



Strengthening Spiritual Resilience Through A Mosque-Based Thematic Study: Wise Responses To Life Trials Among The An-Nur Congregation In Banjarnegara

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ABSTRACT

Life trials are frequently discussed in Muslim congregations, yet religious messages can remain normative when they do not help participants translate patience, effort, trust in God, and help-seeking into daily decisions. This community engagement program aimed to strengthen spiritual resilience and practical religious coping among the congregation of An-Nur Mosque, Pasurenan, Banjarnegara, through a thematic study entitled “Strong and Wise in Responding to Life Trials.” The activity was conducted on 25 July 2026 in collaboration with the Pesantren Masyarakat Dieng community and involved approximately 40 congregants. A service-learning design was combined with participatory religious education through partner coordination, contextual material preparation, a thematic lecture using the mau’izhah hasanah approach, guided reflection, interactive dialogue, and descriptive evaluation. Evaluation drew on attendance records, facilitator observation, oral feedback, and reflective notes rather than standardized psychological testing. The activity generated three immediate learning indications: clearer differentiation between active patience and passive resignation, a practical coping sequence linking emotional acknowledgment, responsible effort, prayer, consultation, and tawakkul, and stronger recognition of the mosque community as a source of social and spiritual support. The program also demonstrated that mosque-based studies become more educationally meaningful when scriptural messages are connected to realistic decisions and when congregants are given space to reflect and ask questions. Because the activity was delivered in a single session without longitudinal measurement, the findings indicate short-term learning rather than sustained behavioral change. Follow-up mentoring and simple pre–post instruments are recommended for future programs.

Keywords: *spiritual resilience; religious coping; mosque-based education; community engagement; Islamic community empowerment*

INTRODUCTION

Trials involving illness, bereavement, family tension, economic pressure, unmet expectations, and social conflict are part of ordinary human life. For religious communities, such experiences are not interpreted only as external events; they are also processed through beliefs about divine wisdom, human responsibility, patience, prayer, and the meaning of suffering. The Qur’an presents trials as an unavoidable dimension of life while linking them to patience, remembrance, and hope. The educational challenge is to move this scriptural orientation from a familiar message into a practical framework that can guide emotions, decisions, relationships, and responsible action (Susanto et al., 2025).

Religious coping refers to the use of beliefs, practices, and religious relationships to understand and manage difficult situations. Positive religious coping may include seeking spiritual support, reappraising hardship through a benevolent religious meaning, praying while continuing constructive action, and receiving support from a faith community. Negative patterns may involve interpreting distress as divine abandonment, blaming oneself excessively,

or using fatalistic language to avoid action. Meta-analytic and empirical studies associate constructive religious coping with better psychological adjustment, while maladaptive religious interpretations can intensify distress (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015; Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005). This distinction is important because patience in Islamic teaching is not equivalent to emotional denial, passivity, or refusal to seek appropriate assistance.

Resilience is similarly more than the ability to endure pain in silence. It concerns the capacity to maintain or recover meaningful functioning while adapting to adversity. Research among Muslim participants in Indonesia indicates that religiosity, social support, and self-efficacy are connected to resilience and subjective well-being (Bukhori et al., 2022). Studies in other Muslim settings also show that religiosity can support psychological resilience when it encourages hope, meaning, and constructive coping rather than fear-based interpretations (Al Eid et al., 2020). These findings provide a useful foundation for community religious education: faith-based messages can contribute to resilience when they strengthen agency, social connection, and realistic hope.

Mosques have a strategic position in this educational process. Beyond ritual worship, a mosque can function as an accessible setting for adult learning, family guidance, mutual support, and community problem-solving. Mosque-based learning has a social advantage because it is embedded in a trusted institution and uses language, symbols, and interaction patterns familiar to congregants. Community service articles in Indonesia have reported the value of thematic studies, motivational lectures, and interactive dialogue for strengthening religious understanding in mosque and school communities (Lestari et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2026; Saputra et al., 2025). Their experience suggests that the lecture format remains useful, but its educational value increases when participants are involved in reflection, questioning, and practical application.

A recurring weakness in one-session religious outreach is the tendency to evaluate success only through attendance or general expressions of enthusiasm. Such indicators document participation but do not sufficiently explain what participants understood, how the message was translated into action, or which limitations remain. Community-engaged learning places greater emphasis on reciprocal partnership, contextual relevance, reflection, and evidence of learning. Reviews and meta-analyses show that service-learning and community-engaged learning can support academic, social, personal, and civic outcomes, although results depend heavily on program design and the quality of reflection (Conway et al., 2009; Guanlao et al., 2025). For a religious study, this means that the program should not stop at content delivery; it should create a structured opportunity to interpret, rehearse, and evaluate the application of the message.

The activity at An-Nur Mosque was developed around the theme “Strong and Wise in Responding to Life Trials.” The phrase “strong” was operationalized as the capacity to remain grounded in faith, regulate reactions, and continue responsible effort. “Wise” referred to the ability to assess a problem proportionally, choose lawful and realistic steps, consult trustworthy people, and accept outcomes without losing hope. This framing avoids two extremes: reducing every hardship to a psychological problem detached from faith, or presenting faith as a reason to suppress emotion and avoid professional support.

This community engagement program was conducted for the congregation of An-Nur Mosque in Pasurenan, Banjarnegara, in collaboration with the *Pesantren Masyarakat Dieng* community. It aimed to (1) clarify the relationship between *sabr*, *ikhtiyar*, prayer, consultation, and *tawakkul*; (2) provide a practical sequence for responding to life trials; and (3) strengthen awareness of the mosque congregation as a network of spiritual and social support. The article documents the program process, immediate learning indications, and methodological lessons for developing a more participatory model of Islamic community education.

METHOD

The program used a service-learning framework combined with participatory religious education. Service-learning was selected because it connects academic and religious knowledge with a concrete community need through reciprocal partnership, implementation, reflection, and evaluation. The approach did not position the mosque congregation as passive recipients. The mosque management and the *Pesantren Masyarakat Dieng* community served as local partners in coordinating the venue, participant mobilization, activity sequence, and contextual suitability of the material (Riyadi et al., 2025).

The activity was held at An-Nur Mosque, Pasurenan, Banjarnegara, on 25 July 2026 and was attended by approximately 40 congregants. Participants represented the mosque community and joined voluntarily. The program was designed as a non-clinical educational activity; it did not diagnose mental health conditions or ask participants to disclose sensitive personal histories. The material emphasized that prolonged distress, risk of self-harm, severe family violence, or health problems require referral to competent religious, medical, psychological, or legal professionals.

The implementation consisted of four stages. First, partner coordination was used to align the theme, audience, venue, schedule, and expected educational outcomes. Second, the facilitators prepared a contextual learning outline that integrated Qur'anic principles, religious coping concepts, brief life scenarios, and guided reflection questions. Third, the main session combined thematic explanation through *mau'izhah hasanah*, short scenario analysis, guided self-reflection, interactive dialogue, and a closing commitment. Fourth, immediate evaluation was conducted descriptively through attendance documentation, facilitator observation, oral participant feedback, and reflective notes recorded after the session.

The *mau'izhah hasanah* approach was used as a communicative principle rather than a one-way sermon technique. The facilitator presented religious guidance with respectful language, realistic examples, encouragement, and room for questions. The learning sequence moved from meaning to action: participants were first invited to recognize the reality of a trial, then to distinguish controllable and uncontrollable aspects, select responsible efforts, use prayer and remembrance to regulate the inner response, seek consultation or assistance, and practice *tawakkul* after action. This sequence was summarized as Recognize–Respond–Rely.

The descriptive evaluation focused on four indicators: conceptual clarity, practical application, participation in reflection and dialogue, and recognition of social support. Field information was organized using a simple thematic matrix. Statements and observations were grouped into recurring themes, compared with the intended learning outcomes, and interpreted cautiously as immediate indications of learning. No statistical inference was used because the activity involved a single session and did not administer a validated pre–post scale.

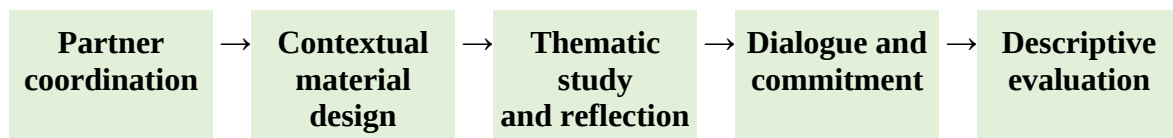


Figure 1. Service-Learning Sequence Used In The Community Engagement Program

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Program implementation and partnership

The program was implemented as scheduled on 25 July 2026 at An-Nur Mosque, Pasurenan, Banjarnegara, with approximately 40 congregants. Collaboration with the *Pesantren Masyarakat Dieng* community supported the social legitimacy of the activity and connected the academic facilitation process with a community-based Islamic network. This partnership was important because religious education is more readily received when local

actors are involved in defining the communication setting and supporting participant engagement.

The session was organized around a progression from scriptural understanding to everyday decision-making. Instead of presenting adversity as a single moral test with one uniform response, the facilitator introduced several distinctions: patience versus passivity, acceptance versus surrendering responsibility, tawakkul versus fatalism, and spiritual support versus denial of emotional pain. These distinctions made the theme more focused and prevented repeated moral exhortation without practical guidance.

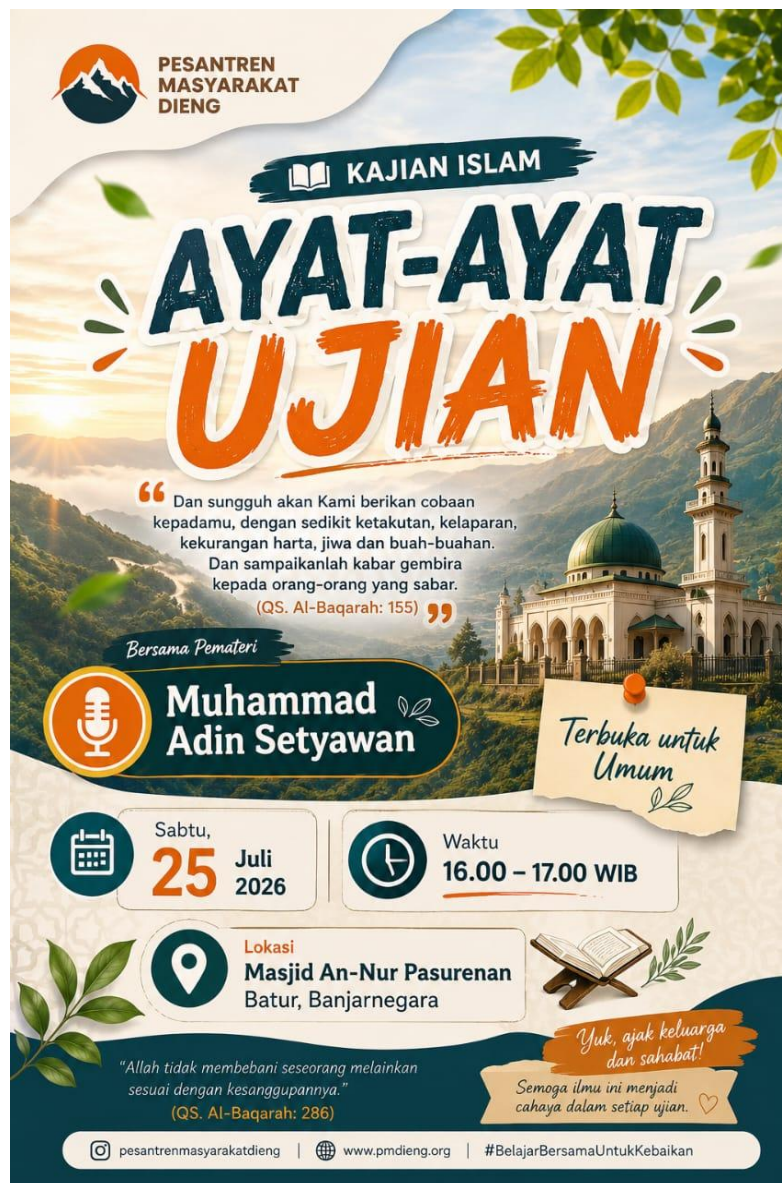


Figure 2. Thematic study on wise responses to life trials at An-Nur Mosque, Pasurenan, Banjarnegara

Learning content: from normative message to coping practice

The material was developed through four interrelated learning units. Each unit connected a religious principle with a decision that participants could recognize in daily life. The content did not promise that piety would remove hardship. It emphasized that faith can shape the way a person interprets a trial, regulates reactions, mobilizes support, and continues responsible action.

Table 1. Content Framework For The Thematic Study

Learning unit	Core message	Practical application	Scriptural anchor
1. Naming the trial honestly	Trials may evoke sadness, fear, anger, fatigue, or confusion; acknowledging these reactions is not a sign of weak faith.	Identify the problem and emotion without exaggeration or denial.	Qur'an 2:155–157
2. Practicing active patience (sabr)	Patience means restraining harmful reactions and remaining committed to what is right while a process unfolds.	Pause, regulate speech and action, and avoid impulsive decisions.	Qur'an 3:200; 39:10
3. Taking wise and lawful effort (ikhtiyar)	A believer is responsible for steps within human control, including consultation and professional help.	Separate controllable from uncontrollable aspects; choose the next realistic step.	Qur'an 13:11; 16:43
4. Relying on God after effort (tawakkul)	Tawakkul gives inner stability after responsible action and prevents despair when outcomes differ from expectations.	Pray, seek support, review the effort, and entrust the result to God.	Qur'an 3:159; 65:3

Immediate learning indications

The descriptive evaluation identified three immediate learning indications. First, participants were directed toward a more active interpretation of patience. The key educational shift was the recognition that *sabr* requires disciplined action and ethical self-control, not the abandonment of effort (Anugraeni et al., 2026; Nabila et al., 2026). This clarification matters because passive resignation can be expressed in religious language even when it leaves a solvable problem unattended. Positive religious coping literature similarly distinguishes collaborative or benevolent religious coping from patterns characterized by helplessness, punishment, or spiritual discontent (Pargament et al., 1998).

Second, the session produced a practical coping structure that linked spiritual practices with problem-solving. The Recognize–Respond–Rely sequence asked participants to name the difficulty and emotional reaction, select a responsible response, and cultivate *tawakkul* after effort. Prayer and remembrance were presented as resources for emotional regulation and meaning-making, while consultation and professional help were presented as compatible with faith. This balance is consistent with evidence that religion can support adjustment when it strengthens meaning, hope, agency, and supportive relationships (Captari et al., 2018; Koenig, 2012).

Third, the activity highlighted the social dimension of resilience. A mosque congregation can provide listening, practical assistance, trusted referrals, and protection from isolation. The program did not frame resilience as an individual achievement detached from relationships. Research among Muslim university students in Indonesia found that social support and religiosity contribute to resilience and subjective well-being (Bukhori et al., 2022). For community education, this implies that a thematic study should encourage congregants not only to become personally strong but also to become a safer and more responsive community for people experiencing hardship.

Table 2. Descriptive Evaluation Of Immediate Learning Indications

Indicator	Evidence source	Immediate indication	Interpretive boundary
Conceptual clarity	Guided restatement and facilitator observation	Participants were able to engage with distinctions between patience and passivity, and between <i>tawakkul</i> and fatalism.	Immediate conceptual indication; not a validated knowledge score.

Indicator	Evidence source	Immediate indication	Interpretive boundary
Practical application	Scenario-based reflection and oral responses	The Recognize–Respond–Rely sequence provided a usable order for considering emotions, action, support, and surrender to God.	Application was assessed during the session only.
Participation	Attendance, questions, and dialogue observation	Approximately 40 congregants took part in the mosque-based learning session and were offered space for reflection and dialogue.	Attendance does not by itself demonstrate behavioral change.
Social-spiritual support	Reflection on the role of the congregation	The mosque community was framed as a source of listening, assistance, consultation, and referral.	Long-term community practices require follow-up observation.

The activity retained the strengths of a thematic lecture clarity, efficiency, and scriptural coherence while reducing its one-way character. Guided reflection and dialogue allowed the message to be connected with actual decision patterns rather than left as a general exhortation. This aligns with community-engaged learning research, which places structured reflection at the center of the relationship between service and learning (Guanlao et al., 2025). In a mosque setting, reflection also respects adult participants as holders of experience rather than treating them as empty recipients of religious information.

The use of realistic distinctions was another important feature. Statements such as “be patient” or “trust God” are theologically meaningful, but their practical meaning can remain ambiguous. By translating them into observable choices—pausing before reacting, identifying controllable aspects, consulting competent people, taking lawful action, and accepting the result—the program made religious language more actionable. Similar Indonesian community service activities have shown that thematic religious learning becomes stronger when lectures are accompanied by questions, interaction, and contextual examples (Lestari et al., 2024; Prayogi et al., 2026; Saputra et al., 2025).

The collaboration with the *Pesantren Masyarakat Dieng* community also supported a model of engagement that is not purely university-centered. Community engagement is more sustainable when local partners contribute trust, contextual knowledge, and continuity. The university or facilitator contributes conceptual organization and evaluative discipline, while the community partner contributes cultural fit and access. This reciprocal orientation is consistent with the ethical logic of service-learning, which seeks mutual benefit rather than one-directional delivery (Singh et al., 2026; Yorio & Ye, 2012).

Limitations and refinement needs

The activity had several limitations. It was conducted in one session, involved approximately 40 participants from one mosque community, and used descriptive evaluation. No validated religious coping or resilience instrument was administered before and after the session. The findings should therefore be interpreted as immediate learning indications, not evidence of lasting psychological or behavioral improvement. Oral feedback may also be influenced by politeness and the authority of the facilitator.

Future programs should use a short series rather than a single meeting. A three-session model could address (1) understanding trials and emotions, (2) active patience and problem-solving, and (3) social support, referral, and follow-up commitments. A brief pre–post questionnaire, anonymous reflection card, and one-month follow-up with mosque administrators would produce stronger evidence. The partner community could also train local facilitators so that the framework is repeated in family study groups and routine mosque learning.

CONCLUSION

The mosque-based thematic study at An-Nur Mosque, Pasurenan, Banjarnegara, provided a focused model for strengthening spiritual resilience through practical religious education. Conducted on 25 July 2026 with approximately 40 congregants and in collaboration with the Pesantren Masyarakat Dieng community, the program connected Qur'anic guidance with a concrete coping sequence: recognizing the trial and emotional response, choosing responsible action and support, and relying on God after effort. Immediate observations indicated clearer engagement with the distinction between active patience and passive resignation, greater practical connection between prayer and problem-solving, and stronger awareness of the congregation as a social-spiritual support network. The contribution of the program lies not in introducing a new theological doctrine, but in translating familiar Islamic concepts into decisions that can be practiced. Because the evaluation was descriptive and limited to a single session, future implementation should include repeated mentoring, simple pre-post measurement, and follow-up observation to assess whether learning develops into sustained individual and community practices.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Arditya Prayogi and Imam Prayogo Pujiono: conceptualization, drafting the article, analyzing activity data, and writing the initial draft. M. Adin Setyawan and Akhmad Aufa Sukron: collecting documentation, verifying field information, and reviewing the program's substance. Riki Nasrullah: academic supervision, critical editing, final validation of the manuscript, and approval of the submitted version.

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This program received no external funding.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to this community engagement program and manuscript.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Non-identifiable activity records and evaluation notes may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to partner approval and participant privacy.

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