

**EXPLORING THE ROLE OF PEER  
RELATIONSHIPS IN STUDENT WELL-  
BEING: A CASE STUDY OF FEMALE  
STUDENTS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AT A  
MODERN *PESANTREN* IN INDONESIA**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Education in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for Master's the degree of**

**Master of Arts (M.A.)**



By :

**Salsabila Abdul Ghofur**

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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

DEPOK

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## ABSTRACT

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The well-being of students in educational institutions is influenced by many factors including their peer relationships. In the context of a modern *Pesantren*—an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia—these relationships are especially significant due to the close-knit communal living arrangements and the integration of religious and modern education. This study aims to explore the dynamics of peer relationships among female students in a modern *Pesantren* and examine their impact on various aspects of student well-being, including social relationships, emotional support, self-perception, autonomy, and mental health. A qualitative methodology was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with a purposively selected sample of female students at a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. Additionally, observation and focus group discussions were utilized to triangulate the data. The findings reveal that supportive peer relationships significantly enhance the students' emotional and social well-being. Students reported a high degree of acceptance and comfort within their peer groups, contributing to positive self-perception and mental health. The communal environment of the *Pesantren*, characterized by shared activities and collective experiences, fosters a strong sense of belonging and emotional security. Moreover, the implementation of the *Pesantren*'s foundational principles, such as *Panca Jiwa*, *Panca Jangka*, and *Panca Bina*, plays a crucial role in promoting a nurturing and inclusive environment. This study concludes that fostering strong peer relationships in educational settings like *Pesantren* is essential for the holistic development of students. The findings underscore the importance of creating supportive and inclusive social environments to enhance student well-being, with implications for educational practices and policies in similar contexts. This research contributes to the broader discourse on student well-being and peer relationships in educational settings by providing a deeper understanding of the social dynamics within *Pesantren*.

Keywords : *Peer Relationships, Well-being, Modern Pesantren, Female Students*

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## ABBREVIATION PAGE

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease- 2019
CCYP	Commissioner for Children and Young People
Kemenag	Kementrian Agama
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMA	Sekolah Menengah Atas
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan
SMP	Sekolah Menengah Pertama
SWB	Subjective Well-being
WHO	World Health Organization
e.g	Exempli Gratia

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study explores the importance of peer relationships in fostering student well-being, focusing on female junior high school students at a modern *pesantren* in Indonesia. This study, conducted in Tangerang Selatan, Banten, seeks to find out how peer relationships contribute to the well-being of female students in the *pesantren* environment. It aims to investigate the dynamics of peer relationships and the implications on several areas of student well-being. This study is significant because it offers insight on the complicated interactions between peer relationships and well-being among female students in the specific context of a modern *pesantren* in Indonesia.

The introduction part of this thesis is divided into four sections: research background, research questions, research aims, and the significance of the study. The research background gives an overview of the study's environment, highlighting fundamental issues and past studies relating to peer relationships and student well-being. This section describes the study's fundamental research questions in order to successfully lead the exploration. Furthermore, the research objectives are defined to help clarify the study's goals and scope. Finally, the importance of the study highlights the potential it will bring to the field of education by fulfilling the gaps in the current literature and offering insights on the role of peer relationships in student well-being in the setting of a modern *pesantren*.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Adolescence is a period of transition in which maturational milestones lead to a priority for peer input, and the social setting plays an important role in influencing those milestones (Torres, 2022). According to that study, adolescence is a crucial developmental period where adults play a supportive role, while peers also take the lead. During this time, adolescents need to develop new skills, spend more time with peers and at school, and also increase the expectations. This environment makes peers a significant source of socialization, sometimes even more influential than parents. Adolescents are also neurologically inclined to pay attention to their classmates' input (Somerville, 2013). As they undergo rapid cognitive, social, and physical changes (Laursen & Veenstra, 2021), peer input becomes essential in either supporting healthy emotional development or contributing to psychopathology of the students (Prinstein & Giletta, 2016). Therefore, the ability to adapt to peer groups is critical.

The United Nations' Global Strategy for Women's, Children's, and Adolescents' Health (Child, 2015) focuses on ensuring the health and well-being of every adolescent, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This way highlights the crucial role of adolescents in its success. Recently, the WHO (2020) also emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to address adolescent health and well-being, because encouraging every adolescent's participation is essential for their development and for the success of these global initiatives. Therefore, peers play an important role in making adolescents feel included and accepted (Torres, 2022).

During adolescence, peer relationships become more important and complex (Nelson et al., 2005). As teens grow older, their social interactions are changing. Instead of mainly having close, one-on-one friendships like they did in childhood, they start to interact within larger groups of friends and peers. In these larger social circles, being popular and having a High social status becomes more important to them (Bowker & Ramsay, 2016). By understanding how these relationships affect mental health can help school management to develop better school programs.

About half of all mental health disorders start to appear before age 14 (World Health Organization, 2018), and globally, around 10% to 20% of adolescents experience mental health difficulties. This makes adolescent mental health becomes in a critical focus for public health policy (House of Commons, 2019; World Health Organization, 2013), emphasizing the need for research to identify factors that can be changed to improve mental health during this stage of life. Because adolescents spend a significant amount of time in school, schools have become increasingly important for implementing interventions to support mental health of students (Department of Health and Social Care and the Department of Education, 2017; Stigler et al., 2011). In general, students attending the middle school, High school, and vocational school, as stated in Sarwono's (2013) results, typically spend approximately 7 hours in a day to their school environment. Consequently, students spend approximately 30% of their daily schedule to attending school. Konu & Rimpelä (2002) for example, identified four factors that impact the well-being of students at school, such as the school environment (including physical and organizational aspects, as well as service and security), social relationships (among students, teachers, and school staff), and opportunities for self-fulfillment, acquire knowledge based on one's ability, receive the input and feedback, and physical well-being.

School serves as one of the most significant specific environments for promoting the growth and development of adolescents and students' well-being around the world (Tian et al.,

2014). Students' well-being at school can impact their ability to efficiently absorb and comprehend material, as well as display healthy and pleasant social behaviour. In addition, students who are attached to their school perform better academically (Bücker et al., 2018; Heffner & Antaramian, 2016). Therefore, as according to the provisions of Law No. 18 of 2014 on mental health, the term "mental health" is used to describe a state in which a person's experiences and holistic development that encompasses physical, mental, spiritual, and social components. This condition enables the individual to possess self-awareness, effectively manage stress, maintain productivity, and actively contribute to their community (Egsaugm, 2020). Consequently, mental health exerts an impact on an individual's physical well-being and may hinder productivity. Supporting mental health is crucial for enhancing productivity and maintaining optimal physical well-being.

As according to Roach (2018), a good-quality friendships are linked to positive mental health, while conflicts and bullying or victimization may increase the risk of mental health issues in adolescence. That is why based on the study from Long & Sweeting (2021), it shows that peer relationships are important for adolescent mental health within their social environment. It also highlights that being bullied by peers is a significant experience that can affect mental health.

Peer relationships are an important component of the social relationship system described by Konu and Rimpelä (2002). According to them, these kinds of relationships are included in the dimension of "loving". The study highlighted the importance of peer relationships because they reflect the interpersonal human connections, which are essential to the social dimension of well-being (p.739). In this view, the dimension of "loving" refers to the interpersonal relationships and positive and good interactions among people. Peer relationships are important especially in the *pesantren* setting because they provide emotional support, establish a sense of belonging, and also help people to develop their social abilities. The peer relationships also help people when facing the social problems, providing emotional support, and establishing a network of support that is essential for emotional and mental health. Therefore, Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) description of peer relationships as "loving" emphasizes their importance in creating an interpersonal relationships and improving the overall well-being of people, particularly during the early stages of adolescence.

A good relationships with peers or friendships are important for social and emotional development in both childhood and adolescence period. They are usually seen as the most valuable and supportive component in the life of young people (O'Rourke et al., 2019). Through

friendships, it may foster the self-esteem, well-being, and interpersonal skills, as well as supporting each other to overcome stress and problems (Hartup & Stevens, 1999). Thus, friendships improve adolescent's self-confidence, reduce feelings of loneliness, and promote life satisfaction (Putri & Muttaqin, 2022). Furthermore, these interactions and relationships play as an important role in developing other relationships (Peets & Hodges, 2018). Therefore, a positive feelings and interactions in teenagers' life are a clear indicator of their well-being.

According to Miller et al. (2013), there are three parts included in the student well-being, such as feeling good mentally, being involved in school, and having good relationships with family and friends (peers). In school, students' well-being means they feel happy and healthy, which can be better in a supportive and inclusive environment (Weare, 2017). This article focus on how students' relationships affect their well-being. People want to connect and support others who are important to them (Shek & Chai, 2020). For students, these important people are often their friends. Therefore, peer relationships and feeling accepted by them is important for emotional, mental and cognitive growth during school years. Research shows that having friends helps teenagers develop mental health as well as well-being of students (Son & Padilla-Walker, 2020).

There are studies which has indicated that the adolescents spend a significant amount of time to interacting with their friends (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Juvonen, 2018). In another study, the adolescents were asked to report on their activities, emotions, and related to their friendship randomly throughout a week. The research found that high school students spend around 29% of their time with classmates, excluding time for learning. This is more than double the amount of the time which adolescents spend with their parents and other adults, who represent just 13% of their time. This research highlights the importance of relationships with peers during adolescence (Veenstra & Lalinga, 2023). These kind of relationships can be distinguished by being more equal, less controlling, and less judgemental than those relationships with parents and other adults (p. 541). Peer relationships have also been connected to beneficial developmental outcomes in many research (Nesi et al., 2018). Furthermore, these kinds of relationships can help adolescents develop their self-autonomy and identity (Rubin et al., 2006). However, despite these advantages, peer relationships can be complicated and also subtle (Mitic et al., 2021).

Building relationships is important in order to create an effective classroom management (AITSL, 2021). Positive relationships between teachers and students are often

connected with better academic outcomes, positive attitudes towards learning, a sense of belonging in the school community, as well as the importance on the regular attendance (Commissioner for Children and Young People [CCYP], 2018). Some students who could have faced difficult situations in their personal life are protected by the good interactions that foster relationships between teachers and students (CCYP, 2018). Their school involvement results are improved by these interactions (CCYP, 2018). Students can feel comfortable and confident attending a school in an emotionally safe setting, knowing they will get help if they face into any problems (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020).

In the *pesantren*, not only the relationships between peers are important, but also the teacher-student relationships will also have an impact on the well-being of students. Teachers often viewed as the spiritual guides as well as educators. This can create a distance between students and teachers and lead to the well-being of students. For example, students might feel hesitant to approach their teachers whenever they have personal issues or they want to consult about academic concerns. In that case, the students might fear that they would be judged or misunderstood. This can lead to feelings of isolation and stress, as students may have to struggle to find a supportive and helpful friendships in the *pesantren*. Therefore, the relationships between teachers and students is important in fostering a healthy and supportive environment in the *pesantren*. By encouraging a good communication and understanding, teachers can play a vital role in promoting the well-being of their students. Besides, teachers are also can help students to manage the challenges and difficulties in the academic issues or personal issues. Some students who could have a challenging situation in their personal life are protected by the good interactions that foster relationships between teachers and students. Thus, their school involvement results are improved by these interactions (CCYP, 2018). Students can feel comfortable and confident attending a school in an emotionally safe setting, knowing they will get help if they face into any problems (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020).

As it is mentioned in the dimension of “loving” by Konu and Rimpelä's (2002), it encourages a strong relationships among students, teachers, and staff by emphasizing empathy, communication, and problem solving abilities as well as helping students to build meaningful relationships with other students and teachers through collaborative projects, peer mentoring, and community service activities. Peer relationships, teacher-student relationships, and family support are all possible elements in this research which I am conducting.

In this study, I will particularly focus on female students at Junior High School level because, basically girls are considered to be more focused on their relationships with peers (MacLochlainn, 2022). Girls or female students often form a higher-quality and close relationships as compared to boys, meaning that their friendships are tend to be having a deeper bound and more supportive (Radmacher & Azmitia, 2006). Typically, girls are also having a better communication with their peers, meaning that they are able to be openly express their thoughts and feelings (Laghi et al., 2016). Furthermore, their interactions are usually marked by positive social behaviours, such as helping, sharing, and showing care and empathy towards others (Diotaiuti, 2021). Hansen (2019) then added that the interpersonal relationships of female students and their relationships with their peers may have a significant impact on their mental health, self-esteem, and the overall educational experience. This means that strong and good relationships with other people can help with their development in social and emotional skills.

Having friends and close confidants significantly improves the life satisfaction and reduces the risk of depression (Choi et al., 2020). People with strong social connections are also less likely to die from various causes, including heart disease and chronic illnesses (Steptoe et al., 2013). This statement refers to Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) theory of well-being in the health dimension. According to the WHO (1948), health is more than having no symptoms of sickness or disability, but it is a condition of overall well-being in all aspects such as physical, mental and social of one's life. The social factor has the most significant influence on the overall well-being of each student, where Eva et al. (2020) discovered that social support has an important impact in improving students' overall well-being.

Students can be assisted and supported in overcoming a variety of challenges that are faced during the transition from adolescent to adulthood in human development. The support and relationships with people that students receive may help and encourage them in dealing with these challenges. Riyanto (2022) stated that there is a substantial correlation index of 63.2% between strong interpersonal interactions and student well-being, indicating a favorable impact. The social aspect of this phenomenon is evident through the establishment of strong relationships, as well as the cultivation of mutual respect and acceptance among students, teachers, and school administration.

Based on the data from OECD (2017), student well-being does not solely refer to academic accomplishments. Meanwhile, Karyani et al. (2015, as cited in Febrieta et al., 2023), assert that student well-being refers to the capacity of students to effectively manage internal

and external demands, while experiencing positive feelings and fulfillment within themselves and their surroundings. This enables students to perform effectively in an academic environment. Karyani et al (2015) believe that the procedures and regulations which is implemented by the Government of Indonesia is looks like focus on fulfilling the physical requirements of children as a measure of their well-being. However, they believe that child well-being in Indonesia encompasses not solely the satisfaction of physical requirements but also encompasses psychological, social, and cognitive aspects. Santrock (2003) shown that environmental influences can exert an influence on stressful situations. Having a happy academic atmosphere is essential for students to achieve optimal learning outcomes and promote their overall well-being.

Schools or formal religion-based education, such as Islamic boarding schools or *Pesantren*, are currently quite popular within the society (Arsita et al., 2016). Society believes that Islamic boarding schools may produce morally upright individuals with a strong sense of religion (Azizah & Hidayati, 2015). *Pesantren* have become known as an appropriate option for learning. It is an Islamic institution that has existed for centuries and has continued to spread Islam through education and teaching (Nasir 2005). *Pesantren* have played an important role in teaching Islamic education and instilling moral values in students across the country (Fitri & Ondeng, 2022). Meaning that, *Pesantren* institutions have received attention for their important contributions to moral values, due to their enduring dedication to the spread of Islamic knowledge and the establishment of moral values, particularly in the field of education.

The students who are enrolling in Islamic boarding schools is also known as santri. They must spend 24 hours every day in the *Pesantren* area (Pritaningrum & Hendriani, 2013). This means that Santri, who enter in *Pesantren* must also stay there. On the other hand, all santri are required to obey to all rules and regulations and spend their full time at the Islamic boarding school or *Pesantren*. The *Pesantren* additionally not only focus on religious teaching, but also on formal education (Hernawan, Budiman, & Dwarawati, 2017). Up to now, *Pesantren* education was defined as a way to learn practical skills and connect with others in a supportive social environment (Nurhayati & Nurhidayah, 2019). Furthermore, life in *Pesantren* is quite different from life in public schools. Students are obligated to reside in dormitories within the *Pesantren's* area and strictly follow to the prescribed curriculum set by the school's administrators.

In this study, I want to explore how friendships and well-being are being connected in a modern *pesantren* in South Tangerang, Banten. In contrast to traditional *Pesantren*, a modern

*Pesantren* combine religious educations with the regular subjects of study. This combination creates a unique environment in which students face not only spiritual challenges but also academic challenges, as well as providing a good place to observe how peer relationships can foster their overall well-being. This modern *pesantren* is a part of a developing Islamic boarding school in Indonesia, where the institutions combine traditional values with modern teaching to provide a unique environment for students' social and emotional development.

One of the most important characteristics of a modern *Pesantren* is its focus on the relationships with peers. In the *pesantren* environment, students are provided with various opportunities to create personal and deep relationships with their peers, which is considered as an important aspect for their social and emotional development. The Peer relationships at *Pesantren* are more than just a casual relationships, they are also continuously maintained through a variety of activities and programmes that promote interaction, relationship, communication, and solidarity. The focus on relationships with others emerges from Islamic principles such as compassion, empathy, and unity, all of which are seen to be necessary for the development of an individual.

By considering an important consideration in *Pesantren*, it is evident that a significant number of students are not adequately supported by a sufficient number of professional staff, particularly in the provision of psychological assistance (Saputro, Isnaini, & Casmini, 2023). Consequently, this leads to numerous challenges, including difficulties in adjusting to the environment within the *Pesantren*, issues with self-reliance, discipline, as well as various other problems that needs preparedness from the very beginning (Ibandiyah & Hasanah, 2021; Yasmin & Ningsih, 2021).

Students who reside in *Pesantren*, engage in highly demanding activities primarily to achieve their academic and personal autonomy goals (Ambarwati, 2016). This refers to their pursuit of educational excellence and their desire to develop independence and self-sufficiency. Furthermore, the pedagogy which is commonly implemented in *Pesantren* consists of extensive daily study sessions that include a broad range of disciplines, such as the difficult ones like Islamic studies, Arabic language, and Islamic traditional sciences (e.g., fiqh, tafsir, hadith). This heavy academic schedule might be mentally challenging for students. It also can challenge the students in understanding the subject matter due to their cognitive limitations (Kurniawan, Akbar, & Rusli, 2020). For example, when students faced with the objectives of study in various subjects within a short period of time, students may have to give their best efforts in struggling with the memorization of the complicated lesson or connect to the entire lesson with

what they are studying. This could contribute to an educational experience that falls short of optimizing their academic potential and their overall development. By addressing these problems, it is critical for improving the learning outcomes and overall well-being of students in the *Pesantren* settings.

In the *pesantren*, the strict cultural values and religious norms emphasize the conformity. This creates a strong sense of community but may also restrict the individual freedom of thoughts. This is clearly seen from several regulations and sanctions in *Pesantren* that are intended to support the creation of obedience and independence of students in carrying out daily life activities, however, it all still goes back to each student. All students in *Pesantren* applied the norms into the form of regulations that are adjusted to the needs and identity of the community where they live. Therefore, the obedience by the *Pesantren* community with regulations is very much needed in order to achieve *Pesantren* goals. However, the pros and cons in responding to regulations are usually occur in the *Pesantren* society. This can be seen from the various types of violations committed by members of the *Pesantren* society. All of this happens because there are some people who are dissatisfied with the rules and regulations (Kusumadewi, et al., 2012).

Added to that, the students who receive a proper social support is reported to have lower levels of stress and they have an enhanced levels of achievement than those who do not receive proper support from others (Beltran et al., 2009). This means that having good relationships with other students can help students to recognize and understand the emotions of others and thus improving their social awareness and empathy. This is in line with the statement from Mutiara (2018) that Peer relationships are especially important for students because they promote emotional intelligence and the ability to build meaningful interpersonal connections. This emotional awareness and connection with peers provide essential support systems that can buffer against stress and promote psychological well-being throughout their academic journey. Additionally, the quality of peer relationships plays a crucial role in shaping students' emotional resilience and overall success in academic and personal endeavors. Cultivating positive peer interactions within educational settings is essential for fostering a supportive environment that nurtures students' social-emotional development and enhances their overall educational experience.

The distinctive environment presents several difficulties, particularly in the first year, as students develop their new relationships with other students, adjust to varying dormitories arrangements, and manage to the unfamiliar circumstances. As indicated by Willis (2012), the

concept of self-adjustment plays a crucial role in facilitating the integration of students into their environment, hence promoting personal satisfaction and harmony with their surroundings.

As students navigate their academic journey within *Pesantren*, they encounter variety of difficulties and challenges related to adaptation and adjustment that can profoundly impact their well-being (Nuryani, 2020). For example, the data from Indonesia reveals about concerning issues in the mental health of adolescent. Salma (2022) reported that in her study sample, one of the three Indonesian adolescents has experienced a mental health issue in the past year, with 3.7% anxiety disorders being the most common. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Putri & Bachri (2021) highlighted that there are about 65% of Indonesian teenagers who experienced anxiety, with 75% reporting to have a severe to very severe levels of anxiety. These findings leads the urgent need to address mental health issues especially within the context of *Pesantren* education, where students may face various challenges and pressures which are related to the academic expectations. Thus, it is very important for promoting the holistic well-being of students within the *Pesantren* by understanding and addressing these challenges.

In this research, I am working as an insider within the pesantren being studied. This role gives me deep access and a strong understanding of the pesantren's environment and dynamics. My motivation for this research comes from observing social issues within the pesantren, particularly those related to peer relationships. Some students decide to leave the pesantren because they don't have friends and feel unhappy. The formation of cliques or exclusive groups creates jealousy among other students, which affects their motivation to study. Students who don't have friends often feel less motivated and less happy. Friendships play a crucial role in the well-being of students at the pesantren, with having friends being a key factor in their happiness. Therefore, I believe that peer relationships are very important for the well-being of students in the pesantren. However, I want to emphasize that there is no bias in this research. I am committed to conducting the research with objectivity and high professionalism, following rigorous research methods to ensure the validity and reliability of the collected data. The findings of this research are expected to be highly beneficial not only for this pesantren but also for others and society at large. Therefore, this research is anticipated to make a significant contribution to enhancing understanding and educational practices within the pesantren environment and fostering better development in the future.

For this research, I decided to focus on female Junior High School students in a modern Islamic boarding school, or *Pesantren*, in Indonesia, due to particular challenges and

dynamics that these students experience. I focus on female student well-being because their experiences and challenges can be different from those of male students, especially in a *pesantren* environment where gender roles might impact to the daily interactions, expectations, and social dynamics. By studying female students specifically, I aim to understand how these factors impact their well-being, which can help the policymakers to develop programs to better support them. Females and males have different mental health characteristics. Women are more likely than males to experience depression and psychological distress. Meanwhile, men are more likely than women to suffer externalising disorders, including antisocial and drug use disorders (Eaton et al., 2012). One of the differences between male and female that has been found is the higher score of women in positive relations with others (Karasawa et al., 2011).

This research is unique because it focuses on a modern *pesantren*, which is a combination between traditional Islamic education with modern academic subjects. Unlike previous studies that may have focused on traditional *pesantren* or general Islamic boarding schools, this study examines how the combination of traditional and modern education impacts female students' well-being. This dual focus on both spiritual and academic aspects within a modern *pesantren* setting provides new insights that haven't been explored in earlier research.

Several reasons contribute to the choosing of this demographic, including the study's focus on female Junior High School students which allows me to look deeper into these specific difficulties and how relationships with others affect their well-being. Furthermore, because *santri* in *Pesantren* spend 24 hours with the members of the *Pesantren*. *Santri* interact, gather, and mingle with people they have never known before (Tsani, 2023). By focusing on modern *Pesantren*, the research may delve into the particular dynamics of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools, which are known for emphasising moral ideals, religious instruction, and social support. This study also provides a distinctive framework for exploring the impact of peer relationships on student well-being, which may differ from public schools. The intensity of interaction between *Pesantren* members makes *santri* required to be able to build a good life together through positive social interactions (Safira, 2018). Then, I want to find out what are the efforts and strategies by counsellors in interpreting and understanding peer relationships of students in *Pesantren*. Besides that, this study intends to present a comprehensive understanding about peer relationships on the overall well-being of students within the framework of modern *Pesantren* education system in Indonesia as well as an emphasis on the significance of peer relationships in students' well-being that has important implications

particularly due to the potential of social relationships to provide significant emotional and psychological support.

The main gap of this study lies in its exclusive focus on peer relationships within female Junior High school in specific setting of modern Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. This expands from previous research that has explored peer relationships in public Islamic boarding schools or in global settings. Prior research has examined the association between peer relationships and the state of well-being among students residing in Islamic boarding schools (Faizah & Widyastuti, 2023). Additionally, the connection between peer attachment and students' self-esteem has also been investigated (Ringganis & Darmayanti, 2023). Nevertheless, there is a lack of research examining the impact of peer relationships on the well-being of female students of Junior High school in a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia.

This study aims to investigate the potential association between peer relationships and the overall well-being of students in a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. Specifically, it will explore the relationship between peer interactions and students' mental, emotional, and social health. The study seeks to provide valuable insights into the role of peer relationships in fostering and maintaining the well-being of students in a modern *Pesantren* setting in Indonesia.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

Based on the above-mentioned background information, the researcher develops the following research questions:

1. To what extent the role of peer relationship inspire to the well-being of female students in Junior High school at a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia?
2. What are the strategies of counselors of *Pesantren* management to enhance peer relationships among students?
3. What are the challenges experienced by female students in Junior High school at modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia in maintaining healthy peer relationships?

## **1.3. Research Aims**

The primary aims of this study are as follows:

1. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of peer relationships in the well-being of female students in Junior High school within a modern Pesantren in Indonesia.
2. To understand the specific strategies and procedures employed by the counselors of the Pesantren management to comprehend and enhance peer relationships among female students in Junior High school within a modern Pesantren in Indonesia.
3. To explore the challenges and difficulties faced by female students in Junior High school within a modern Pesantren in Indonesia, as well as their efforts to sustain positive peer relationships with other students. The research seeks to gain understanding of the diverse elements and dynamics that impact the quality of peer relationships in the specific context of the Pesantren environment.

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is highlighted by the possibility of having an impact on several important aspects of education and student well-being in the setting of a junior high school in modern pesantren in Indonesia. Firstly, an extensive understanding of the function of peer relationships in the overall well-being of female students is important. This understanding serves as a foundation for developing educational methods and programs which are aimed at promoting the emotional, social, and psychological well-being of students in Pesantren, and eventually contributing to their overall development.

Secondly, by observing the efforts and strategies which are implemented by the counsellors at a modern Pesantren in Indonesia to improve peer relationships provides a significant understanding into effective instructional methodologies. These findings are especially important for educators, administrators, and the policymakers who want to improve their efforts to creating a healthy peer environment inside the Pesantren system. Understanding effective strategies can promote a healthier and more supportive social environment.

It is also important to understanding and comprehending the challenges faced by female students of Junior High school level within a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia, in establishing positive peer relationships which is crucial for the development of targeted support systems. By identifying these difficulties, the educators and policymakers can develop some programs that can help students to address specific obstacles, which can create a more

conducive environment for positive and healthy peer relationships in a modern *Pesantren* settings.

Furthermore, this study aims to enhance the dynamics of peer relationships in the *Pesantren* educational system. This insight is useful for developing a specific policies and procedures that deal with the particular conditions of each institution, which can encouraging positive and healthy relationships with peers, and, as well as improving students' overall experiences in school. This also aligns with the broader educational goals and contributes to the ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of education in the country.

Moreover, the research contributes to the academic literature by delving into the complex factors and processes that impact the quality of peer relationships in the specific setting of *Pesantren*. This not only enriches the academic comprehension of peer relationships but also provides a foundation for future research, creating a knowledge base that can inform further studies in various educational settings.

In summary, the significance of this study extends beyond its immediate scope, offering insights that can inform educational practices, improve the *Pesantren* system, address student issues, and contribute to academic knowledge in the realm of peer relationships and student well-being.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

#### 2.1. Literature Review

Peer relationships are definitely important in developing the psychological well-being of adolescents. This is primarily because adolescents are typically imitate the behaviours and attitudes of their peers (Liu, 2023). According to the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (2011), the middle years are crucial for social and emotional development, with relationships with peers providing valuable support and acceptance. Similarly, Blum et al. (2022) emphasise that these relationships can support the adolescents in overcoming the complex nature of this developmental period by promoting emotional resilience and social competence. Mitic et al. (2021) also added about the role of peers in shaping behaviours and attitudes, suggesting that supportive relationships with other people can significantly enhance their overall well-being. The relationships between peers are also important for promoting positive feelings and improving school well-being (Liu et al., 2016; Schmidt et al., 2020). For example, a positive relationships in class are frequently connected with positive emotions (Zurbriggen et al., 2018). Numerous studies have found a connection between students' sense of belonging in the classroom, such as feeling accepted by their classmates, and their overall well-being at school (Graham et al., 2016).

This literature review aims to explore role of peer relationships in the overall wellbeing of students, particularly focusing on their psychological, social, academic, and emotional dimensions. By examining a numerous of previous studies, this chapter will provide a comprehensive understanding of how positive peer relationships can contribute to various aspects of wellbeing, highlighting the importance of fostering and maintaining healthy peer relationships in the well-being of students.

#### 2.1.1. Cultural Context of *Pesantren*

Pesantren, or Islamic boarding schools, are a known as one of the religious educational institution in Indonesia. Originating in the 18th century, Hefner (2016) stated that the Pesantren are unique and have a special characteristics because they are administered under the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This collaborative supervision assures that pesantrens deliver an adequate education that covers both general academic subjects as well as Islamic religious studies, which represents the

Pesantren's integrated approach to learning. As information becomes more accessible and Islamic education values continue to develop, Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) are required to strengthen their development in order to address the global issues and changing circumstances. The growing complexity and diversity of modern life add to this challenge. This situation causes worry not only among teachers, officials, and experts but also among the general public (Muhmidayeli, 2007, p.187 as cited in Silfiana, 2020).

In *Pesantren*, there are two kinds of education systems: the traditional system and the modern system. A modern system of *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Indonesia is a one-of-a-kind educational institution that combines traditional Islamic values and principles with the advanced or modern teaching methods. These institutions are intended to give a full quality education that focuses not only on academic progress but also on spiritual growth, social skills, and mental well-being. According to Wahyudin (2014, p.92), a modern *Pesantren* is managed in an updated way, including its administration, teaching methods, and curriculum. These *Pesantren* have modernized their education, institutions, ideas, and roles. Modern *Pesantren* now offer general subjects in their schools, alongside traditional Islamic teachings. The education system in modern *Pesantren* includes an updated curriculum and teaching methods. They have modernized the curriculum by adding general subjects while still teaching Islamic principles (Wahyudin, 2014).

According to Nuryani (2020), Islamic boarding schools, or *Pesantren* are a form of education commonly found in Indonesia. The distinctive characteristic of *Pesantren* education system is the mandatory of 24-hour residence of students in the *Pesantren* environments. Furthermore, she added that *Pesantren* have distinct norms that necessitate students to obey the rules and regulations in order to be accepted within their surroundings. Students are required to strictly follow to all regulations in regular education. The curriculum aims to integrate classical learning traditions and contemporary methods, which are effectively implemented in the teaching method and lessons (Setiawan, 2013). Alwi (2013), identifies numerous unique characteristics associated with Islamic boarding schools, including the presence of *kiai* (Islamic scholars), *santri* (students), preserving teaching using traditional Islamic texts, and the presence of mosques and dormitories. The prevalence and advancement of Islamic boarding schools as an educational establishment in Indonesia has experienced a substantial increase.

This study focuses on examining the dynamics of peer relationships and the well-being of adolescent students within modern *Pesantren* settings in Indonesia. Modern Islamic

boarding schools, or Modern *Pesantren*, integrate religious and scientific education, emphasizing practical skills, formal learning, and equipping students to confront modern life's challenges (Wahyudin, 2017, p.246). A modern *Pesantren* provides a diverse and advanced curriculum that includes mathematics, physics, languages, social sciences, and technology, as well as modern facilities such as classrooms which are furnished with educational equipment such as technology, science labs, libraries, and other spaces (Qonitin, 2020). Furthermore, the curriculum in the modern *Pesantren* aims to prepare students for the contemporary challenges by emphasizing in the language fluency, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, as demonstrated by the integration of disciplines such as English and computer science (Farhani et al., 2023).

The system of modern *Pesantren* is contrasts with traditional *Pesantren*, who primarily focus only in Islamic subjects and classical Arabic texts. The traditional *Pesantren* focus on religious beliefs and the authority of Ulama or Kyai, as well as the memorization of the lesson and recitation of classical texts as a learning method based on classical Arabic literature and traditional Islamic sources (Farhani, 2023; Silfiana, 2023). Modern and traditional *Pesantren* are differentiated by their methods of instruction and the subject matter. Thus, Silfiana (2020) also added that a modern *Pesantren* expand their content of study subjects other than Islamic studies, including science, technology, and humanities. These differences in educational system represent the transformation of Indonesia's educational setting, as institutions adjust to suit the evolving needs and goals of students and society as a whole.

The study explores at these differences in order to gain an understanding of how modern *Pesantren* settings foster the peer relationships and student well-being. According to Tolib (2015), modern Islamic boarding schools have a unique characteristic in that they implement educational programs that include formal, non-formal, and informal learning methods. These activities are conducted throughout the day in the *Pesantren* environment. He argued that modern Islamic boarding schools emphasize education inside the formal educational system and emphasize modern Arabic and English as a method of addressing contemporary challenges.

Malik (2021) argues that *Pesantren* play a very important role in facilitating the study of Islam within a multicultural society. The principles such as respecting one another, and empathy are maintained inside the *Pesantren*, no matter the differences in social, economic, or status background. The students or *santri* are educated with a common objective, which is to

demonstrate that *Pesantren* serves to teach and to impart the virtue of tolerance. According to him, modern *Pesantren* have unique characteristics, such as the implementation of discussion and interactivity methods in education, education that is community-based aimed at preparing students for societal involvement, and the formation of student organizations that regulate student activities based on principles of democracy, mutual collaboration, and solidarity under guidance and supervision of *Pesantren* management.

Hence, the Modern Islamic Boarding School serves as not only a center for religious education, but also as an establishment that cultivates the social and leadership skills of its students, enabling them to lead an entire life in society. Thus, Modern Islamic boarding schools, or *Pesantren* have implemented a sophisticated and advanced educational system that incorporates structured classes and regular timetables (Pritaningrum & Hendriano, 2013). This programme aims to enhance students' religious knowledge while simultaneously fostering their general knowledge and placing special emphasis on foreign languages, particularly Arabic and English (Tarwiyah, 2021). In addition, Siddiq (2017) states that the purpose of learning Arabic at the Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School is to cultivate students who possess virtuous character, proficiency, creative thinking, open-mindedness, and perseverance, along with the capacity to communicate in Arabic and English. Arabic is regarded as the medium language of Islam, whereas English is considered a worldwide language. Consequently, it is desirable for students to possess proficiency in both Arabic and English in order to actively participate in the global community.

*Pesantren* in Indonesia have grown significantly, with a rise in the number of *Pesantren* and santri (students) over time. According to Putro et al. (2021), the number of *Pesantren* in Indonesia has increased from 3,000 in the 1980s to more than 20,000 by 2020. The more details of this are 8,343 *Pesantren* and 1,489,000 *santri* in West Java, 4,579 *Pesantren* and 609,000 *santri* in Banten, and 3,787 *Pesantren* and 166,000 *santri* in Central Java. This was the total number of *Pesantren* and *santri* in Java by 2020 (Assa'idi, 2021). The increase is due to *Pesantren's* flexibility to changing environments, such as the adoption of modern schooling systems and non-religious subjects into their academic programmes (Isbah, 2020).

*Pesantren* have had a significant political impact in Indonesia. Nor Ismah on Tebuireng's (2022) study focuses on the importance of *Pesantren* during the colonial period, when they acted as centres of Islamic education and contributed to Java's social, cultural, and political protest movements. According to the study, *Pesantren* have grown throughout history

due to their flexibility in shifting environments. The respect given to *Pesantren* by the Indonesian government reflects their political status. *Pesantren* are included in the national education system under Law No. 22 of 1989 and 20 of 2003 (Ningsih et al., 2023). In addition, Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 1979 and Minister of Religious Affairs Decision No. 18 of 1975, as revised by Minister of Religious Affairs Decision No. 1 of 2001, pay special attention to *Pesantren* education.

One of the most important characteristics of a modern *Pesantren* is its focus on the relationships with peers. In these environments, students are provided with opportunities to create personal relationships with their friends (Ringganis & Darmayanti, 2023), which is regarded as critical to their social and emotional development. The Peer relationships at *Pesantren* are more than just casual relationships; they are continuously maintained through a variety of activities and programmes that promote interaction, relationship, communication, and solidarity. The focus on relationships with others emerges from Islamic principles such as compassion, empathy, and unity, all of which are seen to be necessary for the development of an individual

### **2.1.2. Peer Relationships in Adolescence**

In Indonesia, students who have received education at Islamic Boarding School or *Pesantren*, will be considered on comparable with students from regular schools, including Junior High School, High school, and vocational school. In 2015, the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag) established that certificates hold the same value as formal school education, as stated in Minister of Religion Regulation Number 13 of 2014 (Dinas Komunikasi Dan Informatika Provinsi Jawa Timur, 2015). As per the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation, the eligibility criteria for prospective grade 7 students in Junior High School are that they must be no older than 15 years on July 1 of the current year. While, the prospective new students in class 10 (ten) SMA or SMK must be no older than 21 (twenty-one) years on July 1 of the current year (Republic of Indonesia Cabinet Secretariat, 2019). The age group in this area can be categorized as adolescent phase.

Adolescence, as according to World Health Organization:WHO (2019) is the phase of human development that bridges the gap between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence refers to a crucial phase of development that occurs between childhood and adulthood, characterized by significant physical, cognitive, and psychosocial transformations (Papalia, Old, & Feldman, 2008). Adolescents experience psychosocial changes that can be categorized

into three stages: early adolescence, middle adolescence, and late adolescence. Early adolescence refers to the stage of development that happens in individuals between the ages of 12 and 14 years (Papalia, Old, & Feldman, 2008).

Angela (2019) claims that during the transitional phase of early adolescence, various changes can appear in individuals. She added that these changes include experiencing an identity crisis, having an unstable personality, prioritizing peers over parents, displaying reduced respect towards parents, seeking love and affection from sources other than parents, showing rudeness, blaming parents for their problems, regressing to childlike behavior, and falling to the influence of peer groups in their daily lives. Therefore, the peer relationship is a mutually beneficial relationship that is shaped by the competent cognitive, behavioral, and social cognitive processes of its members within the peer group (Rubin et al., 2015).

Throughout the developmental period spanning from infancy to adolescence, children undergo a process of increasing autonomy from their parents and begin to rely increasingly on their peers for social support (Lee & Park, 2017). According to Mónaco and Montoya (2019), while peers play a significant role in socialization, maintaining a strong bond to parents remains an equally crucial aspect of individuals' lives. Nevertheless, it is imperative to investigate the attachment dynamics between adolescents and their peers, as well as the consequential impact of these interactions on their emotional and behavioral responses (He et al., 2018).

In terms of the process of human development, the adolescent years are a very significant period. It is important for a variety of parties involved, especially the social environment, to pay attention to the development that occurs during the adolescent period (Albanjari, 2018; Mardjan et al., 2018). In the case where adolescents are able to successfully complete their developmental objectives, they will be ready to engage with their peers and receive acceptance into social networks. According to Nuryani & Paramata (2018), the most significant of these factors includes the development of social relations with others in the same age group as well as adults other than teachers and parents.

Apparently, there are still a number of adolescents who are unable to adjust adequately to the social situation in which they find themselves hard to adjust. It is one of the reasons why adolescents are rejected by the groups of their peers that they belong to. Students who have High peer relationships will find it easy to socialize, interact effectively with other people, and find it easier to get along with other people (Saida, 2017).

Peer relationships among adolescents explained to be 18% of the variance in their current happiness levels, underscoring the significant role these relationships play in the emotional well-being of early adolescents (Carolina et al., 2018). This highlights the critical need to understand how peer interactions influence happiness during this formative period. Positive peer relationships provide essential emotional support, foster a sense of belonging, and enhance self-esteem, all of which are crucial for young people's happiness. Given the substantial time adolescents spend in school, the quality of their peer interactions can profoundly impact their overall school experience and academic success. Recognizing the importance of nurturing healthy peer relationships can lead to the development of supportive school environments and targeted interventions, particularly in unique educational contexts like modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia, thereby promoting the well-being and happiness of female students. Another cross-sectional study involving middle school students from American adolescents found that having supportive parents and peers enhances their overall life satisfaction (Siddall et al., 2019).

### **2.1.3. Female Adolescence and Peer Relationships**

Peer relationships are the specific relationships which is formed between one or a few close friends. A good relationships with peers may provide reliable emotional support as well as a sense of feeling safety. This allows people to express themselves openly while feeling protected from emotional harm and stress (Balluerka et al., 2016). Research indicates that girls often report stronger attachments to their friends compared to boys. This difference may be because girls value closeness and open communication more in their friendships than boys do (Gorrese & Ruggieri, 2012). Moreover, the adolescents who don't deal with their emotional issues might have trouble with their friendships, and these problems can stick around into adulthood (Galambos et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2014; Vujeva & Furman, 2011). Research shows that the more adolescence care about their friends, the more they might struggle with those friendships, which can make their emotional problems worse (Aldridge et al., 2016; Long et al., 2020).

Male and female students often have different kinds of friendships. Female students are more likely to talk about personal stuff and don't like arguing with friends as much as males do (Benenson, 2019). Studies also say that females tend to feel more depressed than males during their teenage years (Breslau et al., 2017; Salk et al., 2016). Males usually get less help dealing with their feelings from friends than females do, even though this support can help

them feel better about themselves (Rose & Rudolph, 2006). Females, on the other hand, are more affected by how their friendships are going and can feel really stressed if they think their friends don't like them or if they're having problems with their friends. This stress can make their emotional problems worse. Another study said that females tend to have stronger communication and trust in their peer relationships compared to males. This suggests that females place a higher value on emotional closeness and open communication within their friendships, which likely contributes to their stronger peer attachments. By understanding these differences, it can help in the development of support systems that focus on the particular needs of boys and girls in creating a healthy relationships with their peers (Grey et al., 2017).

Lately, Zhao, Sun, and Wang (2021) examined the role of the quality of relationships and gender in emotional neglect which impacts the feelings of sadness or depression. They discovered that females who did not have strong relationships with their peers felt worse when they were emotionally ignored. However, for men, it made a little effect. A research by Ståhl and Dennhag (2021, as cited by Yoon et al., 2023) indicated that females who were satisfied with their friendships felt less anxious or unhappy, but this was not the case for males. These findings indicate that the quality of friendships and gender might impact on how the adolescents respond to emotional neglect, as well as how it connects to the feelings of sadness or depression. For females, having poor-quality relationships and emotional neglect seems to make them even feel worse. Furthermore, the study indicates that girls often have a stronger social reputation than boys. They are usually seen as more compassionate and mature, whereas males are often seen as more aggressive, disruptive, and immature. This has been discovered in various investigations (Crapanzano et al., 2011; Martín, 2016; Muñoz et al., 2008; Rose & Rudolph, 2006). By understanding these dynamics can provide deeper insights into the specific challenges and support needs of female students in Junior High schools, particularly in unique educational environments like modern pesantrens in Indonesia.

#### **2.1.4. The Student Well-being**

Regarding the well-being for children, as stipulated in the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 4 of 1979 concerning on the well-being of children: “Child well-being is a comprehensive system that ensures the well-being and proper development of children in all aspects of their lives, including their spiritual, physical, and social growth”. Child well-being programs are related to social well-being that strive to guarantee the achievement of child well-being, particularly the satisfaction of children's fundamental necessities.

Achieving success in school is primarily dependent on students recognizing the significance of their presence in the learning process. Alonso (2017) provides evidence that those who perceive their school experiences as a means of preparing for the future are more likely to experience psychological well-being due to their strong emotional connection to school. However, there is a positive correlation between High levels of school well-being in students and various positive outcomes such as improved academic performance, higher attendance rates, increased positive behavior, enhanced school security, better mental health, and greater student engagement (Hawary et al., 2018). Furthermore, it is crucial to understand the variables that restrict student well-being. This should serve as a standard to guarantee that student well-being is adequately and accurately addressed. The restricting factors, as described by Masters (2004 as cited in Ianah et al., 2021), is the absence of positive relationships with others, which negatively impacts the well-being of students.

Many studies highlight the importance of the well-being of students in school. For instance, Cahyono et al. (2021) found that when students feel good at school, it boosts their academic performance by 11.7%, helps their mental health, encourages them to be kind, as well as makes them feel responsible. Setyahadi & Yanuvianti (2017) discovered that when students feel happy, it helps them do better in school. On the other side, when students don't feel good, it can lead to problems, like bullying. Victims of bullying often feel powerless and have negative emotions like shame, anger, and sadness, which can lower their self-esteem (Na'imah & Tanireja, 2017).

The consideration of the well-being of student is crucial as it serves as a significant indicator of student growth and development (Elmore, 2010). According to Young (2020), prioritizing students' well-being is crucial for fostering a healthy educational environment. Over time, the studies related to well-being are mostly focused on adults. However, there is an increasing awareness of the need of considering well-being in children and adolescents (Aulia et al., 2020). It is important for educators to make efforts to foster student well-being since it is an important factor in determining the success of education for everyone involved (Ramdani & Prakoso, 2019).

According to Wijayanti and Sulistiobudi (2018), a comprehensive education should prioritize both academic learning and subjective well-being (SWB) within the school environment. Additionally, subjective well-being (SWB) serves as a significant measure of educational excellence inside an academic institution (Liu et al., 2015). Subjective well-being

is a crucial indicator of motivation, involvement, and accomplishment for student (Fogarty et al, 2014; King et al, 2015).

There are two aspects that can improve student well-being such as internal and external factors. They also stated that internal factors influencing student well-being include the ability to adapt and change, learning perspective, self-assessment, and personal attributes (Thoybah & Aulia, 2020). The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2009) highlights various external variables that contribute to student well-being, including teacher support, healthy relationships with peers, a supportive disciplinary environment, and involvement from parents. Moore et al. (2018) also discussed on how a good school environment and positive relationships with friends and family enhance the well-being for students.

Several studies have shown that a student's happiness is influenced by the happiness of their peers. King & Datu (2017) found that when most students in a class feel good, they are more likely to form positive relationships with others. New friends who join the group feel welcomed, which boosts their own well-being. Wijayanti and Sulistiobudi (2018) discovered that peer relationships have the biggest impact on how students feel. Students with a strong sense of well-being tend to be sociable, engage actively with friends, have pleasant conversations, and display a cheerful and positive attitude. Furthermore, it is noted that peer relationships are strongly linked to students' emotional experiences at school, influencing both positive and negative feelings. This positive environment encourages other students to form a relationship with others, as well as conversations, sharing their happiness, and laughing together. When students have good social relationships and they feel accepted, they are more likely to feel happy and enjoy the time in school more. Cappella, Kim, Neal, & Jackson (2013) also found that peer relationships can significantly enhance the learning experience and help students feel more connected to their academic journey. There are a number of factors that have been identified as influential in the development of well-being such as personality, social support, and work-life balance (Majorsy et al., 2018).

In *Pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia, there are several factors which influence student well-being. Psychological factors such as self-compassion, religiosity, and support groups play a significant role in the well-being of teenagers in these schools (Ikromi et al., 2019). Tsaqofah & Khusumadewi (2023) found that happiness and religiousness significantly impact students' psychological well-being, fostering a peaceful and serene environment. Additionally, Saputri (2013) identified other elements that affect well-being,

including the social environment and positive peer relationships, as well as personal background factors like gender, age, and cultural differences. Stress is also a significant issue affecting students' well-being. Therefore, the well-being of students in Indonesian pesantren is influenced by multiple elements, with peer relationships being a crucial factor.

#### **2.1.5. The Role of Peer Relationships in Students' Well-being**

Peer relationships is a relationship among individuals in a group or a set of people in which there is a common interest, attention, and mutual impact on each other (Hasti & Nurfarhanah, 2013; Widyaningrum & Sumarwoto, 2013). Thus, peer relationships occurs when the members of the group share a similar age and maturity level that is comparable to one another. There is a particularly High level of connection with someone's peers while he/she is a teenager. Research has shown that the thinking of adolescents is still highly unsteady and prone to get influenced by their surroundings (Herfinaly & Aryani, 2013; Sartika, 2013).

Peer relationships, as defined by Rubin et al. (2015), are mutual relationships between individuals of the same age group that are shaped by the cognitive, behavioural, and social cognitive abilities of the group members. There are four dimensions that can be utilised to assess peer relationships, such as acceptance and rejection, victimisation, exclusion, and popularity (Rubin et al., 2015 as cited in Angela, 2019). According to Khumaero (2017), there is a direct correlation between the quality of a child's interactions with their peers and their learning accomplishment. Specifically, positive peer relationships lead to higher learning achievement, whereas negative relationships result in lower learning achievement.

By considering the importance of peers in the development of children and adolescents, it is becoming a key source of social support, especially for those who have faced hardships. As it is claimed by Prinstein & Giletta (2016), that children who have faced early difficulties could minimize their later adjustment issues by maintaining firm and positive interactions with others. These relationships may be beneficial in improving and enhancing the paths to development that are affected by stressors including bullying from classmates and family problems. It also means that in order to help adolescents and young people to overcome over early challenges, having strong, supportive relationships is essential. Even if students have experienced challenges like parental problems and bullying, these relationships may minimise problems throughout later in life and enhance their overall development.

Friendships are one of the most important interpersonal relationships, which fulfilling the basic human needs including a sense of belonging and social interaction (Hojjat et al.,

2017). Therefore, support from others is essential for maintaining both physical and mental health especially for the students in *pesantren*. A good and positive social support can enhance the students to have a resilience towards their problems (Ozbay et al., 2007). These positive relationships are also essential for social well-being, providing support that is linked to enhanced physical and psychological health (Chandoevvit and Thampanishvong, 2016; Mitskidou et al., 2021). Additionally, the concept of meaning in life, which includes feeling connected to something greater, further underscores the importance of these relationships in enhancing overall well-being (Kern et al., 2015). Together, these elements highlight how interpersonal relationships and a sense of purpose are interconnected to a person's holistic health.

Children develop and interact in two different social contexts such as the peer world, which includes play groups, clubs, and friends, while the adult world, which includes parents, teachers, and other authority roles (Amin et al., 2017). The results of a research by Kurniawan & Sudrajat (2017, p. 161–162) indicate that friends have a variety of important roles in students' life. According to them, peers have several roles. Firstly, they provide support to students in terms of social, moral, and emotional aspects. Secondly, they teach students important social skills such as cooperation, interaction, self-control, and problem-solving. Thirdly, they act as socialization agents for students. Lastly, they serve as models or examples of behavior for other students. Additionally, peers play a role in shaping students' characters, including aspects such as discipline, religion, friendship, social care, tolerance, environmental care, hard work, curiosity, defiance, and aggression.

The findings are further supported by Mujiastuti's (2015) research, which demonstrated that students who possess significant relationships have higher academic performance compared to those without friendship. According to Parwata, Sudiatmika, and Devi (2018), the level of importance that students place on their relationship with friends is higher than the importance they place on their relationships with parents and teachers. This influence arises due to the significant duration of time that students spend to interacting with their peers in their everyday routines (Karisma & Latifah, 2015).

Peer relationships are an important component of a person's life, especially throughout adolescence. These relationships influence an individual's social, emotional, and academic development. Positive peer interactions have repeatedly been associated to enhanced academic results, mental health, and life satisfaction (Rubin et al., 2015). Peer interactions are valuable for a variety of reasons. According to Wentzel & Watkins (2021), peer interactions

create a sense of belonging and social support, which are critical for emotional well-being. Positive peer relationships have been related to stronger academic performance, including higher grades and more academic engagement. Additionally, positive peer relationships have been linked to decreased levels of sadness and anxiety. Furthermore Eccles and Wigfield (2020) added that peer relationships can impact an individual's life happiness, with good relationships being linked to greater levels of life satisfaction.

Previous research has shown how adolescents' behaviors are influenced by their friends and the factors that affect these relationships. Prinstein's (2001, as cited in Liu, 2023) study found that the adolescents who have friends who do the self-harm are more likely to have self-harming and suicidal thoughts themselves. The doctors or anyone in charge of these kind of situation should check if the close friends of a suicidal teen also have suicidal tendencies. The study's results suggest that peers can affect adolescent's risk of health in many ways. For this issue, strong peer relationships during adolescence have numerous benefits for psychological well-being and overall development. Liu (2023) states that positive and healthy peer relationships are important for various aspects of adolescents' lives, including psychological well-being, academic performance, and general development. In addition to that, strong peer relationships provide adolescents with a sense of belonging and crucial social support which is also essential for emotional well-being and academic success. Positive relationships are connected with lower levels of depression and anxiety which indicate a significant impact on mental health. Furthermore, positive peer relationships are linked to the higher levels of life satisfaction and help adolescents develop resilience, in which it can help them in coping with stress and difficulties. Thus, peer relationships indirectly influence academic performance by shaping an adolescent's self-esteem and self-perception (Liu, 2023). In summary, peer relationships play a pivotal role in shaping adolescents' academic performance. Positive peer relationships are connected to the improvement in academic outcomes, whereas negative peer relationships can also affect to the lower academic outcomes (Yu et al., 2023).

Simolon (2019) discovered a strong positive connection between relationships with peers and psychological well-being. This suggests that peer relationships have 13.8% of the effect on psychological well-being. This suggests that, although social support is important, other factors also contribute to 86.2% of psychological well-being. Strong support from peers promotes psychological well-being because positive relationships with others—such as family, friends, or in educational settings—have a significant impact on a person's mental health. These

beneficial relationships contribute to a decrease in stress from environmental pressures. Furthermore, Rachma (2022) revealed that increasing peer support is associated with improved psychological well-being, emphasising the significance of supportive relationships among peers.

According to the data that Sari (2019) obtained regarding the relationships between peer support and the self-concept of students who were enrolled in the 8th grade at SMPN 9 Bandar Lampung during the 2019/2020 school year. According to the findings of the study, there is a significant and positive relationship that exists between the social support of peers and the students' perceptions of themselves. Sari (2019) found that there is a significant positive association between students' self-concept and the social support they receive from their peers. This finding highlights the significant influence that peer relationships may have on the formation of individuals' self-perceptions.

Within the population of middle school students in Yogyakarta City State, Azhari et al. (2019) discovered a significant association between the support of peers and the overall well-being of the educational environment. In other words, this study discovered an important relationship between peer support and school well-being, highlighting the effect of peer relationships on the overall well-being of students when they are in the context of the school environment.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Amin (2016) reveals that the social relationships among peers at SMP Negeri 5 Way Tuba have a significant impact on students' decision to pursue further education. Specifically, these relationships can influence students' interests and attitudes when making choices regarding their educational goals. Thus, this study revealed that these relationships have a pivotal impact on shaping students' interests and attitudes, consequently impacting the decisions they make regarding their educational objectives. These findings emphasize the need of educators, school officials, and lawmakers acknowledging the importance of promoting healthy peer relationships.

If there is a positive relationship between the results of the tests, it indicates that the student's social acceptance is higher when there is a higher level of social engagement with their peers, and vice versa. According to Andangjati et al., (2021), the consequences of this research have an effect on the students' social interactions, which are seeing an increasing number of improvements.

To sum up, it emphasizes the crucial significance of peer interactions in influencing multiple aspects of students' life. Given to these findings, it is crucial to put into action

interventions as well as techniques that focus on fostering positive peer relationships in school environments. These programs can not only improve students' self-perception and overall happiness, but also have a significant impact on directing their educational goals and choices. In summary, comprehending and utilizing the influence of peer relationships can facilitate the implementation of more complete and efficient strategies to foster the holistic growth and achievement of students in both academic and personal domains.

#### **2.1.6. The Problems Encountered by Students**

Students must be provided with an appropriate and effective learning environment. Classrooms and schools serve as learning environments for students, where they frequently encounter novel experiences and face progressively challenging expectations. Academic tasks that are becoming more difficult and continually evolving friendships relationships at school might have an impact on the psychological well-being of adolescents. Salam et al., (2015) demonstrate that prolonged periods of elevated stress in students may produce tension and anxiety, which may have a negative effect on student learning and academic output.

##### **a) The Problems Encountered by Students in General**

According to the findings of a study conducted by Liana & Hanifah (2018), there are various factors contribute to student challenges with learning. These factors include inadequate facilities and infrastructure, low family income, dysfunctional family dynamics, adolescent growth and development (puberty), and the teaching methods applied by teachers. On the other hand, Suprihatin's (2011) research findings indicate that the process of growth of adolescents is often accompanied by numerous challenges. The challenges faced by High school and vocational school students encompass disobedience of school regulations, academic difficulties, as well as personal (family) and societal problems.

Students, particularly adolescents, face numerous obstacles in school activities, including academic and social interactions. Peer relationships are influenced by both student characteristics and the peers attending the school (Juvonen, 2018). Research by Assdianie et al. (2016) identifies adolescence as a period marked by challenges such as emotional issues, adaptation difficulties, sexual and social conduct, ethics, individual differences, familial conflicts, and academic problems. These challenges are caused by a mix of internal and external

factors. Internal factors include negative learning attitudes, lack of motivation, and poor study habits. External factors include teachers using only one teaching method (Puspitasari, Matsum, and Khosmas, 2019). This indicates that the difficulties adolescents face in school are complex and multifaceted, which is caused from both within the students themselves and from the educational environment. Addressing these challenges requires understanding and addressing both the personal and contextual factors.

In order to address the challenges that arise during adolescence, Assdianie et al. (2016) mentioned that there a range of strategies can be employed, such as critical, remedial, preventive, and developmental methods. The implementation of these methods is facilitated by a range of strategies, encompassing procedures employed in fundamental counseling services, such as traditional counseling, group counseling, cooperative counseling with instructors/homeroom teachers, and cooperative counseling with parents.

#### **b) The Problems Encountered by Students in a Modern Pesantren**

Each individual has different ways and characteristics in adjusting themselves (Janawi, 2019). Because basically, some are easy to adapt and some are not easy or even unable to do it, it could be because they have a way of life that is different from their new environment, so that delays the process of adjusting themselves.

The findings of Rahmadani, Anuar, and Pribadi's (2023) study indicate that the primary concerns for students in Islamic boarding schools are learning skills at a rate of 63%, learning facilities at a rate of 60%, requirements for mastering learning material, and the learning environment and social-emotional factors at a rate of 45%. In a study conducted by Kusaini (2021), it was discovered that the predominant issues faced by students in two Islamic boarding schools in Yogyakarta were Personality (26%), Social Relations (25%), and Physical Health (22%).

Lee, Farruggia & Brown (2013) found that, in a new academic culture, sometimes students feel isolated that causes physical and emotional discomforts to the them. New atmosphere, lonely feelings and homesickness disturb their sleep patterns and reduce learning abilities. According to Mayesti, S., & Ilyas, A.

(2019), from the results of their research related to boarding students from the area (West Sumatra) and from outside the area, it was found that the adaptation of boarding students from areas where they live, they can be categorized as students who have a fairly good adjustment. Besides that, students who come from outside the area also have a fairly good adjustment category, the adaptation of boarding students from outside West Sumatra is in the fairly good category, and there is a significant difference between the adaptation of boarding students from outside and within. West Sumatra. This is very crucial for the continuity of learning and the growth and development of students in Islamic boarding schools. Based on the findings from Segal, T (2019) research, they start to feel that they are from another planet. Culture dissimilarity may create the feeling of unpredictability, hesitation, or worry that a person experience when visiting culture that is diverse from their own. They find themselves in a nearly dissimilar tradition and environment which are unlike.

Language skills may have an intense result effect on an individual's ability to learn and develop, because of its key role within the transmission of information and regulation of cognitive processes (Binder & Smith, 2013). New students process a lot of new information upon their entrance in a new environment. The acculturation process demands that they comprehend new experiences through their own subjective and pre-existing information and perceptions. Because of the subjectivity of these interpretations since many subjects in Pesantren are using Arabic and English language so it affect students in numerous ways as they continue to build their own personal meanings and make sense of the acculturation process (Sawir et al., 2012).

New students are particularly vulnerable to developing mental disorders such as anxiety, mood and stress-related disorders. These illnesses can impact students' functioning across multiple domains, including academia. Whereas some students are more likely to seek mental health specialists, others may note specially if such problems are condemn in their own home (Haber & Griffiths, 2017).

Self-adjustment is a dynamic or process that has a goal so that there can be an appropriate relationship seen from the individual and the environment (Yusra & Daharnis, 2019). However, the ability of each individual is not always

the same, there are some individuals who can adjust easily and there are also individuals who cannot adjust easily. Self-adjustment in individuals can be influenced by two factors, including internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are factors that are influenced from within the individual itself such as emotional maturity, heredity and physical maturity, while external factors are factors that are influenced by something outside of individual control such as environment and culture. In addition to these factors, there are several other factors that can affect the adolescent self-adjustment process in the first year, namely personality, physical condition, education or education as well as environment, religion and culture (Ekanita & Putri, 2019).

There are multiple factors while adjusting to the new environment, as according to Tsani (2023), those factors including significant changes in daily routines and the implementation of strict rules, significantly impact the capacity for adjustment of students, especially for new students. Furthermore, social challenges include feelings of isolation, challenges in establishing new relationships with others, and disparities between new and old students. Academic adjustments in Islamic boarding school, or Pesantren, hold significance for students. Students must make appropriate academic adjustments to effectively deal with the academic requirements of Pesantren and successfully overcome the associated hurdles.

According to a study conducted by Pritaningrum & Wiwin (2013), there is a significant percentage of students who experience difficulties in adjusting to their first year of schooling. Life in Pesantren is an unusual and distinct experience compared to public schools, necessitating students to possess the ability to adjust to the educational standards required. Students must possess the ability to adjust and persevere when confronted with the academic challenges presented by Islamic boarding schools.

According to Santrock (2011), students who experience rejection from their peers face more severe difficulties in adjusting than those who are simply ignored. This finding aligns with the research undertaken by Ryan (2010), which demonstrates that peer relationships have a significant impact on academic adjustment. According to Khalis, et. al (2017), positive peer relationships have been found to support successful academic adjustment.

Students experience greater convenience when they receive consent from their peers. Peer relationships serve as an indicator for popularity and acceptability (Tarwiyah, 2021). Additionally, peer interactions are regarded as more personal and influential in the lives of teenagers/ adolescents (Saud, 2016). Tarwiyah's (2021) research indicates a direct correlation between peer relationships and the academic adjustment of students at the Al Amanah Junwangi Modern Islamic Boarding School.

Additionally, Ambarwati (2016) highlighted that the boredom felt by students who are enrolled in Islamic boarding schools is due to an absence of interaction with the external environment. As stated by Sutarjo (2014), learning boredom is a prevalent issue among students that leads to reduced motivation to learn, a sense of acute laziness, and reduced academic performance. Peer support has the potential to impact cognitive and emotional resources, leading to an enhancement in the general atmosphere of the school (Santrock, 2003).

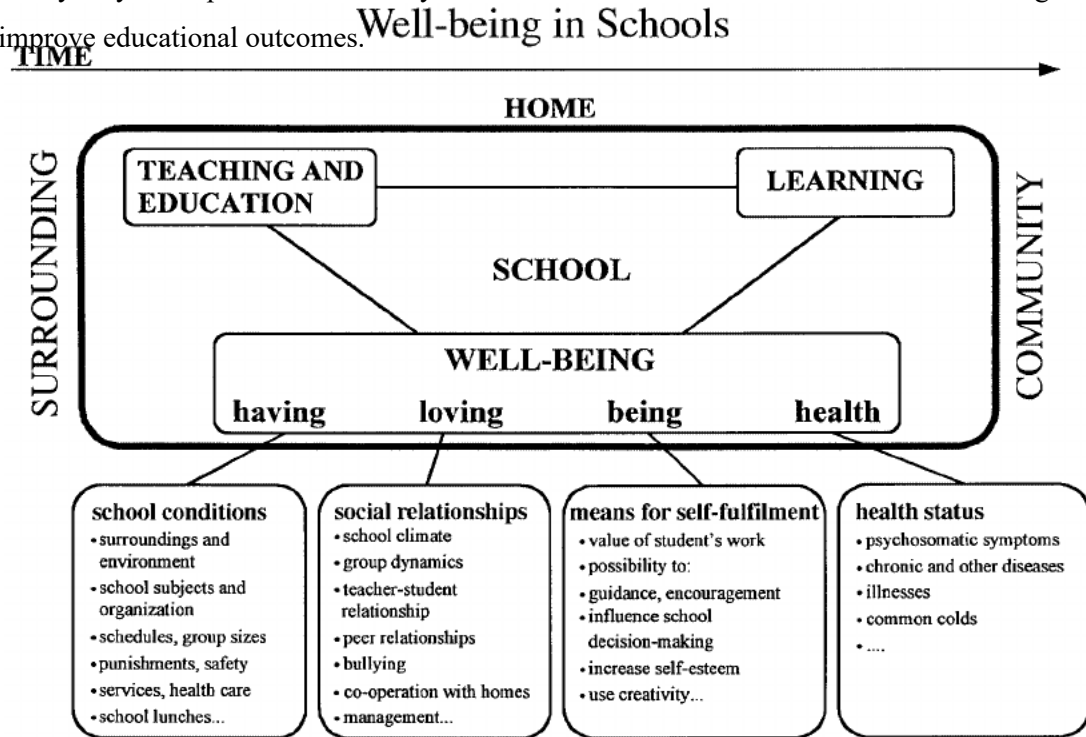
In conclusion, the students who choose to study in Pesantren face a lot of struggles in the settlement of the education system of the Pesantren . Their education system is somehow different from their previous school. The concept of the lecture, the assignments, examination system, and the books becomes a big issue for them. They don't easily adjust with it and it takes them a lot of time to adapt it. That's why we the researchers are working on this study.

## **2.2. Theoretical Foundations**

Konu and Rimpelä (2002) established a theory of wellbeing that highlights the need of a comprehensive approach to understanding students' well-being. Its concept of wellbeing includes four dimensions: having, loving, being, and health. All of these characteristics are linked to and also impact each other, which affecting students' overall well-being. Firstly, the dimension "having" refers to the visible life conditions, such as accessibility to resources and opportunity. Secondly, the dimension of "loving" refers to the students relationships and interactions with others. Third, the dimension of "being" is connected with students sense of identity and self-esteem. Finally, the dimension "health" factor takes into account both students physical and emotional wellbeing.

The theory of well-being by Konu and Rimpelä is also very important since it emphasises the significance of applying a comprehensive approach to assessing the well-being

of students. It emphasises that students' well-being is determined not only by individual factors, but also by the social and environmental conditions in which they live and learn. This theory may be implemented in many educational contexts to increase student well-being and improve educational outcomes.



The theory of wellbeing by Konu & Rimpelä (2002) is closely connected to the main topic of my thesis, "Exploring the Role of Peer Relationships in Student Well-being: A Case Study of Female Junior High School Students in a Modern Pesantren in Indonesia." This theory emphasises the significance of taking a comprehensive approach to assessing student well-being, which includes factors such as social relationships and interactions, mental condition, and physical health. The Konu theory of wellbeing is especially relevant to this study since it emphasises the role of peer relationships in developing student well-being. The theory implies that peer relationships may impact students' emotional, social, and cognitive development, which is an essential component of student well-being.

Konu's theory of well-being, as stated in the School Well-being Model, may be utilised when planning activities which focused on enhancing student well-being in schools by emphasising the four dimensions of well-being: having, loving, being, and health. Here are several methods to use based on the theory.

**1. Having:**

This dimension is ensuring that students have the accessibility to used resources and opportunities that promote their well-being, such as providing counselling services, extracurricular activities, and social support groups. Furthermore, Encouraging students to participate in activities that match their interests and passions, promoting a sense of purpose and satisfaction. In the context of my study, this could include factors like access to educational resources, extracurricular activities, and social support networks.

**2. Loving:**

This dimension encourages a strong relationships among students, teachers, and staff by emphasizing empathy, communication, and problem solving abilities as well as helping students to build meaningful relationships with other students and teachers through collaborative projects, peer mentoring, and community service activities. Peer relationships, teacher-student relationships, and family support are all possible elements in this research which I am conducting.

**3. Being:**

In this dimension, it helps students to build a good sense of identity and self-esteem by encouraging students self-expression, feeling accepted, and self-worth. Beside, this also encouraging students to take any opportunities, try new things, and maturing their mindset, which can boost their confidence and resilience. Self-perception, self-acceptance, and self-worth might all be related in my study.

**4. Health:**

In this dimension, it focus on student physical and mental health by providing access to the healthcare services, which can encourages students towards a positive lifestyle behaviors, and fostering a safe and supportive environment at school. Physical exercise, mental well-being, and stress management are all possible components in this research.

Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) theory of well-being provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the factors that influence student well-being, which is directly relevant to my study. The theory outlines four key dimensions of student well-being: school conditions, social relationships, means for self-fulfillment, and health status. Each of these dimensions can be used to analyze the impact of peer relationships on the well-being of female

students in *pesantren*. In the context of school conditions, the unique residential setting of *pesantren* intensifies the influence of peer relationships, as students spend a significant amount of time together. Positive peer relationships can create a supportive and enjoyable school environment, enhancing students' sense of safety and comfort. The social relationships dimension is directly impacted by the quality of peer relationships. Means for self-fulfillment in *pesantren* are also influenced by peer relationships. Participating in group activities and collaborative learning fosters personal growth and self-expression, which are facilitated by positive peer interactions.

Lastly, health status, particularly mental health, is closely related to the quality of peer relationships. Supportive peer relationships can minimize the level of anxiety and depression, while poor peer relationships can make psychological issues even worse. Thus, Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) theory helps to frame the study by highlighting how peer relationships impact various dimensions of well-being, providing a structured approach to understanding the specific needs and challenges faced by female students in modern *pesantren*. All of these dimensions are interrelated and impact to one another, shaping students' overall well-being. By concentrating on these dimensions, my research may give a thorough knowledge of all factors that influence student well-being and suggest solutions for increasing student well-being in schools.

### **2.2.1. Previous Studies**

In the body of literature that cites the well-being model developed by Konu and Rimpelä (2002), several studies have explored the significance of peer relationships in student well-being. These studies emphasize how social interactions among peers can profoundly impact various aspects of students' lives in educational settings.

The previous research by Puroila et al. (2011) and the school well-being model developed by Konu and Rimpelä (2002) provide a strong foundation for understanding the role of peer relationships in student well-being in the context of modern *pesantren* in Indonesia. Puroila found that positive social relationships among peers are crucial for children's well-being. Children who feel accepted and have close friends tend to exhibit higher levels of well-being. This is relevant to my research on peer relationships in the well-being of female junior high school students at modern *pesantren*. In *pesantren*, students live and study together in a relatively closed and intense environment, making peer relationships extremely important. As in Puroila's et al. (2011) research, positive relationships and social support among students can significantly contribute to their emotional and social well-being.

Furthermore, the school well-being model by Konu and Rimpelä (2002) emphasizes that a supportive social environment in schools can enhance student well-being. This aligns with my aim to explore how creating an inclusive and supportive *pasantren* community can improve the well-being of female students.

The study by Sakrvoa et al. (2014) also provides significant insights into how school relationships affect adolescents' psychological well-being and self-esteem. Sakrvoa et al. (2014) found that positive and supportive relationships with peers and teachers play a significant role in fostering healthy psychological well-being and enhancing students' self-esteem. The findings showed that better pupil-peer and pupil-teacher relationships were statistically significantly related to lower levels of depression and anxiety, as well as reduced social dysfunction. Additionally, good relationships were associated with more positive and less negative self-esteem. These findings indicate that high-quality social interactions at school can serve as a strong source of emotional support for adolescents, helping them better cope with academic and personal challenges.

Furthermore, the study by Mudzkiyyah et al. (2022) provides important insights into the factors influencing the well-being of boarding school students. This research found that academic self-efficacy and peer attachment are significant predictors of student well-being. Students who have high confidence in their academic abilities and strong, positive relationships with their peers tend to exhibit higher levels of well-being. These findings indicate that, in addition to academic achievement, supportive interpersonal relationships in the boarding school environment are crucial for students' emotional and social well-being. This supports the idea that good relationships and confidence in school are important for students' happiness.

Östberg (2003) in the study "Children in classrooms: Peer status, status distribution and mental well-being," utilized Konu and Rimpelä's (2002) model to investigate the impact of peer status on mental well-being among students. The findings indicated that students with higher peer status and better social integration experienced better mental well-being. This study highlights the crucial role of social acceptance and peer relationships in fostering mental health among students.

Opdenakker and Van Damme (2000) examined how the school environment, teachers, and classroom dynamics affect students' academic performance and overall well-being. By applying Konu and Rimpelä's well-being model, they discovered that positive peer relationships and supportive interactions within the classroom significantly enhance both students' academic success and their general well-being. This finding emphasizes the critical

role that a supportive and interactive classroom environment plays in promoting not only academic achievement but also the holistic well-being of students.

Murray-Harvey and Slee (2007) in their research used the theoretical framework provided by Konu and Rimpelä to explore how relationships with peers affect students' social and emotional experiences. Their findings indicated that supportive peer relationships mitigate stress and enhance students' social and emotional well-being, while stressful peer interactions have the opposite effect.

These studies collectively reinforce the critical role of peer relationships in student well-being, as conceptualized by Konu and Rimpelä (2002). The consistent findings across different contexts and educational settings underscore the importance of fostering positive peer interactions to enhance student well-being. This body of research provides a solid foundation for further exploration of peer relationships in specific educational environments, such as modern pesantren in Indonesia.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study aims to explore the role of peer relationships in student well-being among female Junior High school students within a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. The concept of student well-being has received a significant attention in recent years, as the educators and academics have recognize the importance of student well-being in developing students' academic achievement, mental health, and the overall life satisfaction. Peer relationships are particularly significant for student well-being since they have a major impact on students' emotional, social, and cognitive development.

This chapter highlight the research methodology which are used in this study, "Exploring the Role of Peer Relationships in Student Well-being: A Case Study of Female Students in Junior High School at a Modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia." The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures which are employed to collect and analyze the data and also ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. This section will provide a brief overview of the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed in the study.

#### **3.1. Research Approach and Research Design**

The selection of a qualitative research approach and its design for this study is grounded in its appropriateness for investigating the varied perceptions of participants concerning the significance of peer relationships in student well-being within a contemporary *Pesantren* setting in Indonesia. Qualitative methodology is advantageous in facilitating an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and viewpoints, offering the potential for rich and comprehensive data (Creswell, 2014). By emphasizing the understanding and interpretation of individuals' or groups' perspectives, qualitative research effectively enables a thorough investigation into complex phenomena like the role of peer relationships in the well-being of female Junior High school students within modern *Pesantren* contexts. Within the realm of social sciences and humanities, qualitative research methods are commonly employed to delve into the intricacies of individual and collective experiences, seeking to comprehend diverse perspectives and meanings associated with phenomena under study.

In this study, the researcher employed a case study design to investigate how peer relationships impact on the well-being of female students of Junior High school in a modern

*Pesantren* environment in Indonesia. The case study design is very beneficial for exploring patterns and particular situations in many scientific areas, notably the social sciences. The utilization of a case study design is advocated by Creswell, Crowe et al. (2011) as it allows for a comprehensive exploration of specific case of participant experiences and perspectives, generating extensive and detailed data. Widely utilized across various disciplines, particularly in the social sciences, the case study approach offers a methodology to gain a holistic and multidimensional understanding of complex issues within their natural context (Mtisi, 2022). However, I chose a case study design because it involves detailed, in-depth data collection including several sources of data with significant contexts. Creswell (2014) defined a case study as "an in-depth exploration of a system with boundaries (for instance, an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on comprehensive information collection" (p. 485). The use of a case study design in this research is crucial since it allows for in-depth insights into a specific occurrence within its real-world environment (Yin, 2018). Case studies are especially useful for studying complicated social phenomena in context, such as the dynamics of peer relationships and their influence on student well-being (Stake, 1995).

### **3.2. Study Location, Sample and Recruitment**

The study was conducted at a modern Islamic boarding school, commonly referred to as a *pesantren*, located in Indonesia. This particular educational institution is known for integrating traditional Islamic education with contemporary academic subjects, offering a unique blend of religious and secular education. The *Pesantren* was selected because it is an important educational institution in Indonesia with a long history of influencing people. The *pesantren* is situated in a semi-urban area, providing a balanced environment that combines the tranquillity of rural settings with access to urban amenities. The school caters to junior high school students, focusing on female students for this study. It features a well-structured residential system where students live on *pesantren*, fostering a close relationships atmosphere. This setting allows for intensive peer relationships, making it an ideal location to study the role of peer relationships in student well-being.

The characteristics of the study location include an integrated curriculum that promotes holistic education, residential life that enhances social interaction and peer bonding, gender-specific programs addressing the unique educational and developmental needs of female students, a supportive environment that emphasizes moral and spiritual development alongside academic achievement, and a cultural context that upholds religious values. The

sampling method used was purposive sampling, selecting female students aged 12-15 years who had been enrolled in the *pesantren* for at least one academic year and one student counsellor whom were willing to participate with their own consent without force. This approach ensured that the participants had relevant experiences and insights related to the study's focus on peer relationships and well-being, enabling the collection of detailed and meaningful data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

Purposive sampling was employed since it is the most appropriate sampling method for this research study. Purposive sampling was chosen to ensure the selection of participants who can provide rich, relevant, and diverse data. Purposive sampling is a method of selecting participants for a study based on specific characteristics that are directly related to the research questions (Palinkas et al., 2015). The selection of participants in this case would be based on their engagement in peer relationships and their personal experiences with student well-being in modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. The purposive sampling approach ensured that the selected participants had relevant experiences and insights related to the study's focus on peer relationships and well-being. This method enabled the collection of detailed and meaningful data that could provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

Creswell (2016) states that purposive sampling is a commonly employed method for qualitative research. It involves the deliberate selection of comprehensive cases to optimise resource utilisation. Within the framework of this study, purposeful sampling would entail the deliberate selection of participants based on specific criteria that are pertinent to the research questions, such as their engagement in peer relationships and their experiences with student well-being in a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia.

### **3.3. Data Collection Methods**

In this research, I employed a semi-structured interviews, observation as well as focus group discussion. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allow for a thorough study of participants' perspectives and experiences. Semi-structured interviews are a qualitative research approach that combines the benefits of structured and unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are also useful for obtaining nuanced and comprehensive information from participants. They are especially beneficial for acquiring in-depth insights into participants' experiences and opinions since they combine flexibility with structure in the interview process (George, 2023). This approach enabled a more flexibility and wider in asking the questions while maintaining a focus on the main problems which is important to the study's

aims. Moreover, the interviews were conducted in participants' chosen languages and audio-recorded with their consent to improve communication and trust, allowing them to express themselves more freely and truthfully. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions that explored the participants' experiences about the role of peer relationship, the positive and negative impact on their emotional and social wellbeing and as well as the strategies they had used to overcome these barriers.

Despite their advantages, semi-structured interviews have several limitations, such as potential interviewer bias and the resource-intensive nature of data collection and processing (George, 2023). However, these problems were overcome by careful interview planning, openness, and comprehensive thematic analysis of the obtained data. Finally, integrating semi-structured interviews into the research design provided useful insights into the subtle dynamics of peer relationships and their role on student well-being within the context of a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia.

Through the integration of the interview guide with these research questions, the study aimed to collect comprehensive and contextually relevant data that would contribute to a better understanding of the interplay between peer relationships and student well-being in the context of a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. The open-ended nature of the questions enabled participants to express their thoughts and emotions in their own words, resulting in rich and qualitative data that can be analyzed thoroughly (Mashuri et al., 2022).

The first research question was to determine the extent to which peer relationships influence the well-being of female Junior High school students in a modern *Pesantren* setting. This question seeks to examine how peer relationships contribute to students' overall emotional and social health in the school setting. The second study question was to explore the strategies employed by *Pesantren* management and counsellors to establish and strengthen strong peer relationships among students. This study sought to identify specific strategies and methods used to promote healthy social dynamics and improve students' well-being. Lastly, the third research question looked into what challenges that female Junior High school students encounter in maintaining good relationships with their peers in a modern *Pesantren* setting. This question attempted to highlight the difficulties and challenges that students have in their relationships with peers, so offering insights into areas that require attention or intervention to promote positive social relationships.

Furthermore, observation is a valuable data collection method in research, particularly in the context of studying human behavior and social interactions. It offers several

advantages that make it a popular choice among researchers (Theobold et al., 2024). In this research, it observe the daily interactions among students, noting how peer relationships influence their emotional and social well-being. The observation occurred in May 2024.

On the other hand, focus group discussions are often used as a qualitative method to deeply explore social issues. Instead of gathering data from a large, random sample, this approach focuses on a specific group of people chosen for their relevant experiences and insights (O, 2018). In the context of studying peer relationships and student well-being, FGDs are particularly suitable because they mirror the social nature of the topic. By observing how students interact and discuss their relationships, researchers can gain valuable insights into the dynamics that influence well-being.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative research techniques. The data preparation method included reading throughout every obtained data to gain a thorough knowledge of the topic. After careful reading of the recorded text, the researcher then did the coding. Coding was then used to organize and classify data sections based on the related themes and patterns. Coding is the systematic labelling of data sections with descriptive tags or codes that indicate important concepts, ideas, or subject matters. Coding may be considered of as an in-depth thought about and interpretation of the meanings of the data (Theobold et al., 2024). The code for a unit of data is created by careful reading and study, giving the researcher with an intimate knowledge with every datum in the corpus. Codes are allocated to certain sections of text that are relevant to the study topics. For example, in answer to a question regarding difficulties in sustaining peer relationships, paragraphs detailing problems with peers may be categorised as "interpersonal conflicts." In this research, the researcher used coding to discover patterns and relationships between codes in order to construct larger topics or categories.

Themes are repeating issues or concepts gathered from the data (Morgan, 2018). For example, the themes or topics which are relating to the positive effects of peer relationships on students well-being may include "emotional support" or "sense of belonging." Finally, thematic analysis was performed to identify the repeating themes and patterns in the data, followed by content analysis to determine the frequency and distribution of these topics. Member checking was used to confirm interpretations and findings with participants, assuring the accuracy and reliability of the study. The peer debriefing meetings were also performed to

discuss and reflect on the research process and findings with other researchers and experts, which improved the accuracy and reliability of the qualitative research approaches used in this study.

The data analysis for this study was qualitative research methodologies, specifically thematic analysis, to identify and understand patterns and themes in the collected data. Thematic analysis involves many important steps for methodically analysing qualitative data gathered from in-depth interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Firstly, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, capturing the participants' perspectives in written form. This approach ensures that all spoken words and subtleties are correctly recorded for future study. Then, the researcher read the transcripts several times in order to get familiar with them. Initially, this immersion in data allows researchers to obtain a thorough comprehension of individuals' experiences and narratives. The analysis were driven by the research questions and enhanced with illustrative examples taken directly from the participants' voices, resulting in a more nuanced and contextually informed understanding of the studied phenomenon.

### **3.5. Limitation of the Study**

The limitations of this study include potential cultural and language barriers, as the research will be conducted in English, which may not be the primary language of the participants. The generalizability of the findings may also be limited as the study is focused on a specific population (female students of Junior High school within a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia). Additionally, the lack of control over external factors that may influence the data collection and analysis process is also a limitation.

Despite these limitations, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the role of peer relationships in the well-being of female students of Junior High school within a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia and inform educational policies and practices to enhance positive peer relationships in similar contexts. The study's results can offer significant perspectives for educational policymakers in Indonesia and contribute to the existing body of knowledge on Islamic education and peer relationships.

### **3.6. Ethical Considerations**

To ensure participant privacy and security, the inquiry followed ethical standards such as informed permission, safeguard their confidentiality, and anonymity (Yin, 2018). Before participating in this involvement, every participant submitted informed permission,

during which they were told about the objective of the research, potential risks and benefits, and their capacity to discontinue participation at any time without consequence (Smith et al., 2009). To protect privacy, audio-recorded interviews were securely archived in a place only authorised researchers could access (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The identity of participants were secured using anonymization and pseudonyms Putri, with individual identification numbers or anonymous identities used in all study paperwork and reports (Smith et al., 2009). Furthermore, participants were explicitly informed of their freedom to withdraw from the study at any time, emphasising their autonomy and reducing the risks associated with participation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the study, derived from a thorough analysis of the data which are collected through several methods such as interviews, observation and focus group discussion with female students at a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. The chapter is systematically structured in order to address the research questions, which may providing insights into the role of peer relationships in student well-being. The findings are discussed in relation to the existing literature and the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Through a thematic analysis of the interview data, several key themes emerged, shedding light on the significance of social connections, emotional support, self-perception, and mental health in the context of the students' experiences at the *Pesantren*. Each theme is elaborated upon coding which come from direct quotes from the participants as empirical evidences, offering a comprehensive understanding of how peer relationships influence various aspects of student well-being. The discussion also considers the implications of these findings for educational practices and policies within *Pesantren* and similar educational settings.

#### **4.2. Research Result**

##### **4.2.1. Addressing to Research Question 1: Significance of the Role of Peer Relationships**

This section addresses the first research question, by focusing on the significance of peer relationships in the well-being of female students in a modern *pesantren*. By examining the experiences and perspectives shared by the participants, we can better understand how these relationships influence various aspects of their emotional and social lives. The following analysis highlights the crucial role that peer relationships play in fostering a supportive and nurturing environment within the *pesantren*, contributing to the students' overall well-being and academic success.

##### **4.2.1.1. Social Connection**

Social connections play an important role in the overall well-being and emotional health of students in the *Pesantren* setting. Through a series of interviews with Asyila, Aisyah,

Alika and Amara (all are pseudo names), a comprehensive understanding of their social interactions, challenges, and support networks has been developed. The answers from Asyila, Aisyah, Alika, and Amara about social connections reveals that all four student participants emphasize the importance of having a large number of friends and feeling supported by their peers. They highlight the positive aspects of these social connections, such as having fun, helping each other out, and feeling supported. The statements do not mention any negative aspects of the social connections, such as conflicts or feelings of exclusion.

To support the explanation above, here are the statements from the interview with some participants:

**Asyila:** *"I feel like I have a lot of friends here, and we all support each other."*

**Aisyah:** *"I have a lot of friends, and we all hang out together. It's really fun."*

All respondents express having a strong sense of friendship and community. Three emphasize mutual support and helping each other, while one highlights the fun and enjoyment of spending time together. Overall, they convey a positive and supportive social environment.

The observation of strong social interactions during daily activities strengthens the finding that social relationships are vital for the emotional well-being of female students. During daily activities such as breakfast, school, and communal prayers, the students displayed intensive social interactions. They were often seen supporting and helping each other. This finding aligns with interview statements emphasizing the importance of having many friends and feeling supported by them. Overall, the analysis supports the thesis that social connections are crucial for the wellbeing of female students in the Pesantren setting, and that these connections are generally positive and supportive.

#### **4.2.1.2. Supportive Friendships**

All participants emphasized the importance of having supportive and caring friends. They rely on these friendships for emotional support, especially during times of illness or sadness. Trusted friends play a crucial role in their well-being, providing a sense of belonging and comfort.

Supporting the explanation above, the students said:

**Asyila:** *"I have two trusted friends with whom I can share personal issues and happiness."*

**Amara:** *"My friends show that they care about me, especially when I'm not feeling well."*

The analysis of the statements from Asyila, Alika, Amara, and Aisyah about social connections reveals several key points. Firstly, all four students emphasize the importance of having trusted friends who show concern and care for their well-being. They highlight specific instances where their friends demonstrate empathy and support, such as when they are not feeling well, sick, or sad. This suggests that the social connections among the students are characterized by emotional support and a sense of belonging. Secondly, the statements indicate that the students value the emotional support they receive from their friends. They mention specific actions their friends take to show they care, such as being concerned about their well-being. This suggests that the social connections are not just superficial but are deeply rooted in emotional support and empathy. Furthermore, the statements do not mention any negative aspects of the social connections, such as conflicts or feelings of exclusion. This suggests that the students generally feel comfortable and supported within their social networks.

Overall, the interviews with Asyila, Alika, Amara, and Aisyah provide clear evidence of the supportive nature of their friendships within the Pesantren. Each participant explicitly mentions the emotional support they receive from their friends, particularly during times of illness or emotional distress. To illustrate the supportive nature of friendships within the Pesantren, here are examples from the interviews with some participants:

**Asyila:** *"When I was feeling down after receiving a low grade on a test, my friends were there to comfort me. They helped me review the material, and we studied together until I felt more confident."*

**Alika:** *"I remember falling ill last month and being confined to my room. My friends took turns bringing me meals and checking on me. They even helped me catch up on lessons I missed."*

This consistent theme across all interviews justifies the finding that supportive friendships are a critical aspect of social connections in this setting. These testimonies highlight that the participants not only have friends but that these friendships are characterized by a deep level of care and emotional support. The consistency in their experiences underscores the importance of these supportive networks in enhancing their emotional well-being and sense of belonging within the Pesantren. This data justifies the finding that supportive friendships are

essentials for the students' overall well-being and provide a strong sense of community and mutual care.

Observations showed that during leisure times like afternoon breaks and extracurricular activities, the students frequently gathered and discussed personal issues, demonstrating strong emotional support among them. This supports the finding that supportive friendships are crucial for their emotional well-being, as revealed in the interviews.

#### **4.2.1.3. Sense of Belonging**

The sense of belonging among students in the *Pesantren X* is evident in their interactions and the support they receive from their peers. Each participant emphasizes the importance of having friends who provide emotional support and create a positive environment. To support the explanation, here are the statements from the student participants:

- **Asyila's Experience:**

Asyila finds great comfort in her friends' encouragement, particularly during difficult times. She values both the support she receives and the moments of privacy she can find when needed.

*“Even though I have a lot of friends, I still find comfort in being by myself, especially when I need to study or have some quiet time to myself. My desire for being alone changes depending on how I'm feeling.”*

Asyila appreciates the balance between social interaction and personal space, which allows her to manage her emotional well-being effectively.

- **Aisyah's Experience:**

Aisyah feels fortunate to have friends both in the dormitory and at school. Many of her dormitory friends are also her classmates, enhancing her sense of community and belonging.

*“Alhamdulillah, I feel like I have enough friends to talk to and play with, either in the dormitory or at school. Also, some of my dormmates are also my classmates.”*

*“My friends show to me that they do care about me, especially when I'm sick or feeling down.”*

Aisyah's friends contribute significantly to a positive environment where she feels cared for and supported, especially during times of illness or emotional distress.

- **Alika's Experience:**

Alika values the kindness and support she receives from her friends. She also enjoys participating in various extracurricular activities, which offer her opportunities for learning and fun.

*“I feel like I have enough friends, and they are all very kind and supportive.” “I'm involved in many extracurricular activities, and I really enjoy them. They give me a chance to learn some new things which I haven't experienced before, and also I have fun in those activities.”*

Alika's participation in extracurricular activities allows her to develop new skills and enjoy her time at the *Pesantren X*, further strengthening her bonds with her friends.

- **Amara's Experience:**

Amara emphasizes the support and care she receives from her friends. She also enjoys participating in extracurricular activities, which help her feel more connected to others in the *Pesantren X*.

*“I feel very supported by my friends. They are always there for me, whether I'm going through a tough time or just need someone to talk to.” “I love being part of the extracurricular activities here. They make me feel more involved and connected to the *Pesantren*.”*

Amara previously attended a public school, and her transition to the *Pesantren* has been made smoother by the welcoming and supportive environment fostered by her friends and the various activities available.

These statements from Asyila, Aisyah, Alika, and Amara illustrate the strong supportive nature of their friendships within the *Pesantren*. The examples provided demonstrate how these friendships offer emotional support, foster a sense of community, and contribute to a positive and nurturing environment. Through their interactions and involvement in various activities, the students feel connected and supported, enhancing their overall well-being and experience at the *Pesantren*.

This data is supported by the findings from observation and also focus group discussion. The students appeared to feel comfortable and had a strong sense of belonging to the *pesantren* environment, participating actively in daily activities and supporting each other during group activities. This is consistent with participants' statements that they feel comfortable being themselves without fear of judgment and feel accepted by their peers.

#### **4.2.1.4. Emotional Well-being**

The emotional well-being of students in the *Pesantren* is greatly influenced by their interpersonal relationships. Each student finds significant emotional support from their friends, which helps them manage stress and stay positive. To support the explanation, here are the testimonies from the student participants.

**Asyila**, for example, relies on her friends for encouragement during tough times, which prevents prolonged sadness.

*"I feel like I am being supported by my friends emotionally. They encourage and support me during difficult times, which helps me avoid prolonged sadness."*

Similarly, **Aisyah** and **Amara** feel cared for by her friends, especially when they are unwell or feeling down, which contributes to their happiness.

*"My friends show they care, especially when I'm sick or feeling down."*

Aisyah and Alika share the same opinion about enjoying participating in various activities such as *Muhadoroh*, *Tapak Suci*, and Scouting. These activities bring their happiness and make them feel more involved in the *Pesantren X*. This suggests that the students find joy and a sense of belonging through these activities, which contributes to their overall wellbeing.

*“I really enjoy participating in Muhadoroh, Tapak Suci, and Scouting. These activities make me happy and help me feel more involved in the Pesantren.”*

*“I’m involved in many extracurricular activities, and I really enjoy them. They give me a chance to learn new things and have fun.”*

#### **4.2.1.5. The Interpersonal Relationships**

The interpersonal relationships among the students in the *Pesantren X* are characterized by strong bonds of trust, emotional support, and positive interactions. The student participants provided detailed insights into how they build and maintain these relationships, which are important for their overall well-being. To support the explanation, here are the statements from the interview with student participants:

**Asyila** highlights the deep trust she has in her friendships and the joy they bring to her life. She states:

*“I have two trusted friends with whom I can share personal issues and happiness.”*

This indicates that her friendships are not just casual; they are based on a deep level of trust and mutual support, allowing her to share both her problems and her joys with her friends.

**Aisyah** expresses how having friends in both the dormitory and the classroom enhances her sense of community and belonging. She says:

*“Alhamdulillah, I feel like I have enough friends to talk and play with, both in the dormitory and at school. Many of my dormitory friends are also my classmates.”*

This shows that her friendships span across different aspects of her daily life, providing her with a consistent support network and a strong sense of belonging in various settings.

**Alika** emphasizes the kindness and support she receives from her friends, which helps her stay positive. She mentions:

*“I feel like I have enough friends, and they are all very kind and supportive. I try to stay positive and interact well with everyone.”*

This reflects that her friendships are based on mutual kindness and support, which helps her maintain a positive outlook despite any challenges she may face.

**Amara** speaks about the supportive and caring nature of her friends and how they help her feel connected to the community. She explains:

*“I have enough friends, and they are all very supportive and caring. I participate in various extracurricular activities, which I really enjoy. They help me feel more connected to the Pesantren community.”*

Her statements indicate that her friendships are a significant source of emotional support and that participating in communal activities further strengthens these bonds and her sense of connection to the community.

These insights from Asyila, Aisyah, Alika, and Amara reveal that their interpersonal relationships are built on trust, mutual support, and positive interactions. These relationships not only provide emotional support but also enhance their overall sense of belonging and happiness within the *Pesantren*. The participants' experiences highlight the importance of having a reliable and caring network of friends who contribute significantly to their emotional well-being and integration into the community.

This is also supported by the response from discussion with several students in focus group discussion, they said:

*“In this pesantren, we all make friends together, we don't pick and choose, everyone mixes, and there are no cliques or small groups.”*

Which reinforcing the idea of an inclusive and non-judgmental environment. Another student added.

#### **4.2.1.6. Self-perception and Autonomy**

The interviews with the participants at the *Pesantren X* provided valuable insights into the self-perception and autonomy of the students, which is closely linked to their interactions and experiences within their social environment. In this theme, all of the participants share the same perception about self-perception and autonomy, in which all

participants reported feeling comfortable expressing themselves without fear of judgment. The student participants provided detailed insights into how their self-confidence and self-worth are influenced by their friendships and activities. The quotations from the students highlight their sense of self-acceptance from their peers. They feel comfortable being themselves without fear of judgment, indicating a positive self-perception.

**Aisyah:** *“I feel comfortable being myself, and my friends accept me for who I am.”*

**Alika:** *“For me, I feel like I can be myself without fear of judgment, and my friends also support me. I am comfortable being myself. It means you should feel free to say “no” if you don't like something. If you feel like you can't do it or you're scared, it's better to try something else instead of forcing yourself and worrying about what might happen.”*

These statements suggest that the students have a positive self-perception, feeling comfortable and accepted by their peers. They do not fear judgment and are able to be themselves without hesitation. This indicates a strong sense of self-acceptance and self-worth, which is essential for emotional wellbeing and overall development. Overall, the statements from student participants highlight the students' positive self-perception, emphasizing their comfort in being themselves and their acceptance by their peers.

From these testimonies, all participants share a similar perception of autonomy. They all feel a significant level of comfort in expressing their true selves without fear of being judged. Alika's statement underscores the empowerment that comes with autonomy, suggesting that feeling free to reject uncomfortable situations and seeking alternatives is crucial for maintaining one's comfort and authenticity. In summary, the students at the Pesantren experience a strong sense of autonomy, characterized by comfort in self-expression and empowerment in decision-making. This environment allows them to be true to themselves without fear of judgment.

The observation of students' comfort in expressing themselves strengthens the finding that they have a high level of autonomy and feel free to be themselves without fear of judgment. The students displayed a high level of comfort in expressing themselves during daily activities and were not afraid to speak up or refuse something they disliked. This aligns with the finding that they feel comfortable expressing their true identities without fear of judgment, indicating a high level of autonomy.

In contrast to the majority of students who feel comfortable and accepted by their peers, Participant I and Participant J from the focus group expressed a lack of self-confidence. Participant I stated, "*Not yet, I'm still not able to be confident like that,*" indicating ongoing struggles with self-assurance.

Similarly, Participant J mentioned, "*I also haven't fully believed in myself yet,*" highlighting uncertainties in self-trust.

These statements suggest that while many students at the *Pesantren X* experience positive self-perception and acceptance, there are individuals who still lack with confidence and self-perception. This diversity in experiences underscores the complexity of emotional development among students, where some may feel empowered to express themselves freely while others continue to navigate challenges in building self-assurance. Understanding these perspectives is crucial for fostering a supportive environment that encourages all students to develop a strong sense of self-worth and confidence.

#### **4.2.1.7. Mental Health**

Mental health is a crucial aspect of students' wellbeing, and it is essential to understand the impact of peer relationships on their mental health outcomes. The findings from the interviews with the participants at the *Pesantren X* highlight the importance of mental health in the lives of the students. The participants reported managing stress and anxiety through various means, emphasizing the importance of emotional support and self-care. However, they also faced challenges such as anxiety and depression, and barriers to mental health support. The *Pesantren* provided counselling support to foster mental health and promote overall well-being.

#### **4.2.1.8. Stress Management**

The participants reported managing stress and anxiety through various means. Asyila and Alika mentioned that they managed stress by talking to their friends and engaging in physical activities.

*"I prefer to share with my friends. When I'm feeling anxious, I talk to them, like, "Why do I feel so anxious?" I also like to write in a journal. Sometimes, sleeping helps me feel calm too."*

Amara also states:

*"Usually, I leave the dorm and spend some time alone. When I do that, I like studying outside or getting snacks. I also pray a lot and go out of the dorm."*

These statements suggest that the students use a variety of strategies to manage stress and anxiety. They emphasize the importance of social support, such as talking to friends, and also engage in physical activities, journaling, and prayer to cope with stress. Overall, the statements from the participants highlight the students' stress management strategies, emphasizing the importance of social support, physical activities, journaling, and prayer in managing stress and anxiety.

The observed stress management strategies, such as talking to friends and praying, support the finding that social support and religious activities are very helpful in managing stress and anxiety. During routine activities like group study sessions and exam preparation, students showed various strategies for managing stress, including talking to friends and praying together.

#### **4.2.1.9. Emotional Support**

All participants emphasized the importance of emotional support from peers and counselors.

**Aisyah** and **Asyila** share the same perception about having a trusted friend for emotional support. They share their happiness and sadness and also underscores the importance of sharing both positive and negative experiences with friends, which helps in managing emotions and provides a sense of connection and understanding, which is vital for emotional support.

*"Yeah, I like to talk and share stories with my friends. I share both my happiness and my sadness. I tell stories, like how someone was really annoying earlier. It's about sharing feelings too."*

**Alika** also add her view about emotional support, she said:

*“Yeah, Alhamdulillah, I've done quite a lot of sharing with friends here. If I have a problem, I share it with them, and they share back, so we support each other. There are close friends who really care, and there are also those who aren't as close. The really close friends are the ones who care a lot. For example, if I'm sick, they'll ask if I want to eat, get me food, give me medicine, and even go to the health center to get it for me.”*

From Alika's statement, she underscores the importance of a support network among friends, where sharing problems results in receiving emotional support in return. This not only aids in resolving issues but also deepens interpersonal connections. The reference to close friends offering tangible assistance during illness illustrates a profound sense of compassion and emotional support.

On the other side, **Amara** emphasizes the role of both friends and teachers in providing emotional support. The motivation and encouragement from teachers add an additional layer of support, contributing to her overall well-being and academic motivation.

This indicates that the participants highlight the crucial role of emotional support from both peers and teachers in their well-being. This support system includes having confidants to talk to during times of distress, sharing both positive and negative experiences, and receiving help and encouragement. Overall, the emotional support from these relationships contributes significantly to the participants' emotional well-being and resilience.

#### **4.2.1.10. Self-Care**

Participants highlighted the importance of self-care in maintaining mental well-being. The participants emphasize various self-care strategies to maintain their health, showcasing both individual approaches and common practices. To support the explanation, the participants stated:

**Asyila:** *“I maintain my health by watching what I eat because I have gastritis that can flare up anytime. So, I keep a regular eating pattern. If I have time, I exercise in the morning, maybe jogging. I also do other activities and keep the environment clean to avoid getting sick.”*

**Aisyah:** *“I make sure to get enough sleep, eat regularly when it's mealtime, and take vitamins in the morning and at night.”*

**Alika:** “*Maybe like us, if we don't have breakfast, we might get sick, so we have breakfast. If the dorm food isn't good, we can buy food at the canteen, and it's good. I also exercise regularly and practice martial arts, which is also a form of exercise.*”

**Amara:** “*I maintain my health by eating regularly and exercising. Usually, I exercise on Fridays; there's aerobics, volleyball, badminton, and I also do skipping. On a daily basis, I eat regularly and sleep regularly as well. I also take vitamins.*”

Exercise is another common self-care practice among the participants. Amara engages in aerobics, volleyball, badminton, and skipping, emphasizing variety. Alika includes regular exercise and martial arts as part of her routine, and Asyila incorporates morning jogging when possible. Preventive measures are evident in their self-care routines as well. Aisyah and Amara take vitamins daily to support their health, and Asyila manages her diet carefully due to her medical condition, focusing on environmental cleanliness to prevent illness. Overall, all participants adopt a holistic approach to self-care, integrating diet, exercise, sleep, and preventive measures. Amara and Aisyah emphasize the importance of consistent sleep and vitamin intake. Alika adapts her routine to include both exercise and flexible dietary choices, while Asyila tailors her self-care practices to manage her specific health needs, including regular eating, exercise, and cleanliness. In conclusion, the participants share similar self-care strategies, emphasizing regular eating patterns, exercise, and preventive measures to ensure overall well-being. Their holistic approaches reflect a comprehensive commitment to maintaining their health through consistent and proactive self-care practices.

#### **4.2.2. Addressing to Research Question 2: Strategies Employed by *Pesantren* Management/ Counsellor to Cultivate a Positive Peer Culture: Insights From a Counsellor**

Based on an interview with a counsellor at a *Pesantren X*, several strategies are employed to foster a positive peer culture that contributes to the overall well-being and academic success of students. These strategies are deeply rooted in Islamic teachings and values, and are implemented through various programs and activities within the *Pesantren X*.

##### **4.2.2.1. Foundational Islamic Teachings**

The *Pesantren X* promotes positive peer relationships by grounding their educational and social frameworks in Islamic teachings. The counselor mentioned the use of core principles

such as *Panca Jiwa*, *Panca Jangka* and *Panca Bina* which are complemented by teachings from the Quran and Hadith. These principles emphasize the importance of helping others, compassion, and the consequences of harmful behaviors like bullying.

To support this statement, Mrs. Rahimah states:

*“We implement 'panca jiwa,' 'panca jangka,' and 'panca bina' as foundational principles.”*  
*“Our teachings are rooted in the Quran and Hadith.”* *“We emphasize the importance of helping others and the consequences of harmful behaviors like bullying.”*

This indicates that the *Pesantren*'s commitment to implementing *Panca Jiwa*, *Panca Jangka*, and *Panca Bina* as foundational principles, alongside teachings rooted in the Quran and Hadith, creates a comprehensive framework for student development.

#### **Panca Jiwa (Five Spirits)**

1. Spirit of Sincerity
2. Spirit of Simplicity
3. Spirit of Independence
4. Spirit of Islamic Brotherhood (Ukhuwwah Islamiyyah)
5. Spirit of Freedom

#### **Panca Bina (Five Developments)**

1. Devout to Allah
2. Having Noble Character
3. Physically Healthy
4. Broad Knowledge
5. Creative and Skilled

#### **Panca Jangka (Five Plans)**

1. Improving Education Quality
2. Physical Development (Infrastructure and Facilities)
3. Fundraising
4. Cadre Formation
5. Community Service

This perspective is supported by the respondent's opinions as they reflect the positive outcomes of these principles in their daily lives and interactions within the *Pesantren*. The students' sense of self-acceptance and the supportive environment they experience are direct results of these foundational principles being effectively integrated into their educational and social experiences.

This holistic approach ensures that students receive a well-rounded education that includes spiritual, educational, social, and personal growth. By emphasizing the importance of helping others and addressing the consequences of harmful behaviours like bullying, the institution fosters a supportive and empathetic community. This integrated strategy not only enhances academic and spiritual development but also nurtures compassionate and responsible individuals, preparing them for a positive role in society.

#### **4.2.2.2. Regular Reminders and Reinforcement**

Teachers, counsellors, and the *Kyai* continuously remind students about compassion and mutual support. These reminders come during classes, counseling sessions, and community gatherings. In addition, the counsellor states:

*“Teachers, counselors, and the Kyai continuously remind students about compassion and mutual support.” “These reminders come during classes, counseling sessions, and community gatherings.”*

This approach highlights the commitment of *Pesantren X* to fostering a nurturing and supportive environment. By integrating reminders of compassion and mutual support into various aspects of school life, such as classes, counselling sessions, and community gatherings. The *Pesantren X* ensures that these values are consistently reinforced. This continuous emphasis on compassion and support helps create a cohesive community where students are encouraged to develop empathy and strong interpersonal relationships. The involvement of teachers, counsellors, and religious leaders (*Kyai*) in this process indicates a comprehensive and unified effort to instil these values, further strengthening the students' social and emotional development.

#### **4.2.2.3. Programs and Activities**

The institution organizes group discussions and social events, and designs collaborative projects to build friendships and social skills. These include group discussions,

social events, and collaborative projects. Such activities provide structured opportunities for students to build friendships and develop social skills in a supportive environment. To support the statement, the counsellor states:

*“We organize group discussions and social events.” “Collaborative projects are designed to build friendships and social skills.”*

These initiatives demonstrate the *Pesantren X*'s dedication to fostering a strong sense of community and enhancing students' social abilities. By organizing group discussions and social events, the *Pesantren* provides students with opportunities to interact, share ideas, and form meaningful connections. These activities encourage open communication and mutual understanding among students, contributing to a more cohesive and supportive environment.

Furthermore, collaborative projects are specifically designed to develop students' social skills and facilitate friendship building. Working together on projects requires students to cooperate, communicate effectively, and solve problems as a team. This not only helps them improve their interpersonal skills but also enhances their ability to collaborate effectively in different situations. Supported by the response from discussion with several students, one student stated:

*“Making friends in the pesantren is much better because we always do activities together.”*

Which emphasizing the strong social bonds formed through shared activities. Overall, these practices highlight the institution's commitment to creating a well-rounded educational experience that includes significant emphasis on social development and community building.

#### **4.2.2.4. Counsellor Support**

Counsellors play a crucial role in supporting students. Counsellors identify students who may be struggling with social interactions and provide personalized guidance. The counsellor in the interview emphasized the importance of addressing any signs of isolation or bullying promptly and ensuring that all students feel included and supported. To support this statement, the counsellor states:

*“Counsellors identify students who may be struggling with social interactions and provide personalized guidance.” “We address any signs of isolation or bullying promptly to ensure all students feel included and supported.”*

This approach shows the *Pesantren X* commitment to student well-being and social integration. Counsellors actively find and help students who have trouble with social interactions. Each student gets personalized guidance to improve their social skills and relationships. This helps students feel more confident and better able to interact with their peers. The *Pesantren X* takes quick action when they notice any signs of isolation or bullying. This shows their commitment to keeping the environment safe and inclusive for all students. By stepping in right away, they prevent the harmful effects of bullying and isolation. This approach not only promotes a culture of respect and support but also ensures that students feel emotionally secure. It helps students feel a sense of belonging and community, making sure everyone feels valued and included in the school.

#### **4.2.2.5. Handling the Negative Behaviours**

The *Pesantren X* has strict policies against bullying and other forms of harmful behaviour. These policies are enforced to maintain a safe and respectful environment. Students are educated about the negative impacts of such behaviors, both from a moral standpoint and in terms of their social consequences.

The counsellor also states:

*“We have strict policies against bullying to maintain a safe and respectful environment.”*

*“Students are educated about the negative impacts of harmful behaviors from both a moral and social standpoint.”*

These statements reflect the *Pesantren's* approach to creating a supportive and respectful school environment. By implementing strict policies against bullying, the institution sets clear boundaries and expectations for behavior, thereby fostering a safe atmosphere where students can learn and grow without fear of harassment or intimidation. This helps in promoting a positive school culture where mutual respect and dignity are upheld.

Additionally, educating students about the negative impacts of harmful behaviours serves to raise awareness and cultivate empathy among the student body. By addressing bullying from both moral and social perspectives, the institution not only discourages negative behaviours but also encourages students to consider the consequences of their actions on others. This educational approach contributes to the development of responsible and compassionate

individuals who contribute positively to their school community and beyond. Overall, these initiatives demonstrate the institution's commitment to promoting a culture of kindness, respect, and inclusivity among its students.

#### **4.2.2.6. Creating a Safe Environment**

Efforts are made to ensure that students feel safe and happy within the *Pesantren*. This includes creating physical spaces where students can relax and feel secure, as well as fostering an overall atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Students are encouraged to express themselves freely and to seek help whenever they need it.

*“We make efforts to ensure students feel safe and happy within the Pesantren.” “This includes creating physical spaces for relaxation and fostering an overall atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.” “Students are encouraged to express themselves freely and seek help whenever they need it.”*

These efforts underscore the *Pesantren X*'s commitment to promoting the well-being and emotional safety of its students. By prioritizing the creation of physical spaces for relaxation, such as designated areas for leisure and downtime, the institution acknowledges the importance of mental health and stress relief in student life. This initiative contributes to a supportive environment where students can unwind and recharge, fostering a sense of comfort and belonging. Moreover, the institution's emphasis on fostering an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect is crucial for creating a positive school climate. When students feel valued and respected by their peers and educators, they are more likely to engage actively in their studies and social interactions. This inclusive approach not only enhances the overall school experience but also promotes positive relationships and a sense of community among students.

Encouraging students to express themselves freely and seek help when needed further reinforces the institution's commitment to student welfare. By promoting open communication and providing access to support services, such as counseling and mentorship, the institution ensures that students have the resources and encouragement to navigate challenges effectively. This holistic approach to student support contributes to a nurturing educational environment where each student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

These strategies collectively help in cultivating a positive peer culture in *Pesantren*, thereby enhancing the overall well-being and academic success of the students. The consistent reinforcement of Islamic values, combined with structured programs and personalized support, creates an environment conducive to healthy social interactions and personal growth.

### **4.2.3. Addressing to Research Question 3: The Challenges Encountered by Female Students in Their Peer Relationships Within *Pesantren***

The interviews with the participants at the *Pesantren* provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by female students in their peer relationships. This analysis will summarize the key findings from the statements of the participants, including Asyila, Aisya, Alika, and Amara.

#### **4.2.3.1. Challenges Encountered by Female Students in Their Peer Relationships Within *Pesantren***

Based on the interviews conducted with Asyila, Aisya, Alika, and Amara regarding their experiences and challenges in peer relationships in *Pesantren X*, all of student participants acknowledged the diversity of personalities among their peers as a significant challenge. They emphasized the need to adapt and balance their own personalities with those of others to foster effective relationships. This adaptation was seen as crucial to avoiding conflict and maintaining harmonious interactions.

To support this statement, **Asyila, Aisyah, Amara** and **Alika** share the same perspective about individual differences. Some of them mentioned:

*“For me, each person has different personalities. I have to balance their personality with mine, see how they are. Because if I force my personality on them, it's hard to get along. So, we better balance our personalities.”*

The findings suggest that the participants recognize the importance of individual differences in personality, emphasizing the need to balance their own personality with that of others. This approach aims to avoid conflict and difficulties in getting along by adapting to different personalities. The participants' emphasis on balancing personalities highlights the importance of flexibility and adaptability in social interactions, which can lead to more effective and harmonious relationships. Additionally, the participants' approach suggests that they value understanding and empathy in their interactions with others, which can improve communication and foster personal growth. Overall, these findings suggest that the participants recognize the importance of individual differences, adaptation, and flexibility in social interactions. They also highlight the need for effective communication, understanding social dynamics, and maintaining positive relationships.

The findings from interview also supported by student participant in focus group discussion. Majority of them agree that having different personality becomes a barrier in forming a relationship with others.

*“For me, it's definitely the traits that haven't been accepted yet.” “Usually here, we're with senior or junior students, and friends too. Differences in behavior, some are quick-tempered and some are selfish. So, they're still not accepted by others.”*

#### **4.2.3.2. Handling Conflicts and Misunderstanding**

The participants demonstrated a mature approach to handling conflicts and misunderstandings. They emphasized the importance of communication and introspection. Strategies such as calmly discussing issues, seeking clarification, and understanding each other's perspectives were mentioned. Maintaining a cool-headed mindset was considered essential to resolving conflicts effectively.

The students at the *Pesantren X* demonstrate thoughtful and effective conflict resolution strategies, emphasizing understanding, communication, and emotional control. Here are insights from the students on how they approach conflicts:

##### **Asyila's Approach:**

Asyila highlights the importance of understanding the problem and addressing it with a calm mind to avoid escalating emotions:

*“Well... I first try to understand the problem, whether it's really like that or there are other things that make it a wrong understanding. Then, if there's a problem, we should use a calm mind, meaning not to let emotions get the better of us, so we don't get angry or upset. When we want to address a problem, we should use a calm and relaxed mind. Because if we use an angry mind, it will just lead to more anger and not solve the problem. So, if we want to solve a problem, we should use logic and emotions.”*

##### **Narrative on Other Students:**

Aisyah emphasizes collaborative problem-solving and open communication to clarify and resolve mistakes. Alika focuses on immediate dialogue and self-reflection to address anger and misunderstandings. Amara believes in discussing mistakes openly and reflecting on them together to find resolutions.

Together, these approaches reflect the supportive and understanding environment fostered by the *Pesantren X*, where students feel encouraged to handle conflicts constructively and empathetically. The participants emphasized the importance of understanding and addressing problems in a calm and rational manner. They highlighted the need to use a clear and logical approach to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings. Asyila noted that using a calm mind is essential to avoid emotions getting the better of us and to ensure that problems are solved effectively. Aisyah and Alika also emphasized the importance of clarifying issues and finding solutions together. Amara added that reflecting on oneself and the situation can help in resolving problems. Overall, the participants stressed the importance of using a calm and rational approach to address problems and maintain positive relationships.

#### **4.2.4. Discussion**

Based on the literature review provided, this discussion aims to connect the key findings from the reviewed studies to the theme of peer relationships and their significance in student well-being within the context of modern *pesantren* in Indonesia.

##### **4.2.4.1. Theoretical Foundations and Previous Research**

The well-being model developed by Konu and Rimpelä (2002) provides a robust framework for understanding the role of peer relationships in student well-being. This model, which emphasizes the significance of social support and positive interactions in educational settings, aligns well with the findings of Puroila et al. (2011), who highlighted the crucial role of social relationships among peers in children's well-being. This theoretical foundation is particularly relevant to the modern *pesantren* context in Indonesia, where students live and study in a closely-knit environment.

##### **4.2.4.2. Social Connections in *Pesantren***

The findings from the study conducted in a modern *pesantren X* highlight the importance of social connections among female students. As reflected in the interviews with Asyila, Aisyah, Alika, and Amara, these connections provide significant emotional support and contribute to a sense of belonging. The students emphasized that having many friends and feeling supported by them is essential for their emotional well-being. This resonates with Puroila et al. (2011), who found that children with close friends and who feel accepted exhibit higher levels of well-being.

#### **4.2.4.3. Supportive Friendships**

Supportive friendships emerged as a critical theme in the well-being of students at the *pesantren*. The interviews with female student participants at *pesantren* X revealed that trusted friends who show concern and care during times of illness or sadness play an important role in the students' emotional support system. This aligns with Sarkova et al. (2014), who found that supportive peer relationships are significantly related to lower levels of depression and anxiety among adolescents. The emotional support from friends, as described by the participants, helps them manage stress and maintain a positive outlook, further underscoring the importance of peer relationships in fostering mental health.

#### **4.2.4.4. Sense of Belonging and Positive Environment**

A strong sense of belonging is crucial for the well-being of students in the *pesantren*. The experiences from female student participants at *pesantren* X indicate that having friends both in the dormitory and classroom enhances their sense of community and belonging. This is consistent with the findings of Karyani et al. (2015) and Muhmidayeli (2007), who emphasized the role of social connections in fostering a sense of belonging. The inclusive and supportive environment in the *pesantren*, where students feel accepted and valued, mirrors the supportive school environment developed by Konu and Rimpelä (2002).

#### **4.2.4.5. Emotional and Psychological Well-being**

The emotional well-being of students is significantly influenced by their peer relationships. The support and encouragement from friends help students manage stress and avoid prolonged sadness. This finding aligns with the study by Mudzakiyah et al. (2022), which identified academic self-efficacy and peer attachment as significant predictors of student well-being. The participants in the *pesantren* study reported using various strategies to manage stress, including talking to friends, engaging in physical activities, and practicing self-care routines such as regular eating and exercise. These strategies reflect the importance of a supportive social environment in promoting emotional well-being.

Additionally, Norwich (2022) provides a broader view on how mental health and well-being are connected in schools. The study suggests that schools should focus more on students' well-being, not just academic goals. This holistic approach means creating supportive and inclusive environments that help students feel better mentally

and emotionally. Such changes in educational practices and policies are important for improving students' overall well-being.

#### **4.2.4.6. Conflict Resolution and Adaptation**

The ability to handle conflicts and misunderstandings is vital for maintaining healthy peer relationships. The participants demonstrated a mature approach to conflict resolution, emphasizing communication and introspection. This is in line with Kecaj et al. (2021), who highlighted the importance of effective communication and empathy in resolving conflicts. The students' emphasis on using a calm and rational approach to address problems underscores the supportive environment in the *pesantren*, which encourages constructive conflict resolution.

#### **4.2.4.7. Peer Dynamics and Mental Health**

Understanding the dynamics of peer relationships is crucial for supporting students' mental health. Hoferichter et al. (2021) stated that peer dynamics significantly impact a student's mental health and well-being. Positive peer relationships can provide emotional support, social learning, and role modelling, while negative peer dynamics can lead to peer conflict and adverse outcomes. The findings from the *pesantren* study underscore the importance of fostering positive peer interactions to enhance student well-being and highlight the potential negative effects of poor peer relationships.

#### **4.2.4.8. Implications for Educational Practices and Policies**

The findings from this study have important implications for educational practices and policies in *pesantren* and other similar institutions or schools. By focusing on building positive peer relationships and creating a supportive social environment can improve student well-being. Setting up support systems like peer mentoring programs and group activities can strengthen social connections and offer emotional support. Additionally, training teachers and staff on the importance of peer relationships and conflict resolution can help create a more positive school environment.

In conclusion, the critical role of peer relationships in student well-being, as conceptualized by Konu and Rimpelä (2002), is evident in the experiences of female students in a modern *pesantren* X. The consistent findings across different contexts and educational settings underscore the importance of fostering positive peer relationships to enhance student well-being.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of peer relationships in fostering the well-being of female students at a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia. The study employed a qualitative research methodology, including semi-structured interviews, observation, and focus group discussions. The data analysis revealed several key themes that contribute to the students' overall well-being.

#### 5.2. Conclusion

##### 5.2.1. Research Summary

This study focused on the role of peer relationships in the well-being of female students of Junior High School at a modern *Pesantren X* in Indonesia. Understanding how peer relationships affect various aspects of student well-being can offer valuable insights into educational practices in such unique settings. The findings of this study highlight the crucial role that peer relationships play in the well-being of students. It shows that these relationships are fundamental not only for providing emotional support but also for fostering a sense of belonging, enhancing self-esteem, and promoting mental health. The supportive and nurturing environment created by positive peer interactions contributes significantly to the overall well-being of the students. This study proposed three research questions: (1) How do peer relationships impact the emotional well-being of female students in a modern *Pesantren*? (2) What strategies are employed by *Pesantren* management to cultivate a positive peer culture? (3) What challenges do female students encounter in their peer relationships within the *Pesantren*?

The research was conducted at a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia, involving detailed interview, observations and focus group discussion with female students of junior high school. The methodology included thematic analysis of the collected data to provide comprehensive insights into the role of peer relationships in the students' well-being.

In conclusion, this study provides significant insights into the impact of peer relationships on student well-being in *Pesantren*. It emphasizes the need for targeted support systems and educational strategies that promote positive peer relationships. By addressing

these factors, educators and policymakers can improve the well-being and academic success of students in *Pesantren* and similar educational settings.

### **5.2.2. Research Findings**

By conducting Thematic Analysis as the data analysis process, this study revealed several key themes that contribute to the students' overall well-being.

#### **5.2.2.1. Social Connections and Emotional Support**

- **Social Connection:** The participants emphasized the importance of individual differences in personality, highlighting the need to balance their own personality with that of others to avoid conflict and difficulties in getting along. They also valued understanding and empathy in their interactions with others, which can improve communication and foster personal growth.
- **Emotional Support:** The students relied on their friendships for emotional support, especially during times of illness or sadness. They shared both positive and negative experiences with friends, which helps in managing emotions and provides a sense of connection and understanding.

#### **5.2.2.2. Conflict Resolution and Adaptation**

- **Handling Conflicts and Misunderstandings:** The respondents demonstrated a mature approach to handling conflicts and misunderstandings. They emphasized the importance of communication, introspection, and maintaining a cool-headed mindset to resolve conflicts effectively.
- **Adaptation:** The students acknowledged the diversity of personalities among their peers as a significant challenge. They emphasized the need to adapt and balance their own personalities with those of others to foster effective relationships.

#### **5.2.2.3. Sense of Belonging and Positive Interactions**

- **Sense of Belonging:** The students felt a strong sense of belonging among their peers, which is evident in their interactions and the support they receive from their peers.

- **Positive Interactions:** The students enjoyed participating in various activities with their friends, which made them feel happy and supported.

#### 5.2.2.4. Stress Management and Support Networks

- **Stress Management:** The participants used various strategies to manage stress and anxiety, including social support from friends, physical activities, journaling, and prayer.
- **Support Networks:** The students relied on their friendships for emotional support, especially during times of illness or sadness.

#### 5.2.2.5. Challenges and Adaptation

- **Challenges Encountered by Female Students:** The participants acknowledged the diversity of personalities among their peers as a significant challenge. They emphasized the need to adapt and balance their own personalities with those of others to foster effective relationships.

#### 5.2.2.6. Policies and Efforts by the *Pesantren X* Management to Foster Peer Relationships

The *Pesantren X* management implements several strategies to foster positive peer relationships and enhance student well-being. Core Islamic principles emphasizing compassion and helping others are integrated into daily life, reinforced by teachings from the Quran and Hadith. Teachers, counsellors, and religious leaders continuously remind students of these values during classes, counselling sessions, and community gatherings. Structured activities such as group discussions, social events, and collaborative projects build friendships and social skills, fostering a strong sense of community. Counsellors provide personalized guidance to students struggling with social interactions, promptly address signs of isolation or bullying, and ensure all students feel included and supported. Strict anti-bullying policies are enforced, and students are educated about the negative impacts of harmful behaviours, promoting a culture of empathy and respect. Efforts are made to create physical spaces where students can relax and feel secure, and an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect is fostered, encouraging students to express themselves freely and seek help when needed. Extracurricular activities and community service are promoted to enhance social skills, instil a sense of responsibility, and

foster a positive peer culture, collectively creating a supportive and nurturing environment that significantly contributes to the students' overall well-being and academic success.

The findings suggest that the students at the *Pesantren X* recognize the importance of individual differences, adaptation, and flexibility in social interactions. They also highlight the need for effective communication, understanding social dynamics, and maintaining positive relationships. The supportive and inclusive environment fostered by the *Pesantren X*, along with the commitment to foundational principles like *Panca Jiwa*, *Panca Jangka*, and *Panca Bina*, significantly contributes to the students' self-confidence, sense of belonging, and ability to handle conflicts constructively.

### **5.3. Suggestions**

#### **5.3.1. For Future Research**

Future research on peer relationships and well-being in educational settings, particularly *Pesantren*, can benefit from several focused approaches. Longitudinal studies are essential to understand how peer relationships evolve over time and their long-term impact on students' mental health and academic success. These studies could offer deeper insights compared to the snapshot provided by the current study, highlighting the dynamics of these relationships over an extended period.

Comparative studies across different educational settings could also be valuable. While this study focuses on a modern *Pesantren*, comparing these findings with those from public schools or other types of boarding schools could reveal unique aspects of the *Pesantren* environment. Such comparisons could illuminate distinct challenges and benefits inherent to the *Pesantren*, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of educational contexts.

Examining gender differences in peer relationships and well-being is another crucial area for future research. Understanding whether and how these dynamics differ for male students compared to female students could provide a fuller picture of the influences on student well-being in *Pesantren* settings. Furthermore, the role of digital communication in peer relationships is increasingly relevant as technology becomes more integral to students' lives. Investigating how online interactions complement or complicate face-to-face relationships could provide insights into the benefits and challenges of digital communication in maintaining peer relationships.

Lastly, exploring cultural factors influencing peer relationships is critical. Understanding the cultural norms and values that shape social dynamics in *Pesantren* can provide nuanced insights into the specific needs and challenges faced by students. This cultural perspective is essential for developing interventions and policies that are culturally sensitive and effective. By pursuing these research directions, future studies can build on current findings to develop a more nuanced understanding of peer relationships and their impact on student well-being in *Pesantren* and similar educational settings.

### **5.3.2. For Practical Implications**

The findings from this study offer several practical implications for improving the well-being of female students in *Pesantren* and similar educational settings. One important implication is the enhancement of social support systems within schools. Implementing structured support systems that encourage positive peer relationships, such as peer mentoring programs, group activities, and team-building exercises, can significantly strengthen bonds among students. These initiatives can foster strong peer relationships, thereby enhancing students' emotional and social well-being, which in turn can lead to improved mental health and academic performance.

Another important practical implication is the need for training teachers and staff on the importance of peer relationships and how to support them. Schools should provide training programs that include strategies for conflict resolution, promoting inclusivity, and identifying students who may need additional support. Teachers equipped with these skills can create a more supportive and understanding school environment, helping students feel safe and valued.

Additionally, creating safe spaces for social interaction is essential. Schools should develop environments where students feel comfortable and secure to interact and build relationships. This can be achieved through designated areas for social activities and ensuring that these spaces are monitored to maintain a positive atmosphere. By providing safe spaces, schools can facilitate healthy social interactions that contribute to the overall well-being of students.

Lastly, promoting extracurricular activities that foster social connections and emotional well-being is essential. Schools should encourage student participation in various clubs, sports, and other activities that align with their interests. These activities not only provide a break from academic pressures but also serve as platforms for students to develop new friendships and enhance their social skills. By implementing these practical measures,

educational institutions can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that significantly contributes to the well-being and success of their students.

### **5.3.3. For *Pesantren* Management**

*Pesantren* management can enhance the well-being of female students by fostering a supportive social environment through regular group activities, peer mentoring programs, and extracurricular clubs that promote teamwork and mutual support. Professional development for staff is essential, focusing on the importance of peer relationships, conflict resolution, and inclusivity to equip educators with the tools to create a positive social atmosphere. Providing safe and inclusive spaces for social interaction, along with accessible mental health support services and regular workshops on stress management, is crucial. Encouraging student autonomy and leadership by involving students in decision-making and offering leadership opportunities can boost their self-confidence and sense of responsibility. Regularly monitoring and evaluating these initiatives through feedback from students and staff will ensure continuous improvement and better meet the needs of students. By implementing these strategies, *Pesantren* management can create a nurturing environment that significantly enhances the well-being and development of their female students.

### **5.4. Limitation**

In this research, I face several limitations that need to be considered. One of them is the constraint in data collection due to limited time. The short timeframe affects both the quantity and depth of data I can gather for this study. Additionally, time constraints limit my ability to conduct thorough analysis and explore various aspects of information more broadly. This certainly impacts my capability to generalize the findings from this research. Nevertheless, I have made every effort to ensure that the findings remain valid and relevant within the available context.

I also face limitations in the scope of the study because my subjects are female Islamic boarding school students (*santri putri*), which involves certain cultural sensitivities that need to be considered. This affects my ability to conduct in-depth observations in certain aspects. Additionally, due to the research being conducted close to final exams, their extracurricular activities are limited, reducing opportunities to observe activities beyond the main curriculum. Nevertheless, I strive to maximize the analysis and interpretation of the available data to produce relevant and meaningful findings.

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## APPENDICES

### *Appendix 1. Interview Questions*

## RESEARCH PROTOCOL

### Appendix 1

#### Interview

1. Assalamualaikum, selamat pagi/siang/sore.
2. Perkenalkan, nama saya Salsabila Abdul Ghofur. Saya mahasiswi S2 di UIII yang saat ini sedang tahap menulis tugas akhir.
3. Kami bermaksud meminta kesediaan saudara untuk menjawab beberapa pertanyaan tentang pengalaman anda mengenai hubungan sosial/ pertemanan dan juga kesejahteraan di pesantren.  
Kegiatan ini bersifat sukarela, dan anda bisa mengundurkan diri dalam kegiatan ini. Partisipasi anda bersifat rahasia, dan data yang diberikan hanya akan digunakan dalam thesis penulis.
4. Jika bersedia, maka dilanjutkan dengan pertanyaan lanjutan.

### List of Questions

#### Research Questions:

1. To what extent the role of peer relationships inspires to the well-being of female students in junior high school at a modern Pesantren in Indonesia?
2. What are the strategies of counsellors of *Pesantren* management to enhance peer relationships among students?
3. What are the challenges experienced by female students in junior high school at a modern *Pesantren* in Indonesia in maintaining healthy peer relationships?

RQ	Dimension	What to be Known	Questions	Indonesian
<p><b>Significance of the role of peer relationships</b></p>	<p><b>Having</b></p>	<p>Social Connections : Understanding the quality and depth of peer relationships among female junior high school students.</p> <p>Support Network: Examining the extent of social support and friendship networks within the peer group.</p> <p>Sense of Belonging:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you feel like you have enough friends to talk to and play with at the Pesantren?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Dormitory</li> <li>b. School</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Are you able to join clubs or activities that you enjoy and that contribute to your happiness?</li> <li>- Can you describe a place at the Pesantren where you feel safe and happy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apakah Anda merasa memiliki cukup teman untuk diajak bicara dan bermain di Pesantren?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asrama</li> <li>• Sekolah</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Apakah Anda dapat bergabung dengan klub atau kegiatan yang Anda sukai dan dapat meningkatkan kebahagiaan Anda?</li> <li>• Bisakah Anda mendeskripsikan sebuah tempat di Pesantren di mana Anda merasa aman dan Bahagia?</li> </ul>

		Investigating feelings of inclusion and belongingness among students in the Pesantren setting.		
	<b>Loving</b>	Emotional Well-being: Assessing emotional experiences and the impact of peer relationships on emotional stability.  Interpersonal Relationships: Exploring the nature of interpersonal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you feel like you have someone to talk to when you're feeling sad or upset?</li> <li>2. Are you able to share your feelings and thoughts with someone you trust within the Pesantren community?</li> <li>3. Can you describe someone at the Pesantren who cares about you and</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apakah Anda merasa memiliki seseorang untuk diajak bicara saat sedih atau terganggu?</li> <li>• Apakah Anda dapat berbagi perasaan dan pikiran dengan seseorang yang Anda percayai dalam komunitas Pesantren?</li> </ul>

		<p>I connections and how they contribute to overall well-being.</p>	<p>supports you emotionally?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bisakah Anda mendeskripsikan seseorang di Pesantren yang peduli dan mendukung Anda secara emosional?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Being</b></p>	<p>Self-Perception: Examining how peer relationships influence self-esteem and self-concept.</p> <p>Autonomy: Investigating the level of independence and agency experienced by students in their</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you feel like you can be yourself and express your true identity without fear of judgment?</li> <li>2. Are you encouraged to try new things and take healthy risks at the Pesantren? (for example join the martial arts and sports)</li> <li>3. Do you have the autonomy</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apakah Anda merasa bisa menjadi diri sendiri dan mengekspresikan identitas sejati tanpa takut dihakimi?</li> <li>• Apakah Anda didorong untuk mencoba hal-hal baru dan mengambil risiko yang sehat di Pesantren?</li> </ul>

		social interactions.	to make decisions and choices that align with your values and preferences?	(contohnya mengikuti Pencak Silat dan olahraga) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apakah Anda memiliki otonomi untuk membuat keputusan dan pilihan yang sesuai dengan nilai dan preferensi Anda?</li> </ul>
	<b>Health</b>	Mental Health: Assessing the impact of peer relationships on mental health outcomes such as anxiety and depression.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do you prioritize and manage your physical health while studying at the Pesantren?</li> <li>2. How do you cope with stress and anxiety in a healthy manner?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bagaimana Anda memprioritaskan dan mengelola kesehatan fisik Anda selama belajar di Pesantren?</li> <li>• Bagaimana Anda mengatasi stres dan</li> </ul>

		Physical Well-being: Exploring how social interactions contribute to physical health and overall vitality.	3. Are you able to get enough sleep and rest to support your overall well-being?	kecemasan dengan cara yang sehat? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apakah Anda dapat tidur dan istirahat yang cukup untuk mendukung kesejahteraan secara keseluruhan?</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies</b>	Understanding the organizational and support frameworks designed to foster positive peer relationships among students.	To uncover the strategies and best practices employed by Pesantren management and counselors to cultivate a positive peer culture that contributes to the overall well-being	1. How does the Pesantren promote opportunities for students to develop friendships and social connections? 2. Can you describe any specific programs or activities organized by the Pesantren to foster positive peer interactions?	4. Bagaimana Pesantren mempromosikan kesempatan bagi siswa untuk mengembangkan persahabatan dan hubungan sosial? 5. Bisakah Anda mendeskripsikan program atau kegiatan tertentu yang

		and academic success of students.	3. How do counselors support students in building and maintaining healthy relationships with their peers?	<p>diselenggara kan oleh Pesantren untuk membina interaksi positif antar teman?</p> <p>6. Bagaimana konselor mendukung siswa dalam membangun dan menjaga hubungan yang sehat dengan rekan sebaya?</p>
<b>Challenges</b>	This dimension encompasses various aspects related to the challenges encountered by female students in their peer interactions	To uncover the specific challenges and complexities faced by female students in building and maintaining healthy peer relationship	<p>1. What are some of the common difficulties you face in your interactions with peers at the Pesantren?</p> <p>2. How do you navigate conflicts or misunderstand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apa saja kesulitan umum yang Anda hadapi dalam interaksi dengan teman sebaya di Pesantren?</li> <li>• Bagaimana Anda menavigasi konflik atau</li> </ul>

	within Pesantren	s within a modern Pesantren setting.	ings with your peers? 3. Are there any barriers that prevent you from forming or maintaining positive relationships with other students?	kesalahpaha man dengan teman sebaya? • Apakah ada hambatan yang mencegah Anda untuk membentuk atau menjaga hubungan positif dengan siswa lain?
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*Appendix 2. An Example of Translated Transcript*

**INTERVIEW WITH 1ST PARTICIPANT FROM STUDENTS: Asyila (pseudo name)**

Interviewer: Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh. Good morning. Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Salsabila Abdul Ghofur. I am a master's student at the International Islamic University Indonesia, currently in the final stages of my thesis. We would like to ask for your willingness to answer some questions about your experiences regarding social relationships or friendships, as well as well-being in the boarding school. This participation is voluntary; there is no threat or coercion, and you may withdraw if you find this activity intimidating or uncomfortable. Your participation will be kept confidential; your identity will not be disclosed anywhere, and the data provided will only be used for this written thesis. It's just the answers, no names, no school details. If you are willing, we can proceed with further questions. Are you ready?

Asyila: I'm ready.

Interviewer: Thank you. Could you first tell me which class you are in at the boarding school?

Asyila: I'm in class 2D TMI at this pesantren.

Interviewer: Alright. Let's get to the first question. Do you feel you have enough friends to talk to at the pesantren? But first, here are two parts: in class and in the dormitory. How about in the dormitory? Do you feel you have enough friends?

Asyila: Yes, I feel I have enough friends in my dormitory. Alhamdulillah, everyone is good, there are no problems. Alhamdulillah, I have many friends, good friends in the dormitory who accept me as I am. We share with each other.

Interviewer: And what about in school?

Asyila: It's the same in school; I also have many friends. So, I can socialize with other friends, share stories, sing with other friends. We joke around together. So, both in the dormitory and in school, I have many friends.

Interviewer: Next, have you been able to join clubs or activities that enhance your happiness? For example, activities like cooking, sewing, or other activities usually available at the pesantren.

Asyila: Yes, what makes me happy is there are several activities at this pesantren that I enjoy. I also enjoy being part of the core team as a coordinator. The core team is in scouting. Usually, we train together on chants. We add materials like Morse code, pioneering, and first aid.

Interviewer: So, this can increase happiness at the pesantren?

Asyila: Yes, it does, it makes me happy.

Interviewer: Can you describe a place in this pesantren where you feel happy and safe? Somewhere comfortable where there's no senior telling you what to do, or anything like that, where is this place?

Asyila: Actually, I like being random, I seek solitude, I seek tranquility. If I want to find a place to study, I look for a quiet place, like studying alone in class. I also like it in my room.

Interviewer: So, you prefer solitude, not being with others?

Asyila: It depends, it depends on my mood.

Interviewer: When stressed or finding studies difficult, where do you feel safe and happy?

Asyila: When I have a lot on my mind, I want to find a quiet place.

Interviewer: Next, do you have someone to talk to when sad or troubled and have problems?

Asyila: I have friends here whom I can talk to, whom I can share my problems with.

Interviewer: Are there many friends?

Asyila: Whom I trust, just two. But I have many friends.

Interviewer: Next, have you been able to share feelings and thoughts with someone trusted in the pesantren community? When you're sad or happy, do you share your feelings with a friend or someone else?

Asyila: Yes, I share my happiness with my friend whom I trust, but not everyone can know how I feel.

Interviewer: Can you describe someone who supports you emotionally when sad? Like if there's someone like that in the pesantren, in the dormitory, or in school who supports you in your studies or otherwise?

Asyila: I have a friend whom I share my problems or happiness with. If I'm happy, I also share the news with that friend. Because if I'm sad, I don't keep it to myself. I want to tell someone about it. My friend also supports me, encourages me, as long as it's best for me. If I'm sad, I'm cheered up, given support. So I don't stay sad for too long.

Interviewer: Do you feel you can be yourself and express your identity without fear of judgment or ridicule? Confident in yourself, as a person, confident?

Asyila: Hmm... There are times when I feel confident, and there are times when I don't. But usually, if something happens, or something like that, if someone talks about me, I don't take it to heart. I take it as a lesson and reflect on myself. I believe that this self of mine, God willing, will be useful in society with the skills, efforts, and knowledge I have, God willing, will be beneficial to others.

Interviewer: So you're not afraid of others talking about you?

Asyila: If someone talks about me, I'm okay with it because maybe there's a side that doesn't like me, so I'm okay if they talk about me. But it shouldn't cross the line.

Interviewer: Yes, that's right. Okay, next, are you encouraged to try new things and take healthy risks at the pesantren? Like for example, sports have risks, right? Are you encouraged to try new things and take risks? For example, there are activities that are a bit... extreme. So, what's that like?

Asyila: So, before I came here, I used to join Taekwondo extracurriculars. Now here, there's Tapak Suci. Tapak Suci is martial arts. I want to see how Tapak Suci is like. They say there's a Tapak Suci competition in June or July, so I want to try participating in that competition.

Interviewer: So, you like to challenge yourself?

Asyila: Yes, because Taekwondo and Tapak Suci have different moves.

Interviewer: Okay. Next, do you have the freedom to make decisions and choices that align with your values and principles? For example... let's say there's scouting or Tapak Suci. Are you forced to choose that or free to choose that? For example, dancing. Are you forced to choose or is it your freedom to choose?

Asyila: I participate in activities here based on my own decision. I participate in extracurricular activities or other activities based on my own will, no coercion from others or from my parents, it's all from my own heart.

Interviewer: So, if for example there's a cooking club, and you don't like cooking, but you're told to join, someone tells you to join, how would that be?

Asyila: I try new things. I can't cook, but since joining the cooking club, I've been... God willing, I'll be able to cook...

Interviewer: So, you like new things?

Asyila: Yes.

Interviewer: That's good, that's good. Next, how do you prioritize and manage your physical health while studying at the pesantren? To stay healthy, how do you do it?

Asyila: I start with watching what I eat. Because I have gastric problems that can come anytime, so I maintain my eating habits. Then, if I have time, I do morning exercise, maybe jogging. I do other activities to maintain a healthy environment to avoid illnesses.

Interviewer: Good, good. Next, how do you cope with stress and anxiety? When feeling bad, not in the mood, how do you handle it healthily?

Asyila: I do things that make me happy, for example, I brush or wash clothes, I become calmer.

Interviewer: What if there's a friend who annoys you?

Asyila: Usually, if someone I find unimportant talks to me, I don't think too much about it, I don't add to my worries.

Interviewer: Good, good. Next, do you get enough sleep and rest to support your well-being? Is the sleep and rest here at the pesantren enough?

Asyila: Alhamdulillah, it's enough for me. But because I used to stay up late at home, but I stay up until around 11 o'clock at the latest. That's only if there's homework or important activities for the next day. But if I'm already tired, I rest right away.

Interviewer: So it's enough?

Asyila: Yes.

Interviewer: Next, this is the last question. What are the difficulties often faced in interacting with friends at the pesantren?

Asyila: Well, everyone has different personalities. I have to balance their personality with mine, how they are and how I am. Because if I force their personality to be like mine, it's difficult to get along. So, we balance our personalities with each other.

Interviewer: Are there any other difficulties? Like if there's a friend who's how?

Asyila: It just takes time. If befriending someone annoying takes time.

Interviewer: Alright, alright. Lastly, are there any obstacles or factors that could prevent you from building or maintaining positive relationships with other friends? Are there any obstacles if you want to be friends with someone, are there always obstacles?

Asyila: Yes, there are sometimes things like that.

Interviewer: Can you give an example?

Asyila: Well, for example, I had a close friend back in MI (Islamic Elementary School) here. When we got here, there are probably more friends, because we're not roommates anymore and not in the same class, so they moved on to other friends. But for me, it's okay now because we're not as close anymore.

Interviewer: But if you ever need to make friends or build friendships again, are there any that didn't work out? Are there any?

Asyila: Yes... There are. There was one like that. I wanted to be friends with them, but they didn't respond to me. Maybe there are cooler friends, maybe they chose other friends.

Interviewer: Okay, that's it. Thank you very much for your participation. Thank you very much, your answers were very good. Thank you, peace be upon you, and may the mercy of Allah be upon you.

Asyila: And peace be upon you, and may the mercy of Allah be upon you too.

**RESULTS OF OBSERVING ACTIVITIES OF FEMALE  
ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL STUDENTS ON WEDNESDAY**

**Wake Up, Fajr Prayer in Congregation, and Personal Preparation (04:00 - 05:30)** The female students assist each other in waking up, demonstrating solidarity early in the morning.

**Environmental Cleanliness Activity (05:30 - 06:00)** Engaging in communal cleaning activities enhances cooperation and solidarity among the female students of the pesantren.

**Breakfast Together (06:00 - 06:30)** During breakfast, the female students sit together in small groups, chatting and joking, strengthening their bonds with each other.

**Morning School (07:00 - 12:00)** During classes, the female students sit together, sharing knowledge and helping each other understand the lesson materials.

**Dhuhr Prayer in Congregation (12:00 - 12:30)** Congregational prayers strengthen the spiritual and social bonds among the female students.

**Lunch Together (12:30 - 13:00)** During lunch, the female students share stories and experiences, creating a friendly and harmonious atmosphere.

**Muhadhoroh (Speech in 3 Languages: Arabic, English, Indonesian) (12:00 - 14:30)** This activity helps the female students improve their communication skills in three languages. They support each other and provide feedback, creating a supportive learning environment.

**Rest and Leisure Activities (15:00 - 15:30)** During break time, the female students engage in jokes and play together, strengthening their friendships.

**Asr Prayer in Congregation (15:30 - 16:00)** Congregational prayers reinforce the sense of togetherness among the female students.

**Tapak Suci Extracurricular (16:00 - 17:00)** During this time, the female students practice Tapak Suci or martial arts. This activity allows them to build resilience and socialize, strengthening their bonds and friendships as it requires partners for practice.

**Maghrib Prayer in Congregation (18:00 - 18:30)** This activity gathers the female students for a communal activity emphasizing unity and faith.

**Quran Study Together (18:30 - 19:00)** Studying the Quran in small groups strengthens spiritual bonds and unity.

**Isha Prayer in Congregation (19:00 - 19:40)** Night prayers serve as a closing activity that reinforces the sense of togetherness among the female students.

**Dinner Together (19:40 - 20:00)** Having dinner together creates a warm family atmosphere and mutual support.

**Group Study (20:00 - 21:30)** Group study sessions allow the female students to help each other understand lessons and solve problems together.

**Rest and Bedtime Preparation (21:30 - 22:00)** Before bedtime, the female students have brief conversations and ensure all preparations for sleep are done, showing care and concern for each other.

*Appendix 4. An Example of Translated Focus Group Discussion*

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION 1**

Interviewer: Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, good morning.

Participant A, Participant B, Participant C, Participant D: Waalaikumsalam, warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, good morning Miss.

Interviewer: Allow me to introduce myself, I'm Salsabila Abdul Ghofur, a graduate student at the International Islamic University Indonesia currently in the thesis writing stage. Today, we would like to request your willingness to answer some questions about your experiences regarding social relationships or friendships, as well as well-being in this pesantren. Participation in this activity is voluntary, which means if you feel uncomfortable, you can withdraw from the activity. Your participation is confidential, and the data provided will only be used for my thesis. If you agree, we can proceed with the questions. Are you all willing?

Participant A, Participant B, Participant C, Participant D: Yes, Miss, we are willing.

Interviewer: Before we begin, could you please tell me what class you're in?

Participant A: I'm in class 2F.

Participant B: I'm in class 3E.

Participant C: I'm in class 1D.

Participant D: I'm in class 3D.

Interviewer: Alright. Let's start with the first question. How are friendships here in the pesantren? How would you describe it?

Participant A: Well, here in the pesantren, we're all friends together, there's no picking and choosing, everyone mingles, no circles or groups.

Interviewer: Do you have close friends here who are always there for you, both in good times and bad?

Participant A: Yes, I do, Miss.

Interviewer: How about you?

Participant B: Hmm.. In my opinion, making friends at the pesantren is much better because we're always together in activities. We're always together, so socializing is easier and closer.

Interviewer: Okay, and you? Do you have close friends here in the pesantren?

Participant C: Yes, I do.

Interviewer: Alright, one more. Do you have friends here in the pesantren?

Participant D: Yes, I do, especially those who are like confidants, even friends can be a place to confide in.

Interviewer: Good. Does it mean that both in the dormitory and at school, the friends are the same?

Participant A, Participant B, Participant C, Participant D: Mostly the same, Miss. So it's not different.

Interviewer: Who do you talk to when you're feeling sad? How do they help you feel better, if they do?

Participant A: Usually, when I'm sad, I talk about it, and then they support me, like saying, "Don't be sad anymore. How about we do something so we won't be sad?" They comfort us, so we feel more comfortable confiding in them.

Interviewer: Okay, how about you?

Participant B: If I'm feeling sad and need someone to talk to, I go anywhere, especially to my roommates. Roommates know more about us in the room, how we are daily. So when we tell them, the friends we tell know how we feel.

Interviewer: And you?

Participant C: If, for example, I have someone to confide in, when I'm sad, they will give me motivational support. They also remind me not to do bad things, do better.

Interviewer: I see. Okay, if you're feeling sad, who do you talk to?

Participant D: Hmm.. I have a close friend.

Interviewer: Then how do they help, help you?

Participant D: Definitely give encouragement and also give input for the future to be better.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Do you feel comfortable talking about your feelings to friends? How? Comfortable not if you have a story to a close friend, comfortable not?

Participant A: Well, I'm comfortable, Miss. But to certain people who are close to us.

Interviewer: And you?

Participant B: If I'm alone, I'm comfortable, but it's also the same with a few close people.

Interviewer: How about you?

Participant C: Definitely comfortable, especially with friends or friends who know about our lives, our feelings. So, we feel more relaxed when we tell friends, especially about our problems.

Interviewer: Okay, how about you?

Participant D: Definitely comfortable, then especially with close friends who are almost everything that we know about us, how we feel.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Now do you, do you feel you can be yourself here without fear of being judged by others, confident?

Participant A: Well, I feel confident because I think I can, Miss.

Interviewer: Good, how about you?

Participant B: Yes, of course, I can be confident because I can do it because I don't need to hear other people's words because I can trust myself.

Interviewer: Good, how about you?

Participant C: If I can trust myself, don't listen to other people's words, then there is also support from friends. For what, don't be afraid, so we can trust ourselves who we think can.

Interviewer: Good, how about you?

Participant D: Yes, I feel confident, then if there are words that might not be good, then later for the future, how. Then get support from our friends, so that we can be confident.

**Interviewer:**

Alright, now, do you feel supported to try new things here at the pesantren? For example, things you've never done before, like martial arts—if you hadn't done it before, but here you want to do it.

Participant A: Yes, Miss. I feel like martial arts has always been my thing, and here it's active. Like participating in competitions and such, so I feel more accustomed, more enjoyable. I'm not nervous anymore when meeting many people or participating in competitions.

Interviewer: Okay, how about you?

Participant B: For me, at home, there was no martial arts, but for example, cooking—before, I couldn't cook. Now I'm more interested in learning to cook better here. And I also get support from friends to try new things.

Interviewer: Okay, and you?

Participant C: Back in my old school, I never joined extracurricular activities like dancing, cooking, and such. But here, when I found out there were many extracurricular activities like that, I wanted to try new things. Like dancing, public speaking, cooking, martial arts, scouting—I'm really happy here because there are so many new things I can try.

Interviewer: Okay, how about you?

Participant D: Back then, I only joined dance and drum band clubs. But here, there are many clubs, so I'm trying things I couldn't do before.

Interviewer: I see, alright. Do you feel you can make decisions on your own without being forced or pressured by others?

Participant A: Yes, I can, Miss. Usually, if it's my own decision, it's usually for myself. But if it's a decision we make together, we discuss and consult each other.

Interviewer: Okay, how about you?

Participant B: For me, I can make decisions for myself, and if it's a joint decision, there's always a discussion and consultation.

Interviewer: Alright, and you?

Participant C: When it comes to making personal decisions, sometimes I ask for advice from friends for a better decision. So, I don't make mistakes in making decisions I'm still unsure about. But for decisions we make together, we always discuss it through consultation.

Interviewer: Okay, good. And you?

Participant D: Well, making personal decisions is really difficult because there are a lot of doubts, but when I talk to myself about it, I always find a solution. If it's a decision we make together, there's always a discussion and consensus.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Now, how do you maintain your health here at the pesantren?

Participant A: I focus more on eating here, reduce snacks, and eat more of the dormitory food, which is healthier.

Participant B: For me, it's running, and the food here, we already eat three times a day, it's enough. I cut down on unhealthy snacks and oily foods. Also, we have enough physical activities here.

Participant C: For me, maintaining health and cleanliness is important, both in my room and around me, because if we want to eat but the environment isn't clean, it's pointless. Also, we have to manage snacks and food to avoid eating indiscriminately.

Participant D: I drink water regularly, like after showering, waking up, and so on. And if it comes to snacks, I reduce icy snacks, oily snacks, and eat three times a day.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Now, how do you deal with stress or anxiety while at the pesantren?

Participant A: Usually, I have friends who are really mood boosters, like when I'm sad, I play with them, and after playing with them, I laugh, so I feel relieved.

Participant B: For me, it's more about resting, being alone if not, doing hobbies I like.

Participant C: For me, it's talking to close friends who understand my feelings. And if there are no close friends available, I try to divert my attention to extracurricular activities I enjoy. Like martial arts, which helps me relieve stress.

Participant D: For me, it's writing in a diary, expressing my complaints and so on. Or talking to close friends when I'm anxious.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Now, what does this pesantren do, from this dormitory, according to you, the efforts of this pesantren so that you can have many friends, what efforts and activities does this pesantren make for you to have friends, are there any?

Participant A: Usually, like if we often join extracurricular activities, we can mingle. So we have many friends, not just classmates, but also seniors and juniors.

Participant B: In my opinion, it's because of the different room assignments, not all are in the same class, there are seniors, there are juniors. So we can mingle and get to know more than just our class.

Participant C: I think besides extracurricular activities, there are also events that we can do together. So not just classmates, but at those events, we can participate together, like competitions, extracurricular activities, or other activities together.

Participant D: For me, it's from room changes. If we change rooms, last year we had different friends, and this year we have different friends again. So we can mingle with others, and when we gather, we don't sit by class. So it helps us mingle.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Now, what activities help you make friends with others? Are there any beneficial activities at this pesantren? Are there any agendas or events?

Participant A: I think it's more about competition events, Miss, because when we're in a competition, sometimes we really need each other. We support each other, so we feel closer to our friends.

Participant B: For me, it's also about competition events, Miss, because we really need each other, we all need each other. So we encourage each other.

Participant C: I think it's similar to competitions, besides competitions, there are extracurricular activities that can bring us together, so we can be closer.

Participant D: For me, it's from extracurricular activities, and if there are events, we who are like committee, being a committee can make each other not be selfish, strengthen each other.

Interviewer: Okay, finally, are there any problems you often face with friends at the pesantren, and how do you overcome them?

Participant A: There are always problems with friends at the pesantren, but when there's a problem, one of us has to apologize first so we can be friends again and not fight.

Participant B: There are always problems, maybe misunderstandings or something, but someone with the problem has to straighten things out first. So, who should apologize and who shouldn't, or maybe both are wrong because both are selfish, so we must forgive each other.

Participant C: Problems in the dormitory with friends are inevitable, especially over trivial matters because jokes are taken too seriously. So, those who argue must have a deep talk to resolve the problem properly.

Participant D: If there are problems with friendships, we discuss it calmly, and then apologize. Because if we tell others again, maybe it'll get worse due to misunderstandings, what's said isn't right, so we should talk together.

Interviewer: Alright, that's it. Thank you very much for your participation; this is very useful for me. Your identities are safe and won't be disclosed. Thank you very much for your participation, Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.