

# Gratitude and resilience among Muslim psychology students in the hyperconnectivity era

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**Abstract:** This study aims to determine the effect of gratitude on resilience levels among Muslim Psychology students in the era of hyperconnectivity. The research subjects consisted of 32 psychology students from the class of 2023 at an Islamic university in Yogyakarta. The measurements were conducted using the Islamic Gratitude Scale (IGS-10) to assess gratitude, which includes intrinsic and extrinsic gratitude, as well as the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) to measure resilience. The data were analyzed using Spearman's correlation analysis and linear regression using the Jamovi software. Results revealed that while gratitude did not directly correlate with resilience ( $r = .244, p > .05$ ), intrinsic gratitude emerged as a significant predictor ( $B = .443, p = .017$ ) for Muslim psychology students in the hyperconnectivity era. These findings imply that mental health interventions should prioritize fostering internal values and intrinsic drives rather than relying solely on external or generalized coping mechanisms to build psychological resilience against digital demands.

## **Kata Kunci:**

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In hyperconnectivity era, every individual lives in a highly connected environment through various digital media, in which social, academic, and professional interactions increasingly depend on internet networks and digital devices (Floridi, 2015). This circumstance creates both opportunities and psychological challenges, especially for college students. The increasing information exposure, social pressure in digital media, and evolving academic demands require individuals to master high adaptive capabilities. This capacity to bounce back from digital stressors and maintain psychological well-being is conceptualized as resilience, a vital trait for navigating the modern educational landscape.

To cultivate such resilience, individuals require a strong psychological foundation, where intrinsic values such as gratitude play a pivotal role. Gratitude functions as a cognitive-affective lens that alters how individuals perceive and interpret life stressors (Fredrickson, 2004). In a fast-paced, digitally demanding world, being grateful assists students in developing adaptive coping strategies and reframing digital distress into opportunities for personal growth (Armafansa & Hayati, 2022; Kumar et al., 2021). By focusing on positive aspects of their environment, grateful individuals are better equipped to mitigate anxiety, regulate their emotions, and maintain a stable point of view when facing negative situations, thereby significantly enhancing their overall resilience and ability to handle stress (Faizah, 2024; Utami, 2020).

In the specific context of Indonesia, where digital penetration among youth is remarkably high, extensive empirical literature has consistently demonstrated this robust link between gratitude and student resilience. Various local studies report significant positive contributions, with gratitude accounting for anywhere between 14% and 68.2% of the variance in resilience across different student demographics (Armafansa & Hayati, 2022; Kumar et al., 2021; Utami, 2020). Beyond general student populations, this positive trajectory is highly evident among Muslim youth in Indonesia, such as Al-Qur'an memorizers and students at Islamic State Universities across major metropolitan areas like Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi (Jabodetabek), and Makassar (Faizah, 2024; Qotrunnada, 2024; Utami, 2020). Within these groups, gratitude operates as a core coping mechanism, often interacting with other protective factors like self-esteem and family functioning to substantially predict higher levels of psychological resilience (Faizah, 2024; Qotrunnada, 2024).

However, a critical theoretical gap remains in how gratitude is conceptualized within these studies, as most existing literature treats it as a homogenous, unidimensional construct. In Islamic psychology, as conceptualized by Rusdi et al. (2021), gratitude is distinctively nuanced and divided into two core dimensions: Intrinsic and extrinsic gratitude. Intrinsic gratitude reflects an internal, deep-seated theological acknowledgment, orientation, and heartfelt praise toward Allah

(alhamdulillah) for Allah's endless blessings. Conversely, extrinsic gratitude manifests outwardly through observable behaviors, prosocial relationships, verbal expressions, and the constructive utilization of given blessings for positive, ethical deeds. Because the hyperconnectivity era exposes youth to both internal existential pressures and external social validation, these two distinct dimensions of gratitude may operate and interact differently when predicting psychological resilience.

Intrinsic values such as gratitude are essential matter as a psychological foundation which can strengthen one's resilience in facing the pressures in nowadays' fast-paced and connected era. Furthermore, very limited attention has been paid to Muslim psychology students in Indonesia. Thus, understanding the relationship between gratitude and resilience becomes significantly relevant for study, especially among Muslim psychology students who face not only academic challenges but also values demanding and self-existence in the digital space. Therefore, this study aims to bridge these empirical and theoretical gaps by investigating how the distinct dimensions of intrinsic and extrinsic gratitude, based on the framework by Rusdi et al. (2021), predict resilience among Muslim psychology students navigating the hyperconnectivity era in Indonesia.

## **Literature Review**

According to Connor and Davidson (2003), resilience is an individual's skill in managing stress originating from inside or outside the individual. It is supported by research conducted by Armanfasa et al. (2022) regarding resilience, which means the ability to rise from experienced pressure, overcome life's challenges, and recover after experiencing major difficulties in life, thereby being able to survive and solve problems well. Meanwhile, academic resilience refers to the ability of students to effectively face challenges, difficulties, and pressures in an academic context (Martin & Marsh, 2006). This includes the ability to endure in difficult conditions, adapt, and achieve academic goals despite facing obstacles.

Predictors of resilience can be divided into internal factors (from inside the individual) and external factors (from the environment). Based on the theory by Connor and Davidson (2003), resilience is predicted by five core factors: (1) personal competence, high standards, and tenacity; (2) trust in one's instincts, tolerance of negative emotions, and the strengthening effects of stress; (3) positive acceptance of change and secure relationships; (4) personal control; and (5) spiritual influences. However, when we look at resilience strictly as the basic ability to "bounce back" or recover from stress and difficulties, this ability is highly influenced by how these internal and external factors work together (Smith et al., 2008). These factors consist of personal characteristics and social support. Internal factors, including self-esteem, self-efficacy, coping skills, and demographic aspects like age and gender, have a significant impact on how well a person can endure and adapt to life's challenges

(Faizah, 2024; Utami, 2020). At the same time, these internal traits interact with external factors, such as social support from peers, family, and active involvement in campus or social activities, which help students handle stress better (Utami, 2020). All of these internal and external factors are interconnected. For instance, optimism, self-esteem, and social support work together to build strong psychological endurance in students (Armafansa & Hayati, 2022).

Within this framework, gratitude plays a major role as an internal factor that predicts and strengthens student resilience, contributing to the increase of resilience (Kumar et al., 2021). According to Emmons and McCullough (2003), gratitude is universally defined as a two-step cognitive process: first, recognizing that one has obtained a positive outcome, and second, recognizing that there is an external source for this goodness. Conceptually, gratitude is a positive feeling that can increase thinking flexibility and help individuals focus on the positive aspects of life, even when facing stress (Kumar et al., 2021). Furthermore, gratitude also functions as a personal protective factor that strengthens academic resilience, since a grateful attitude encourages individuals to engage in positive activities and socialize with others (Utami, 2021). In addition, gratitude reflects emotions, moral values, attitudes, personality traits, and coping styles that enable one to recognize and respond to assistance given by others through positive experiences in social relationships (Armafansa & Hayati, 2022). On the other hand, social support, which refers to the behavior of others providing comfort, care, and assistance when needed, also plays an important role in strengthening gratitude and increasing resilience (Faizah, 2024). From a spiritual standpoint, Rusdi et al. (2021) defines gratitude through the Islamic perspective as an individual's theological realization and appreciation of Allah's blessings, which is divided into two dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic gratitude. Intrinsic gratitude refers to the internal mindset where a person sincerely acknowledges, accepts, and praises Allah (*al-hamdu lillah*) from the heart for all conditions. Meanwhile, extrinsic gratitude is the behavioral side, shown through positive actions, verbal expressions, and using those blessings to do good deeds for others.

In practice, this Islamic gratitude works as a powerful mindset. Intrinsic gratitude helps students reframe difficult situations spiritually, allowing them to focus on the good things in life even when facing high stress (Kumar et al., 2021). Furthermore, extrinsic gratitude encourages students to build positive social relationships and actively seek support from their environment (Armafansa & Hayati, 2022; Utami, 2020). In this study, gratitude is specifically understood through the Islamic perspective developed by Rusdi et al. (2021). Based on these theoretical links, this study assumes that the dimensions of gratitude from Rusdi et al. (2021) directly improve students' ability to bounce back and recover from adversity (Smith et al., 2008) by helping them maintain a peaceful heart and connect well with their social environment. Therefore, based on this theoretical framework, the hypothesis of this

study is that there is a relationship between gratitude and resilience among Muslim psychology students.

Based on the synthesized theoretical framework and empirical literature, this study proposes one major hypothesis and two minor hypotheses. The major hypothesis posits that there is a positive relationship between gratitude and resilience among Muslim psychology students. Furthermore, to examine the specific multidimensional mechanisms, the first minor hypothesis proposes that intrinsic gratitude has a positive relationship with resilience, while the second minor hypothesis proposes that extrinsic gratitude has a positive relationship with resilience among Muslim psychology students.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The participants in this study were Psychology student of 2023 academic year from an Islamic university in Yogyakarta. There were 340 students suitable to be respondents for this study. Surely, not all of the 340 respondents were willing to participate, therefore, the researchers determined 32 respondents as the minimum amount of data obtained.

The data collected by distributing online questionnaires using Google Form as the instrument. The Islamic Gratitude Scale (IGS-10) constructed by Rusdi et al. (2021) was utilized to measure the level of gratitude of the respondents. The gratitude scale measures intrinsic ( $\alpha = .761$ ) and extrinsic ( $\alpha = .845$ ) individual gratitude, with a reliability of .863. To measure the level of resilience of the respondents, the researchers used the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) constructed by Smith et al. (2008). The BRS has a reliability score of .80 – .91 and consists of three favorable and three unfavorable items. The analysis method used in this study is Spearman's correlation analysis and linear regression using the Jamovi software.

Participants in this study comprised 32 second-year Muslim psychology students at University X. Data analysis revealed three distinct categories: Low, medium, and high. The medium category predominated, representing for 27 participants (84.375%), whereas the low categories comprised three participants (9.375%) and high categories comprised two participants (6.25%).

## **Research Findings**

This research consists of two variables. The independent variable is gratitude, and the dependent one is resilience. This section presents the findings of data processing obtained for each variable. Descriptive results show the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation values in table 1. The following are the details of the data processing results using Jamovi.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Data*

| Variable   | N  | M    | Median | SD   | Min  | Max  | W    | p     |
|------------|----|------|--------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Gratitude  | 32 | 5.15 | 5.30   | .629 | 2.70 | 6.00 | .831 | <.001 |
| Resilience | 32 | 3.03 | 3.00   | .638 | 2.00 | 4.67 | .970 | .492  |

Based on the normality testing using the Shapiro-Wilk method, the gratitude variable is not normally distributed ( $W = .831$ ), which is less than  $W_{critical} = .831$ . Conversely, the resilience variable is normally distributed ( $W = .970$ ), which is higher than  $W_{critical} = .831$ . Consequently, since the normality assumption is not met for both variables, a non-parametric correlation test using Spearman's analysis will be utilized for the subsequent hypothesis testing.

**Table 2**

*Correlation Test*

|            | Resilience | Gratitude | Intrinsic | Extrinsic |
|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Resilience | -          |           |           |           |
| Gratitude  | .244       | -         |           |           |
| Intrinsic  | .384*      | .770***   | -         |           |
| Extrinsic  | .046       | .904***   | .472**    | -         |

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , one-tailed

Based on Table 2, the correlation analysis between the variables shows that the Spearman's rho coefficient ( $r_s$ ) for gratitude and resilience is  $r_s = .244$  with a  $p$ -value higher than  $p = .05$ . This indicates that although a weak positive trend exists, the correlation between global gratitude and resilience is not statistically significant within this sample. Consequently, the hypothesis proposed in this study is rejected.

Furthermore, when examining the specific dimensions of gratitude against resilience, the analysis reveals a different pattern. The correlation coefficient for intrinsic gratitude and resilience is  $r_s = .384$  ( $p < .05$ ), proving a statistically significant positive correlation between intrinsic gratitude and resilience. Conversely, the correlation coefficient for extrinsic gratitude and resilience is  $r_s = .046$  ( $p > .05$ ), indicating that the positive relationship between extrinsic gratitude and resilience is not statistically significant in this sample.

**Table 3**

*Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Resilience*

| <b>Predictor</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>SE</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>p</b> |
|------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Intercept        | 1.648    | .883      | 1.866    | .072     |
| Intrinsic        | .443     | .174      | 2.543    | .017     |
| Extrinsic        | -.127    | .217      | -.585    | .563     |

*Note. B = unstandardized regression coefficient (Estimate); SE = standard error; t = t-test statistic; p = p-value*

Based on Table 3, the multiple linear regression analysis reveals the individual contribution of each gratitude dimension toward resilience. The intrinsic gratitude dimension obtained an estimate value (unstandardized coefficient) of with a -value of and a -value of . Since the -value is less than (), it indicates that intrinsic gratitude has a statistically significant positive effect on resilience among the students. Conversely, the extrinsic gratitude dimension obtained an estimate value of with a -value of and a -value of . Because the -value is greater than (), this suggests that the negative trend observed in the extrinsic gratitude dimension is not statistically significant within this sample. Therefore, extrinsic gratitude cannot be considered a significant predictor of student resilience in this model.

## Discussion

This research conducted aims to determine the existence of a positive relationship between gratitude and resilience in Muslim psychology students. Based on the statistical testing, the gratitude variable does not show a statistically significant relationship with resilience ( $r = .244$ ,  $p > .05$ ), therefore the major hypothesis is rejected. Additionally, the extrinsic gratitude dimension does not show a statistically significant relationship with resilience ( $r = .046$ , ), thus the first minor hypothesis is rejected. Subsequently, intrinsic gratitude dimension demonstrates a statistically significant positive relationship with resilience ( $r = .384$ , ), therefore the second minor hypothesis is accepted. It implies that the higher the intrinsic gratitude, the higher the resilience. Data analysis also shows that the dimension of intrinsic gratitude has a correlation with resilience. It implies that the higher the intrinsic gratitude, the higher the resilience.

The reason behind the rejection of the major hypothesis can be methodologically explained by several statistical constraints within this study, such as a limited number of respondents, the presence of low-score outliers in the gratitude variable, and

limited data variation. The data variation for the gratitude variable tends to be heavily concentrated at high scores. Consequently, the data is not equally spread out and creates a ceiling effect that fails to represent the actual baseline relationship in the wider population. The outliers within this limited dataset significantly skewed the correlation analysis, masking the global connection between the two variables.

Furthermore, the lack of statistical significance in the relationship between extrinsic gratitude and resilience can be understood through the conceptual nature of this dimension. As developed by Rusdi et al. (2021), extrinsic gratitude represents the behavioral and implementational side of gratitude, which often depends on material benefits, rewards, or positive conditions received from the external environment. This makes extrinsic gratitude somewhat transactional and reliant on shifting external factors. Because it depends on extrinsic things that are easily altered, when those positive conditions diminish, the feeling of gratitude is likely to decrease. On the other hand, resilience, as conceptualized by Smith et al. (2008), requires more stable, sustainable, and internal psychological resources. Therefore, while being grateful for externally received blessings is entirely normal, it does not deliver a strong or stable enough foundation for long-term resilience development when facing high academic stress.

Conversely, the significant positive relationship found between intrinsic gratitude and resilience highlights the strength of internal psychological resources. It occurs because intrinsic gratitude is gratitude in the form of acceptance and a feeling of contentment, the initial step of the feeling of gratitude. The dimension of intrinsic gratitude explains that gratefulness is the attitude of being content and accepting any blessing given by Allah SWT (Ibn Qayyim, in Rusdi et al., 2021). Thus, intrinsic gratitude does not depend on extrinsic rewards, which makes intrinsic gratitude able to encourage someone to see the positive side in various situations, even in difficulties. Intrinsic gratitude also focuses on what is "gained" or "experienced" rather than what is "obtained." Therefore, intrinsic gratitude can be a stable source of resilience because it involves cognitive processes such as finding meaning behind the difficulties experienced and appreciating whatever is obtained, regardless of the amount.

Remarkably, the results of this study differ from previous research findings which stated that extrinsic gratitude was significantly correlated to resilience while intrinsic gratitude was not (Faizah, 2024). It also does not support previous research findings which stated that gratitude has a relationship with resilience (Armanfansa et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2021; Utami, 2020). This difference may be due to variations in the population, methodology, and definitions of gratitude measurement used. However, in the context of this study, intrinsic gratitude demonstrated more relevant in supporting resilience because of its nature, which is more stable and rooted within

the individual, making it more effective in managing pressure and difficulties experienced.

This research has several important limitations that must be addressed. First, the sample size involved in this study was quite limited. The small sample size can affect the statistical strength and generalization of the research findings to larger student population. The larger the sample size, the more stable and accurate the relationship between gratitude and resilience, especially when analyzing sub-dimensions such as intrinsic and extrinsic gratitude. Second, the results of the correlational test found in this study showed a weak correlational relationship. This weak correlation indicates that there are many other factors other than gratitude that also contribute significantly to shaping student resilience. Thus, the focus of this research on the relationship between these two variables is quite limited in describing the psychological complexity of resilience. Third, the lack of gender data shows that differences in the relationship between intrinsic gratitude and resilience between men and women is still unknown.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the research findings, it is known that intrinsic gratitude has a relationship with student resilience. It fulfills the second minor hypothesis. However, these research findings do not support previous research which stated that gratitude and extrinsic gratitude is related to resilience. However, a significant positive relationship was found between intrinsic gratitude and student resilience, thereby supporting the second minor hypothesis. These findings indicate that an internal, deeply rooted mindset of gratitude that centered on spiritual acceptance, contentment (qana'ah), and appreciating internal experiences, serves as a vital protective factor in enhancing the resilience of Muslim psychology students when navigating academic challenges.

## **SUGGESTION**

Practically, students are advised to cultivate intrinsic gratitude by focusing on what they "gain" or "experience" rather than what they "receive" so that resilience in facing academic challenges increases. Lecturers and campus counseling services should design reflective workshops and counseling modules that integrate these internal value systems. Finally, for further research, a larger and more diverse number of participants, adding moderator and mediator variables, and considering the influence of cultural context differences, personal background, and socioeconomic conditions of students can be involved.

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## APPENDIX

### The Islamic Gratitude Scale (IGS-10)

Answer the following questions based on the situation you feel. There are no wrong or right answers in this questionnaire; you can use this questionnaire as evaluation material. The more honest your answers are, the more valid the results obtained will be.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Quite Disagree

4 = Quite Agree

5 = Agree

6 = Strongly Agree

| No  | Questions                                                               | 1  | 2 | 3  | 4  | 5 | 6  |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1.  | When I receive kindness from someone, I repay with good deeds.          | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 2.  | I definitely act it with good deeds for the kindness I receive.         | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 3.  | I pray for others who gives me supports and ease.                       | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 4.  | If I receive kindness, I often help others.                             | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 5.  | I thank for the gift from others.                                       | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 6.  | When I receive blessings, I directly say Alhamdulillah / praise to God. | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 7.  | I always express praise to Allah/ God every time I pray.                | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 8.  | I can still enjoy the life even when I face some difficulties.          | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 9.  | I feel that the blessings I receive is abundant.                        | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |
| 10. | I am already satisfied with a small blessing.                           | SD | D | QD | QA | A | SA |

## B. Resilience Research Scale

### Instructions:

Answer the following questions based on the situation you are experiencing. There are no wrong or right answers in this questionnaire; you can use this questionnaire as an evaluation material. The more truthful your responses are, the more reliable the outcomes will be.

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree

| No. | Questions                                                                      | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1   | I tend to recover faster after difficult periods.                              | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 2   | I find it difficult to manage challenging situation.                           | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 3   | I only need short period of time to recover from challenging situation.        | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 4   | I find it difficult to recover after something unfortunate occurs.             | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 5   | I often manage difficult periods without any obstacles.                        | SD | D | N | A | SA |
| 6   | It usually takes me a long time to get through challenging periods in my life. | SD | D | N | A | SA |