



TA'AWUN EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE WELL-BEING AMONG YOUNG WOMEN CADRES OF NASYIATUL 'AISYIYAH

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Abstract: Young women cadres in faith-based community organizations often navigate multiple roles as students, workers, wives, mothers, and organizational activists. This study examines role conflict among young cadres of Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah (NA), a young women's autonomous organization within Muhammadiyah, and explores how the Islamic relational value of ta'awun, or mutual assistance in doing good, contributes to their collective well-being. A descriptive qualitative design was employed using data from 125 cadres across Indonesia through an online questionnaire, in-depth interviews, and ongoing focus group discussions. Closed-ended responses were summarized descriptively, while open-ended responses and interview data were inductively coded to remain grounded in participants' own accounts. The findings indicate that role conflict is particularly pronounced between organizational responsibilities and employment, generating time pressure, guilt, and emotional exhaustion. Ta'awun is practiced through task redistribution, emotional support, and flexible participation, strengthening belonging, solidarity, and organizational commitment, although its implementation varies across regions and leadership levels. A tentative model linking role conflict, ta'awun-based coping, collective well-being, and organizational commitment is proposed.

Abstrak: Kader perempuan muda dalam organisasi kemasyarakatan berbasis agama sering menjalani peran ganda sebagai pelajar, pekerja, istri, ibu, dan penggerak organisasi. Penelitian ini mengkaji pengalaman konflik peran kader muda Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah (NA) serta kontribusi nilai Islam ta'awun terhadap kesejahteraan kolektif. Penelitian menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif dengan data dari 125 kader di berbagai wilayah Indonesia melalui kuesioner daring, wawancara mendalam, dan diskusi kelompok terfokus. Data tertutup dianalisis secara deskriptif, sedangkan data terbuka dan wawancara dikoding secara induktif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa konflik peran terutama terjadi antara tanggung jawab organisasi dan pekerjaan, yang memunculkan tekanan waktu, rasa bersalah, dan kelelahan emosional. Praktik ta'awun diwujudkan melalui pengalihan tugas, dukungan emosional, dan fleksibilitas kehadiran. Praktik tersebut memperkuat rasa memiliki, solidaritas, dan komitmen organisasi, meskipun penerapannya berbeda antarwilayah dan jenjang kepemimpinan. Penelitian mengusulkan model tentatif yang menghubungkan konflik peran, koping berbasis ta'awun, kesejahteraan kolektif, dan komitmen organisasi.

INTRODUCTION

Young women today are increasingly expected to hold several social roles at once: student, employee, wife, mother, and member of a civic or religious organization. Piling these roles on top of one another frequently produces role conflict, a condition in which the demands of one role sit awkwardly against the demands of another until psychological strain follows (Cavagnis et al., 2023). A growing body of evidence ties unresolved work-family and multiple-role conflict to fatigue, guilt, reduced life satisfaction, and diminished psychological well-being among women across very different cultural settings, from Italian working mothers (Cavagnis et al., 2023) to Indonesian female civil servants (Wijayani & Supriyanto, 2022), working mothers in Indonesian manufacturing settings (Marliana et al., 2026), Tanzanian student-mothers balancing coursework and caregiving (Kisanga & Matiba, 2023), and Israeli parents negotiating overlapping work and study roles (Kulik, 2025). Systematic reviews of work-family conflict converge on much the same conclusion: as dual demands intensify, the psychological cost falls disproportionately on women, and this effect is strongest precisely where institutional and cultural support for combining roles is weakest (Cavagnis et al., 2023; Pan et al., 2022).

Indonesia is a particularly instructive setting in which to study this problem, because civic and religious organizational life there is dense, multigenerational, and, for many women, effectively a second career layered on top of paid employment and domestic responsibility. Muhammadiyah, founded in 1912, is one of the largest Islamic reform movements in the world, and its structure of autonomous organizations for men, women, and youth has long served as one of the main channels through which Indonesian Muslim women gain access to public leadership, beginning with the founding of Aisyiyah in 1917 by Siti Walidah, better known as Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, as a platform for women's education and empowerment. Nasyyatul 'Aisyiyah (NA), Muhammadiyah's autonomous organization for young women, carries this legacy forward while addressing a distinct demographic: cadres who are frequently still building their careers, finishing their education, and starting their families at the very moment they also take on organizational leadership. This makes NA cadres a strategically important, yet understudied, population for role-conflict research. Unlike employees whose competing demands are usually framed simply as "work" versus "family," NA cadres carry a third, semi-voluntary domain, organizational service grounded in religious obligation, whose

legitimacy is not consistently recognized by employers, schools, or, at times, even family members.

NA provides a platform for young women to build leadership skills, engage in social da'wah, conduct community advocacy, and contribute to women's empowerment (Adeline et al., 2022; Rahmaniah et al., 2025), echoing the broader trajectory of Muhammadiyah's sister organization Aisyiyah, whose leadership and educational programs have expanded from central boards down to village-level branches while staying explicitly grounded in religious values (Rahmawati et al., 2026). Aisyiyah's contribution has also extended into education, where its programs have been documented as a deliberate strategy for promoting gender-friendly Islamic schooling in the digital era, embedding women's empowerment directly into curricular and pedagogical practice rather than leaving it as an abstract aspiration (Anam & Hidayat, 2022). Behind this visible public role, however, cadres must simultaneously finish their studies, sustain careers, and fulfil domestic responsibilities, which places them in a somewhat paradoxical position: publicly seen as agents of change while privately absorbing the psychological cost of layered role demands (Idris & Wan Hassan, 2021).

Research on young Muslim women activists in Southeast Asia points to a similar dilemma: the wish to contribute and grow through activism collides with social expectations and domestic burdens (Idris & Wan Hassan, 2021). Comparable tension surfaces in studies of Indonesian postgraduate women negotiating study, work, and family inside a patriarchal-collectivist culture, where role conflict is experienced not simply as a scheduling problem but as a layered moral burden involving guilt toward family, employer, and community all at once. Where social support is lacking, this tension can wear down cadres' persistence and even push them toward withdrawing from organizational life altogether, which underlines why organizations that can offer emotional, social, and spiritual support matter so much (Hamdani & Nurhidayah, 2022).

One value that Muhammadiyah treats as capable of easing this tension is ta'awun education. Etymologically, ta'awun means mutual help in goodness, affirmed in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 2. Within Muhammadiyah, this value functions as the animating spirit, or ruh gerakan, of its social solidarity work, conceptually close to the wider Indonesian ethos of gotong royong, which operates across community and economic life as a form of social capital binding members through reciprocal obligation rather than formal contract (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020). Ta'awun is not confined

to occasional charitable acts; it develops into a value-education process that cultivates a shared, collective awareness of mutual support. Within NA, ta'awun education can function as a kind of safe space where cadres share experiences, put down the burden of competing roles for a while, and strengthen solidarity among peers. Recent studies confirm that religiously grounded social support meaningfully strengthens psychological resilience among young Muslim women and helps buffer the impact of role conflict (Hamdani & Nurhidayah, 2022; Mhiri et al., 2025), a pattern that fits the classic stress-buffering account of social support, in which supportive relationships matter most precisely when demands are highest (Vila, 2021), and with more recent evidence that perceived support reduces distress mainly by lowering perceived stress itself rather than by simply adding a generic protective factor (Acoba, 2024).

This study rests on the proposition that well-being is not only an individual matter but also a collective one. Collective well-being foregrounds the quality of social relationships, community cohesion, solidarity, and reciprocal support (Hoffman et al., 2023). For NA cadres, the organization is not merely a space for self-development; it functions as a support system that keeps them steady amid the complexity of multiple roles. That said, organizational support is never automatically present. Qualitative work on faith-sensitive coping among Muslim women affected by hardship shows that the psychological benefit of religious practice depends on whether faith communities actively attend to members' support needs, rather than simply assuming that shared belief alone will be enough (Aldbyani, 2025). This caveat is directly relevant to NA, where ta'awun is normatively espoused but whose lived consistency across leadership tiers and regions had not previously been examined empirically. It is also worth noting that Aisyiyah, as an organization, has itself had to actively manage internal divergence and organizational tension over time, using what has been described as an *islah*, or reconciliatory, strategy to hold its structure together across differing views (Syamsiyatun, 2020), a reminder that mutual-help values inside these organizations are cultivated deliberately rather than simply assumed to exist.

Accordingly, the present study addresses two research questions: (1) How do young women cadres of Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah experience role conflict across their organizational, occupational, academic, and domestic roles? and (2) How does ta'awun, as an educational and lived organizational practice, contribute to the collective well-being and organizational commitment of these cadres? By combining a qualitative descriptive

reading of open-ended and interview material with a quantitative description of a relatively large cadre sample, this study offers both descriptive breadth and a reasonably grounded account of cadres' everyday experience, and proposes a preliminary conceptual model linking role conflict, ta'awun-based coping, collective well-being, and organizational commitment.

Role Conflict and Women's Multiple Roles

Role conflict arises when the simultaneous demands of two or more roles are, in some way, mutually incompatible, so that fulfilling one role makes fulfilling another harder. Women in caregiving, occupational, and civic roles are disproportionately exposed to this condition because domestic caregiving expectations rarely shrink even as women's public participation expands (Cavagnis et al., 2023). Systematic reviews indicate that hardiness, self-esteem, an internal locus of control, and, critically, relational and organizational support act as protective factors that buffer the negative effects of role conflict on women's well-being (Cavagnis et al., 2023). Consistent with this, Indonesian studies on female workers report that unmanaged role conflict is significantly associated with reduced psychological well-being (Wijayani & Supriyanto, 2022) and with elevated emotional exhaustion among working mothers (Marliana et al., 2026). Findings from Indonesian career women more broadly echo this pattern too: multiple-role conflict tends to weaken organizational commitment unless it is offset by adequate social support, a relationship documented among women civil servants navigating career and family duties simultaneously (Ariany et al., 2022). Boundary-management research adds a communicative dimension to this picture: how women talk about, negotiate, and signal role boundaries to employers, family, and organizations shapes how much conflict they end up experiencing, somewhat independent of the sheer number of roles held (Leppäkumpu & Sivunen, 2023). Work-family conflict has also been shown, in organizational-behaviour research, to erode organizational citizenship behaviour unless buffered by subjective happiness and family support, suggesting the psychological toll of conflicting roles can spill over into reduced discretionary contribution to the organizations women serve (Pan et al., 2022), a dynamic directly relevant to voluntary, cadre-based organizations such as NA, where discretionary service is essentially the organization's lifeblood.

Religiosity, Social Support, and Resilience Among Muslim Women

Religious coping and faith-based social support have repeatedly been linked to resilience among women facing chronic stressors. Among Tunisian women, perceived social support was found to be a critical predictor of psychological resilience (Mhiri et al., 2025), while religiosity and spirituality have been shown, in a systematic review of youth mental health, to play a protective role against depression and anxiety when embedded in supportive community structures (Aggarwal et al., 2023). Among Muslim women specifically, religious and community-based coping mechanisms have been found to strengthen emotional resilience and support recovery from distress, including among immigrant and diasporic populations navigating layered identity demands (Reich et al., 2024). These findings support the idea that religiously grounded social bonds are not incidental to women's well-being but function as an active coping resource, consistent with the broader stress-buffering literature showing that social support's protective effect is strongest precisely under conditions of elevated demand (Vila, 2021), and that this protective effect often works by reducing perceived stress rather than by directly altering mood (Acoba, 2024).

Ta'awun as an Islamic Relational Value and Organizational Practice

Within Indonesian Islamic civil society, mutual-help values such as ta'awun, and the broader cultural ethos of gotong royong, function as forms of social capital that bind members together through reciprocal obligation and shared identity. Empirical work on gotong royong among Indonesian micro-enterprises shows that this ethos can be deliberately mobilized as a practical resource for meeting collective needs, not merely invoked as rhetoric (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020). Within Muhammadiyah and its autonomous organizations, ta'awun is cultivated deliberately through cadre formation, or kaderisasi, embedding mutual assistance as an organizational norm rather than leaving it to spontaneous charity. Recent accounts of Aisyiyah and Muhammadiyah women's movements document how these organizations combine religious values with structured women's empowerment programs, extending thematic councils for education, health, and social welfare from central down to village level, in order to strengthen members' capacity, voice, and collective agency (Adeline et al., 2022; Rahmaniah et al., 2025; Rahmawati et al., 2026). This study extends that literature by asking, empirically, how ta'awun is experienced, not merely espoused, by young cadres who are managing competing roles day to day.

Collective Well-Being

Collective well-being reframes psychological health as an emergent property of relationships and community life rather than solely an individual trait. It emphasizes belonging, mutual recognition, and the density and quality of a group's social ties as determinants of shared flourishing (Hoffman et al., 2023). Within organizational settings marked by high role strain, such as nursing, the effect of job strain on organizational commitment has been shown to be moderated by the level of social support available to the worker (Li et al., 2022), and collective resources of this kind appear to function as a buffer that individual coping alone cannot supply. The present study applies the collective well-being lens to a faith-based women's organization, a context in which spiritual meaning-making and communal solidarity are closely intertwined, and in which, as recent commentary on faith-sensitive support cautions, the protective value of shared belief is conditional on whether the community's structures actively translate belief into support (Aldbyani, 2025).

The Present Study

Taken together, this literature suggests that role conflict is a near-universal experience for women occupying multiple public and private roles, that religiously grounded social support functions as a resilience resource, and that collective, rather than purely individual, frameworks are needed to understand how organizations sustain their members' well-being. Yet empirical work examining how an explicitly Islamic relational value such as *ta'awun* is lived and practiced, rather than only normatively described, within a large-scale women's cadre organization remains scarce. This study addresses that gap using data from *Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah* cadres across multiple regions of Indonesia, and it does so by staying deliberately descriptive: rather than building a deeply interpretative account of a small number of cases, it aims to give a faithful, well-organized picture of what a fairly broad group of cadres say about role conflict and mutual help in their own words.

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a qualitative descriptive design, complemented by descriptive quantitative profiling of a broad cadre sample. Qualitative description was chosen deliberately rather than by default. As Sandelowski argued in her influential critique of the field, many studies labeled as grounded theory, phenomenology, or ethnography are,

on closer inspection, better described as qualitative description, and there is no reason to disguise a straightforward, data-near account of a phenomenon under a heavier theoretical label it does not actually need (Sandelowski, 2000). Qualitative description sits low on the interpretative ladder compared to approaches such as phenomenology or grounded theory: it seeks a comprehensive, everyday-language summary of an experience or event, and researchers using it deliberately stay close to their data rather than transforming it into a more abstract theoretical rendering (Sandelowski, 2010). This made it a good fit for the present stage of the project, where the aim was to map, in a reasonably systematic way, how a broad group of NA cadres describe role conflict and ta'awun in their own words, rather than to build a fully worked-out phenomenological or theoretical account from a handful of cases. A systematic review of qualitative descriptive studies in health-related research further notes that this design typically draws on naturalistic inquiry, favors purposive or convenience sampling, and analyzes data through some form of qualitative content or thematic analysis rather than a more heavily theory-driven coding scheme (Kim et al., 2017), a description that matches the approach adopted here. In the present phase of the project, data collection combined a structured-and-open-ended online questionnaire administered to a broad cadre sample with in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) among a purposively selected subset of participants; the interview and FGD strand of data collection is ongoing, and the present article reports the questionnaire-based descriptive findings together with a qualitative descriptive analysis of the open-ended responses collected so far.

It is worth being explicit about what this choice means for how the findings should be read. A qualitative descriptive study does not promise the same depth of idiographic, case-by-case interpretation that a phenomenological study would; what it offers instead is a broader, low-inference account that stays recognizably close to what participants said, which is arguably more useful at this stage, when the research team still needs a reasonably wide-angle picture of the terrain before narrowing in on a smaller number of cases for deeper interpretative work later in the project (Doyle et al., 2020).

Participants and Setting

Participants were 125 NA cadres recruited through purposive sampling across four principal regions selected to represent the diversity of NA's organizational base: Central Java, an established Muhammadiyah stronghold; Yogyakarta, a student city with a high concentration of cadres who are simultaneously university students; Sumatra,

representing NA's presence outside Java in a culturally and religiously heterogeneous setting; and Sulawesi, representing high cultural plurality and complex socio-religious dynamics, alongside cadres from several additional regions. Inclusion criteria were: being a young woman aged 18-35 years, having served actively as an NA cadre for at least two years, having direct experience of role conflict, and providing voluntary informed consent. Participants were distributed across five organizational leadership tiers: Regional Leadership/Pimpinan Daerah (n = 54, 43.2%), Wilayah/Provincial Leadership (n = 30, 24.0%), Branch/Pimpinan Cabang (n = 30, 24.0%), Sub-branch/Pimpinan Ranting (n = 6, 4.8%), and Central Leadership/Pimpinan Pusat (n = 5, 4.0%). Regarding family status, 44.0% were married with two or more children, 26.4% were unmarried, 13.6% were married with one child, 10.4% were married without children, and 5.6% were single parents. The most frequently reported source of daily support was a spouse (53.6%), followed by parents (17.6%) and extended family (12.8%); notably, 7.2% of participants reported having no significant source of support at all.

Data Collection

Data were collected through three complementary techniques. First, a semi-structured online questionnaire combining closed-ended, categorical or multiple-choice, and open-ended items was distributed to cadres across the target regions, covering role-conflict experience, its perceived impact, coping strategies, experiences of ta'awun-based support, perceptions of the organization as a safe space, and aspirations for future ta'awun education. Second, in-depth semi-structured interviews are being conducted with a purposively selected subset of participants to probe the meaning behind particular survey responses in more depth. Third, focus group discussions, with five to seven participants per region, are being held to check emergent categories against group discussion and to capture collective dynamics, complemented by documentation and observation of NA's cadre-formation materials and internal forums.

Data Analysis

Closed-ended items were entered into a spreadsheet and analyzed descriptively using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics, generating frequencies and percentages to characterize the sample and the prevalence of role conflict; no inferential statistics are reported at this stage given the purposive, non-probability sampling design. Open-ended

textual responses were exported to NVivo qualitative-analysis software to support systematic coding. Following the logic of qualitative descriptive analysis, coding proceeded inductively and stayed close to participants' own wording rather than being mapped onto a pre-existing theoretical scheme: researchers repeatedly read the responses, assigned short descriptive codes to meaningful segments of text, grouped related codes into categories, and then organized categories into broader themes, moving back and forth between the raw excerpts and the developing category structure so that each theme could be traced directly back to specific participant statements (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). This approach is broadly consistent with conventional thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke, in which themes are built bottom-up from the data rather than fitted to an existing coding frame, while stopping short of the heavier interpretative work of unpacking each participant's individual sense-making that a phenomenological analysis would pursue (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Two members of the research team coded the open-ended responses independently before comparing and reconciling their coding, and themes were retained only where they were supported across multiple, independent participant accounts rather than resting on a single vivid case. The resulting categories were then read together with the collective well-being literature to build the tentative conceptual model presented later in this article.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Credibility was supported through method triangulation across questionnaire, interview, and documentation data, and will be strengthened further through member checking and peer debriefing as the interview and FGD strand is completed. Dependability was supported by keeping a clear audit trail of coding decisions in NVivo, so that the route from raw excerpt to final theme can be checked by someone outside the coding team, a practice recommended for qualitative content analysis generally (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Transferability is supported by rich contextual description of the four target regions rather than by any claim to statistical generalization. All participants provided informed consent, were assured of the right to withdraw at any time, and were assigned pseudonymous participant codes, such as P5 or P22, in place of any identifying information; illustrative excerpts reported below have been translated from Indonesian into English by the research team and lightly edited only for readability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participant Characteristics

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of the 125 participating cadres across NA's five organizational leadership tiers. Participation was concentrated at the Regional (Pimpinan Daerah) level, reflecting both the relative size of this tier within NA's structure and its accessibility for purposive recruitment, while smaller proportions were drawn from the Sub-branch and Central tiers. This distribution matters for how the rest of the findings should be read, because, as the discussion below shows, cadres' experience of both role conflict and organizational support was not uniform across tiers.

Leadership Tier	n	%
Regional (Pimpinan Daerah)	54	43.2
Provincial (Pimpinan Wilayah)	30	24.0
Branch (Pimpinan Cabang)	30	24.0
Sub-branch (Pimpinan Ranting)	6	4.8
Central (Pimpinan Pusat)	5	4.0
Total	125	100

Source: Field questionnaire data (2026).

Prevalence and Sources of Role Conflict

A majority of participants reported having experienced role conflict, most often between organizational duties and paid employment, followed by organization-family conflict, family-work conflict, and conflict between childcare and organizational duties (Table 2). Regarding frequency, most participants experienced role conflict "sometimes" or "rarely," with a smaller group reporting "fairly often" or "very often" experiences. The most commonly reported impacts were difficulty managing time, feelings of guilt, physical and emotional fatigue, stress, and, for a smaller subset, a diminished desire to remain organizationally active. This broadly matches international evidence that unmanaged multiple-role demands are associated with fatigue, guilt, and reduced psychological well-being (Cavagnis et al., 2023; Kisanga & Matiba, 2023; Kulik, 2025), but the specific configuration found here, where organizational service rather than domestic labour is the single most frequently cited source of conflict, is distinctive, and is worth unpacking further below.

Indicator	n	%
Experienced role conflict	87	69.6
Did not experience role conflict	35	28.0
Source: organization-employment conflict	40	32.0
Frequency: sometimes	56	44.8

Indicator	n	%
Frequency: rarely	35	28.0
Frequency: fairly often	25	20.0
Frequency: very often	9	7.2
Felt ta'awun-based support from cadres/organization	107	85.6

Source: Field questionnaire data (2026).

Read together, Tables 1 and 2 suggest that role conflict in NA is not evenly distributed, either by its source or by where cadres sit within the organization. Organization-versus-employment conflict was reported roughly twice as often as any single family-related source, which suggests that the central tension cadres navigate is less the classic "work-family" dyad than a three-way negotiation among paid work, domestic responsibility, and voluntary religious service, with the last of these frequently the one that has to give way when time runs short, precisely because it is the only role without external contractual weight behind it. Because participation in this study was concentrated at the Regional tier, where organizational structures and peer networks tend to be most developed, it is plausible that the prevalence figures reported here are, if anything, a conservative estimate of the strain experienced at smaller or more peripheral tiers, where fewer peers and less-established local leadership may leave cadres more exposed to unresolved conflict. This distributional pattern sets up the thematic account that follows, which traces both the sources of this strain and the relational resources cadres draw on to manage it.

Theme 1: Role Conflict as a Consequence of Multiple-Role Demands

Consistent with role conflict theory, participants' accounts show that conflict arises from the simultaneous demands of several social identities: organizational, occupational, academic, and familial, rather than from any single source of strain.

"When there is an NA activity, the school where I teach finds it very difficult to grant permission, because [it is argued] teaching is an obligation while organizational service is only voluntary... perhaps because the school's leadership are not themselves cadres, so their response was quite unsupportive." (P14, translated from Indonesian)

"I had to become a full-time, unpaid caregiver at home to look after my parents, who suffer from stroke and heart disease." (P33, translated from Indonesian)

These excerpts show that role conflict is frequently structural, rooted in how institutions such as schools and workplaces recognize, or fail to recognize, organizational

service, as much as it is personal. This structural reading is reinforced when set alongside boundary-management research showing that the ease with which a role's legitimacy can be communicated to gatekeepers, such as an employer or a school principal, materially shapes how much conflict a person experiences (Leppäkumpu & Sivunen, 2023): P14's account reads, in effect, as a failed boundary negotiation, in which voluntary religious-organizational service could not be framed to her employer as carrying equivalent legitimacy to paid, contracted work. A similar dynamic surfaces in comparative Indonesian research on career women, where multiple-role conflict was found to weaken organizational commitment specifically in cases where support from the surrounding institution, whether family, workplace, or organization, was thin (Ariany et al., 2022). In both cases, the difficulty is not simply having too many roles; it is having one role's legitimacy repeatedly re-litigated with each new institutional gatekeeper.

Theme 2: The Psychological Toll of Role Conflict

Participants described emotional exhaustion, psychological pressure, and reduced family time, alongside evidence of resilience through positive reappraisal of their experiences. Reported impacts clustered around fatigue, both physical and emotional, guilt, stress, difficulty allocating time, and, in some cases, a wish to withdraw from organizational activity, yet very few participants reported that this translated into an actual loss of commitment, suggesting that distress and continued engagement can coexist rather than being mutually exclusive. This pattern parallels findings from working mothers in Indonesian manufacturing settings, where emotional exhaustion frequently co-occurred with continued labour-force participation rather than exit (Marliana et al., 2026), and from studies of student-mothers, where coping was often expressed as enduring rather than resolving the underlying multiple-role burden (Kisanga & Matiba, 2023). Read through a resource-based lens, the coexistence of distress and continued commitment suggests cadres are not simply tolerating strain passively; they appear to be drawing on some compensating resource that keeps organizational engagement intact even as personal cost accumulates. The themes that follow identify that resource as relational and religious in character. It is also worth noting that participants rarely framed this psychological toll purely as a personal failing; several accounts explicitly located the difficulty in the surrounding institutional context, as in Theme 1, even while describing their own fatigue and guilt, suggesting cadres hold a

fairly grounded, structurally aware understanding of why they feel strained rather than attributing it solely to personal inadequacy. This distinction matters for how support might be designed: support that addresses only individual coping skills, without also addressing institutional recognition of organizational service, would leave the structural half of the problem untouched.

Theme 3: Relationally Oriented Coping Strategies

The dominant coping strategies mentioned were communication with a spouse, deliberation (musyawarah), time management, seeking help from fellow cadres, prayer, and self-reflection, indicating that coping was predominantly relational and spiritual rather than solitary.

"When I face role conflict, what I usually do is stay positive, carry out each role as it comes, and trust that this is for the best; Allah surely has the best plan for us." (P58, translated from Indonesian)

"I go through whatever problem comes up, talk to someone I trust, and when I have spare time I give myself space to recharge, some 'me-time' and meditation." (P71, translated from Indonesian)

These excerpts echo a wider literature on religious coping among Muslim women, in which practices such as prayer and trust in divine planning function not merely as private consolation but as an active interpretive strategy for reframing burdensome circumstances as meaningful and survivable (Aldbyani, 2025). They also fit the stress-buffering account of social support, under which the presence of a trusted confidant matters most precisely when demands are highest (Vila, 2021), and evidence that perceived support reduces distress largely by lowering perceived stress itself, rather than by directly changing mood (Acoba, 2024): P71's description of talking to someone trusted before allowing herself rest fits this stress-reduction pathway quite closely. What stands out in the NA data is that this relational and spiritual coping was rarely described as an individual technique practiced alone; it was embedded in, and sustained by, the organizational structure itself, a pattern taken up more fully in Theme 4.

Theme 4: Ta'awun as a Lived, Everyday Practice

A large majority of participants, 85.6% or $n = 107$, reported having felt ta'awun-based support from fellow cadres or the organization when under role strain. Ta'awun was enacted through task substitution, emotional support, organizational flexibility, and

practical assistance, which is evidence that the value operates as concrete practice rather than remaining a normative ideal that is only talked about.

"Emotional support from my fellow cadres was one of the things that motivated me to get back up and stay enthusiastic." (P9, translated from Indonesian)

"I am often listened to and given advice when I share my problems, and when I really cannot manage, I am allowed to be excused from an organizational activity for urgent family or work matters." (P22, translated from Indonesian)

This finding gives empirical substance to something that, in prior literature on Aisiyiah and Muhammadiyah women's movements, has largely been described at the level of institutional programming, such as education boards, health boards, and economic-empowerment initiatives, rather than at the level of everyday interpersonal exchange (Adeline et al., 2022; Rahmania et al., 2025; Rahmawati et al., 2026). It also fits the broader Indonesian ethos of gotong royong, in which mutual assistance functions as social capital that members can draw on in practical need, not only as a value they endorse in the abstract (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020). P22's account of being formally excused from an activity is particularly telling: it shows ta'awun being translated into a concrete organizational accommodation, functionally similar to the flexible work arrangements shown elsewhere to reduce work-family conflict and support organizational commitment (Pan et al., 2022), but grounded here in religious-communal obligation rather than employment policy.

Theme 5: The Organization as an Evolving Safe Space

Many participants described NA as a place of belonging and growth, though this was not universal; some accounts pointed to unmet needs for empathy and psychosocial support, indicating that the organization's function as a safe space is real but unevenly realized across contexts.

"For me, Nasyiah has become one of my safe spaces. I grew up and learned within Nasyiah from the very beginning, and I have always been placed among senior sisters who understand my need to grow." (P5, translated from Indonesian)

At the same time, a subset of participants indicated that support was not always available when it was most needed, pointing to gaps in the consistency of ta'awun practice that the organization's **leadership** may want to address. This unevenness is worth reading against the participation pattern in Table 1: because participation, and plausibly also the density of peer relationships, is heavily concentrated at the Regional tier, cadres at

smaller or more peripheral tiers, such as Sub-branch or Central, may simply have fewer proximate peers through whom ta'awun can be enacted day to day, even where the value is equally endorsed. This reading is consistent with commentary on faith-sensitive support elsewhere, which cautions that shared religious identity alone does not guarantee that a community's structures will actively translate belief into support unless local structures are deliberately organized to do so (Aldbyani, 2025). It is also consistent with the observation that even a long-established organization like Aisyiyah has had to work actively, at times through explicit reconciliatory strategies, to keep its internal structures aligned rather than assuming cohesion would simply follow from shared religious commitment (Syamsiyatun, 2020).

Theme 6: Aspirations for Structured Ta'awun Education

Most participants proposed mentoring, peer-support structures, empathetic-communication training, mental health education, and role-conflict management training as components of a more structured ta'awun education.

"[We need] education on the mental health of women as mothers, wives, workers, and organizational activists." (P40, translated from Indonesian)

"For me, being a young Nasyyatul 'Aisyiyah woman means learning to become a knowledgeable, independent, and useful person. There, I learned that women do not only have a role in the family, but are also able to contribute to society, education, and the surrounding environment." (P61, translated from Indonesian)

Cadres' explicit request for mental health literacy and structured mentoring signals that they experience ta'awun's current, largely informal form as valuable but not, on its own, sufficient, a gap consistent with reviews showing that religiosity's protective effect on youth mental health is strongest when embedded in deliberately supportive community structures rather than left implicit (Aggarwal et al., 2023). It also resonates with Aisyiyah's own history of embedding empowerment directly into structured educational programming rather than leaving it to informal transmission (Anam & Hidayat, 2022), suggesting cadres are, in effect, asking NA to extend that same deliberateness to psychosocial and mental-health support.

A Tentative Conceptual Model

Bringing the six themes above together with the collective well-being literature (Hoffman et al., 2023), the data suggest a tentative process model: Role Conflict leads to Ta'awun-Based Coping, which leads to Collective Well-Being, which in turn sustains

Organizational Commitment. In this model, role conflict functions as the precipitating stressor; ta'awun-based coping, relational, spiritual, and organizationally flexible responses, functions as the proximal mechanism; collective well-being, belonging, mutual recognition, solidarity, is the emergent relational outcome; and organizational commitment is the more distal, behaviorally relevant outcome that sustains the cadre base over time. Consistent with evidence that social support moderates, rather than unconditionally guarantees, the relationship between job strain and organizational commitment (Li et al., 2022), the present data suggest this pathway is conditional: it operates most strongly where ta'awun is realized consistently at the local level, and more weakly where, as Theme 5 shows, organizational responsiveness is uneven. This model will be tested and refined further through the ongoing interview and FGD strand of the broader project.

Integrative Discussion

Three findings deserve particular discussion. First, the prevalence and character of role conflict reported here, most acute at the intersection of organizational service and paid employment, echoes findings from working women in both Western and Indonesian contexts, where unmanaged role conflict is consistently linked to fatigue, guilt, and reduced psychological well-being (Cavagnis et al., 2023; Marlina et al., 2026; Wijayani & Supriyanto, 2022). What is distinctive in the NA context is that part of this conflict is institutionally produced: workplaces and schools that do not formally recognize religious-organizational service as legitimate leave create structural friction that individual coping cannot fully resolve, a pattern that fits closely with boundary-management evidence that unrecognized or poorly communicated role boundaries directly drive experienced conflict, independent of the sheer number of roles held (Leppäkumpu & Sivunen, 2023). This points to a boundary condition on existing work-family conflict models when they are applied to volunteer or semi-voluntary religious organizational roles, which are neither purely "work" nor purely "leisure" in conventional role-conflict taxonomies, and it helps explain why the modal source of conflict in this sample was organization-versus-employment rather than the family-versus-work conflict that dominates much of the Western literature.

Second, the finding that ta'awun functions as a concrete, lived practice, not merely an espoused value, supports and extends the literature on religiously grounded social support as a resilience resource (Hamdani & Nurhidayah, 2022; Mhiri et al., 2025; Reich

et al., 2024). Where prior research has generally treated religiosity as an individual-level coping resource, prayer and positive religious reappraisal, for instance, documented across multiple Muslim-majority and diaspora samples (Aldbyani, 2025), the present findings show that, within an organized cadre structure, religious values can be operationalized at the organizational level through task substitution, flexible attendance norms, and structured emotional support, effectively turning an individual coping resource into a collective one. This is consistent with evidence that social support moderates the relationship between job strain and organizational commitment (Li et al., 2022), and with organizational-behaviour evidence that family and organizational support can offset the erosive effect of work-family conflict on discretionary organizational contribution (Pan et al., 2022; Ariany et al., 2022): in NA's case, ta'awun appears to serve an analogous moderating function, but rooted in religious-communal rather than purely occupational logic. It also resonates with the wider Indonesian finding that gotong royong operates as usable social capital rather than symbolic rhetoric (Lukiyanto & Wijayaningtyas, 2020), suggesting ta'awun in NA may be a religiously coded, organization-specific instance of a broader cultural mechanism.

Third, the uneven realization of the organization as a "safe space," present for many cadres but not universally so, nuances the collective well-being framework (Hoffman et al., 2023). Collective well-being is not a fixed organizational property but a variable, situated accomplishment that depends on the responsiveness of local leadership, the flexibility of organizational norms, and the availability of peer networks at a given tier or region. This suggests the proposed model, role conflict, ta'awun-based coping, collective well-being, organizational commitment, should be understood as conditional on organizational responsiveness rather than automatic, a proposition the planned interview and FGD phase of this project is well positioned to test in more depth, and one that aligns with caution in the faith-based support literature against assuming that shared belief alone secures adequate support (Aldbyani, 2025; Syamsiyatun, 2020).

These findings also extend the literature on Muhammadiyah and Aisyiyah women's movements, which has predominantly focused on leadership, da'wah, empowerment, and educational-program outcomes (Adeline et al., 2022; Rahmaniah et al., 2025; Rahmawati et al., 2026; Anam & Hidayat, 2022), by foregrounding cadres' psychological well-being and the mechanism, specifically ta'awun-based mutual support, through which the organization sustains that well-being under conditions of multiple-role strain.

Methodologically, the study also illustrates a fairly practical application of qualitative description to a relatively large, questionnaire-based sample, staying deliberately close to participants' wording rather than reaching for a heavier interpretative apparatus (Sandelowski, 2000; Kim et al., 2017), while the fuller, more idiographic phase of the broader project awaits the completed interview and FGD strand.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the collective well-being literature by demonstrating how a culturally and religiously specific relational value, *ta'awun*, can be operationalized as an organizational-level mechanism linking individual role strain to collective outcomes, complementing predominantly Western, secular conceptualizations of community well-being and social support (Hoffman et al., 2023). It also extends work-family and role-conflict theory by highlighting a semi-voluntary, faith-based organizational role that conventional work-versus-family dichotomies do not adequately capture, and by showing that boundary-negotiation difficulties, already well documented in general work-life research (Leppäkumpu & Sivunen, 2023), apply with particular force to organizational roles whose legitimacy is not institutionally codified.

Practically, the findings suggest several concrete directions for NA and Muhammadiyah more broadly. First, structured mentoring and peer-support systems could be developed and explicitly framed as *ta'awun* education, rather than leaving mutual support to informal, tier-dependent practice, with particular attention to strengthening peer density at the Sub-branch and Central tiers, where Table 1 shows participation, and plausibly peer availability, is thinnest. Second, organizational leaders could be trained in empathetic communication and basic psychosocial support skills, drawing on evidence that community structures must actively translate shared values into support rather than assuming it follows automatically (Aldbyani, 2025). Third, role-conflict management and mental health literacy modules tailored to cadres balancing domestic, occupational, and organizational demands could be offered, consistent with cadres' own stated aspirations in Theme 6. Fourth, at the institutional level, NA and Muhammadiyah could advocate for formal recognition of religious-organizational service, for example through Muhammadiyah-affiliated workplaces and schools, and through model letters or memoranda of understanding that give organizational service a recognized institutional status comparable to other forms of civic leave, so as to reduce the structural sources of role conflict identified in Theme 1. A fifth, longer-horizon

implication follows from the tier-related unevenness noted above: because ta'awun appeared most reliably enacted where peer density and local leadership were strongest, NA's cadre-formation curriculum could deliberately build small, geographically proximate peer clusters at the Sub-branch level, rather than relying solely on tier-wide programming administered from Regional or Central boards, so that mutual support does not depend on a cadre's proximity to the organization's administrative centre.

Beyond NA itself, these implications may travel to other Indonesian civil-society organizations that similarly rely on cadres' unpaid or semi-voluntary labour, including Muhammadiyah's other autonomous bodies and non-religious volunteer-based organizations that invoke a comparable ethos of gotong royong. Wherever an organization depends on members who are simultaneously employees, students, or caregivers, the present findings suggest that formal, structured mechanisms for mutual support are likely to sustain member well-being and retention more reliably than an implicit assumption that shared values alone will produce adequate support.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the present analysis draws primarily on open- and closed-ended questionnaire data; the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions that will allow fuller triangulation and member checking are still under way, and the themes reported here should be regarded as an initial, questionnaire-derived descriptive layer rather than a complete account of cadres' lived experience. Because the design is deliberately descriptive rather than deeply interpretative, it is also better suited to mapping the range and pattern of cadres' experience than to explaining, in a fine-grained way, why any single cadre makes sense of her situation as she does; that deeper, more idiographic question is left to the planned interview phase. Second, the purposive sampling strategy, while appropriate here, limits the statistical generalizability of the prevalence figures reported. Third, self-report data on sensitive experiences of conflict and distress may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly given participants' organizational affiliation. Fourth, because data collection relied on an online questionnaire, cadres with limited digital access or literacy, plausibly concentrated in more peripheral branches, may be under-represented, which could understate the very unevenness in organizational support documented in Theme 5. Future research should complete the planned interview and FGD phases across all four target regions, test the proposed conceptual model using structural or mixed-methods approaches, examine

whether ta'awun-based organizational support generalizes to other Muhammadiyah-affiliated organizations or to non-religious civil-society organizations with comparable mutual-aid norms, and directly compare tiers and regions to establish which organizational conditions most reliably translate the value of ta'awun into felt support. Future work would also benefit from validated quantitative instruments, for example established work-family conflict scales and a purpose-built ta'awun-based organizational support measure, so that the tentative model proposed here can eventually be tested with structural equation modelling rather than relied upon only as a descriptive synthesis; such an instrument would also make it possible to test directly whether ta'awun's protective association with well-being operates, as the discussion above suggests, primarily by lowering cadres' perceived stress rather than by directly buffering distress once it has already arisen (Acoba, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Young women cadres of Nasyiatul 'Aisyiyah commonly experience role conflict, most acutely between organizational service and paid employment, with consequences for time management, guilt, and emotional fatigue. At the same time, the Islamic relational value of ta'awun is enacted concretely through task substitution, emotional support, and organizational flexibility, and functions as a resource that sustains cadres' collective well-being and continued organizational commitment, although its consistency depends on the responsiveness of local organizational structures rather than being automatic. Using a qualitative descriptive approach allowed these patterns to be mapped across a fairly broad group of cadres while staying close to how they themselves described their experience, rather than filtering it through a heavier interpretative lens from the outset. These findings support a tentative model in which ta'awun-based coping mediates the relationship between role conflict and collective well-being, contingent on organizational responsiveness. As the broader study progresses, this model will be refined and used to inform the design of a structured ta'awun education module intended to strengthen NA's capacity to support its young women cadres, and its logic may offer a template for other faith-based and civil-society organizations seeking to convert relational values into durable member well-being.

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