



Traditional Pesantren, Parental Involvement, and Santri Well-being: Insights from Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran of Yogyakarta

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ABSTRACT

The importance of student well-being in the context of positive youth development is widely acknowledged, despite little recognitions regarding what it means for *santri* to live well in the educational setting of traditional pesantren. “santri well-being” encompasses a dual-faceted composition, encompassing affective elements and life satisfaction of the pesantren students. A kiai or caregivers, not only acting as a prominent religious scholar and charismatic leader, but also assumes a pivotal role as a custodial figure within the contextual fabric of traditional pesantren milieu. The focal point of this research revolves around the examination of santri well-being within the context of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran. With an educational heritage spanning half a century, it maintains a profound affiliation with Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest Islamic organization in contemporary Indonesia. Situated in Yogyakarta, the pesantren has exhibited substantial progress of education strategies over time, adopting modern innovations while upholding its traditional Sunni values and principles. The research methodology involved the purposive selection of eight informants strategically chosen in accordance with the research objectives. This cohort comprises both students and caregivers affiliated with the pesantren. The findings marked Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran’s swift adaptation to modern educational paradigms while preserving its traditional values. A complex network of parental apparatuses exists to provide care, guidance, and support to santri, encapsulating a range of individuals and roles that collectively contribute to overall well-being and development of students. This complexity is further underscored by the collective commitment of pesantren members to uphold the Sunni theology with a demand on righteous and orthodox belief. Through such dynamic caregiving approaches, the pesantren seeks to strike a balance between tradition-innovation, thus fulfilling its mission to nurture santri well-being and satisfaction within a rich Islamic Sunni tradition.



Introduction

The importance of student well-being in the context of positive youth development is widely acknowledged, despite little recognitions regarding what it means for *santri* to live well in educational setting of *pesantren*. To shed light on this matter, it is imperative to consider the circumstances of “santri,” referring to resident students in Islamic boarding institutions known as “pesantren,” mainly located in Indonesia. These students, thousands in number within each *pesantren* institution, find themselves physically separated from their familial homes, thus leading to the delegation of custodial responsibilities to the (self-) appointed *pesantren* leaders [kiai] or caregivers [pengasuh]. The arrangement becomes imperative within the framework of the principles outlined in the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which delineates three fundamental domains of children’s entitlements: holistic development, such as protection from harm, and active engagement. The enforcement of these tripartite rights necessitates vigilant and conscientious oversight from *pesantren* caregivers to ensure the comprehensive realization of the rights vested in its youth students.

Within the contextual fabric of the *pesantren* tradition, a *kiai* or *pengasuh*, acting as a prominent religious scholar and charismatic leader, assumes a pivotal role as a custodial figure. This underscores the profound symbiosis between the *kyai* and the nurturing responsibilities vested in them within the institutional framework of *pesantren*, as articulated by Shofiyullah et al. (2020, 2022). Moreover, the *pesantren* plays a pivotal role in empowering its students and, by extension, the broader community, as corroborated by Wahid et al. (2010). The institution’s overarching mission is encapsulated in its self-designation as a “School of Life,” epitomizing its commitment to instill Islamic principles, cultivate self-reliance, and foster socio-emotional skills (Nurmadiansyah, 2016). The legislative principles enshrined within Indonesia’s Law No. 18 on Islamic Boarding Schools, ratified by the Indonesian government (2019), underscore the reaffirmation of the manifold roles assumed by Islamic boarding institutions. Taking account on the Letter C from the Decree, the imperative to “ensure the perpetuation of each *pesantren*’s educational, propagation, and community-empowerment functions” is articulated, with due consideration to the imperative of structured provisions that align with venerable traditions and distinctive attributes.

Islamic boarding schools, exemplified by the oversaturated discussion of the “*pesantren* studies”, transcend their conventional role as pedagogical institutions. The scholarly discourse surrounding *pesantren*, as evidenced in earlier works by Geertz (1956, 1968), Dhofier (1980), and Mastuhu (1994, 1997), underscores the multifaceted nature of these establishments, extending their influence beyond the education realm to encompass socio-cultural dimensions. This assertion is further corroborated by later research on *pesantren* such of Purwadi (2002), Zakaria (2010), and Mukhibat (2016) which attests to the active involvement of *pesantren* in nurturing socio-cultural norms and traditional system of Islamic education. In this context, *pesantren* maintains its unwavering commitment to upholding time-honored values intrinsic to classical institutions, as elucidated by Rakhmawati (2013) and Shofiyullah et al. (2020, 2022), thereby serving as conduits for the transmission of communal values are embodied within students of the *pesantren*.

In this conceptualisation, “santri well-being” encompasses a dual-faceted composition, encompassing “affective elements” (comprising emotions, sentiments, and prevailing mood states, such as feelings of contentment) and “life satisfaction.” The differentiation between these two components has been established through empirical investigations (Lucas et al., 1996; McLellan & Steward, 2015). Moreover, this well-being construct is contingent upon contextual domains within life, such as the dynamics of *kiai-santri* relationship, friendship among *santris*, and school-life experiences. As the trajectory of *pesantren* moves forward, it is incumbent upon it to forge a nurturing and educational paradigm of *santri* well-being that harmonizes with local cultural ethos, national identity, and ethical imperatives. This framework gains paramount significance as it intersects with broader social welfare concerns, particularly in the context of safeguarding the rights of children engaged as “*santri*” within the *pesantren* environment.

The focal point of this research revolves around the examination of “*santri* well-being” specifically within the context of *Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran*. This traditional boarding school, with an educational heritage spanning half a century, maintains a profound affiliation with *Nahdlatul Ulama*, the largest Islamic organization in contemporary Indonesia. Situated in Yogyakarta, *pesantren* has exhibited substantial progress of education system over time, adopting the

modern educational principles while upholding its traditional Islamic values and customs. The research methodology involved the purposive selection of eight informants strategically chosen in accordance with the research objectives. This cohort comprises both students and caregivers affiliated with the pesantren. The evolving trajectory of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran, marked by its swift adaptation to contemporary educational paradigms while preserving its core traditional values, sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of how these factors intersect with the well-being of its students.

Theoretical Framework

Pesantren and Student Well-being

Santri well-being within pesantren necessitates strict adherence to a comprehensive 24-hour regimen, firmly rooted in educational and ethical principles. This meticulously structured routine encompasses a diverse array of activities, commencing from the moment of awakening and extending to scholastic endeavors, Qur'an recitation, physical exertion, and santri-communal interactions. All these activities are intricately aligned with the established regulations of the pesantren. The conscious choice made by parents to entrust their children to the care and mentorship of religious authorities, mentors, and fellow students within the milieu of the pesantren signifies a deliberate decision to immerse their offspring in a religious educational experience, even if it entails a certain degree of diminished parental involvement.

Santri's affective elements and life satisfactions within the pesantren has engendered discourse and reflection within the community. They who pursue education at pesantren often experience prolonged separation from their families. The environment within pesantren itself has been a subject of debate, particularly with regard to care aspects. Critiques by Nurcholis Madjid (1997) have spotlighted physical conditions in Islamic boarding schools, highlighting issues such as spatial constraints, insufficient restroom facilities, irregular arrangements, and inadequate sanitation—factors that could potentially contribute to health-related concerns among students. Despite the continued relevance of such critiques, contemporary progress in modern pesantren has yielded improvements in facilities and infrastructure. Nafis (2008) has voiced concerns regarding adherence to

clerical wisdom and decisions within pesantren, citing instances of inconsistency. Nevertheless, amidst the array of critiques, there exists an evident societal eagerness to have children reside and study within pesantren environment, as evidenced by the escalating number of santri each year.

Pesantren functions as a holistic education platform that harmoniously integrates conventional academic curriculum with religious values. Putro, et al. (2019) underscore the ethical role of pesantren which imparts ethical values to santri. This role is further validated by Kango et al.'s (2021) research at Al-Falah Gorontalo Islamic boarding school, revealing the institution's use of three strategies—logic, sentiment, and punishment—to cultivate ethical qualities in students. Moreover, each pesantren represents an adaptive and innovative entity, characterized by a curriculum responsive to market demands, aimed at preparing students for global challenges. This educational paradigm emphasizes a profound understanding of Islamic values, supplemented by an international curriculum supported by modern technology (Hak et al., 2023; Huda, 2020). The core focus of this curriculum lies in nurturing values inherent in the Al-Qur'an and Hadith, with the aspiration to nurture spiritually intelligent, ethically principled, and skilled individuals (Arifin et al., 2018; Rafiq et al., 2020). As an empowerment institution, each pesantren promotes three religious knowledge paradigms (Syakroni et al., 2019): religious knowledge derived from the logical paradigm (fiqh), the rhetorical paradigm (kalam), and the physiognomical paradigm (al-firāsa). Pesantren also embodies several pivotal characteristics, including a focus on science and technology, prioritization of religious and moral values, and the promotion of tolerance and pluralism.

Research on pesantren has explored historical, institutional, and educational aspects extensively (Achmad, 2011; Al-Fandi, 2012; Dhofier, 1980; Fauzi, 2012; Husin, 2018; Nafis, 2008; Salehudin, 2016). Nevertheless, empirical investigations concerning parental and communal involvement in supporting the well-being of santri within the context of pesantren remain relatively limited, thus necessitating further exploration. The act of parenting carries enduring implications for attachment formation and attitude development throughout subsequent life stages. This is due to the continuity of children's ability to love, fostered by the affection experienced in their prior environment. However, when

a children become santri, caregivers' demonstrations of love contribute to the cultivation of broader compassion (Vinayastri, 2015). This experience stimulates children to extend their emotional bonds beyond themselves.

Prevailing research on parenting within Islamic boarding schools frequently draws upon Baumrind's theory (Ali et al., 2018; Maarif & Kartiko, 2018; Putri & Noviekayati, 2015; Rakhmawati, 2013; Rizkiani, 2012). Another research on pesantren well-being conducted by Sebelas Maret Univ. with UNICEF (LPPM UNS & UNICEF, 2009), revealed that the pattern of care in Pesantren does not always provide comfort for children because it is vulnerable to violence. For example, giving physical penalties such as doing push-ups, squad-jumps, running around school, and cleaning the bathroom in a certain period, some caregivers claimed that most santris accepted such physical punishment sincerely. Baumrind's theory delineates three student caregiving patterns: authoritarian, democratic, and permissive. However, the concept of care possesses multifaceted dimensions influenced by factors such as child development stage, parental health, living conditions, available support, and access to services (Baumrind, 1991; Baumrind & Black, 1967). The intricate nature of care within pesantren, influenced by its distinctive culture, necessitates thorough examination. This study deviates from previous research by aiming to furnish a more profound analysis and a broader comprehension of pesantren's stance on care. This study endeavors to address gaps in scientific understanding concerning the parenting of children within a boarding school system. Its central objective is to unravel the perspectives of pesantren concerning the provision of care to students.

The concept of care within pesantren is intricately interwoven with its unique cultural heritage, recognized as a sub-culture or traditional idealism (Abdurrahman, 2010; Dhofier, 1980). This cultural distinctiveness, in conjunction with the parenting paradigm of pesantren, contributes to a rich and invaluable heritage for Indonesia, warranting exploration from diverse angles to elucidate the background and the pesantren's viewpoint on parenting care. This study diverges from prior research endeavors, with the intention of enhancing analytical depth and broadening comprehension regarding the perspectives of pesantren on caregiving. The primary aim of this investigation is to bridge existing scientific voids pertinent to the notion of parenting children who reside and partake in

education within a boarding school framework. This objective is underscored by the aspiration to gain insight into how pesantren perceives and administers care for its students. The defining attributes and native character of the santri well-being paradigm constitute a valuable heritage for the Indonesian society. This facet warrants exploration from multiple dimensions within this research to elucidate the contextual backdrop that informs the pesantren's outlook on parental care and support. This encompasses the multifaceted provision of emotional, psychological, and pragmatic assistance to santri within the confines of the pesantren environment. The scope encompasses the role of caregivers in tending to the emotional needs of santri, fostering a sense of safe and secure, and facilitating their comprehensive well-being.

Research Method

This research is mainly situated within the context of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran, a prominent Islamic boarding school known for its traditional foundation and affiliation with Nahdlatul Ulama. Established in 1975 by Kiyai Haji Mufid Mas'ud, this pesantren, located in Yogyakarta, has undergone rapid development while upholding traditional values. Employing a case study methodology, this research focuses on Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran, recognized as one of the influential pesantrens in Indonesia. The study adopts a case studies approach to investigate parenting practices within this educational institution. The researcher engages in intensive interactions with the pesantren, actively participating in the parenting activities. The objective is to attain comprehensive insights into the characteristics of student parenting within the pesantren context. A purposive selection of eight informants, comprising students and kiai/caregivers affiliated with the pesantren, is undertaken to fulfill research objectives.

From the pointview of student welfare theory, the increasing enrollment of santri at pesantren necessitates a concurrent emphasis on the quality of care and knowledge pertaining to santri well-being given the role of pesantren as surrogate caregivers. Within this framework, the position and role of pesantren in terms of care emerge as pivotal determinants of students' welfare. Recognizing the significance of parenting within pesantren and its influence on santri well-

being and psychological development, the study underscores the essential nature of investigating the parenting process among children residing within pesantren. The research anticipates providing the community with a conceptual framework and insights into the process and circumstances of Indonesian children living away from their families, along with the implementation of effective parenting interventions within the pesantren system.

This study spans an extended duration aiming to enhance the depth of data collection, consistent with Stake's perspective (Creswell, 2002). It aligns with Stake's characterization of case studies as a research strategy centered on exploring programs, events, activities, processes, or individuals. These cases are temporally bound, and the researchers meticulously collect detailed information using diverse data collection methodologies throughout a continuous timeframe. Yin's viewpoint characterizes a case study as an empirical inquiry into phenomena within the lifeworld. The delineation between the phenomenon and its context lacks rigid boundaries, and the investigation process incorporates multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2015). Embracing Yin's approach, the research employs a systematic analysis of social action through multi-source evidence, including multi-source participant observation, comprehensive observation, and direct engagement with other three pesantrens in Indonesia.

Data collection encompasses observation, interviews, and the analysis of secondary materials. Observation techniques are employed to witness parenting practices within Islamic boarding schools, enabling researchers to observe parenting activities firsthand. Additionally, in-depth interviews with eight students and caregivers are conducted to ascertain students' experiences of parenting within the pesantren and to gather insights from the caregivers' perspective. The selection of informants is purposeful, aimed at encompassing diverse dimensions of parenting experiences within Islamic boarding schools. The interview inquiries are designed to explore the practical aspects of santri well-being within pesantren, targeting informants directly engaged in parenting practices. Simultaneously, interviews with students are approached in a congenial manner to gauge their attitudes and perceptions regarding the care they receive. Data analysis involves the processes of data reduction and triangulation to reinforce the rigor of the analysis. Extensive archival resources, including writings, magazine articles, and newspaper reports

relevant to the research subject, are collected to enrich the data pool. The analytical process encompasses data reduction and interpretation, adhering to the principles of triangulation to ensure comprehensive analysis.

Research Discussion

Exploring Maze-Like Parenting Discourse in Pesantren

Exploration of the caregivers' and students' experiences and perspectives during their engagement with the educational and emotional processes in pesantren holds the potential to uncover the intrinsic nature of care manifesting within the institution. This research endeavors to illuminate the essence of caregiving within pesantren by attaining insights from the daily encounters of caregivers and students, thereby shedding light on the genuine embodiment of care within the pesantren context. The viewpoints of caregivers are particularly examined as invaluable sources of information elucidating how pesantren conceives and operationalizes the provision of parental care and well-being.

This inquiry delves into how individuals or entities are recognized and designated within pesantren to undertake the responsibility and authority of student care, elucidating the discerned roles of kiai in the caregiving process to maintain santri well-being. Within the context of pesantren, a complex network of parental apparatuses exists to provide care, guidance, and support to santri, encapsulating a range of individuals and roles that collectively contribute to overall well-being and development of students. The hierarchical distribution of caregiving responsibilities in Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran is starting from the Kiai, the Head of Pesantren (lurah), the Coordinators, the Room Administrator, the Ustādh (male teacher) or Ustādhah (female teacher), the Senior Santris, the School Administrators or Caretakers, the Junior Caretakers, and Dormitory Staffs. The hierarchy underscores the stratified arrangement by which care duties are allocated, encompassing individuals at different levels of the institution, ranging from junior students to more experienced senior ones, and culminating in the leadership of the pesantren.

The Kiai, often regarded as a preeminent religious scholar, assumes a central role in the caregiving structure of pesantren. Endowed with extensive religious knowledge and revered authority, the Kyai functions as a spiritual guide and

mentor to the santri. They offer religious teachings, moral guidance, and play a significant role in shaping both ethical, spiritual, and practical knowledge of the pesantren students. Kyai's guidance extends beyond academics, encompassing values, ethics, and character formation. The Lurah, or the head of pesantren, plays a pivotal role in coordinating and overseeing the administrative aspects of care within the pesantren. They facilitate communication between different caregiving entities and ensure the efficient functioning of the care system, fostering a harmonious environment conducive to santri well-being. Both Coordinators, Room Administrators, Ustādh or Ustādhah, the Senior Santris, the School Administrators, the Junior Caretakers, and Dormitory Staffs assume an intermediary role between junior santris, and the Lurah, and Kiai. They serve as facilitators of communication and support while manage day-to-day affairs within pesantren, ensuring that santris' fundamental needs and supports are met, addressing concerns, and maintaining a cohesive community.

These apparatuses assist the kiai in their responsibilities, acting as a bridge between different layers of the caregiving process and ensuring that the environment is conducive to learning, living, and thriving for all santris. This hierarchy highlights the layered structure through which care responsibilities are assigned, spanning from lower-level students to senior students and ultimately, to the leadership of the pesantren. These parental apparatuses collectively form a comprehensive framework that attends to various dimensions of santri well-being, encompassing spiritual, academic, social, and emotional aspects. The interaction and collaboration among these roles create a nurturing ecosystem that supports the holistic development of students within the pesantren environment.

The discussion endeavors to expound the conceptualization of caregiving to all santris, encapsulating the pesantren's unique interpretation of parental involvement and care. This conception of caregiving is derived from the informants' understanding and experience of the caregiving process, intimately intertwined with the cultural milieu. Their perspectives on caregiving in pesantren are distinctly molded by expectations and practical implementation of parenting concepts, following after the traditional norms and values of the institution and local culture.

Pesantren Well-being: Reading Minds of the Institution Boards

Pesantren Pandanaran's student care approach rests on core objectives grounded in the Qur'an and Sunna. These goals, intrinsic to Islamic teachings and traditional pesantren values, underscore the institution's commitment to fostering holistic development in its santri. They encompass cultivating a "Qur'anic Character," urging both caregivers and santri to internalize teachings contained in the Qur'an. The second goal promotes the independency, equipping santri with critical thinking and decision-making skills. The third objective emphasizes "Being Ahl as-Sunna wa al-Jama'at," instilling a deep understanding of Sunni Shafi'i Islamic principles within the community. The objectives also involve nurturing "ritual piety," forging a profound connection to religious practices, and nurturing a spiritual bond with God. Likewise, "social piety" stresses compassionate engagement, kindness, and social responsibility. "Natural piety" highlights the unity with nature and Allah's creation, promoting stewardship. Collectively, these aims epitomize Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran's endeavor to cultivate well-rounded santri who are spiritually grounded, intellectually astute, socially aware, and ethically principled. By aligning care goals with these principles, the pesantren offers a nurturing environment that supports holistic development while upholding Islamic values.

The apparatuses at Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran hold a different perspective on "How to care for santri," reflecting comprehensive approaches to nurturing santri's development. First, emphasis is placed on "straightening the child's attitude and behavior." This involves instilling a sense of discipline and ethical conduct by guiding the santri to adhere to proper behavior in alignment with Islamic teachings. Second, the focus on "forming santri personality with noble values and noble ways" underscores the intent to mold the students' character through the infusion of virtuous values and ethical principles. The aim is to cultivate an identity characterized by integrity, respect, and adherence to moral norms. Third, "following the Prophetic way of caregiving" approach draws inspiration from the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad. It seeks to imbue the santri with the qualities and practices exemplified by the Prophet, fostering compassion, humility, and devotion.

Fourth, the mean of “new santris’ incubation and socialization” reflects the pesantren’s role in providing a protective and nurturing environment, conducive to the students’ growth across intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Fifth, the method of “greeting and listening” highlights the significance of acknowledging and valuing the voices of the students. By actively engaging with the students and attentively listening, the pesantren apparatuses fosters an atmosphere of respect and open communication. Sixth, the form of “accompanying” stresses the importance of mentors, *ustādz/ustādzah*, and caregivers providing ongoing companionship. This guidance, support, and sense of security aim to prevent the students from feeling isolated in their educational journey. Lastly, the principle of “providing best examples” underscores the impactful role of role models among the apparatuses. By embodying the values and teachings they seek to impart, they inspire the students to emulate virtuous behavior (*daʿwa bil-ḥikmat*). Overall, these forms coalesce to create a comprehensive framework of care that nurtures the santri’s well-being while instilling core values and ethical foundations.

Within the mind of the Kiai, being a caregiver in the pesantren context is a challenging endeavor that demands dedication and commitment. The role requires caregivers to assume a multifunctional position, intertwining roles of teachers, mentors, and parental figures. This complexity is further underscored by the commitment to uphold the Sunni theology, with its or *‘aqīdah ahl as-sunna wa al-jamāʿat* (adherent to prophetic sunna and the path of prophet’s followers), emphasizing the importance of adhering to the tenets of Sunni Islam within the community, with a demand on righteous and orthodox belief.

The ambiance of pesantren, according to kiai’s experience, cultivates an environment that encourages creative and innovative approaches to intellectual and emotional educations, prompting caregivers to forge novel methods that cater specifically to the unique requirements of each santri. This inventive spirit transcends various domains, spanning from educational methodologies to character cultivation, while also nurturing a profound sense of worship. The act of worship is interwoven with the purview of parenting practices, serving as an impetus for caregivers, as perceived by the kiai, to inculcate a profound spiritual affinity with religious rituals and practices, thereby facilitating spiritual

development. At the heart of the pesantren's value system resides the essence of the institution itself. The pesantren principle of preserving the productive traditions while exploring new innovations and adaptations to the educational system (*al-muḥāfazhatu 'alā qadīm as-ṣāliḥ wa-al-akhdhu bi-al-jadīd al-aṣlah*) encapsulates the ethos of safeguarding the virtuous elements of the past while embracing the superior facets of the present. This guiding principle, from the perspective of the kiai, steers caregivers to uphold cherished traditions while seamlessly integrating modern insights and innovative approaches into the realm of caregiving. In essence, the foundation of parenting within the pesantren value is an intricate and nuanced framework that amalgamates religious teachings, steadfast commitment, inventive creativity, and a forward-looking mindset, according to the kiai's perspective. It recognizes the formidable challenges caregivers confront while placing emphasis on the significance of spirituality, innovative thinking, and the perpetual evolution of caregiving methodologies congruent with timeless Islamic precepts. Additionally, this discourse accentuates the pivotal role of the pesantren's distinctive caregiving perspective, shaped by its foundational principles, convictions, and ideological underpinnings.

The interpretation and enactment of caregiving practices within the Pesantren milieu are deeply informed by the principles and values derived from these foundational beliefs. The Qur'an and Sunna stand as bedrock pillars, guiding caregivers, from the perspective of the kiai's experience, in their endeavor to provide holistic care to santris. It elucidated within this discourse on santri care offers insights into how pesantren caregivers has firmly established a fundamental framework for comprehending and delivering care to its students, according to the Kiai of Sunan Pandanaran's perspective. The participants in this study articulate principles arising from viewpoints interwoven with core convictions and ideologies, which collectively forge the architecture of caregiving practices bestowed upon students within the milieu of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran. The foundational ethos of parental involvement in maintaining santri well-being, within the context of its values in the pesantren, is intricately woven into a multi-faceted framework deeply rooted in Islamic principles, as perceived by the kiai.

The Analysis of Pesantren's thought of parenting

The santri, whether directly or indirectly, initiate their assimilation of parental or caregiver norms through the process of habituation. This acquisition involves learning to conform to norms within their social environment, with an underlying understanding of corresponding rights, obligations, and sanctions for rule violations. This educational process aims to instill in children a positive sense of belonging within both the family and community spheres. Fostering encompasses nurturing a sense of security and guidance in children, whether they are under the care of biological parents or pesantren caregivers. The complexity of santri well-being within pesantren environment is reflected by a multifaceted framework influenced by various intrinsic and extrinsic factors. This complexity is echoed in the intricate nature of caregiving in diverse contexts, both familial and institutional (Durrant, 2016). Each caregiving experience is characterized by a distinctive amalgamation of parental or caregiver mentality, developmental stage of the child, physical well-being, familial or environmental circumstances, such as the conditions found within pesantren, community support, and the availability of services. This comprehensive view underscores the uniqueness of caregiving dynamics while acknowledging the underlying universal dimensions.

Parental responsibilities, in the context of the pesantren, are assumed by individuals holding varying designations within the institution's hierarchy, ranging from Kyai, Lurah, coordinator, and room administrator to ustādh, senior santri, administrator, junior caretaker, and dormitory staffs. These designations signify the range of roles and responsibilities entailed in the caregiving process within Islamic boarding schools, reflecting a structured approach to nurturing santri well-being and affective elements. As a parental figure or caregiver, the role encompasses ethical, educational, and practical responsibilities for the comprehensive growth and development of the child, ensuring their safety, security, happiness, and overall welfare, in alignment with Bridgeman (2007). Notably, robust evidence indicates that most childcare programs yield positive outcomes for children, underscoring the influential role of parents in shaping their children's knowledge, skills and

character (Mbwana et al., 2009). The weight of parental influence vis-à-vis genetics, economics, culture, and educational institutions remains a subject of discourse. However, the impact of caregiving quality on fostering an equitable and responsible society remains undeniable (McLellan & Steward, 2015; Stewart & LaVaque-Manty, 2004).

The Canadian Council on Learning (2007) aims to classify styles of parenting for youth learning, emphasizing responsiveness and control as defining dimensions. These dimensions encompass the harmony between parents or caregivers and their ability to respond to children's needs, as well as the degree of parental supervision and discipline. This classification, rooted in the authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful categories proposed by Baumrind (1991), illustrates the substantial influence of caregiving style on children's psychosocial development, social competence, well-being, and behavioral patterns, as affirmed by recent research findings. The presented caregiving styles within the context of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran in Yogyakarta, encompassing a positive parental involvement in student caretaking. The authoritative pattern, defined by a balanced combination of control and responsiveness, yields positive outcomes and optimally fulfills students' needs either in the need of material or emotional supports. This findings underscore the interplay between kiai's parental styles and santri's self-esteem, independence, maturity, and social competence, as corroborated by Amato & Fowler (2002) and Miller et al. (1993).

A holistic perspective on caregiving necessitates acknowledging the comprehensive interplay of all dimensions within a child's care process. This approach recognizes the intricate amalgamation of caregiving patterns and behaviors, yielding a comprehensive understanding of caregiving dynamics. By adopting this broader lens, the true reality of caregiving practices becomes clearer, emphasizing their significance in shaping the experiences of caregivers and santri within the pesantren context. The intention to foster the Qur'ānic character and self-independence among students is highlighted in the results section. This process aligns with the broader concept of adopting new innovations to the educational system while maintaining long-lasting traditional pesantren curricula (*al-muḥāfazhatu 'alā qadīm as-ṣāliḥ wa-*

al-akhduhu bi-al-jadid al-aslah), encapsulating the preservation of past virtues while embracing superior facets of the present. Through such dynamic caregiving approaches, the pesantren seeks to strike a balance between tradition and innovation, thus fulfilling its mission to nurture santri well-being and life satisfaction within a rich Islamic context.

Conclusion

The focal point of this research revolves around the examination of “santri well-being” within the context of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran. A kiai or caregivers, acting as a prominent religious scholar and charismatic leader, also assumes a pivotal role as a custodial figure within the contextual fabric of traditional pesantren milieu. In this conceptualisation, this research refers to “santri well-being” as a dual-faceted composition, encompassing “affective elements” and “life satisfaction.” Moreover, this well-being construct is contingent upon contextual domains within life, such as the dynamics of kiai-santri relationship, friendship among santris, and madrasa-dormitory life experiences. As the trajectory of pesantren moves forward, it is incumbent upon it to forge a nurturing and educational paradigm of santri well-being that harmonizes with local cultural ethos, national identity, and ethical imperatives.

The evolving trajectory of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran marked by its swift adaptation to contemporary educational paradigms while preserving its core traditional pesantren values (*al-muḥāfazhatu ‘alā qadīm as-ṣāliḥ wa-al-akhduhu bi-al-jadid al-aslah*). This duality between the preservation of religious tradition and the integration of modernity creates a rich ground for investigating how these dynamics influence the emotional and overall well-being of the santri. Within the context of Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran, a complex network of parental apparatuses exists to provide care, guidance, and support to santri, encapsulating a range of individuals and roles that collectively contribute to overall well-being and development of students. The hierarchical distribution of caregiving responsibilities in Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran is starting from the Kiai, the Head of Pesantren (*lurah*), the Coordinators, the Room Administrator, Ustādh/ah, Senior Santris, the

School Administrators or Caretakers, the Junior Caretakers, and Dormitory Staffs. This complexity is further underscored by the collective commitment of pesantren members to uphold the Sunni theology, with its or *'aqīdah ahl as-sunna wa al-jamā'at*, emphasizing the importance of adhering to the tenets of Sunni Islam within the community, with a demand on righteous and orthodox belief. The intention to foster the Qur'anic character and self-independence among students is highlighted in the results section. Through such dynamic caregiving approaches, the pesantren seeks to strike a balance between tradition-innovation, thus fulfilling its mission to nurture santri well-being and satisfaction within a rich Islamic Sunni tradition.

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Author's Declaration

Authors' contributions and responsibilities

The authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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