The Effectiveness of Character Strengths-Based Peer Counseling in Fostering Psychological Well-Being in Islamic Boarding Schools

🄳 **Muslikah Muslikah*[1]**, 🄳 **Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto[1]**
🄳 **Ashari Mahfud[1],** 🄳 **Afriyadi Sofyan[1,2]**
🄳 **Lailawati Madlan Endalan[3],** 🄳 **Abi Fa'izzarahman Prabawa[2,4]**
🄳 **Ifan Setiawan[1]**

[1]Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia
[3]Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
[4]Universitas Islam Negeri Salatiga, Indonesia
✉ muslikah@mail.unnes.ac.id*

Abstract

Low psychological well-being and elevated help-seeking behaviors among students in Islamic boarding schools underscore the necessity for effective psychological support systems. This study assesses the effectiveness of a character strengths-based peer counseling intervention in enhancing students' psychological well-being within Islamic boarding school settings. Grounded in the principles of positive psychology and aligned with Islamic educational values, the intervention emphasizes five core character strengths (gratitude, hope, zest, curiosity, and love) delivered through a peer counseling framework. Employing a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design, the study involved 81 first-year students (ages 13-17) from three pesantren in Semarang, randomly assigned to experimental (n = 45) and control (n = 36) groups. The Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989) was used to measure six dimensions of well-being. Data were analyzed via Two-Way ANOVA to evaluate the intervention's impact over time. Results indicated significant improvements in psychological well-being within the experimental group ($p < .01$), with a notable post-test mean score increase of 13.53 points, interaction effect with $\eta^2 p = 0.049$. This value approaches the moderate category. These findings substantiate that character strengths-based peer counseling is an effective and culturally appropriate intervention for promoting mental health in faith-based educational environments. The study contributes to applying positive psychology in non-Western contexts, emphasizing the potential of peer-led models to enhance adolescents' emotional resilience, interpersonal relationships, and religious character development. The study's limitations and potential directions for future research are also discussed to improve the generalizability and sustainability of the intervention.

INTRODUCTION

Psychological well-being is crucial in supporting individual development, especially during adolescence, a formative period marked by identity formation and social adaptation. Adolescents with high psychological well-being tend to adapt more effectively to environmental changes, maintain healthy social relationships, and demonstrate optimal academic and spiritual performance (Ryff & Singer, 2004). This issue becomes particularly critical in boarding school environments, such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), where students (Santri) live in closed communities governed by strong cultural, religious, and normative values. Students are expected to live apart from their families, follow a demanding daily schedule, and adapt to rigid religious and social expectations (Regulation of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Number 30 of 2020).

A growing number of recent studies including those conducted by Abdusshomad, A. (2024); Afharrozi, A. (2024); Munawaroh, H. (2024); Rahmi, K. (2025) show that students in a boarding school environment, especially during their first year, are vulnerable to various psychological challenges. Feelings of homesickness, adaptation difficulties, academic pressure, and limited emotional support from family members have been shown to significantly lower students' psychological well-being (Rahmi, K., 2025; Xing et al., 2021; Pfeiffer & Pinquart, 2014). Muslikah (2024) found that over 90% of first-year students in Islamic boarding schools in Semarang experienced psychological well-being in the low to very low category. Although this study demonstrates that many students face challenges during their first year, few disclose these issues to counselors at Islamic boarding schools. Muslikah (2024) found that less than 50% of students seek help from counselors in these settings. This suggests the presence of alternative psychological support services that students may utilize aside from counseling within the boarding school.

Empirical evidence shows that students tend to feel more comfortable sharing their problems with peers rather than teachers or adult figures (Gao et al., 2017). In a survey conducted across several Islamic boarding schools, more than 64% of students reported turning to their peers as the first source of support when facing personal challenges. This suggests that peer counseling holds substantial potential in the boarding school context. Peer counseling refers to a counseling approach that utilizes peers as counselors who offer emotional support, problem-solving assistance, and guidance to help individuals adjust within their social environment (Glazzard et al., 2019; Al-Mafraji, 2022). A key advantage of peer counseling is the similarity in age, experience, and environmental context, which fosters a more open and relatable atmosphere for sharing.

Concurrently, the emergence of positive psychology, introduced by Seligman (2011), has contributed significantly to the development of strength-based psychological interventions. One of its core concepts is *character strengths*, which are sets of positive traits that individuals can develop to achieve a meaningful and productive life. Peterson and Seligman (2004) identified 24 character strengths classified into six core virtues: wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Traits such as gratitude, hope, zest, curiosity, and love have been shown to have a strong positive correlation with psychological well-being (Gander et al., 2020). Character strengths play a crucial role in cultivating positive emotions, enhancing resilience, strengthening social relationships, and promoting optimal psychological well-being.

Within the context of Islamic education, these character strengths align closely with Islamic moral teachings, which emphasize gratitude (*syukur*), optimism in divine decree, zest for knowledge, curiosity in religious learning, and compassion for others. Islamic boarding schools serve not only as academic institutions but also as moral and religious training grounds for students. As such, character strengths derived from positive psychology offer significant potential for integration into counseling services in pesantren as both preventive and promotive mental health strategies.

Rationale of the Study

Although character strengths-based interventions have been widely studied and implemented internationally, empirical research that specifically evaluates the effectiveness of such interventions in the form of peer counseling within Indonesian Islamic boarding schools remains limited. While several studies have demonstrated the efficacy of character strengths-based programs in enhancing adolescent well-being in general school settings (Lai et al., 2020; Kabakçı et al., 2024; Kaynak, 2025; Adebayo et al., 2025), there is a scarcity of research testing their effectiveness in pesantren environments, which are characterized by communal living, strong interpersonal relationships, and high religious commitment. These characteristics suggest a fertile context for the implementation of positive psychology-based peer counseling.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a peer counseling program based on character strengths in enhancing the psychological well-being of students in Islamic boarding schools. Specifically, it examines how this approach can improve mental health among adolescents in these faith-based educational settings, thereby extending the principles of positive psychology into communal contexts. The anticipated results will provide empirical evidence on the relevance and effectiveness of peer counseling informed by positive psychology in supporting adolescent mental health in boarding schools. Additionally, the study seeks to contribute to the development of community-based counseling practices grounded in religious values.

METHODS

Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group format, aiming to evaluate the effectiveness of a character strengths-based peer counseling intervention on students' psychological well-being in Islamic boarding schools. This design is suitable for educational and counseling research where random assignment at the individual level is not feasible (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Participants and Procedure

Participants consisted of 81 first-year students (aged 13–17 years) from three Islamic boarding schools in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. All participants had adequate reading and comprehension skills in the Indonesian language and were not undergoing any formal psychological treatment during the study. Prior to data collection, institutional and parental consent were obtained.

The sampling technique used was cluster random sampling, which is considered effective for studies conducted in structured educational institutions (Taherdoost, 2016). Three Islamic boarding schools were purposively selected based on their institutional consent and the availability of counseling services. Within each school, entire first-year student groups (class clusters) were randomly assigned to either the experimental group (n = 45) or the control group (n = 36). The sample comprised 40 male (49%) and 41 female (51%) students helping to ensure comparable groups at baseline.

The study was conducted over four weeks during October–November 2024. Prior to the intervention, baseline psychological well-being was measured using the PWB scale (pre-test). Participants were then divided into two groups: 1) Experimental group (n = 45): Received peer counseling based on the character strengths module, and 2) Control group (n = 36): Received the school's conventional peer counseling program.

The Peer Counselor Guide (Muslikah et al., 2023) for implementing the Character Strengths-Based Peer Counseling Model is a practical guide designed to equip *Santri*, who act as peer counselors in providing counseling services to their peers. This guide explains the basic concepts of character strengths-based peer counseling, program objectives, implementation principles based on Islamic values, and service stages consisting of pre-counseling, opening, core, and closing.

In practice, this guide serves as a reference for peer counselors who have undergone specialized training provided by counseling teachers or coaches. The training includes a comprehensive curriculum covering key counseling techniques, stages of counseling, character strengths, and the integration of Islamic values, with a duration of 4 weeks. The training program involved 4 counselors as supervisors and 45 peer counselors selected from among the students. During this training, peer counselors are supervised and supported to ensure their understanding and effectiveness in applying the guide's steps. The training material includes modules on counseling techniques, stages of counseling, character strengths, communication skills, empathy, and Islamic teachings related to mental well-being. Each counseling session is conducted systematically according to the guide, starting with spiritual preparation, followed by exploring character strengths, and concluding with reflection and evaluation. The guide also emphasizes the importance of an empathic approach, positive communication, and the incorporation of Islamic values throughout the counseling process. By utilizing this guide, peer counseling becomes a powerful tool for problem-solving, fostering Islamic character development, and promoting sustainable improvement in students' mental well-being.

The peer counseling intervention consisted of eight sessions (twice weekly, 60 minutes each), facilitated by trained peer counselors under the supervision of school guidance counselors. Each session applied a positive psychology-based module focusing on character development, with the activities detailed in Figure 1.
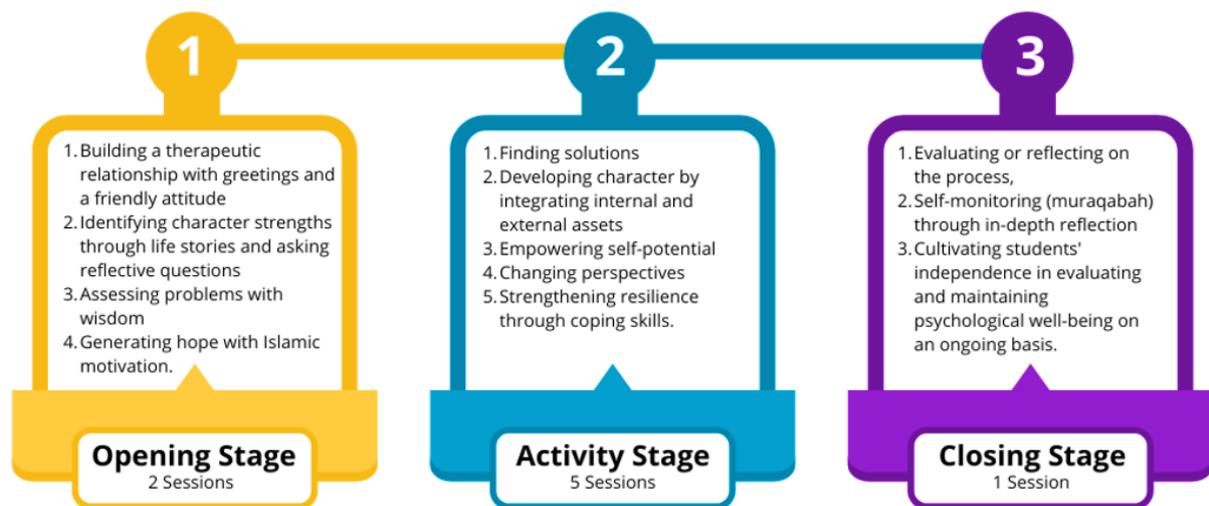

Figure 1. Session Framework of the Peer Counseling Intervention

Sessions were supervised weekly by school counselors to ensure protocol fidelity and provide feedback for improvement. The control group participated in conventional peer counseling activities without the strength-based structure. Periodic supervision ensured adherence to the intervention protocol. Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of strength-based counseling in enhancing adolescent resilience and psychological well-being within educational contexts (Shoshani & Slone, 2017). Following the intervention, a post-test

using the PWB scale was administered. All participants provided signed informed consent prior to participation.

Instruments

Psychological Well-Being Scale: The primary instrument used was the Psychological Well-Being (PWB) Scale, adapted from Ryff (1989). The Indonesian version of the scale had previously been validated for school-based contexts and demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties (Sugiyo et al., 2019). The scale comprises 42 items on a 4-point Likert scale, measuring six dimensions of psychological well-being: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. In this study, the scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.876$, indicating high internal reliability, consistent with recent international reliability findings for the PWB scale (Lin et al., 2021).

Peer Counseling Module: A peer counseling module based on character strengths was used. The module was developed based on the theoretical framework by Peterson and Seligman (2004) and adapted from synthesized research on strength-based peer counseling interventions (Cheng et al., 2022). The module provides structured session guidelines centered on five core character strengths: gratitude, hope, zest, curiosity, and love.

Data Analysis

The study employed Two-Way ANOVA using JASP v0.16.3 to assess the main effects of the intervention (group: experimental vs. control) and time (pretest vs. posttest), as well as their interaction. Prior to hypothesis testing, the assumptions of normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) and homogeneity of variances (Levene's test) were verified. The statistical significance level was set at $p < .05$. Descriptive statistics and effect sizes, specifically Partial Eta Squared, were also computed to enhance interpretability of the results. Partial Eta Squared was used to quantify the magnitude of the effects. Two-Way ANOVA was selected due to its capacity to examine the simultaneous impact of two independent variables and their interaction on a dependent variable (Field, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results

A total of 81 first-year students residing in Islamic boarding schools in Semarang City, Central Java, Indonesia, participated in this study. Table 1 presents the demographic distribution of participants based on gender and age.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristics	Experimental Group (n=45)	Control Group (n=36)	Total (n=81)
Gender:			
Male	22 (49%)	18 (50%)	40 (49%)
Female	23 (51%)	18 (50%)	41 (51%)
Age:			
13–14 years	23 (51%)	18 (50%)	41 (51%)
15–16 years	19 (42%)	15 (42%)	34 (42%)
17 years	3 (7%)	3 (8%)	6 (7%)

Table 1 shows a balanced distribution of gender and age between the experimental and control groups, indicating that the study's results are unlikely to be influenced by gender or age differences. Both groups exhibit similar proportions of gender and age, with the majority of participants in the 13–14 years age range, a critical period for character development and psychological well-being. Although there are slightly more males than females, the difference is not significant and does not suggest gender bias that could affect the results. This balanced

distribution ensures that the findings can be generalized across genders and age groups, providing a solid foundation for further analysis while minimizing potential confounding variables.

Prior to conducting the Two-Way ANOVA, tests of normality and homogeneity of variances were performed. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test indicated that both pre-test and post-test scores were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$). Levene's Test of Homogeneity also showed no significant differences in variance between groups ($p > 0.05$), indicating homogeneity of variances. A Two-Way ANOVA was employed to examine the effect of character strengths-based peer counseling and its interaction with time on students' psychological well-being.

Table 2. Two-Way ANOVA Results for Psychological Well-Being

Source of Variation	F	p	Partial η²
Time (Pre vs Post)	10.64	0.001	0.063
Group (Experimental vs Control)	24.73	<.001	0.135
Interaction (Group × Time)	8.18	0.005	0.049

Note: $p < 0.01$ (significant)
Effect sizes follow Cohen's (1988) guidelines for partial η²: Small (≈ 0.01), Moderate (≈ 0.06), Large (≥ 0.14).

As shown in Table 2, the results of the mixed ANOVA test showed a significant influence of time, group, and their interaction on psychological well-being scores. First, the analysis revealed a significant main effect of time (pre-post), $F = 10.64$, $p = 0.001$, with $\eta^2p = 0.063$. This value is considered approaching the moderate category (Cohen, 1988), indicating a general increase in psychological well-being scores from pre-test to post-test across all participants, regardless of group. Second, a significant main effect of group (experimental vs. control) was found, $F = 24.73$, $p < .001$, with $\eta^2p = 0.135$. This effect is considered significant, indicating that overall, participants in the experimental group had higher psychological well-being scores than those in the control group. Third, there was a significant interaction effect between time and group, $F = 8.18$, $p = 0.005$, with $\eta^2p = 0.049$. This value is approaching the moderate category, indicating that the increase in scores from pre-test to post-test was not the same in both groups. Specifically, the experimental group showed a greater increase in psychological well-being scores than the control group, indicating that the intervention provided had a significant positive impact.

Table 3. Mean Scores of Psychological Well-Being in Pre-test and Post-test

Group	Pre-test (M±SD)	Post-test (M±SD)
Experimental Group	150.200 ± 17.060	163.733 ± 13.841
Control Group	145.528 ± 12.566	146.417 ± 10.866

The comparison of mean scores, as presented in Table 3, compares the average Psychological Well-Being (PWB) scores between the experimental and control groups during the pre-test and post-test. The control group's score remained relatively stable, from 145.53 in the pre-test to 146.42 in the post-test. Conversely, the experimental group experienced a significant increase, from 150.20 in the pre-test to 163.73 in the post-test. It shows a substantial increase of 13.533 points in the experimental group, while the control group experienced a minor increase of only 0.889 points. To understand the comparison, Figure 2 illustrates.
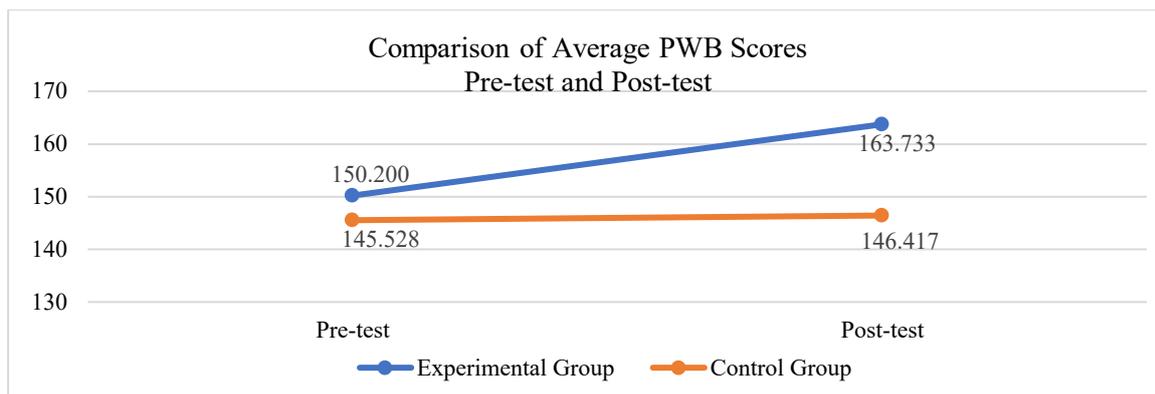
Figure 2. Comparison of Average PWB Scores Pre-test and Post-test

These results confirm that character strengths-based peer counseling effectively enhances the psychological well-being of students in Islamic boarding schools compared to conventional peer counseling. The intervention's effectiveness aligns with previous studies emphasizing the role of strength-based approaches in promoting resilience, positive emotions, and interpersonal relationships among adolescents in educational settings (Cheng et al., 2022; Shoshani & Slone, 2017).

The findings of this study demonstrate that peer counseling based on character strengths is significantly effective in enhancing the psychological well-being of students in Islamic boarding schools. This is evidenced by a substantial increase in psychological well-being scores among the experimental group following the intervention, while only a minimal improvement was observed in the control group. These results reinforce the growing body of evidence supporting the utility of strength-based interventions in school counseling practices, particularly within communal and religious educational environments.

The significant improvement observed in the experimental group is consistent with previous research that found peer counseling interventions to be effective in alleviating psychological distress and improving emotional well-being among adolescents. A meta-analysis conducted by Cheng et al. (2022) revealed that strength-based peer support programs substantially enhance adolescents' resilience, self-esteem, and psychological well-being across various educational settings. Similarly, Shoshani and Slone (2017), Shavaisi et al (2024), and Yıldırım & Kardaş (2024) demonstrated that positive psychology-based interventions contribute to reducing depressive symptoms and promoting positive affect among high school students. The present study extends these findings by confirming the effectiveness of such interventions within Islamic boarding school settings, a unique environment with distinct socio-religious dynamics.

The superior outcomes in the experimental group can be attributed to the integration of five core character strengths (gratitude, hope, zest, curiosity, and love) which have been empirically linked to enhanced psychological well-being (Gander et al., 2020; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Gratitude helps students maintain positive emotions amidst the challenges of separation from family, while hope fosters optimism for their academic and spiritual goals within the boarding school environment. Zest and curiosity encourage active engagement with peers and new experiences, crucial for successful social adaptation in communal living. Love, as a relational strength, enhances interpersonal connectedness, which is particularly important in boarding school settings where peer relationships are integral to emotional support networks (Glazzard et al., 2019). In addition to their psychological significance, these strengths resonate with the core values of Islamic education, such as *syukur, raja', ghirah thalabul 'ilm*, and *ukhuwah Islamiyah*. Thus, these five were prioritized for their high impact and contextual fit with pesantren values and adolescent needs.

Moreover, the study corroborates earlier findings that peer support is more readily accepted and impactful among adolescents in close-knit communal environments. Gao et al. (2017), Norder et al. (2025), and Chukwu et al. (2025) reported that adolescents prefer sharing personal concerns with peers over authority figures, as they perceive peers as more empathetic and relatable. The hierarchical and formal nature of student-teacher relationships in boarding schools may limit students' willingness to disclose sensitive psychological issues to school counselors or religious mentors. The peer counseling approach leverages the natural affinity among peers, making it a highly contextual and culturally congruent method for promoting mental health in boarding school communities.

From a theoretical perspective, the results align with Seligman's (2011) positive psychology framework, which posits that enhancing individual strengths leads to improved well-being and life satisfaction. By focusing on character strengths rather than deficits, peer counseling sessions cultivated positive emotions, resilience, and social bonds elements that constitute the PERMA model (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment) (Seligman, 2011). The intervention's emphasis on character strengths is especially meaningful in Islamic educational contexts, where moral virtues such as gratitude (*syukur*), optimism (*husnudzon*), and compassion (*rahmah*) are deeply embedded within religious teachings.

Additionally, this study addresses a notable gap in the literature, as limited research has empirically tested strength-based counseling interventions within Islamic boarding school environments in Indonesia. Previous studies have predominantly focused on general schools (Lai et al., 2020) or Western educational contexts (Shoshani & Slone, 2017), leaving a significant need to verify the cross-cultural applicability of such interventions. The findings of this study provide empirical evidence supporting the contextual effectiveness of strength-based peer counseling in communal, religiously oriented boarding schools, thereby expanding the scope of counseling psychology research in non-Western settings.

Moreover, although this study successfully demonstrated short-term improvements in psychological well-being, longitudinal studies are needed to assess the sustainability of these effects over time. Investigating the long-term impact of peer counseling on academic achievement, moral development, and social adjustment would also be valuable for strengthening the evidence base.

Implication

The results of this study have significant implications for both counseling psychology theory and practice, particularly in religious educational settings such as Islamic boarding schools. The findings confirm that peer counseling interventions based on positive psychology, particularly character strengths, can significantly enhance students' psychological well-being in communal, faith-based environments. This supports the shift from problem-focused models to strength-based approaches, which empower students through the development of positive attributes.

Practically, the success of this intervention suggests that school counselors and mental health professionals in boarding schools should integrate character strengths modules into peer counseling programs. Not only does the intervention enhance emotional resilience, but it also strengthens peer relationships, a crucial source of social support in communal settings. Furthermore, the alignment of character strengths with Islamic values provides a culturally relevant framework for promoting mental health, fostering the integration of moral and spiritual virtues alongside psychological well-being. Theoretically, this study expands the literature on positive psychology interventions by providing empirical evidence from a non-Western, faith-based educational context, thus broadening the cross-cultural applicability of strength-based counseling models.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

This study has several limitations that must be considered. First, it was conducted in three Islamic boarding schools in a single urban area of Central Java, Indonesia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions, rural areas, or different types of religious boarding schools. Future research should include a more diverse sample across geographical and socio-economic backgrounds to enhance external validity. Additionally, the study focused only on short-term outcomes immediately following the intervention, leaving unclear whether the observed improvements in psychological well-being are sustained over time. Longitudinal studies are needed to assess the durability of these effects and their potential influence on other areas, such as academic performance and moral development.

Based on the study's findings and limitations, several recommendations for future research can be made. These include conducting longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of character strengths-based peer counseling, expanding the intervention to include additional character strengths, and replicating the study in diverse cultural and geographical contexts. Furthermore, incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews, could provide deeper insights into students' subjective experiences. Lastly, developing digital or blended peer counseling programs could increase accessibility and scalability, particularly in remote or resource-limited settings. These steps will help further advance the field of counseling psychology and enhance mental health services in religious educational environments.

CONCLUSION

This study provides strong empirical evidence that peer counseling interventions based on character strengths effectively enhance the psychological well-being of students in Islamic boarding schools. The success of the intervention is attributed to its culturally relevant, peer-based, and strength-focused approach, which aligns with both positive psychology and Islamic teachings. By fostering gratitude, hope, zest, curiosity, and love, the program improved resilience and interpersonal relationships among students. These findings highlight the value of transitioning from problem-focused to strength-based counseling models in adolescent services, especially in faith-based educational settings. Despite the study's limited geographic scope and short-term assessment, the results offer a solid foundation for future research, including longitudinal studies, expanded interventions with a broader range of character strengths, and digital delivery formats. These directions represent valuable opportunities to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of peer counseling programs for adolescents in faith-based educational systems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

M: conceptualized the research framework, developed the peer counseling module, and supervised the intervention process. DYP: contributed to research design, assisted in the development of the peer counselor training materials, and coordinated data collection. AM: was responsible for data management, statistical analysis, figure and table preparation, and assisted in interpreting results. AS: contributed to the literature review, theoretical framework, drafting of the introduction and discussion sections, and refined the academic writing. LBM: ensured adherence to ethical research protocols and review of the manuscript draft. AF: contributed to providing methodological guidance, critical revision of the manuscript, ensured consistency of the manuscript with APA 7th, and alignment with international publication standards. IS: reviewed the overall structure and ensured consistency of the manuscript with journal guidelines.

REFERENCES

Abdusshomad, A. (2024). Pemaafan sebagai Metode Para Santri Antisipasi Kasus Bullying di Pondok Pesantren. As-Syar'i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga, 6(1), 669-680. https://doi.org/10.47467/as.v6i2.692

Adebayo, D. F., Hashimi, I. H. M., & Bono, S. A. (2025). Character strengths and adolescent flourishing in Nigeria: examining the mediating role of strengths use and moderating role of gender. International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 30(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2025.2502556

Afharrozi, A. (2024). Investigasi Dampak Perceraian Orang Tua terhadap Motivasi dan Prestasi Santri di Pondok Pesantren. JIIP-Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan, 7(9), 9465-9473. https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v7i9.5298

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences (2nd ed.).* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Creswell, J. W., & Guetterman, T. C. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (6th ed.). Pearson.

Field, A. (2020). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Gander, F., Hofmann, J., Proyer, R. T., & Ruch, W. (2020). Character strengths: Stability, change, and relationships with well-being. *Applied Research in Quality of Life, 15*(2), 349–367. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-018-9690-6

Gao, S., Assink, M., Cipriani, A., & Lin, K. (2017). Associations between rejection sensitivity and mental health outcomes: A meta-analytic review. *Clinical psychology review*, 57, 59–74. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2017.08.007

Glazzard, J., Rose, A., Ogilvie, L., & Shucksmith, J. (2019). A narrative systematic review of the impact of peer mentoring on children and young people's mental health. *Children and Youth Services Review, 109*, 104589. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104589

Cheng, H., McDermott, R. C., & Lopez, F. G. (2022). Strength-based peer support interventions: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 69*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000582

Chukwu, S., Marlissa, J. A., Argareni, K., Tumangger, S., & Abram, Y. (2025). Peer Group Mentoring Approach as an Effort to Shape the Spirituality of Christian Adolescents. Indonesian Journal of Christian Education and Theology, 4(2), 145-154. https://doi.org/10.55927/ijcet.v4i2.98

Kabakçı, Ö. F., & Ergene, T. (2024). The Role of Character Strengths in Positive Youth Development: Prediction of Resiliency, Subjective Well-Being, and Academic Achievement. Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Journal, 14(75), 619-638. https://doi.org/10.17066/tpdrd.1421043

Kaynak, Ü. (2025). Relationship Between Well-Being and Social Interest in Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Character Strengths. Child Indicators Research, 1-22. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-025-10219-9

Lai, E. S. Y., Kwok, C. L., Wong, P. W. C., Fu, K. W., Law, Y. W., & Yip, P. S. F. (2020). The effectiveness and sustainability of a peer-based early intervention program to reduce self-harm and improve mental health literacy among secondary school students in Hong Kong: A cluster randomized controlled trial. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(22), 8525. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17228525

Lin, Y., Tsai, P., & Chang, C. (2021). Reliability and validity of Ryff's psychological well-being scale: A meta-analysis and psychometric evaluation in adolescents. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 22*(4), 1807–1833. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00288-8

Munawaroh, H. (2024). Analisis Pengaruh Tekanan Psikologis Dan Beban Tugas Terhadap Kesejahteraan Mental Santri: Studi Kasus santri pondok pesantren Safiinatunnaja (PPQSN) di Mekarsari Rt 05 Rw 11 Kalibeber Mojotengah. An Najah (Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Sosial Keagamaan), 3(4), 331-335. https://journal.nabest.id/index.php/annajah/article/view/355/227

Muslikah. (2023), *Panduan Konselor Sebaya Pelaksanaan Model Konseling Sebaya Berbasis Character Strengths bagi Peningkatan Psychological Well Being Santri di Islamic Boarding Schools*. [Unpublished guidebook]

Muslikah. (2024). Pengembangan model konseling sebaya berbasis character strengths bagi peningkatan psychological well being santri di Islamic boarding school (Disertasi doktoral, Universitas Negeri Semarang). Repositori Universitas Negeri Semarang. https://lib.unnes.ac.id/67047/

Norder, W., de Boer, A., & Minnaert, A. (2025). Peer relations and motivation in special secondary education: Experiences of adolescents with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. British Journal of Educational Psychology. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12773

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Oxford University Press.

Pfeiffer, J. P., & Pinquart, M. (2014). Problem behavior and self-concept in adolescents in residential care: Associations with peer relationships and staff behavior. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 43*(2), 175–193. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-013-9234-8

Rahmi, K. (2025). Perbedaan Homesickness Pada Santri Perantau Dengan Santri Bukan Perantau Di SMP Pondok Pesantren Ummul Ayman Kecamatan Samalanga (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh).

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57(6), 1069. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.57.6.1069

Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (2004). Know thyself and become what you are: A eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 9*(1), 13–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9019-0

Al-Mafraji, Salem bin Mohammed. (2022) The effectiveness of a peer-counseling program in reducing cyberbullying among middle school students. *Journal of Umm Al-Qura University for Educational and Psychological Sciences.* Volume-14, Issue-3: September 2022 / Article-4. https://doi.org/10.54940/ep20211839

Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. Free Press.

Shavaisi, F., Heydarpour, S., Jalilian, N., Jalali, A., & Rezaei, M. (2024). The effects of positive psychology and physical activity on depression, anxiety, and stress among students with

premenstrual syndrome: a single-blind, randomized controlled trial. BMC Women's Health, 24(1), 499. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-024-03333-3

Shoshani, A., & Slone, M. (2017). Positive psychology interventions in school psychology: A meta-analysis. *Psychology in the Schools, 54* (9), 1073–1090. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22072

Sugiyo, S., Muslikah, M., Antika, E., & Sutikno, U. (2019). Profil Psychological Well-Being pada Siswa Kelas X SMA Negeri 12 Semarang Tahun Pelajaran 2018/2019. Proceeding Of International Conference On Islamic Education (ICIED), 4(1), 116-120. Retrieved from https://conferences.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/icied/article/view/1074

Taherdoost, H. (2016). Sampling methods in research methodology; how to choose a sampling technique for research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management, 5*(2), 18–27. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3205035

Xing, X., Luo, J., Ruan, H., & Dine, M. (2021). Boarding school experience and adolescents' mental health: The role of perceived social support and self-esteem. *Children and Youth Services Review, 120*, 105776. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105776

Yıldırım, İ., & Kardaş, F. (2024). Examining the Effectiveness of a Positive Psychology-Based Psychoeducation Program on Adolescents' Character Strengths. Erzincan Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 26(1), 92-103. https://doi.org/10.17556/erziefd.1411176