantitative analytic (cross sectional)	Santri (12-17 years old), Male & Female	55 santri	Kuesioner (analisis Spearman's rho)	Protective	There was a significant relationship between stress levels and peer emotional support ( $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ), environmental conditions ( $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ), and self-adjustment skills. Support from peers is a crucial protective factor to reduce stress.	Faktor-Faktor Yang Berhubungan Dengan Tingkat Stres Pada Santri Di Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Kamal
12	Aini, S., & Santosa, B. (2023)	MTs Terpadu Pondok Pesantren Haji Abdul Karim Syu'aib, Kab. Agam, Indonesia	Quantitative (regression)	8th grade students (Male & Female)	52 santri	Likert scale questionnaire	Protective	Dhikr has a significant effect on the mental health of santri (18% contribution). The dhikr routine is proven to make santri calmer and more relaxed in dealing with various problems, as well as helping the adjustment process in the pesantren environment.	Pengaruh Dzikir Terhadap Kesehatan Mental Santri di MTs Terpadu Pondok Pesantren Haji Abdul Karim Syu'aib

13	Rohman et al. (2025)	Scoping review (multi lokasi, Indonesia)	Scoping Review	Teenage students (10-19 years old)	7 article	Arksey & O'Malley, PRISMA-ScR	Protective	Resilience is influenced by social support (family, friends, caregivers), adaptive coping strategies (emotion management), and adaptive coping. and seeking social support), biopsychosocial factors (physical activity, personality, life experience and contributing). Resilience can improve the well-being and mental resilience of adolescents in a boarding education environment.	Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Resiliensi pada Remaja di Pondok Pesantren: Scoping Review
14	Nindya & Muhid (2022)	Literature review (Indonesia)	Systematic Literature Review	Santri (teenager)	article sekunder	Review literatur	Protective	Social support increases the subjective well-being of santri in pesantren, reduces emotional distress, improves adaptation, has a social role and good friendship relationships, increases independence & academic achievement.	Pentingnya Social Support Untuk Meningkatkan Subjective Well-Being Santri Pondok Pesantren: A Systematic Literature Review
15	Saputra, M. V. D., & Affandi, G. R. (2024)	Madrasah Aliyah di Pondok Pesantren Ar-Raudhatul Ilmiah Kertosono	Kuantitatif (korelasional & regresi ganda)	Santri	195 santri	Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support,	Protective	cSelf-efficacy has a significant negative relationship with academic stress (the higher the self-efficacy, the lower the academic stress). Although social support is not directly related to academic stress, these two factors (self-efficacy and social support)	Hubungan antara Dukungan Sosial dan Stres Akademik pada Santri Madrasah Aliyah di Pondok Pesantren Ar-Raudhatul

						Academic Stress Scale		together have a significant effect in reducing students' academic stress.	Ilmiah Kertosono
16	Dewi, L., Tentama, F., & Diponegoro, A. M. (2021)	Two pesantren (X and Y) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia	Quantitative (SEM-PLS model analysis)	Seventh grade students (male & female)	150 santri	Family Support Scale, Social Scale, Gratitude Scale, Self-Acceptance Scale, Subjective Well-Being Scale	Protective	Family social support (9.9% contribution) and gratitude (83.6% contribution) have a positive and significant effect on the subjective well-being of santri. However, self-acceptance was not found to have a significant effect.	Subjective well-being: Mental health study among student in the Islamic boarding school
17	Muttaqin, M. I., et al. (2024)	Tahfidzul Qur'an Sirojul Ulum Pare Kediri, Indonesia	Qualitative case study	MTs and MA students (teenage age)	1,000 students (700 junior high & 300 high school)	Interview, observation, documentation	Risk & Intervention	Students who memorize the Qur'an face academic and non-academic pressures that can trigger mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression. The pesantren addresses these issues through a disciplinary approach and Islamic mystical therapy (practices given by the caregiver) provided by the caregiver to overcome stress and memorization difficulties.	Optimizing Mental Health in Islamic Boarding School Students: Balancing Physical and Mental Endurance for Effective Qur'an Memorization
18	Yohandi, Arifin, S., & As'ad. (2025)	Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Situbondo, Indonesia	Action research with a service-learning approach	New students (Santriwati)	2,423 new santri (initial survey found 35% experiencing problems)	Survey, interview, observation, training, and module development	Risk & Intervention	It was found that there was a decrease in mental health and psychological well-being in new santri due to the lack of counseling assistance based on pesantren local wisdom. Interventions in the form of counseling assistance by examining pesantren local wisdom, training and making pesantren-based	Konseling Berbasis Pesantren Untuk Meningkatkan Kesehatan Mental Dan Kesejahteraan Psikologis Santriwati Baru

								counseling modules were designed to overcome this problem.	
19	Putri, N. K., et al. (2023)	Pesantren Al Amin, Paciran, Indonesia	Community service with the concept of mentoring	Siswa/i SMP dan SMA	366 students (210 junior high & 156 high school)	Interview, questionnaire (Olweus Bullying Questionnaire Revised, Moral Disengagement Regarding School Bullying Scale)	Risk & Intervention	Identified the risk of bullying and lack of mental health services in Poskestren. The program successfully initiated mental health management, conducted screening, and provided education to reduce mental health measles and increase awareness.	Inisiasi Manajemen Kesehatan Mental Pada Sekolah Berbasis Pesantren
20	Afriani, D. (2020)	Pondok Pesantren Daarau Attauhiid, Muaro Jambi, Indonesia	Qualitative	Madrasah Tsawiyah students (12-15 years old)	13 santri	Observation, interview, documentation	Risk & Intervention	Santri have little knowledge about mental health and dealing with psychological stress. The Jambi Healthy Pesantren Movement (GPS) community plays a role in improving mental health knowledge through socialization and sharing sessions to provide a forum for santri. Collaboration with boarding school residents supports the success of the program. Meanwhile, knowledge, interest in adding insight is an obstacle to the implementation of the program.	Peran Komunitas Gerakan Pesantren Sehat (GPS) Jambi dalam Meningkatkan Pengetahuan Kesehatan Mental Santri di Pondok Pesantren Daarau Attauhiid Kec. Kumpeh ulu kab. Muaro jambi

21	Sedjo, P., et al. (2025)	Pesantren X, Cibinong, Kab. Bogor	Community service program (intervention )	Male students in 8th and 9th grade (teenage age)	37 students (screening) and 12 students (FGD)	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) dan Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	Risk & Intervention	Screening identified 12 out of 37 students as having emotional, behavioral, or social relationship problems. Intervention with an FGD approach with empathic facilitation techniques and a strength-based approach revealed challenges in emotional regulation, social interaction, and academic and spiritual stress, caused by being away from parents, limited personal space, and memorization load. This program has the potential to continue with group counseling sessions and monitoring.	Community service program for the mental health of Male students at pesantren x: intervention through focus Group discussion (FGD)
22	Syarifah, M. (2023)	Asy-Syarifiy Islamic Eco-Boarding School Lumajang, Jawa Timur	Descriptive qualitative case study	Teens (santri)	6 transfer students as a special case study	Observation, in-depth interview, documentation	Protective & Intervention	Pesantren acts as a place of convalescence for children experiencing stress and gadget addiction due to the pandemic. Outdoor learning methods and the concept of eco-pesantren are proven to reduce stress and help restore children's mental health.	Pesantren as Convalescence of Children's Mental Health: A Case Study at The Asy-Syarifiy Islamic Eco-Boarding School Lumajang, East Java, Indonesia

23	Yahya, M. (2023)	Darus Sholah Islamic Boarding School, Jember, Indonesia	Qualitative case study	Administrators, Principals, Teachers/Ustadz, Students, and Guardians of students from Kindergarten, Elementary School, Junior High School, Senior High School, and Religious Schools.	Not mentioned (sample includes caregivers, administrators, teachers, and students)	Observation, interview, documentation	Protective & Intervention	Pesantren contributes greatly to the mental and spiritual development of students through formal and non-formal education channels. This effort aims to form a balanced personality between physical and spiritual, as well as instill religious values and social sensitivity through religious values, broad insights in the scope of general and religious knowledge, uploading sensitivity to amar ma'ruf nahi munkar towards others and social sensitivity. environment, Forming the personality of Islamic students who are physically and mentally balanced, and influential and with the many educational institutions established.	Contribution and Efforts of Islamic Boarding Schools In The Mental And Spiritual Development Of Santri At Darus Sholah Islamic Boarding School, Tegal Besar Village, Jember Regency
24	Fakhriyani, D. V., & Sa'idah, I. (2024)	Pondok Pesantren Al-Kautsar Pamekasan-Madura, Indonesia	Descriptive qualitative	Students (Santri)	The subject is the manager of the pesantren	Interview, observation, documentation	Protective & Intervention	Guidance and counseling (BK) services in pesantren, although incidental, are an important effort to maintain the mental health of santri. BK services include learning, social, personal, and career guidance based on pesantren values to form an 'insan kamil' person.	Bimbingan dan Konseling di Pesantren Sebagai Upaya Menjaga Kesehatan Mental Santri
25	Laisa, E., & Qomariyah, N. (2021)	Pondok Pesantren Matsaratul Huda	Qualitative with a case	Male and female	Santri, board members,	Interview, observation, and literature analysis	Protective & Intervention	The tradition of reciting Burdah regularly every night after Isha' prayer followed by reading istighfar and	Tradisi Baca Burdah Sebagai Penguat

		Panempan, Pamekasan	study approach	students (Santri)	and community			prayers during the COVID-19 pandemic has a positive impact on the mental health of students. This activity fosters an attitude of tawakal and optimism, provides positive emotions, and a sense of calm, so that students are able to adapt to new habits.	Kesehatan Mental Santri di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19 (Studi Kasus di Pondok Pesantren Matsaratul Huda Panempan Pamekasan)
26	Nurfitriya, S. (2025)	Tinjauan Literatur	Systematic narrative review	Students (Santri)	22 research articles (2013-2024)	Analyze journal articles from various electronic databases	Risk, Protect & Intervene	The main risk factors for santri mental health are adaptation pressure, academic-spiritual demands, and limited emotional support. Protective factors include the value of spirituality, social support among students, and supportive coaching. Islamic value-based interventions and peer counseling models proved effective.	Kesehatan Mental Santri dalam Lingkungan Pendidikan Berasrama: Tinjauan Literatur
27	Prabowo, H., et al. (2023)	Pondok Tetirah Dzikir (PTD), Sleman, Yogyakarta	Qualitative case study with thematic analysis	Patients with mental disorders and drug abusers from the lower economic class	3 key informants (kyai, co-therapist, alumnus)	Semi-structured interviews and participant observation	Intervention	The pesantren provides free mental health rehabilitation services using therapy based on Tariqah Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah (TQN). The therapeutic methods used include dhikr, prayer, repentance baths, and the use of "khalwat rooms" for contemplation, which have proven effective in	The Contribution of Pondok Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) to Developing Poor's Mental Health <b>(Conference)</b>

								improving patients' mental health (mental problems and drug addiction).	
28	Aliana, C. R., Amaiza, Y., & Wardani. (2022)	Pesantren Darul Aman, Aceh Besar, Indonesia	Quantitative (pre-post test)	Jamaah Suluk (no age limit, male & female)	58 jamaah	Skala Kesehatan Mental (diadopsi dari Veit & Were)	Intervention	Suluk activities (spiritual coaching method) significantly improved the mental health of pilgrims ( $p < 0.05$ ). The average mental health score increased from 51.41 (before) to 81.17 (after), indicating that the rituals of dhikr, fasting, and prayer are able to provide inner peace.	Kesehatan Mental Jamaah Suluk di Pesantren Darul Aman Aceh Besar
29	Fadhilah, A. N., & Surur, S. (2024)	Pondok Pesantren Kalimasada Bangsri Plandaan, Jombang, Indonesia	Qualitative research (field study)	Santri (teen age), Male & Female	Not mentioned (subjects include caregivers, ustadz/ustadzah, and santri)	Observation, interview, and documentation	Intervention	The implementation of spiritual education through tausiyah, guidance, and collective worship activities (congregational prayer, Qur'anic tadarus, dhikr together, night prayer) is very well implemented. This program has proven successful in increasing the mental and spiritual growth of students, strengthening faith, and forming a better person.	Implementasi pendidikan rohani dalam peningkatan mental spiritual Santri di pondok pesantren kalimasada bangsri plandaan jombang



### 3.1 Risk factors for students' mental health

The following are the results of the analysis of various literature related to the risk factors for students' mental health in pesantren:

**Table 2:** Summary of Risk Factors for Santri Mental Health

Factor	Form of Risk Factor	Findings	Supportive Studies
Academic-spiritual pressure	Double load	The double burden of book memorization, busy schedules and academic pressures trigger stress, anxiety and poor sleep quality.	[14], [15], [16]
Adaptation challenges and social dynamics	Bullying	Occurs in physical and verbal forms that are often triggered by the prioritized system and impact mental hygiene (anxiety, depression and withdrawal).	[17], Putri, dkk. (2023)
	Social anxiety	The majority of students experience moderate levels of social anxiety due to the demands to always be active in socializing and appearing in public.	[18]
	Adaptation difficulties and social isolation	New students experience severe challenges in emotional regulation, social interaction, feelings of loneliness due to being away from parents, and limited personal space.	[19], [20]
Institutional and systemic factors	Lack of family visits	Increased risk of anxiety in students due to lack of family visits, especially during the covid-13 pandemic	[21]
	Strict rules and discipline	Rigid rules are a source of stress for the majority of students and a reason for feeling uncomfortable.	[22], [23]
	Lack of formal mental health services	Access to professional psychological services is very limited and santri's knowledge about mental health is also minimal so that problems are often not handled.	[22], [24]
Factor gender	Gender-based vulnerability	Female students are more prone to emotional, behavioral and hyperactivity problems than girls	[25]

The results show that there are three main factors that affect the mental health of santri in pesantren, namely academic (consisting of memorization and school loads), social environment (bullying, social anxiety, peer conflict, and adaptation), as well as institutional and systemic (consisting of homesickness, limited communication with family, strict rules and discipline and lack of mental health services) and gender-based vulnerability.

### 3.2 Protective factors for students' mental health

The following are the results of the analysis of various literature related to the protective factors for students' mental health in pesantren:

**Table 3.** Summary of Protective Factors for Santri Mental Health

<b>Form of Protective Factor</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Supportive Studies</b>
Peer social support	Peer support is positively related to students' subjective well-being and reduces stress.	[26], [27]
Social support (general)	Reduces stress and increases adaptation and independence	[28], [29]
Family social support	Support provided by the family makes a positive contribution of 9.9% to increasing subjective well being.	[30]
Gratitude	Gratitude provides a positive contribution of 83.6% to the increase in subjective well being.	[30]
Self-efficacy	Negatively associated with academic stress	[31]
Spiritual Education	The implementation of structured spiritual education has succeeded in increasing the mental and spiritual growth of students.	[32]
Dhikr	The dhikr routine is proven to make students calmer in dealing with problems, and helps the self-adjustment process.	[33]
The tradition of reading burdah	Proven to significantly improve pilgrims' mental health	[34]
Adaptive coping strategies	The ability to manage emotions and actively seek support is key in building resilience	[35]
Counseling Services	Counseling services are an important effort to maintain the mental health of students in pesantren even though it is incidental.	[36]
Eco-pesantren service	The concept of learning outdoors in a beautiful environment is proven to reduce stress and aid mental recovery.	[37]

On the factors that protect the mental health of santri, the results of the literature review show that there are four main factors, namely social support (family, peers and general support), religiosity and spirituality (dhikr, burdah reading tradition. Spiritual Education), external factors (counseling services and eco-pesantren), and internal (self-efficacy and gratitude).

### 3.3 Mental health interventions for students

The following are the results of the analysis of various literature related to the intervention for improving students' mental health in pesantren:

**Table 4.** Summary of Santri Mental Health Intervention

Type Intervention	Shape Program	Findings	Supportive Studies
Spiritual & Religious	Suluk (Spiritual Retreat)	The rituals of remembrance, fasting, and prayer can provide inner peace and improve mental health	[34]
	Reciting burdah	Reading burdah regularly every night fosters tawakal, optimism, provides positive emotions, and a sense of calm, so that students are able to adapt to new habits.	[38]
	Tarekat Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah-based therapy	Effectively rehabilitates people with mental disorders and drug abuse through dhikr, prayer and seclusion rooms	[39]
	Dhikr in congregation	Making students calmer and more relaxed	[33]
	Structured Spiritual Education	The implementation of tausiyah, guidance and joint worship (prayers, tadarus, dhikr, night prayers) has succeeded in improving the mental spirituality of santri.	[32]
	Disciplinary approach and spiritual healing	Disciplinary approaches and spiritual healing provided by caregivers are used to overcome stress and memorization difficulties.	[16]
	Guidance and Counseling	Counseling services in pesantren	Although it is incidental, counseling services (learning, social, personal, career) are an

		important effort to maintain the mental health of santri and form 'insan kamil' personalities.	
	Counseling based on local wisdom of pesantren	Training and making pesantren-based counseling modules used to improve the mental health and psychological well-being of new female students	[20]
Community-based	Screening and focus group discussions through sharing session programs	The screening process effectively identifies at-risk students who are then followed up with FGDs to explore problems and find solutions together.	[19]
	Healthy pesantren movement program with external involvement	Socialization and story-sharing sessions were conducted to increase students' knowledge about mental health and dealing with psychological stress.	[24]
Institutional and environmental	Inisiasi manajemen kesehatan mental	Mengembangkan kapasitas poskestren untuk mengelola layanan Kesehatan mental melalui skrining, edukasi dan penyusunan rencana kerja	[40]
	Konsep eko pesantren	Belajar di luar ruangan dan konsep eko-pesantren dapat mengurangi stress dan memulihkan kesehatan mental anak	[37]

There are several forms of intervention applied by pesantren as a form of prevention of mental health problems and improvement of mental health. The results of the review highlighted four types of interventions, namely Spiritual & Religious, Guidance and Counseling, Community-based, Institutional and environmental.

## 4 Discussion

### 4.1 Forms of mental health problems

This study was conducted to provide a systematic and comprehensive information landscape about risk factors, protective factors and potential

interventions for students' mental health in the pesantren environment through a scoping review.

Pesantren is revealed as an environment with very complex dynamics, which simultaneously presents a series of significant psychosocial risk factors, while providing protective and resilience mechanisms that are distinctive and deeply rooted in spiritual and communal values. The discussion in this section will synthesize and elaborate on the findings from various studies to build a holistic understanding of the risk, protective factors and mental health interventions implemented in the pesantren environment.

#### 4.2 **Risk Factors**

The pesantren environment that demands high adaptation can cause various problems, including stress, anxiety, depression, social and adjustment problems (not at home, and withdrawing), emotional problems, and emotional distress, academic & non-academic problems, especially in the early phase. These problems and pressures tend to be multidimensional in nature covering various aspects of academic, social personal and system.

Regarding the first research question, one of the sources of stress in students is the double burden faced by students [16]. The demand to excel in formal education as well as the target of memorizing the Qur'an and studying the yellow book reportedly affected their mental health [16]. A very busy schedule of activities causes students to have difficulty dividing their time so that they have limited time for rest and recreation [29]. In the end, this pressure can directly cause stress, anxiety and even depression in students [16]. As a result, students' sleep quality becomes poor [15].

The adaptation process in a new environment is another crucial factor that affects the mental health of santri, especially for those who have just entered the pesantren. Distance from family often causes feelings of loneliness and homesickness. [19], [23]. On the other hand, communal living with very limited privacy space often triggers conflicts between roommates [19]. This challenge can be compounded when accompanied by social anxiety [18] and bullying practices that are still found in some pesantren [40]. Bullying is often related to the seniority system which can have a serious impact on victims such as trauma and fear [17]. In addition, the reluctance and embarrassment of students to report them to the ustadz or kyai also makes many psychological problems not handled properly [24]. The stigma that mental health problems are considered as "weak faith/ *lemah iman*" or lack of closeness to God is a big obstacle for students to seek help. [16].

Systematically, many pesantren still do not have adequate mental health infrastructure. Health services in pesantren, such as the pesantren

health post (poskestren), are generally more dominantly oriented towards physical health, while attention to mental health has not been a top priority [40]. Fakhriyani & Sa'idah (2024) also found that guidance and counseling (BK) programs in many pesantren have not been structured as in formal institutions [36]. In addition, the services available are often conditional and incidental due to the limited number of trained and professional counselors.

#### 4.3 **Faktor Protektif**

Answering the second question, there are several factors that are also a source of support and resilience for santri in achieving mental health. In the midst of various challenges faced, pesantren is actually a fertile ground for the growth of unique and unique protective factors, both from internal (students themselves) and external (pesantren environment). These factors not only help santri to survive, but also encourage them to develop and build strong mental resilience.

The fundamental strength of the boarding school environment lies in its emphasis on spirituality [33]. Various religious practices not only serve as coping mechanisms that protect students with mental health problems, but also as therapeutic interventions based on the local wisdom of pesantren. A number of studies consistently show that the practice of worship that is done regularly and together can be a source of calmness. Activities such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic tadarus and dhikr are proven to be able to improve the mental spirituality of santri [32].

Specifically, Dhikr has been shown to have an effect on relaxation and calmness [33]. Participation in suluk activities is also proven to significantly improve the mental health of jama'ah [34]. Spiritual practices help santri surrender themselves completely to God (Allah), which in turn provides inner calm. The practice of reciting burdah, for example, is an effective bathiniyah endeavor, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This activity helps students be more optimistic and fosters an attitude of tawakkal, which is an important component of mental health [38].

Religion and spirituality provide a framework of meaning that helps students face various difficulties in life. Fadhilah & Surur (2024) identified that Spiritual Education which is realized through worship activities and book studies is able to improve the mental spirituality of santri [32]. In fact, some pesantren also function as rehabilitation centers for people with mental disorders and drug addiction through dhikr-based therapy and tarekat (TQN) [39]. This approach is based on the philosophy that illness is a "guest from God" who must be welcomed and lightened, not stigmatized and shunned. [39].

Social support, especially from peers, has also consistently been one of the most prominent external protective factors [28], [29], [31], [41]. In an environment where students live away from their families, peers act as the main emotional support system [30]. In addition, the figure of the caregiver (kiai), ustadz/ustadzah, and the kiai's daughters also play an important role as a guide and source of security for students [36].

In addition to external factors, students' resilience is also strongly influenced by their internal psychological strength. Factors such as self-efficacy and gratitude have been shown to have a significant negative relationship with academic stress, while contributing to the improvement of psychological well-being. [30], [31].

Several studies have also highlighted differences in the manifestation of mental health problems based on gender. Yohandi et al. (2025) reported that new female students are more prone to experiencing a decrease in mental health and psychological well-being [20]. Specifically, they show higher levels of social anxiety than male students [18], while male students tend to face social relationship problems [37]. This finding indicates the need for differentiated and gender-appropriate intervention approaches.

#### 4.4 **Intervensi Kesehatan mental**

Answering the third question, the results of analyzing various literatures show a variety of intervention models applied in pesantren to maintain and handle the mental health of students. The forms of intervention used vary from traditional spiritual practices, counseling guidance services to structured programs with a modern psychological approach.

I pesantren-based intervention is the most fundamental intervention model because it is integrated with the culture and system of life in pesantren. This practice not only functions as a coping mechanism but also as a direct therapeutic intervention. Some pesantren, especially those that act as rehabilitation centers, use the Sufism approach as a healing method [39], [43]. One example is Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah tarekat-based therapy, which integrates dhikr and other religious practices to treat people with mental disorders and drug addiction [39]. In Pesantren Darul Aman, suluk (spiritual retreat) activities that are carried out intensively have proven to be significant in improving the mental health of congregation [34]. In addition, the practice of daily worship performed in congregation also serves as an intervention (healing). Fadhillah & Surur (2024) and Aini & Santosa (2023) said that dhikr performed regularly can provide the effect of relaxation and inner calmness [32], [33]. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the tradition of reading burdah every night became a bathiniyah endeavor that made students more optimistic and able to have faith in facing uncertain situations [38].

Although there is reportedly no structured implementation as in formal schools, guidance and counseling services have begun to receive attention in the pesantren environment. Fakhriyani & Saidah (2024) found that guidance and counseling services in pesantren are generally conditional and incidental to the needs of the students. The form of services includes classical guidance (which includes learning, personal social and career guidance) as well as individual counseling provided for santri who face specific problems such as discipline violations or adaptation difficulties [36]. This model demonstrates efforts to provide psychological support despite the limitations of professionals and facilities.

Interventions that empower internal and external communities also show high effectiveness because they are participatory and can reduce stigma towards mental health issues. Sedjo et al. (2025) applied focus group discussion (FGD) as a forum to voice the problems of students related to emotions, social relations and academic pressure and find joint solutions from their own perspectives [19]. Yohandi et al. (2025) through action research trained female students to become peer counselors by equipping them with basic counseling skills. This intervention also includes the preparation of a mental health module based on the local wisdom of pesantren, so that it becomes more relevant and easily accepted [20].

In addition to the internal community, support from the external community also plays an important role. Afriani (2020) highlighted the initiation of the Jambi Healthy Pesantren Movement, which provides a sharing session and "cerita santri" program. This program provides a safe space for santri to share their experiences with external mentors, as well as reducing the feeling of reluctance when they have to talk to authority figures in the pesantren [24].

Lingkungan pesantren itu sendiri juga dapat menjadi pendekatan intervensi. Syarifah (2023) menemukan bahwa konsep eco-pesantren dengan metode pembelajaran di luar ruangan efektif untuk mengurangi stres dan kecanduan gawai pada anak pasca pandemi. Selain itu, Baharun & Adhimah (2019) menemukan bahwa seluruh sistem pendidikan di pesantren yang penuh dengan tantangan mulai dari adaptasi lingkungan, manajemen waktu, hingga interaksi multikultural pada hakikatnya berfungsi sebagai pelatihan untuk membangun adversity quotient dan ketangguhan mental para santri.

### **Implikasi**

The review results in several important practical implications for the development of programs and policies in an effort to improve the mental health of santri in the pesantren environment. The main implication of this

study is the need for an integrated and contextual approach, namely by utilizing the internal strengths of pesantren while proactively overcoming the risk factors.

Pesantren need to develop a more structured counseling guidance program and integrate mental health services into the pesantren health post (poskestren), so that the services provided are no longer incidental. This effort needs to be accompanied by training in basic counseling skills for ustadz and ustadzah who have the potential to carry out this role.

Utilizing the unique strengths of pesantren is also an important aspect, namely integrating local wisdom values such as patience, sincerity and tawakkal into the counseling module, as well as strengthening spiritual practices such as dhikr, suluk and burdah recitation as effective spiritual-based mental health interventions.

In addition, the implementation of routine early screening to detect at-risk students, the provision of psychoeducation to reduce stigma and equipping students with psychological skills such as self-regulation and self-efficacy, can be a significant preventive measure in preventing students' mental health problems.

The development of a peer counseling program is also recommended by utilizing peer support as an important source of psychosocial support. Collaboration with external parties, such as the Gerakan Pesantren Sehat community, can provide a safe space for santri to share their stories and improve mental health literacy. Finally, the Intervention design needs to consider gender, given the differences in problem manifestations between female and male santri.

## 5 **Kesimpulan**

Efforts to improve the mental health of students require a holistic approach, not only focusing on risk mitigation, but also on strengthening the protective mechanisms that have grown in the pesantren culture. The integration of structured guidance and counseling services with interventions based on local wisdom and spirituality unique to pesantren is the main key to success in building the mental health of students. With this approach, pesantren can realize a healthy and balanced educational environment, which gives birth to a generation that is intellectually superior, mentally resilient and spiritually mature.

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