


Religion and Mental Well-being: A Phenomenological Research on Individual Experiences in Interaction with the Qur'an among Pepadun Muslims in Lampung

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<p>Submitted: 2023-09-10</p> <p>Published: 2023-10-15</p> <p>Keywords: Religion, Mental Health, Pepadun Muslims.</p> <p>Copyright holder: © Abrori, M. S. (2023)</p> <p>This article is under:</p>  <p>How to cite: Abrori, M. S. (2024). Religion and Mental Well-being: A Phenomenological Research on Individual Experiences in Interaction with the Qur'an among Pepadun Muslims in Lampung. <i>Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy</i>, 5(3). https://doi.org/10.51214/00202305752000</p> <p>Published by: Kuras Institute</p> <p>E-ISSN: 2656-1050</p>	<p>ABSTRACT: This research raises the topic of the relationship between religion, mental well-being, and local cultural wisdom in pepadun Muslim communities in the interior of Lampung. It was found that the understanding and practice of religion in this community positively impacted mental well-being, became an inner bond that provided physical and spiritual calm, and strengthened the spiritual relationship with God through interaction with the Koran. Researchers found differences between the religious practices of pepadun Muslims and urban Muslims, especially in socio-religious practices. The higher level of solidarity among pepadun Muslims indicates that they live communally and socially. Assimilation of local wisdom, such as Nemui Nyimah and Piil Pesenggiri, becomes a critical element of these communities' religious understanding and practice, becoming the cultural foundation that gives uniqueness to their religious life. This research provides insight into the dynamics of the relationship between religion, mental well-being, and local cultural wisdom but also confirms that religious and cultural values play an essential role in shaping the religious insight and mental well-being of the Pepadun Muslim community in the interior of Lampung.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The term "Inland Muslims" refers to individuals who identify themselves as Muslims and reside in remote or isolated areas. In the context of this research, Inland Muslims are those who live in the Lampung province area. The research focus will be placed on how they understand and practice religion, particularly in their interactions with the Qur'an, and the impact of these interactions on their mental well-being.

This kind of study is still considered a "peripheral" topic in current discussions of religious studies. It cannot be denied that the phenomenon of Muslim life in urban areas is a more popular topic compared to Muslims in remote or isolated areas. In general, Muslim life in urban areas gets more attention because of its affordability, proximity to central authorities, and better facilities (Zamhari et al., 2021) when compared with Muslims in inland areas. Even so, Muslim life in remote areas offers something unique and interesting, namely the assimilation between the local wisdom that they uphold and the religion they adhere to. Inland Muslim religious procedures can vary from one place to another, depending on locality, natural environment, and local traditions passed down from generation to generation. This factor is the researcher's first argument for why this research needs to be carried out.

Back to the topic "religion and mental well-being". Religion, adapted from several literature review articles, is believed to be a potential resource for maintaining a person's mental condition (AbdAleati et al., [2016](#); Iqbal & Skinner, [2021](#); Koenig, [2009](#)). Research has also shown that religious beliefs and practices can be instrumental coping when facing stress (Koenig, [2009](#)). Not only that, religion also plays a role in helping individuals make decisions to seek social support, which is also a key factor in maintaining mental well-being (Jung, [2018](#)).

Up to this point, we can see that religion and mental well-being have a very close relationship. This relationship will later become the argument of the two researchers as to why this research can contribute significantly to gaining knowledge and religious practices among rural Muslims to maintain mental condition. This information can then be adapted into our daily lives to maintain sanity amidst massive disruption and uncertainty.

Religion and mental well-being, more studied from a psychiatric point of view (Koenig, [2009](#); Weber & Pargament, [2014](#)). This means that mental well-being in question has become a consensus of the psychiatric profession, where there is a barometer that is widely used to determine or diagnose a person's level of mental well-being. However, it should be noted that such an approach could lead to operational definition incompatibility if used with Muslims in rural areas. As the researcher mentioned previously, this argument is the basis for the two current studies. To ensure that the context of this research is appropriate to the real conditions of Muslims in rural Lampung, the researcher will formulate an operational definition of mental well-being carefully and precisely.

Study Aim and Hypothesis

This research aims to investigate the religious understanding and practices of Pepadun Muslims, analyze their impact on their mental well-being, compare them with urban Muslims, identify the influence of assimilation of local wisdom, and formulate a definition of mental well-being that suits their context. The hypotheses are social support, their mental well-being in psychiatry, and assimilating local wisdom with their mental well-being.

METHODS

Approach and Design

This qualitative research aims to understand the experiences of Pepadun Muslims in Inland Lampung in practicing their religion, especially their interactions with the Koran, and its impact on mental well-being. The phenomenological research design used will allow the researcher to gain a contextual and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Smith & Osborn, [2004](#)) through data collection using in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis.

Licensing and Research Ethics

Before the research is carried out, permission and ethical approval will be submitted to the Institute for Publication, Research and Community Service, Ma'arif Lampung University, the local government, community leaders and research participants. The researcher is committed to ensuring that all data collected will be kept confidential and used only for the purposes of this research, and that the entire research process will be conducted with careful ethical consideration.

Research Location

Inland Muslims in this study refer to individuals who identify themselves as Muslims and reside in remote or isolated areas. These Inland Muslims are those who live in the Lampung province area.

Respondents and Selection Criteria

The respondents in this study are Inland Muslims who live in Lampung province, this is marked by the inclusion of respondents in the Lampung Pepadun tribe (see previous explanation regarding

Lampung Pepadun). Researchers will consider various demographic groups in the research sample, including men and women, various age ranges, as well as individuals from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds, especially those who fall into the category of traditional leaders and religious leaders in their region. This aims to gain a more comprehensive and diverse understanding of the understanding and practice of religion in the Lampung Pepadun community, as well as its influence on their mental well-being.

Data Collection Techniques

This research's data collection techniques involve in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document collection. Interviews and discussions will be recorded, with the respondent's consent and transcribed for analysis (The following is a research interview guide <https://bit.ly/PWWCARA> and observation guide <https://bit.ly/POBSERV>). During the data collection process, the researcher will take detailed field notes that will assist in the data analysis process.

Data analysis

Analysis of this research data will follow a phenomenological approach, which involves steps such as transcription and data organization, reading and understanding, identification and categorization of themes, unifying themes, and writing and presenting results. Each of these steps will be executed carefully to ensure an accurate and ethical interpretation of the respondent's experiences and perspectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Research on religion and mental well-being carried out by researchers on Pepadun Muslim communities in the interior of Lampung has a unique aim, namely to investigate the understanding and practice of the religion of Pepadun Muslims in the interior of Lampung, analyze its impact on their mental well-being, compare them with urban Muslims, and compare them with urban Muslims. Finally, the influence of the assimilation of local wisdom is identified, and a definition of mental well-being that suits their context is formulated. The research results are as follows: First, Pepadun Muslim communities in the interior of Lampung have a unique way of studying Islamic religion. They all start studying religious knowledge and the Koran in the same place, namely Nuwo Balak (the traditional house of the Lampung Pepadun indigenous community, which has high cultural meaning and is a symbol of togetherness and a symbol or philosophy). Second, the impact of deepening religious knowledge and interaction with the Qur'an in daily life on the mental well-being of Pepadun Muslims is that apart from being a holy book, they also use the Qur'an as an inner bond between creatures and God (physical and spiritual tranquility). Third, the comparison of the religious practices of Pepadun Muslims with urban Muslims lies in the social and religious practices, where Pepadun Muslims' solidarity level is stronger than the social-religious practices of urban (individual) Muslims. Fourth, the assimilation of local wisdom by Pepadun Muslims influences religious understanding and practice.

This is closely tied to customs and culture, which are still firmly held by our ancestors and have been preserved from generation to generation. Pepadun Muslim local wisdom such as *Nemui Nyimah* (always be polite and friendly) and *Piil Pesenggiri* (self-esteem or guidelines for native Lampung people). From some of the local wisdom of Pepadun Muslims, it can also be relocated to the concept of psychiatric mental welfare, where every Pepadun Muslim community upholds religion, especially interaction with the Koran. They always practice the routine of reading the Koran after praying five times a day, even if it is only 1 verse. Pepadun Muslims believe that they get extraordinary spiritual peace by reading the Koran.

The Pepadun Lampung Muslim community uses *Nuwo Balak* as a home for the Qur'an, namely carrying out the practice of studying the Qur'an and deepening Islamic religious knowledge, as well as a place for carrying out the *Betamat Qur'an* tradition (khatam Qur'an) for the sons and daughters of Pepadun Muslims by inviting an *ustadz/kyai*. *Nuwo Balak* also has various other functions, such as being used as a symbol and emblem of life and harmony in a traditional family based on blood relations of one descent. *Nuwo Balak* also functions as a place to live for families who do not have a house; it functions as a place for deliberation. The family, in formulating and resolving things or problems, functions as a place to carry out ceremonial activities such as *begawi*, celebration parties and so on, and also functions as a place to care if an elderly family member is sick or dies.

Pepadun Muslims' understanding of religion in maintaining their mental well-being cannot be separated from the role of the Koran. All Muslims in the world also believe that the Koran is not just a collection of divine verses or sayings but is also a source of calm for anxious hearts. Lampung Pepadun Muslims use the Qur'an as an inner bond between creatures and their creator God. They constantly interact by reading the Qur'an after completing obligatory prayers because their spiritual experience is closely tied to the Qur'an where every verse of the Qur'an contains guidelines for the wisdom, justice, and love of Allah SWT, becoming a guide for every individual who seeks direction in life and inner peace. The Qur'an can also involve every reader with profound messages. The Qur'an provides an understanding of the meaning of life, tests, and hope. With each verse read melodiously, the beautiful sentences in the Koran flow like soul-soothing melodies, bringing peace to a life full of challenges. As a guide to life, the Qur'an not only calms the heart but also guides towards a life full of meaning and harmony with the will of God.

The socio-religious practices of Muslims in Pepadun Lampung are more substantial than the social practices of Muslims in urban areas. This occurs because social and cultural conditions influence a person's thought patterns, activities, and social practices. Pepadun Muslims are said to be better in their religious practices, not without reason, but Pepadun Muslims have a more significant level of religious solidarity compared to urban Muslims. In the Pepadun Muslim area of Lampung, traditional traditions such as *Piil Senggiri*, *Nemui Nyimah*, *Betamat Qur'an*, etc., are still running well. Then, the weekly routine of Pepadun Muslims is working together to clean places of worship, raise the foundations of neighbors' houses, etc. These activities will not be found in urban Muslim areas. The uniqueness of Pepadun Muslims' traditional traditions makes their solidarity very closely intertwined, not only with fellow native Pepadun Muslims but also with immigrant Muslims whose status is not native.

The assimilation of local wisdom by Pepadun Muslims has significantly influenced their religious understanding and practices. Lampung Pepadun Muslims have various local wisdom cultures such as *Nemui Nyimah* (always be polite and friendly) and *Piil Pesenggiri* (self-esteem or guidelines for native Lampung people). From some of the local wisdom of Pepadun Muslims, it can also be relocated to the concept of psychiatric mental welfare, where every Pepadun Muslim community upholds religion, especially interaction with the Koran. They always practice the routine of reading the Koran after praying five times a day, even if it is only 1 verse. Pepadun Muslims believe that they get extraordinary spiritual peace by reading the Koran. Besides interaction with the Qur'an can provide inner peace to the Lampung Muslim community, this interaction also limits their attitudes or behavior. If they make a mistake or are about to make one, they will abandon their intention because they always remember that God is constantly watching them.

Discussion

Research on religion and mental well-being that has been carried out by researchers on Pepadun Muslim communities in the interior of Lampung has a unique aim, namely to investigate the understanding and practice of the religion of Pepadun Muslims in the interior of Lampung, analyze its impact on their mental well-being, compare them with urban Muslims, and the latter identified

the influence of assimilation of local wisdom, as well as formulating a definition of mental well-being that was appropriate to their context. The research results are as follows: First, Pepadun Muslim communities in the interior of Lampung have a unique way of studying Islamic religion. They all start studying religious knowledge and the Koran in the same place, namely, *Nuwo Balak* (the traditional house of the Lampung Pepadun indigenous community, which has a high cultural meaning and symbolizes togetherness and philosophy). Second, the impact of deepening religious knowledge and interaction with the Qur'an in daily life on the mental well-being of Pepadun Muslims is that apart from being a holy book, they also use the Qur'an as an inner bond between creatures and God (physical and spiritual tranquility). Third, the comparison of the religious practices of Pepadun Muslims with urban Muslims lies in the social and religious practices, where Pepadun Muslims' solidarity level is stronger than the social-religious practices of urban (individual) Muslims. Fourth, the assimilation of local wisdom by Pepadun Muslims influences religious understanding and practice, and this is closely tied to customs and culture, which are still firmly held by our ancestors and have been preserved from generation to generation. Pepadun Muslim local wisdom such as *Nemui Nyimah* (always be polite and friendly) and *Piil Pesenggiri* (self-esteem or guidelines for native Lampung people). From some of the local wisdom of Pepadun Muslims, it can also be relocated to the concept of psychiatric mental welfare, where every Pepadun Muslim community upholds religion, especially interaction with the Koran. They always practice the routine of reading the Koran after praying five times a day, even if it is only 1 verse. Pepadun Muslims believe that they get extraordinary spiritual peace by reading the Koran.

The understanding and practice of Pepadun Muslim religion in the interior of Lampung in the context of life has a unique religious deepening practice compared to other areas in the province of Indonesia, where Lampung Pepadun Muslims deepen the study of religious knowledge and the Koran carried out in sacred places. like *Nuwo Balak*, this kind of practice is unique and different from the Muslim community in general, where they usually study religious knowledge and the Koran at TPQ, TPA, Mushola, Mosque, Qur'an House, etc. However, in reality, the practice of pepadun Muslims does not receive much attention from the government. This statement is also supported by several previous studies, such as those conducted by Isnaeni & Hakiki (2016). Their research discovered that Muslim life in inland areas offers something unique and exciting, namely the assimilation of local wisdom with the religion unique to each place. From Isnaeni and Hakiki's statements and the research results, we can see that the uniqueness of Pepadun Muslims needs to be protected and preserved more and needs to receive more attention from the government.

In the context of *Nuwo Balak*, which is unique because it is used as a place for understanding and practicing the Muslim religion in Lampung, Fitri et al. (2023) observed that the traditional house *Nuwo Balak*, is a traditional Lampung ethnic building with decorations on the roof of the house symbolizing the gentleness of the Lampung ethnic group. The house's rooms consist of a front porch, back porch, front room, central area, and back room. Each has a different function See *Balak* in the Lampung community, Pepadun is a sacred traditional house. The *Nuwo Balak* traditional house is a traditional Lampung ethnic building with decorations on the roof of the house that symbolize the gentleness of the Lampung ethnic group. The house's rooms consist of a front porch, back porch, front room, central area, and back room. Each has a different function.

Even so, Arditya (2022) found that *Nuwo Balak* by the Muslim community, Pepadun Lampung is used as a home for the Qur'an, namely carrying out the practice of learning the Qur'an and deepening Islamic religious knowledge as well as a place for carrying out the tradition of the Betamat Qur'an (khataman Qur'an) for the sons and daughters of Pepadun Muslims by inviting an ustadz/kyai (Akbar, 2023). *Nuwo Balak* also has various other functions, such as being used as a symbol and emblem of life and harmony in a traditional family based on blood relations of one descent. *Nuwo Balak* also functions as a place to live for families who do not have a house; it functions as a place for deliberation The family, in formulating and resolving things or problems, functions as a place to carry

out ceremonial activities such as begawi, celebration parties and so on, and also functions as a place to care if an elderly family member is sick or dies (Lestari, et al. [2023](#)).

In reality, the understanding and practice of the Pepadun Muslim religion greatly influence their mental well-being, especially interactions with the Koran. They constantly interact with or read the Koran after every five daily prayers, and they do this not just to seek reward but to fulfill the needs of their souls; every time they interact with the Koran, they always feel inner calm and happiness. which is very extraordinary. This was also done by AbdAleati et al. ([2016](#)), whose research shows that religion functions as an essential resource for maintaining mental conditions. This support was also confirmed by Iqbal & Skinner ([2021](#)) and Koenig ([2009](#)), who see religion as a coping tool when facing stress. Jung ([2018](#)) also emphasizes that religion is vital in helping individuals seek social support, a critical factor in maintaining mental well-being. From the results of research conducted by researchers and supported by several previous research statements, it can be seen that religion has a vital role in maintaining mental well-being, especially in the Lampung Pepadun Muslim community.

The understanding of religion by pepadun Muslims in maintaining their mental well-being cannot be separated from the role of the Koran. Fitri Lina ([2017](#)) states that the Koran also explains mental revolution. Then Iskandar Dzulkornain ([2018](#)) and Imelda Suzanna Datau ([2022](#)) agreed to believe that the Qur'an is not just a collection of verses or divine sayings but is also a source of calm for the heart but also a therapy for various diseases. Then, M. Quraish Shihab ([2006](#)) added that the Qur'an is the inner bond between creatures and their creator God. From these statements, it can also be seen that Lampung papadun Muslims constantly interact by reading the Koran after completing the obligatory prayers because they believe that their spiritual experience is closely tied to the Koran where every verse of the Koran is contained. Allah SWT guidance of wisdom, justice, and compassion becomes a guide for every individual who seeks direction in life and inner peace. The Qur'an can also involve every reader with profound messages, the Qur'an provides an understanding of the meaning of life, tests, and hope. With each verse read melodiously, the beautiful sentences in the Koran flow like soul-soothing melodies, bringing peace amid a life full of challenges. As a guide to life, the Qur'an not only calms the heart but also guides towards a life full of meaning and harmony with the will of God.

In the context of comparative socio-religious practices, Indika Kharisma ([2023](#)) stated that from the results of his research, it was known that the socio-religious practices of Muslims in Pepadun Lampung were more substantial than the social practices of Muslims in urban areas. This occurs because social and cultural conditions influence a person's thought patterns, activities, and social practices. In the research results of Zamhari et al. ([2021](#)), they observed that this unique phenomenon received less government attention than Muslim life in urban areas. This shows that although Pepadun Muslims receive less attention from the government, they are said to be better in their religious practices, not without reason. Still, Pepadun Muslims have a more significant level of religious solidarity compared to urban Muslims. Traditional traditions are still running well in the Pepadun Muslim area of Lampung. like *Piil Senggiri*, *Nemui Nyimah*, *Betamat Qur'an* etc.

Then, the weekly routine of Pepadun Muslims is working together to clean places of worship, raise the foundations of neighbors' houses, etc. These activities will not be found in urban Muslim areas. The uniqueness of Pepadun Muslims' traditional traditions makes their solidarity very closely intertwined, not only with fellow native Pepadun Muslims but also with immigrant Muslims whose status is not native.

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Implications

The implications of research on religion and mental well-being among Pepadun Muslims in the interior of Lampung show that religion, especially interaction with the Koran, has an essential role in individual mental well-being. Individual experiences interacting with the Koran can provide emotional and spiritual support that positively impacts the mental well-being of Lampung Pepadun Muslims. This research can also provide in-depth insight into individuals' subjective experiences interacting with the Koran. It can provide a richer understanding of how religion influences individuals' thoughts, feelings, and actions. This research also underscores the importance of understanding the local cultural context in responding to religion and mental well-being. The research location in Lampung also provides unique nuances regarding how people experience religion and mental well-being.

The findings of this study may have practical implications for the mental health field, particularly in the context of well-being interventions and supports. A deeper understanding of how religion, including interaction with the Qur'an, can be used as a source of support for mental well-being may help in designing more effective interventions. This research confirms the importance of the dimension of spirituality in mental health. In this context, the Qur'an is a source of inspiration and spiritual support that can help individuals overcome the challenges of everyday life. Thus, this research provides insight into the relationship between religion and mental well-being and may also have relevant implications for policy development, clinical practice, and further understanding of religion's role in local communities' lives.

Limitations and Further Research

This research has limitations regarding outreach to Muslim Pepadun areas in Lampung province. This is because the area of Lampung is vast, and there are so many Muslim pepadun areas in each area, with unique local wisdom in each area in Lampung province. Due to limited research time, researchers could not reach all Muslim areas in Lampung quickly. Advice to researchers who will research religion and mental well-being in the future: we hope that in the future, researchers can export more Muslim areas in Lampung province, which still have unique things, especially research on religion and mental well-being, which is linked to the well-being of their lives.

CONCLUSION

The results of research conducted by researchers regarding religion and mental well-being in the Pepadun Muslim community in the interior of Lampung, which has unique and exciting objectives, can be concluded: First, the understanding and practice of the religion of the Pepadun Muslim community in the interior of Lampung has a unique way of deepening Islamic religious knowledge, namely in *Nuwo Balak*. Second, the positive impact of religion and interaction with the Koran on the mental well-being of Pepadun Muslims is an inner bond that provides physical and spiritual calm, strengthening the spiritual relationship with God. Third, when comparing the religious understanding of Pepadun Muslims with urban Muslims, there are significant differences between the religious practices of Pepadun Muslims and urban Muslims, especially in socio-religious practices. The higher level of solidarity between Pepadun Muslims and urban Muslims indicates differences in socio-religious approaches, where shared values are more dominant compared to the individual approach, which may be more common among urban Muslims. Fourth, Assimilation of Local Wisdom: Local wisdom, such as *Nemui Nyimah* and *Piil Pesenggiri*, plays an essential role in the understanding and religious practices of Pepadun Muslims. These values form the cultural foundation that their ancestors firmly hold, give color to their religious practices, and contribute to the concept of psychiatric mental well-being, namely the routine of reading the Koran as a source of mental and spiritual calm for the Lampung Pepadun Muslim community. Overall, this research provides in-depth insight into the relationship between religion, mental well-being, and local cultural wisdom, but also shows that religious and cultural values have an essential role in shaping the religious insight and mental well-being of Pepadun Muslim communities in the interior of Lampung.

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