

THE QUR'AN AS A SELF-HEALING MEDIUM: A STUDY OF THE LIVING QUR'AN AMONG FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF THE IMAM SYAFI'I ISLAMIC INSTITUTE

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Abstract

This study analyzes how final-year students at IAI Imam Syafii Pekanbaru use the Qur'an as a self-healing medium in responding to academic and psychological pressures. A qualitative descriptive and interpretive design grounded in the Living Qur'an approach was employed. Twelve final-year students were selected purposively, and data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed thematically and interpretively. The findings identify three major stressor categories: chronic academic workload, administrative disorientation, and conflicts in social relationships and personal life. In response, students engage with the Qur'an through listening to murottal, internalizing patience, tawakkul, and gratitude, reviewing memorization, dhikr, and spiritual reflection. These practices are perceived as providing emotional calm, meaning, and resilience when students face academic uncertainty and bureaucratic confusion. The study shows that Living Qur'an practices function as forms of spiritual coping that support emotional regulation and continued academic engagement, while not substituting professional psychological support when such assistance is needed.

Keywords: Living Qur'an; Self-Healing; Final-Year Students; Spiritual Coping; Academic Resilience

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengalaman mahasiswa tingkat akhir IAI Imam Syafii Pekanbaru dalam memanfaatkan Al-Qur'an sebagai media self-healing untuk menghadapi tekanan akademik dan psikologis. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain interpretatif berbasis Living Qur'an. Informan terdiri atas 12 mahasiswa tingkat akhir yang dipilih secara purposif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik dan interpretatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tiga kelompok stresor utama, yaitu beban akademik kronis, disorientasi administratif, serta konflik relasi sosial dan persoalan personal. Dalam menghadapi tekanan tersebut, mahasiswa mempraktikkan penerimaan fungsional terhadap Al-Qur'an melalui mendengarkan murottal, internalisasi nilai sabar, tawakal, dan syukur, muraja'ah, zikir, serta refleksi spiritual. Al-Qur'an dipersepsikan sebagai sumber ketenangan, makna, dan penguatan resiliensi ketika mahasiswa menghadapi ketidakpastian akademik dan birokrasi kampus. Temuan menegaskan bahwa praktik Living Qur'an berfungsi sebagai strategi coping spiritual yang mendukung regulasi emosi dan keberlanjutan aktivitas akademik, tanpa menggantikan dukungan psikologis profesional ketika diperlukan. Pendekatan ini memperluas kajian Living Qur'an ke konteks kesejahteraan mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: Living Qur'an; Self-Healing; Mahasiswa Tingkat Akhir; Coping Spiritual; Resiliensi Akademik



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INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a crucial phase in human development, often considered a golden bridge to intellectual maturity, economic independence, and social service. However, behind these ideal expectations, the contemporary academic environment has transformed into a highly competitive arena of pressure, significantly impacting the psychological stability of its participants. The phenomenon of mental health crises among college students is no longer a marginal issue but has become a pressing global public health challenge. Various studies have shown that the transition to emerging adulthood that occurs during college is a period highly vulnerable to the emergence of emotional and psychological disorders.¹

Globally, increasing academic pressure, financial burdens, and uncertainty about the future have fueled an alarming prevalence of mental disorders. In Indonesia, statistics show a similar trend, which has even increased post-pandemic. Based on data from the Basic Health Research (2018), the prevalence of emotional mental disorders among the population aged 15 and above—the age range of college students—reached 9.8%, a sharp increase from 6% in 2013. More specifically, among college students, approximately 25% reported symptoms of moderate to severe academic stress, while 15% showed signs of burnout or chronic mental exhaustion.² This condition reaches its peak in final year students who are facing the demands of completing their final assignments or theses, a phase where the uncertainty of graduation meets the often burdensome expectations of a career.

Table 1.Student Mental Health³

Indicator	Statistics/Findings	Data source
Prevalence of Emotional Mental Disorders (National)	9.8% (Population 15+ Years)	2018 Basic Health Research
Students with Academic Stress Symptoms	25% (Medium-Heavy)	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia 2023
Prevalence of Depression in Indonesian Students	14.2% (Moderate), 5% (Severe)	Peltzer & Pengpid 2018

¹ Arif Tri Setyanto, Moh. Abdul Hakim, dan Fa'iza Putri Muzakki, “Deteksi Dini Prevalensi Gangguan Kesehatan Mental Mahasiswa di Perguruan Tinggi,” *Wacana: Jurnal Ilmiah* Vol. 15, No. 1 (Januari 2023): 66–78, <https://doi.org/10.20961/wacana.v15i1.69548>.

² “*Mental Health Mahasiswa: Menjaga Keseimbangan antara Tugas, Organisasi, dan Cita-Cita*,” CDC UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, diakses 29 Januari 2026, <https://cdc.uinssc.ac.id/mental-health-mahasiswa-menjaga-keseimbangan-antara-tugas-organisasi-dan-cita-cita-p6989>.

³ “*Pentingnya Kesehatan Mental dan Akses Konseling di Kampus*,” Stekom, diakses 29 Januari 2026, <https://stekom.ac.id/artikel/pentingnya-kesehatan-mental-dan-akses-konseling-di-kampus>.

Cases of High Anxiety in Student Respondents	86.8%	Descriptive Analysis of 227 Students
Indications of Academic Burnout	15% of the total student population	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia 2023

The urgency of discussing mental health on campus is reinforced by the fact that untreated psychological disorders not only hinder academic achievement but also damage long-term quality of life. Decreased motivation to learn, delayed graduation, social withdrawal, and the risk of self-harm are all tangible manifestations of unmanaged mental distress.⁴In this context, educational institutions have a moral and systemic responsibility to provide not only intellectual facilities, but also safe spaces for students' mental health recovery.

The Imam Syafii Islamic Institute (IAI) Indonesia, a higher education institution located in Pekanbaru City, Riau Province, has unique characteristics that influence the psychological dynamics of its students. With a vision of becoming an institute with integrity and excellence in producing independent and characterful Muslim intellectuals by 2037, the campus implements a curriculum that integrates Islamic studies with digital literacy.⁵ IAI Imam Syafii manages six study programs that cover the dimensions of law, education, and sharia economics.⁶ However, this academic ambition brings consequences in the form of a double burden of responsibility for students, especially those in their final years.

Field research conducted among final-year students at IAI Imam Syafii revealed that the triggers for mental stress are multidimensional, and can be classified into three main, interrelated categories. The first category is the accumulated academic burden accompanied by simultaneous deadlines. Almost all participants identified the massive pile of assignments as a major factor in their stress. One student stated that the mounting academic burden often hindered their academic activities, while Informant 11 highlighted the pressure to understand difficult material in a very short time (Rahmawati, Agustini, and Ramadhan 2025). This pressure is exacerbated by their status as final-year students, who are required to complete their theses while still completing their remaining courses.

Factors such as information asymmetry and mental fatigue due to administrative aspects. An interesting phenomenon was found in the response of a student, identified as NH, who

⁴Ibid.

⁵ “*Visi*,” STAI IMSYA (Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Imam Asy-Syafi’i), diakses 29 Januari 2026, <https://stai-imsya.ac.id/visi>.

⁶ “*Visi dan Misi*,” Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu (LPM) STAI IMSYA, diakses 29 Januari 2026, <https://lpm.stai-imsya.ac.id/visi-dan-misi/>

highlighted that mental stress stems not only from course material but also from systemic confusion.⁷ Unsynchronized campus information between administration and students causes extraordinary mental fatigue.⁸ At Islamic institutions, this challenge is compounded by the rigorous Quran memorization (tahfidz) targets set amidst a busy class schedule. This dual burden of maintaining academic achievement and upholding the mandate of memorization creates unique spiritual stress for students at Islamic Religious Colleges (PTKI).⁹

In response to these pressures, students at Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI), such as IAI Imam Syafii, intuitively turned to spiritual values as their primary coping strategy. This is where the concept of the Quran as a self-healing medium becomes relevant. Theologically, the Quran claims to be the syifa (antidote) for the ailments of the human soul.¹⁰ However, this study does not merely view the Qur'an as a normative text, but rather through the Living Qur'an approach, namely scientific research on the phenomenon of the Qur'an that is alive and practiced by the Muslim community in their daily lives.¹¹

The Living Qur'an study shifts the focus from what the text "says" to what society "does" with it. In the context of final-year students, the Qur'an functions beyond its textual boundaries; it exists in the form of audio recitation (murottal), memorization, and internalized life motivation. Students use the Qur'an as a self-healing tool to overcome anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and uncertainty about the future.¹² Activities such as reading the Qur'an with tartil have been proven to reduce stress hormones, activate endorphins, and provide deep psychological calm.¹³

The concept of self-healing in Islam is closely linked to efforts to restore spiritual balance. Mental health in Islam is not simply about being free from mental disorders, but rather about achieving a state of *sakinah* (tranquility) and *mutma'innah* (serenity of soul) through a harmonious

⁷ NH, wawancara oleh penulis, mahasiswa angkatan 2022, 16 Desember 2025.

⁸ A. Rahmawati, A. Agustini, dan M. R. Ramadhan, "Gangguan Kesehatan Mental terhadap Performa Akademik Mahasiswa Tingkat Awal," *Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan dan Konseling* 11, no. 1 (2025): n.p.

⁹ Sugeng Sejati, "Dinamika Psikologis Mahasiswa Penghafal Al-Qur'an Ditinjau dari Surat Fāṭir Ayat 32," *Jurnal Ilmiah Penelitian Mandira Cendikia* 2, no. 7 (Januari 2024): n.p., <https://journal-mandiracendikia.com/jip-mc>

¹⁰ Nur Padilah, "Makna Syifā' dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an Surah Yūnus Ayat 57," *Al-Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan* 18, no. 3 (t.t.): n.p., <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v18i3.3500>.

¹¹ Roma Wijaya, "Makna Syifā' dalam Al-Qur'an (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes pada QS Al-Isrā' [17]: 82)," *Al-Adabiya: Jurnal Kebudayaan dan Keagamaan* 16, no. 2 (24 Desember 2021), <https://doi.org/10.37680/adabiya.v16i2.924>

¹² Annida Nazirah, "Wawasan Al-Qur'an tentang *Mental Health*: Studi Al-Qur'an Tematik dengan Pendekatan *Grounded Theory*," *IHSANIKA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 3 (September 2025): 387–405, <https://doi.org/10.59841/ihsanika.v3i3.3076>

¹³ Azka Mufarrida, *Membangun Kesehatan Mental melalui Aktivitas Menjurnal Qur'an (Studi Living Qur'an pada Anggota Webinar Qur'an Journaling for Self Healing)* (tesis magister, Program Studi Magister Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, Konsentrasi Ilmu Tafsir, Program Pascasarjana Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2023), 88

relationship with the Creator.¹⁴ The Qur'an as a healing medium works through several psychological mechanisms:

First, through spiritual mindfulness techniques. By reading or listening to the Quran, students are encouraged to focus on the present moment, letting go of past regrets and future worries.¹⁵ This activity stabilizes the heart rate and brain waves, creating a relaxing effect similar to meditation but with a deeper dimension of value.¹⁶ Experimental research shows that murottal therapy of Surah Ar-Rahman significantly reduces stress levels in students who are working on their thesis.

Second, through revelation-based cognitive strengthening. The Quran provides a new interpretive framework for suffering. Students are taught to actively practice *sabr* (patience), *syukur* (gratitude) for even the smallest progress, and *tawakkal* (submission) to the final outcome. This is highly effective in breaking the cycle of negative self-talk that often arises when a thesis encounters obstacles or when guidance with a lecturer is not going smoothly.¹⁷

As an institution that upholds sharia values, the Imam Syafii Islamic Institute (IAI) places significant emphasis on the *tahfidz* (memorization) program. However, for final-year students, memorizing the Quran amidst their busy academic schedule is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, memorizing the Quran provides a source of inner peace and powerful extrinsic motivation.¹⁸ On the other hand, the demands for disciplined *muraja'ah* (repeating memorization) require very strict time management.

Field observations indicate that failure to balance study time with memorization is often a major source of stress. Students frequently experience headaches, panic, insomnia, and irritability due to missed memorization targets and mounting coursework.¹⁹ The feeling of guilt because they feel they have "betrayed" the Koran for the sake of worldly affairs is a very heavy moral burden for a *hafiz*/*hafizah*.

However, research also shows that students with high spiritual intelligence tend to be more resilient in the face of final-year pressures. For them, the Quran is not simply an object to be memorized, but rather a subject that provides the energy to overcome academic challenges.

¹⁴ Annida Nazirah, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an...*, 392,

¹⁵ Khizan Ahmilul An'am, *Self-Healing dalam Q.S. Al-Insyirāh (Studi Analisis Self-Healing Diana Rahmasari)* (skripsi sarjana, Program Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, Jurusan Studi Al-Qur'an dan Sejarah, Fakultas Ushuluddin, Adab dan Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, 2024), 57.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*,

¹⁸ Sugeng, *Dinamika Psikologis...*, 163

¹⁹ Khasna Fauziyah Nur, *Tingkat Stres dalam Proses Menghafal Al-Qur'an pada Santri Mustawā Awwal Pondok Pesantren Modern Darul Qur'an Al-Karim Desa Karangtengah Kecamatan Baturraden Kabupaten Banyumas* (skripsi sarjana, Program Studi Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam, Fakultas Dakwah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Purwokerto, 2020). 65

Through reflection on Surah Fatir, verse 32, students are reminded that Allah will not burden a soul beyond its capacity, so they learn not to overburden themselves.²⁰

This study also emphasizes that self-healing at IAI Imam Syafii is not simply an escape from problems, but rather a proactive process for building academic resilience. Final-year students use the Quran to reprogram their stress response, enabling them to return to their coursework and theses with a fresher and more hopeful perspective.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, with the aim of understanding in depth the meaning, experience, and practice of utilizing the Qur'an as a self-healing medium among final year students of the Imam Syafi'i Islamic Institute. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study does not aim to measure symptoms quantitatively, but rather explores subjective realities, inner experiences, and the construction of meaning built by students in responding to academic and psychological pressures through their interactions with the Qur'an. In this context, the qualitative approach allows researchers to capture the phenomenon of the living Qur'an, namely how the Qur'an is not only positioned as a normative text, but is brought to life in daily practice as a source of calm, mental strengthening, and emotional recovery.

This research is a field research with a descriptive-interpretive design. Field research was chosen because the primary data were obtained directly from the research subjects through intensive interactions within the Imam Syafi'i Islamic Institute campus located in Pekanbaru, Riau. This campus has six study programs with a strong Islamic academic character, making it a relevant context for examining the relationship between students' academic life, psychological stress, and Quran-based religious practices. The research focused on final-year students who are empirically vulnerable to stress, whether due to academic demands, the burden of completing studies, or the dynamics of social and personal relationships.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from informants through in-depth interviews and observations, while secondary data came from documentation, such as academic guidelines, lecture schedules, archives of campus religious activities, and scientific literature relevant to the themes of self-healing, student psychology, and the study of the Living Qur'an. The research informants were 12 final-year students selected from a total population of approximately 80 students, taking into account variations in

²⁰ Yeni Eka Cahyani dan Sari Zakiah Akmal, "Peranan Spiritualitas terhadap Resiliensi pada Mahasiswa yang Sedang Mengerjakan Skripsi," *Psikoislamedia: Jurnal Psikologi* 2, no. 1 (2017): n.p. <https://doi.org/10.22373/psikoislamedia.v2i1.1822>

study program backgrounds, academic experience, and level of involvement in Qur'an-based religious practices.

The informant determination technique uses purposive sampling, namely the deliberate selection of research subjects based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives. The informant criteria include: (1) active final year students at the Imam Syafi'i Islamic Institute, (2) have experienced or are experiencing mental stress, academic stress, or mental fatigue, and (3) have experience using the Qur'an—either through recitation, tadabbur, remembrance of certain verses, or other religious activities—as a means of calming oneself or overcoming psychological stress. This purposive sampling technique is considered appropriate because it allows researchers to obtain rich, in-depth, and contextual data, in accordance with the focus of the Living Qur'an study.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews served as the primary technique for exploring informants' subjective experiences related to triggers for mental distress, the forms of stress experienced, and the practice of utilizing the Quran in self-healing. Interviews were conducted semi-structured to provide researchers with a systematic framework of questions and flexible space to explore informants' personal narratives. Observations were conducted to directly observe the academic atmosphere, religious activities, and student interaction patterns on campus that could potentially influence their psychological well-being. Meanwhile, documentation was used as supporting data to strengthen the results of the interviews and observations.

The data analysis in this study used descriptive thematic analysis. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were first transcribed, classified, and reduced according to the research focus. Next, the researcher identified key themes emerging from the data, such as accumulated academic load and simultaneous deadlines, academic information asymmetry that triggers mental fatigue, as well as social relationship conflicts and personal problems. These themes were then analyzed descriptively to examine the relationship between students' psychological distress and the practice of the Living Qur'an as a self-healing medium. The analysis was conducted interpretively by linking field findings with the Living Qur'an theory and Islamic psychology perspectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

National statistics in Indonesia show a worrying trend: the prevalence of emotional and mental disorders among university students has reached 9.8%. On campus, approximately 25% of students report symptoms of moderate to severe academic stress, with 15% of them showing signs

of burnout or chronic mental exhaustion.²¹ This condition reaches its peak in final year students who are faced with the demands of completing their thesis and the uncertainty of the future.

At the Imam Syafii Islamic Institute (IAI) in Pekanbaru, this challenge takes on a unique dimension due to the integration of the Islamic curriculum with the target of Quran memorization (tahfidz). Students are not only required to excel intellectually through the six available study programs (Sharia Economics, Sharia Banking, Islamic Attitude Assessment (IAT), Islamic Education and Training (PBA), Islamic Religious Education (MPI), and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), but also to maintain spiritual integrity through constant interaction with the Quran.²²

As an institution that upholds sharia values, the Imam Syafii Islamic Institute (IAI) places significant emphasis on the tahfidz (memorization) program. However, for final-year students, memorizing the Quran amidst their busy academic schedule is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, memorizing the Quran provides a source of inner peace and powerful extrinsic motivation. On the other hand, the demands of disciplined muraja'ah (repetition) require rigorous time management.

Field observations indicate that failure to balance study time with memorization is often a major source of stress. Students frequently experience headaches, panic, insomnia, and irritability due to missed memorization targets and mounting coursework.²³ The feeling of guilt because they feel they have "betrayed" the Koran for the sake of worldly affairs is a very heavy moral burden for a hafiz/hafizah.

However, research also shows that students who have high spiritual intelligence tend to be more resilient in facing the pressures of the end of their studies.²⁴ For them, the Quran is not simply an object to be memorized, but rather a subject that provides the energy to overcome academic challenges. Through reflection on Surah Fatir, verse 32, students are reminded that Allah will not burden a soul beyond its capacity, so they learn not to overburden themselves.

In the perspective of classical interpretation, as put forward by Thahir Ibn Asyur, the Qur'an is likened to a doctor who diagnoses human mental illnesses—such as doubt, anxiety, and inner weakness—and provides medicine in the form of spiritual guidance. Ibn Asyur emphasized that the Qur'an is a comprehensive healer (musytarak), which covers both psychological and physical

²¹ Arif Tri Setyanto, "Deteksi Dini Prevalensi Gangguan Kesehatan...",70

²² "Visi dan Misi," Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu (LPM) STAI IMSYA, diakses 29 Januari 2026, <https://lpm.stai-imsya.ac.id/visi-dan-misi/>

²³ Muh. Rif'at, *Dinamika Stres Penghafal Al-Qur'an di Pondok Pesantren DDI Al-Ihsan Kanang Kecamatan Binuang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar* (skripsi sarjana, Program Studi Bimbingan Konseling Islam, Fakultas Ushuluddin, Adab dan Dakwah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Parepare, 2023).

²⁴ Yeni Eka Cahyani dan Sari Zakiah Akmal, "Peranan Spiritualitas terhadap Resiliensi pada Mahasiswa yang Sedang Mengerjakan Skripsi," *Psikoislamedia: Jurnal Psikologi* 2, no. 1 (2017): n.p. <https://doi.org/10.22373/psikoislamedia.v2i1.1822>

illnesses.²⁵ This interpretation provides a basis for students to believe that any mental stress they experience has a solution in the Qur'an.

Contemporary, M. Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Misbah provides a more psychological dimension. He states that the word *syifa* in certain contexts contains the meaning of relief and consolation for individuals who are depressed or oppressed. For final year students at IAI Imam Syafii, feelings of "oppression" may arise due to excessive workloads or confusing administrative information. The Qur'an is present as a medium for their emotional and spiritual reconstruction, providing hope that behind every difficulty there must be ease, as promised in QS. Al-Insyirah.²⁶

The integration of this theological understanding with the reality of students' psychological suffering creates a powerful synergy. Students read the Quran not only as a routine act of worship, but also as a dialogical process to restore their mental energy, depleted by the worldly demands of campus life. Data obtained from final-year students at the Imam Syafii Islamic Institute (IAI) provides a very personal picture of the heavy psychological burden at the end of their studies. The simultaneous accumulation of assignments is not merely a technical issue, but a trigger for chronic anxiety. Informant 11 revealed that the demand to understand difficult material in a short time creates almost unbearable pressure. This aligns with educational psychology theory, which states that excessive cognitive load without adequate recovery breaks will lead to a degradation of the brain's executive functions, making it difficult for students to focus and make sound academic decisions.

Information asymmetry, as complained by NH (Informant 9), is an external factor that undermines student self-efficacy. In an unstable academic information system, students often feel a loss of control over their academic journey.²⁷ The mental fatigue that arises is not due to the learning process itself, but rather to the energy drained from navigating confusing bureaucracy. For students memorizing the Quran, this fatigue threatens the quality of their memorization, which in turn triggers feelings of spiritual guilt for neglecting God's trust in favor of worldly administrative tasks.

Furthermore, the social relations conflicts experienced by Informants 8 and 10 demonstrate that the campus organizational ecosystem in Pekanbaru is not always a supportive place. Peer rivalry, toxic leadership dynamics within organizations, or intrusive personal issues often become invisible but fatal obstacles to learning motivation. At a time when students need emotional support

²⁵ Nur Padilah, "Makna Syifā' dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an Surah Yūnus Ayat 57," *Al-Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan* 18, no. 3 (t.t.): n.p., <https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v18i3.3500>

²⁶ Fajar Arif Rohmatulloh dan Derysmono, "Makna Syifā' dalam Al-Qur'an (Studi Komparatif Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab dan Sayyid Qutb)," *At-Taisir: Journal of Indonesian Tafsir Studies* 6, no. 1 (Juni 2025): 16–28.

²⁷ NH, wawancara oleh penulis, mahasiswa angkatan 2022, 16 Desember 2025.

to complete their theses, the loss of social harmony actually worsens their mental state, causing them to withdraw from the academic environment.

The Architecture of Multidimensional Stressors: From Academic Load to Administrative Labyrinths

Based on field data collected from final-year students at IAI Imam Syafii Pekanbaru, it was found that the mental stress they experienced was not a single phenomenon, but rather a complex and interconnected architecture of stressors. The first category was the massive accumulation of academic workloads accompanied by simultaneous deadlines. Informant 1 revealed that the pile of assignments was often a major inhibiting factor in their study activities. This pressure was exacerbated by difficult course material, as complained by Informant 11, who felt pressured to understand difficult concepts in a short time.²⁸ Psychologically, excessive cognitive load without sufficient recovery can cause degradation of focus and trigger academic procrastination behavior, respondents experienced emotional mental problems, which shows that the academic environment in this region does have a high level of stressors.

The second category, which is a crucial finding and adds value to this study, is information asymmetry and mental fatigue due to administrative aspects. NH (Informant 9) highlighted that systemic confusion—such as asynchronous campus information between administration and students—is a source of tremendous stress. This administrative uncertainty creates a sense of helplessness and undermines students' self-efficacy.²⁹ Furthermore, as students at Islamic institutions, these administrative burdens overlap with the obligation to memorize the Quran. This dual challenge creates a specific kind of mental fatigue: academic stress meets spiritual stress. Disruptions in the academic information system (SIKAD) or difficulties accessing campus services have been shown to contribute significantly to anxiety in final-year students.

The third category involves social relationship conflicts and intrusive personal issues. Informants 8 and 10 noted that the dynamics within student organizations and disharmonious interactions between peers create inner unrest that hinders learning motivation. Interpersonal conflicts within PTKI environments are often triggered by differing perspectives or unhealthy

²⁸ Penulis, observasi lapangan terhadap mahasiswa tingkat akhir IAI Imam Syafii Indonesia, Pekanbaru, 10–20 Desember 2025.

²⁹ *Ibid.*,

competitive pressures.³⁰ Without strong social support from peers, students tend to experience isolation which exacerbates symptoms of depression and anxiety.³¹

Table 2. Stressor Typology of IAI IMSYA Students

Stressor Typology of IAI IMSYA Students	Psychological & Physical Manifestations	Primary Data Source
Chronic Academic Burden	Dizziness, difficulty focusing, procrastination, decreased motivation	Informant 1, Informant 11
Administrative Disorientation	Bureaucratic confusion, mental fatigue, double stress (tahfidz)	Informant 9, Informant 2
Social Relations Friction	Inner restlessness, feelings of isolation, organizational conflict	Informant 8, Informant 10

Living Qur'an Reception: Transforming Text into Self-Help Spiritual Therapy

Facing these multidimensional stressors, IAI Imam Syafii students conducted a functional reception of the Qur'an, which in the Living Qur'an study is defined as the use of holy verses for practical purposes in everyday life. The Qur'an is no longer seen only as an object of study in class, but as a healing subject (syifa) that lives in their bodies and actions.³²

The first form of this self-healing strategy is the use of murottal therapy. Students tend to listen to the recitation of holy verses—particularly Surah Ar-Rahman—as a positive distraction from the burden of their thesis. Scientifically, the stimulation from listening to Quranic verses triggers the release of endogenous opiates in the brain, which balances the autonomic nervous system and reduces stress hormones. Murottal therapy performed independently, especially before

³⁰ STAI IMSYA | Home,” STAI IMSYA (Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Imam Asy-Syafi’i), diakses 29 Januari 2026, <https://stai-imsya.ac.id/>

³¹ Lailatul Afifah Ardi, Puji Gusri Handayani, Frischa Meivilona Yendi, dan Lisa, “Fenomena Stres Akademik dalam Penyelesaian Tugas Akhir pada Mahasiswa Rantau,” *Jurnal Konseling dan Pendidikan* 13, no. 1 (2025): 49—, <https://doi.org/10.29210/1139300>.

³² Mahmud My, dkk, “Manajemen Stres Semester Akhir: Memahami Dampaknya pada Kualitas Hidup dan Kesejahteraan Mental Mahasiswa,” *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan* 14, no. 2 (Mei 2025): n.p., <https://jurnaldidaktika.org>.

bed or when feeling particularly stressed, has been proven effective in reducing anxiety scores in students working on their final assignments.³³

The second form is the internalization of the values of *sabr* (patience), *tawakal* (self-surrender), and gratitude as cognitive coping. Final-year students reconstruct the meaning of their suffering through the lens of revelation. For example, the belief in QS. Al-Insyirah (94:5-6) that "with hardship comes ease" provides a stable hope amidst the administrative uncertainty of the campus.³⁴ This spiritual coping practice helps students remain resilient despite challenges with guidance or limited resources. They believe that every obstacle is a test to improve their spirituality.

The third form is spiritual journaling and *dhikr* (recitation of *istighfar*) as a medium for emotional catharsis. Expressing one's sorrows to God through interaction with verses of the Quran is seen as a form of "divine counseling." For students who memorize the Quran, the activity of *muraja'ah* (reciting the memorization) serves a dual function: as an academic-spiritual obligation and as a moment of silence to calm the mind from the hustle and bustle of administrative matters. The Quran becomes a safe space for students to acknowledge their vulnerabilities without fear of social stigma on campus.

The Qur'an as an Anchor of Resilience Amidst a Systemic Crisis

The main novelty of this study lies in its analysis of the use of the Quran as a specific coping tool for stress caused by campus administrative disorganization. While previous research has focused more on stress caused by course material or financial issues, this study finds that "bureaucratic labyrinths" and "asynchronous information" are significant stressors at IAI Imam Syafii, and the Quran serves as an instrument of inner synchronization.

When the campus information system (SIKAD) fails or data synchronization is hampered—as Informant 9 experienced—uncertainty ensues, damaging students' cognitive structures. In this situation, the Quran serves as a stable "alternative information system." Through the concept of *tawakal*, students delegate their emotional burden to a transcendent power when the institutional system fails to provide certainty. This significantly reduces the risk of academic burnout caused by bureaucratic fatigue.

Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and academic resilience. Spirituality effectively contributes to students' ability to recover from failure. At IAI Imam Syafii, students who have a higher intensity of interaction with the Quran tend to be better

³³ Rival Agustina dan Kholil Lur Rachman, "Strategi Coping Stres Akademik Mahasiswa melalui Terapi Al-Qur'an," *Journal of Islamic Education Guidance and Counseling* 6, no. 1 (Juni 2025): 1–15.

³⁴ Sismanto, "Kajian Ayat-Ayat Syifā' dalam Perspektif Tafsir dan Implementasinya dalam Pengobatan Ruqyah," *Studia Quranika* 6, no. 2 (Januari 2022), <https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquan.v6i2.5651>.

able to manage anger caused by unfair treatment or administrative ambiguity. The interpretation of the word *syifa* in QS. Yunus: 57 by the mufassir which emphasizes "relief and consolation for the oppressed" is relevant for students who feel disadvantaged by the administrative system.³⁵

Therefore, memorizing the Quran at IAI Imam Syafii Pekanbaru serves not only as a sacred text memorized to fulfill credits, but also as a sophisticated spiritual technology to restore mental health. The integration of spiritual resilience and adaptability to administrative stressors creates a model of students who are not only academically intelligent but also mentally strong. These findings recommend that Islamic educational institutions not only improve their digital systems but also consciously integrate Quran-based self-healing practices into their student mentoring systems as a form of mental health crisis mitigation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the psychological pressures experienced by final-year students at IAI Imam Syafii Pekanbaru are multidimensional rather than arising from a single academic source. The findings identify three interconnected categories of stressors: chronic academic workload and simultaneous deadlines, administrative disorientation caused by unclear or asynchronous institutional information, and social relationship conflicts combined with personal difficulties. Within the specific context of an Islamic higher education institution, these pressures may also intersect with responsibilities related to Qur'anic memorization and *muraja'ah*, creating an additional spiritual dimension to students' experiences of academic strain.

The study further shows that students respond to these pressures by developing functional forms of Qur'anic reception consistent with the *Living Qur'an* perspective. The Qur'an is experienced not only as a sacred text for recitation or academic study but also as a source of emotional reassurance, meaning-making, and spiritual orientation. Practices identified in the study include listening to *murottal*, reviewing memorized verses, engaging in *dhikr*, reflecting on Qur'anic messages, and internalizing values such as *sabr*, *tawakkul*, and gratitude. Through these practices, students seek to reinterpret stressful experiences within a religious framework that provides hope and emotional stability.

An important finding concerns administrative disorientation as a distinctive source of mental fatigue. Students reported that unclear academic information, bureaucratic uncertainty, and difficulties navigating campus systems could weaken their sense of control over their academic progress. In this context, Qur'anic engagement functions as a form of spiritual anchoring when institutional structures fail to provide sufficient certainty. This finding extends discussions of student stress beyond conventional concerns such as coursework, financial pressure, and thesis

³⁵ Fajar Arif Rohmatulloh, *Makna Syifā' dalam Al-Qur'an...*, 16–28.

completion by highlighting the psychological consequences of institutional communication and administrative management.

The study also indicates that Qur'anic *self-healing* should be understood as a spiritual coping process rather than as a substitute for professional psychological or institutional support. Its significance lies in students' subjective experiences of calmness, renewed motivation, emotional regulation, and meaning reconstruction. Therefore, the role of the Qur'an in student well-being is best understood as complementary to broader forms of support, including clear academic communication, supportive supervision, peer networks, accessible counseling, and responsible workload management.

Overall, this study contributes to *Living Qur'an* scholarship by demonstrating how Qur'anic practices become embedded in the everyday psychological experiences of final-year students. The Qur'an functions as a lived source of resilience through recitation, memorization, reflection, and the internalization of religious values. Nevertheless, the study is limited by its qualitative single-institution design and purposively selected informants. Future research may involve multiple Islamic higher education institutions, longitudinal observation, or mixed-method designs to examine more systematically the relationship between Qur'anic engagement, spiritual coping, academic resilience, institutional stressors, and student well-being.

Research Novelty

The novelty of this study lies in identifying administrative disorientation and information asymmetry as significant stressors within a Living Qur'an framework. Previous discussions of student mental distress frequently emphasize academic workload, financial difficulties, thesis completion, or interpersonal problems. This study adds an institutional dimension by showing that unclear administrative communication and bureaucratic uncertainty may also become important sources of psychological fatigue for final-year students. Qur'anic engagement consequently emerges not only as a response to academic pressure but also as a spiritual mechanism for restoring meaning and emotional stability amid institutional uncertainty.

A further contribution lies in conceptualizing Qur'anic *self-healing* as a form of functional and experiential reception. The Qur'an is not merely interpreted textually but is enacted through *murottal*, *muraja'ah*, *dhikr*, reflection, and the internalization of *sabr*, *tawakkul*, and gratitude. This expands the scope of *Living Qur'an* studies from ritual and communal reception toward the domain of student well-being and academic resilience. The study therefore demonstrates how sacred-text reception can operate within everyday emotional and educational experiences.

The study also offers a contextual understanding of the dual role of Qur'anic memorization within Islamic higher education. Tahfidz-related responsibilities may be experienced as an

additional burden when academic demands accumulate, yet interaction with the same Qur'anic material can simultaneously provide spiritual reassurance and resilience. This tension illustrates that religious practices cannot be categorized simply as either protective or burdensome; their meaning depends on workload, institutional context, personal interpretation, and the ways students integrate them into their coping processes.

Research Implications

Theoretically, the findings imply that *Living Qur'an* scholarship can be expanded by incorporating psychological and educational dimensions of sacred-text reception. Qur'anic engagement may be analyzed not only in terms of ritual practice or social tradition but also as a meaning-making process through which individuals regulate emotions, reinterpret hardship, and sustain motivation. This perspective creates a productive dialogue between *Living Qur'an* studies, Islamic psychology, and research on academic resilience.

Institutionally, Islamic higher education institutions should not rely solely on students' personal spirituality to manage academic distress. The findings suggest the importance of improving administrative communication, synchronizing academic information, managing workloads more transparently, and providing accessible student-support mechanisms. Qur'an-based reflective activities may be incorporated into mentoring or spiritual-development programs as complementary forms of support, while students experiencing significant psychological difficulties should also have access to appropriate professional assistance.

Pedagogically and socially, lecturers, academic advisors, and campus religious mentors can help students develop healthier forms of spiritual coping by emphasizing balanced interpretations of *sabr*, *tawakkul*, gratitude, and personal responsibility. Qur'anic engagement should support students in returning to constructive academic action rather than becoming a means of avoiding unresolved problems. Integrating spiritual mentoring with clear academic guidance, supportive peer relationships, and responsive institutional services may create a more holistic model of student well-being within Islamic higher education.

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