



## THE PROCESS OF FORMING RESILIENCE IN ADOLESCENTS AS SANTRI WHO HAVE NEVER LIVED IN AN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL (GROUNDED THEORY)

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Navigating boarding school life can be challenging for new santri unfamiliar with such environments. The inability to adapt to the school's diverse nature and regulations often leads to mental health issues. Developing self-resilience can address the adaptation crisis. This study aimed to explore how female santri build resilience to manage, overcome, and address challenges in the boarding school setting. **Methods:** This research used a qualitative design with a grounded theory approach. Purposive sampling selected 7 participants. The researcher utilized Glaser and Strauss's theory to integrate the CCA analysis process. **Results:** The study identified eight stages and components contributing to resilience, introducing the concept of integrity within resilience. These stages are categorized into three phases: passive, active, and integration. **Discussion:** The components contributing to resilience are integral to all stages, forming a system for building resilience. The challenges faced by new santri do not significantly impact their decision to remain at the Islamic boarding school, as resilience formation helps mitigate these issues. The conclusion is that participants successfully navigated the three phases of resilience formation and achieved resilience.

Keywords: Grounded theory, Islamic boarding school, Santri, Resilience

### Introduction

Adolescence is an important phase in developing adaptive skills (Carlo, G., & Padila-Walker, 2020). The ability of adolescents to explore the formation of self-identity, aspects of self-assessment, and openness to themselves (Gill et al., 2018) is a benchmark in building social relationships and responding to life's inconsistencies adaptively (Das et al., 2017). Inconsistencies in the environment can be prevented by balancing emotional

and spiritual intelligence (Iswati & Noormawanti, 2019).

Islamic boarding schools are one of the many religious-based educational institutions that are used as a place of choice to deepen spirituality (Kompri, 2018). Through the learning methods used in Islamic boarding schools, adolescents who live there are proven to have balanced emotional and spiritual intelligence (Abror, 2020). Mental resilience is deliberately formed during the education process in Islamic boarding schools as a



distinct advantage that is different from other educational institutions (Saihu & Rohman, 2019). The inability of new santri to adapt often gives rise to maladaptive behavior that can trigger mental health problems (Nida & Labibah, 2021). Mental health problems experienced by new students and those living in boarding schools for the first time include stress responses, depression, anxiety, insomnia, denial, anger, and prolonged fear (Roy et al., 2021).

Basic strength in defending oneself and being able to adapt to a new environment can be formed through resilience (First et al., 2018). Resilience is a form of coping with stress to stay healthy and never hurt themselves or others so that they can manage stress effectively even in new environments such as boarding schools (First et al., 2018). The environment and interactive experiences in negotiating become a process of forming resilience for individuals who decide to settle (Shean, 2015). The resilience of residential students is strengthened by the presence of interest, desire, motivation, effort, and interest in deepening a field of knowledge in a new environment (Camacho-Zuñiga et al., 2021; Daniels et al., 2021).

The formation of adolescent resilience refers to the ability to regulate emotional conditions, daily life management, and meaningful interpersonal engagement (Chan et al., 2020) so that they can be independent, have the ability to decide (McELHANEY & Allen, 2012), and survive boarding school (Farley & Kim-Spoon, 2014). This condition is one of the factors of change agents for

adolescents who survive the tradition of Islamic boarding school life (Yuliatul Wahidah, 2015). Garmezy stated that the resilience process is not resistance to stressful conditions but the ability to recover and survive with adaptive behavior (Shean, 2015). The success of santri to adapt to a new environment is a form of positive self-feeling and individual satisfaction in society so that support from the environment is needed as a medium for coping with the inconsistencies of a life (Mana et al., 2021).

This research is important to develop a resilience theory that can underlie the decision of adolescents to live in Islamic boarding schools, identify at-risk adolescents who are still able to survive in the phenomenon of social processes, and provide solutions and opportunities for adolescents to behave adaptively. The researchers found that there has been no research that explores, understands, and interprets the process of forming adolescent resilience while living in Islamic boarding schools. The novelty of the resilience formation process specifically for female santri from the theory of Luthar, Masten, and Ungar is by adding the value of integrity to the value of resilience. Therefore, the researchers conducted a study to determine the process of forming resilience in santri who had never lived in Islamic boarding schools.

## Methods

The research design is qualitative with a grounded theory approach. The research sampling technique used purposive sampling consisting of 7 people who met



the research criteria and represented the phenomena and were willing to be interviewed in depth. Sabilurrasyad Gasek Islamic Boarding School, Malang is a research site with high heterogeneity with various levels of education. The data sources in this study used documentation data and interview techniques with participants and Islamic boarding school administrators with a period of July 2021 to July 2022. The researcher also adopted the theory of Glaser and Strauss (1967) in (Defilippis et al., 2020) as a research flow to combine purposive sampling techniques and the Constant Comparative Analysis (CCA) analysis process starting from sampling, data preparation, data, and analysis

## Results

### Overview of participant characteristics

Participants in this study were young women (18-21 years old) who were studying and had just started boarding school in 2020 and were actively attending diniyah  $\geq 80\%$ , 7 people were willing to be interviewed in depth. The demographic data that can be displayed from all participants is in table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Frequency distribution of participant characteristics based on demographic data (n=7)

Code	Age	Month of entry/length of stay (month)	Islamic education class	University/ Semester	Origin
P1	20th	September/4	I'dadiyah	UNMER/3	Banyuwangi
P2	21th	Maret/10	I'dadiyah	UM/5	Kediri
P3	21th	Juni/7	I'dadiyah	UB/5	Malang
P4	21th	Maret/10	Kelas 1	UM/5	Malang
P5	21th	Mei/9	Kelas 1	UM/5	Kalimantan
P6	21th	Mei/9	Kelas 1	UB/5	Kediri
P7	20th	Maret/12	I'dadiyah	Postekkes/3	Tulungagung

### Category cluster

The results of data analysis from in-depth interviews based on participant answers

are answered in nine categories as the compilers of the findings of the theory of behavioral patterns. The nine categories show the phases of the stages of resilience formation consisting of: (1) Emotional Disturbance (2) Emotional Abuse (3) Rejection Emotions (4) Exploring Abilities (5) Seeking Support (6) Reframing Conditions (7) Developing Adaptation Abilities, (8) Achieving Conformity and (9) Resilience Values. One category shows the components that form resilience, namely resilience values as the main component of the eight stages of the resilience process. The findings of these categories are explained in detail in narrative form according to the numbering sequence from the first category to the ninth category without changing the adolescent experience that has been conveyed. The following is a scheme for compiling the nine categories from keywords and subcategories:

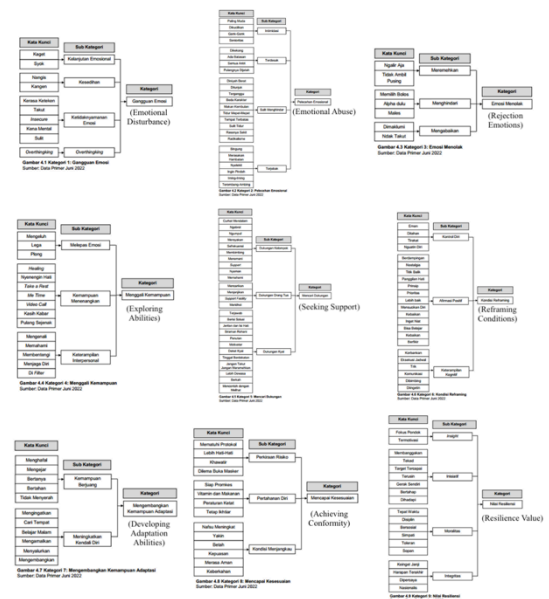


Figure 2. Scheme of the composition of the nine categories from keywords and subcategories

### The process of building resilience

The nine categories produced are then processed in the resilience theory formation process phase. The formation of this theory refers to the purpose of the study, namely to determine the process of forming the resilience of female santri in overcoming, controlling, returning, and reaching problems in Islamic boarding schools. The theory formation process includes analysis of the results of concept formation, review of theories related to behavioral processes, and discussions with grounded theory experts and experts in the field of mental health.

The eight stages of resilience are categorized into three phases according to the social processes that occur. The passive phase includes the categories of emotional disturbance, emotional abuse, and emotional rejection. The active phase includes exploring abilities and seeking support. The integration phase includes reframing conditions, developing adaptive abilities, and achieving conformity. The ninth category is the value of resilience as the main component of the eight stages of the resilience process, namely insight, initiative, morality, and integrity. The following are the phases of resilience that have been formed without referring to the order of the categories produced, so that the existing categories can continue to become the concept of resilience theory in female santri.

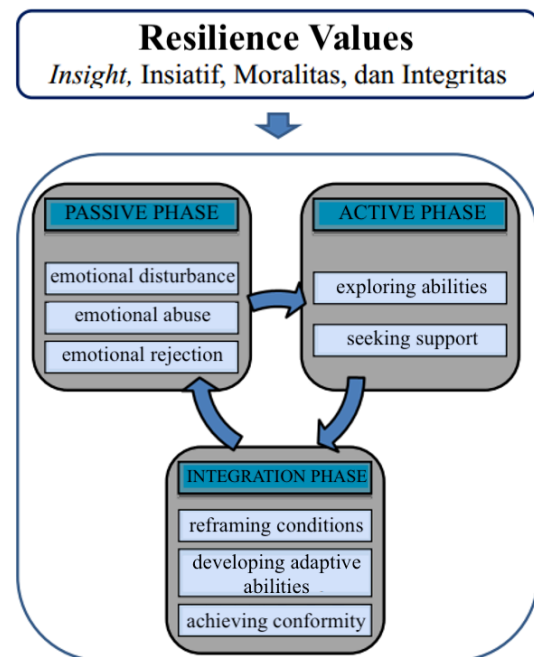


Figure 1. The process of forming adolescent resilience in Islamic boarding schools during the Covid-19 pandemic

### Discussion

The resilience process can be formed when female santri have four resilience values, namely insight, initiative, morality, and integrity. The first stage begins when female santri experience emotional disturbance, emotional abuse, and emotions of rejection as a passive phase of female santri towards the conditions that occur. Furthermore, female santri begin to actively respond to the social environment by exploring their abilities and seeking support. In the end, female santri choose to accept the conditions through reframing conditions and developing adaptive abilities so as to achieve conformity to resilient conditions.

### Values that form resilience

#### 1. Insight



The first component of resilience is formed through the characteristic values possessed by female santri, namely insight. Female santri who have insight are those who are able to be open to themselves and are able to adapt to various situations (Detta & Abdullah, 2017). Insight in female santri can also be increased by the role of the surrounding environment to remain resilient. In accordance with the advantages of Islamic boarding schools, mental resilience is deliberately formed during the educational process (Saihu & Rohman, 2019). This condition is strengthened by the ability of female santri to think about their own conditions and the environment of the Islamic boarding school.

## 2. Initiative

The next category of resilience values is initiative. Initiative is a strong desire to solve problems and adapt to uncertain conditions (Detta & Abdullah, 2017). The initiative of female santri can be identified when they have decided to persist in going through a social process that may be stressful. Student resilience factors are strengthened by interest, desire, motivation, effort, and pleasure (Camacho-Zuñiga et al., 2021; Daniels et al., 2021). Thus, the second component of resilience formation is initiative, namely a form of subjective sincerity to deepen certain knowledge.

## 3. Morality

Social processes are closely related to the process of forming resilience. One of the characteristic values of resilience is

obtained from the social behavior of adolescents in responding to the tradition of heterogeneity (Asgari et al., 2021). The success of socializing, sympathizing, helping each other, and tolerance in Islamic boarding schools can increase the morality of female santri. In accordance with the peak of developmental achievement in late adolescence, namely having sensitivity to others (Do et al., 2017). So it can be concluded that morality is the ability of female santri to establish interpersonal relationships.

## 4. Integrity

The pinnacle of resilience values is integrity. The form of integrity of female santri is found in those who have promises, parental expectations, community role models, and a sense of nationalism. Integrity is formed from positive experiences and beliefs in living life in society (Chan et al., 2020). This condition becomes a consistency of female santri towards actions and words on the values adopted by society. McCubbin and McCubbin also believe that maintaining integrity and responding to crisis phenomena adaptively are two resilience adjustment processes (Dewi, 2021). The resilience value here is no longer focused on oneself but the ability to see the usefulness of oneself for the life of society.

## Phases of resilience formation

### 1. Passive phase

The passive phase in question is a silent response from an individual in the form of feelings, thoughts, and self-confidence with the hope that others can understand





their condition so that they are willing to reduce the conflict being experienced. The conflict of thoughts to stay in a new environment in order to carry out survival with demands for a sense of security from outside is a signal of resilience (Butu et al., 2019). The passive phase begins with the emergence of feelings of fear shown by female santri to express their opinions about things they like and dislike. This imitation and restraint are elements of the process of creating the values of the pondok (Hasanah et al., 2021). Although in reality there is no visible rejection behavior from female santri during the social process at the Islamic boarding school and it is not surprising that female santri consider the Islamic boarding school to be a sacred prison.

This study groups the passive phase into 3 stages, namely emotional disturbance, emotional abuse, and emotional rejection. Emotional disturbance is an emotional condition that is raised by female santri) in a new environment as a factor that influences personal actions, behavior, and goals characterized by shock, sadness, discomfort, and even overthinking. Emotional abuse is a form of unpleasant treatment from within to recognize the social process that occurs by not rejecting the situation. The emotion of rejection is an alternative solution that is not adaptive to accepting new traditions and maintaining healthy conditions so as not to hurt themselves or others by not undergoing routines and continuing to choose to stay in the Islamic boarding school. Defensive abilities, positive adaptation, and flexibility to problems

through attitudes of forgiveness, self-acceptance, and receiving social support can reduce the risk of stress within (Putri et al., 2022).

## 2. Active phase

The active phase is an open response that is shown through real actions and can be seen by others as a form of self-defense so that it is able to deepen resilience abilities. Some adolescents are said to have succeeded in surviving and have the opportunity to face difficulties even though there are many possible risks (Shean, 2015). These stages are identified at the stage of exploring abilities and seeking support, meaning that self-conditions and environmental conditions greatly influence each other. Exploring abilities is an effort by oneself to continue to develop and believe in life in the future. Seeking support is increasing self-resilience even though female santri have found their abilities because of the discomfort that is still felt when facing a new environment. In line with research (Li et al., 2018), the solution to solving problems is not by avoiding them but by exploring resilience, self-efficacy, and seeking social support.

There are two sources to form and improve the resilience of female santri, namely internal and external resources. These internal resources include the ability to release emotions, the ability to calm oneself, and interpersonal skills. While external resources include group support, parental support, and kyai support. The abahyai figure holds absolute power and authority in the life of the Islamic boarding



school. Kyai is a figure who acts as an advisor in community life, especially for santri (Nida & Labibah, 2021). These three supports make female santri no longer trapped in their own emotions and no longer accept all forms of social processes with silence.

### 3. Integration phase

The active and passive phases will continue to rotate side by side as a self-defense response to situations that may be undesirable. The condition of resilience will never be stable, female santri continue to feel various negative emotions over bad events that have been experienced. Likewise with Luthar's theory (2000) in (Shean, 2015), resilience is a dynamic process that includes positive adaptation in the context of difficulties. Meanwhile, female santri who begin to understand and recognize the social processes that occur in their lives by combining passive and active actions into one system that functions as a whole is called the integration phase.

The integration phase includes reframing conditions, developing adaptability, and achieving conformity. Reframing conditions are techniques for changing negative emotions and perceptions with new perspectives so that they are more open to solutions. Developing adaptability is the acceptance of existence in a new environment so that the desire to remain resilient is difficult to eliminate because it is considered a need within itself. Achieving conformity is a condition of achievement that has been in accordance with expectations, where female santri are

at the peak of resilience. Achieving conformity in this study states that female santri feel comfortable with Islamic boarding school life and continue to try to face difficult conditions that may be felt because all stages of resilience formation will continue to rotate because resilient conditions are not always stable.

### Conclusion

This study identified nine categories: one resilience-forming component and eight stages. The components forming resilience are core elements consisting of (1) Insight: female santri's ability to understand their conditions and environment, (2) Initiative: their decision to survive stressful social processes, (3) Morality: ability to establish interpersonal relationships, and (4) Integrity: ability to see their usefulness for society outside the Islamic boarding school. The resilience formation continues through eight stages grouped into three phases: passive, active, and integration. The passive phase includes emotional disturbance, abuse, and rejection, representing silent responses from female santri hoping others understand their condition. The active phase comprises exploring abilities and seeking support, shown through visible self-defense actions. The integration phase includes reframing conditions, developing adaptability, and achieving conformity, marked by santri understanding social processes by combining passive and active phases. These findings can be applied to similar student dormitories. The risk factors for crisis in female santri stem from binding rules, dense activities, unhealthy



relationships, homesickness, and limited outside activities. These issues can be minimized through the resilience process. Internal resources include emotional release, self-calming, and interpersonal skills, while external resources include group, parental, and kyai support. All participants completed the three phases of resilience formation, achieving resilient conditions.

### Suggestions

#### 1. For Future Research

This study covers only late adolescent female santri, not other age groups. Further studies should explore parents' backgrounds, add observations, and interview female santri who have left pesantren to enrich analysis.

#### 2. For Nursing Education Institutions

Nursing education institutions should implement the three pillars of higher education regarding maintaining female santri resilience for use as intervention.

#### 3. For Mental Health Nursing Service Agencies

Healthcare agencies, from primary to specialist care, should maintain resilient conditions for early intervention delivery.

#### 4. For the Pesantren Environment

The pesantren environment should identify and determine resilience formation phases based on resilience building value components.

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