STUDENT RELIGIUSITY: LECTURERS' EXPERIENCE IN STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY VERSUS STATE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study aims to document the experiences of lecturers at State Islamic Universities (PTKIN) and State Public Universities (PTUN) regarding student religiosity. Ten lecturers from two PTKINs and nine lecturers from two PTUNs became informants for this qualitative research. In-depth interviews were conducted to collect data and analyze it narratively. The results showed that PTKIN lecturers saw that the religiosity of their students was not better than students at PTUN. It turned out that lecturers at PTUN had conducted studies on lecture material from the perspective of the Koran and encouraged their students to explore Islam through activities outside of lectures. Both lecturers at PTKIN and PTUN see that students' religiosity is formed before they go to college, and is influenced by family factors and religious extracurricular activities. The experience of lecturers at PTKIN and PTUN is that community expectations are very high for the religiosity of PTKIN students compared to PTUN students. The superior programs at PTUN need to be imitated by PTKIN such as repairing prayer facilities to increase student religiosity and activating forums for Islamic studies.

Keywords: Religiosity, students, lecturers, State Islamic University, State Public University.

Introduction

Epidemiological studies describe that religiosity has recently become a necessity and the increasing dependence of individuals on religion in dealing with life pressures (Pargement, 2000). McMahon and Biggs (2012) have indicated that high levels of

religiosity and spirituality are necessary for a calm life and resilience to problems. In the context of student life in tertiary institutions, research results show that students who have a high level of religiosity are correlated with their learning motivation (Solichin & Muhlis, 2020), they are able to maintain their health by avoiding eating foods that are prohibited in their religion (Pikó et al., 2012), and is a protective factor related to health (Edara et al., 2021), happiness and well-being (Pikó et al., 2012).

This indicates that religiosity can increase positive things in supporting the learning process and student behavior. Pargement et al (2000) assert that religiosity has five main functions, namely (1) meaning, implies the search for meaning from an event, (2) Control, seeks strength and control in an event, (3) comfort/spirituality, as a search comfort and closeness to God, (4) Intimacy, as a search for closeness to God, (5) life transformation, as a search for transformation in life. Thus, if person is faced with an event, religion can be a way to find meaning, control to monitor oneself, create a sense of comfort because there is a God who must be handed over.

In this regard, it cannot be denied that education is an effort to direct students to have religiosity and there are several types of educational institutions in Indonesia and religious backgrounds. Differences in the types of educational institutions are mainly in the curriculum applied where religious education institutions use a curriculum based on education and the religious field (Tamami, 2019) . The research results of Khan, (2014) reveal that even though religious education institutions tend to be oriented towards the religious curriculum, it does not mean that it causes differences in the religiosity of students. The quantity factor of delivering religious subject does not affect the quality of students' religion (Azizah, 2015) .

Therefore, preparing graduates who have high religiosity is one of the visions of the State Islamic Religious College (hereinafter abbreviated as PTKIN). The phenomenon is that PTKIN in Indonesia is currently based on the Muslim community with all its variants located in a sociological and pluralistic environment both in terms of ethnicity, language and religion. This position is very advantageous because Islamic tertiary institutions become "buffers for the region" which function as guardians of morality, stability and social harmony based on religious values (Amirah Diniaty et al, 2017). This leads to all courses in PTKIN as the center of attention, especially the religiosity of the students.

Research on the comparison of student religiosity based on the status of religious or non-religious scientific fields, has actually been undertaken starting in the form of theses that compare the religiosity of students between religious and non-religious faculties in one tertiary institution (Rahmawati, 2010), theses (Komariyah, 2018) and research reports of lecturer (Salahudin, 2016) who compared the religiosity of students between religious and non-religious universities. Interesting from the results of these studies, it turns out that there are variations where on the one hand, there is no difference in the religiosity of students at religious and non-religious tertiary institutions (Komariyah, 2018), but other studies have found students at PTKIN have a high level of religiosity compared to students studying at State Public Universities (PTUN) in the aspect of religious or intellectual knowledge from five aspects, namely aspects of belief, aspects of religious practice, aspects of experience, aspects of religious knowledge, and aspects of consequences (Silahudin, 2016). Another version, the research findings of Amirah Diniaty (2017) that graduates from the education faculties at PTUN are considered by stakeholders to be better in social, personality and professional competence than graduates from the Tarbiyah and Teacher Training faculties at PTKIN. The results of this study also show that there is a positive personality dimension of PTUN graduates compared to PTKIN, whose data has not been revealed much.

Dealing with the above, it reveals the assumption of Sheffler (1960, 75) who asserts that the true purpose of the study of religion is to teach "about" religion, not to teach students "to be religious" or "how to be religious". This statement needs to be proven, by looking at it from the perspective of the lecturer as an educator regarding the religiosity of their students. Researcher has not found research results related to this issue and this is the background of this research. The aim of this research was to document the experiences of PTKIN and State University lecturers in observing the religiosity of their students.

Research Method

The interpretive social constructivist perspective has been implemented in this study (Widodo, 2018) in which it emphasizes freedom from past stories to translate a story's meaning. Regarding to this reason, in conducting research, a narrative inquiry research design is used in which narrative or story plays an important role. Clandinin &

Huber (2010) emphasized that in this design researchers and participants are involved in exploring experiences and phenomena that are felt directly by participants, whose data can be in the form of memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, archival documents, track records. and medical records, organizational documentation, theories in science, ballads and works of art (Riessman, 2008). The focus of this research was on the emotional experiences of lecturers in both higher education settings in viewing the religion of their students. The lecturers who took part in this research shared their personal experiences with students. Participants who were interviewed did not feel pressured or respected. The experience narration gained will be used to discover the experience of lecturers seeing the religion of students at PTKIN and PTUN, as a meaningful practice (best practice) in the future.

This study was undertaken at two PTKIN and two PTUN in West Sumatra Province, for 1 month. Researcher as lecturer at PTKIN contacted fellow lecturers at PTKIN and PTUN who already have emotional closeness, thus providing easy access for researchers to obtain approval to become participants. The determination of lecturers who were participants was carried out by accident, namely lecturers who were willing and had the time to share their experiences in this research. The following is the participant demographic data (see Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic Data of Participant

PTKIN/PTUN	Initial	Sex	Age	Last Education
PTKIN	NN	P	49	Master of Health Science
	AR	L	45	Doctor of Communication Science and Da'wah
	IR	L	51	Doctor of Guidance and Counseling
	FS	P	29	Master of English Language
	HD	P	46	Master of Development Economy
	SL	P	50	Doctor of Guidance and Counseling
	EH	P	35	Master of Guidance and Counseling
	RR	P	33	Master of Informatics Engineering
	RT	P	45	Master of Agriculture Technology
	GT	P	49	Master of Education Science
PTUN	TA	P	45	Master of Management
	DEP	P	46	Master of Nursing Science
	IL	P	46	Master of Japanese Literature
	DS	P	44	Master of Anthropology
	PF	P	30	Master of Industrial Engineering
	RH	P	28	Master of Agriculture Technology
	YN	P	50	Master of Development Economy
	SY	L	39	Master of Informatics Engineering
	Kl	L	37	Master of Informatics Engineering

Researcher used an instrument in the form of a list of semi-structured questions used for in-depth interviews. The instrument helps researchers to find out the complete

information from the participants (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). The researcher explored the participants' answers to the problem that students at PTKIN were considered less religious than students at PTUN. The question is about; what is the current religiosity of students according to the lecturers, how is the religiosity of students in university, and what are the obstacles. Interview data were collected directly in the form of Focus Group Discussions in one room, and audio-visual recordings were recorded. Conversations were undertaken casually and relaxed between researchers and participants. Researchers guarantee their anonymity, through the use of pseudonyms, and sensitive information was merely included in the final narrative with their consent. The interview results were transcribed by adding information from gestures, expressions that were recorded visually.

Data analysis was carried out on the results of interviews that were transcribed. The researcher followed the more complete steps for analyzing interview data as suggested by Widodo (2014), namely listening to audio recordings of interview results, taking notes on important things needed, writing and codifying data, interpreting and validating FGD.

Results and Discussion

Research data has decribed lecturers' experiences regarding student religious coping were processed through codification and coherent story narratives. In order for the reader to get a holistic picture, the writer arranges using deductive language the messages conveyed by the participants in a structured way. The researcher made four subtitles in conveying his findings, namely: (1) students at PTUN are more religious than students at PTKIN (2) High societal expectations of the religiosity of PTKIN students compared to PTUN students (3) The leading program at PTUN to form the religiosity of students who are not PTKIN (4) PTKIN must improve itself to prepare graduates who are more religious.

Students at PTUN are more religious than students at PTKIN

Initially, all informants emphasized that student religiosity was the result of a long process that they went through in their families and in educational institutions from the lowest to university level. Factors that affect the level of student religiosity include Islamic boarding school background, parenting style, organizations and

extracurriculars that are attended, and access to social media. This was asserted by lecturer participants at PTKIN MS, FS, IR as follows:

> *I see students* **from Islamic boarding schools have higher religiosity than students from public schools.** *Especially if the parents also have a strong religious foundation. I feel that in daily interactions with students who are active in extracurricular activities* **and religious organizations, they are more religious than students who are not active.** *(MS, interview 2 June 2021).*

> *I ever met students who did not behave religiously outside campus, such as taking off their veil. When I asked them, they replied that actually studying at an Islamic university was not their main choice but because they had not graduated from a public public university.* **This is different from the previous condition when we were students, attending PTKIN was a spirit of deepening religion.** *(FS, interview 2 June 2021)*

> *I observed that most of the students use their time to access the internet instead of praying. I have done research on my students about what they access on the internet, and most of the answers are social media such as chatting and online games. Direct access to information about low religion in lectures. But on the other hand they get more knowledge about religion from social media too.* **I worry** *that they will get false information about religion on social media, and it is the lecturer's job to discuss it in lectures. (IR, interview 2 June 2021)*

Meanwhile, PTUN lecturers emphasized that the religiosity that formed in students is motivated by a spiritual need to explore general knowledge such as students in medical study programs that they get in lectures and that is already in the Koran. This factor is supported by lecturers who have a mission to explore religious values from the lecture material given, as expressed by the PTUN lecturer as follows:

> *In the study program of Health Sciences, fellow lecturers often find a connection between research results and the content of the Qur'an that* **fascinates us. There is a spiritual need to find natural wonders that have not been answered scientifically but in fact there is an explanation in the Qur'an.** *Like in*

*medicine, my friends and I examined the human nerves and studied why they work and who creates them. I discussed this with students, **they were amazed and enthusiastic about learning it. Therefore, in my opinion, students at PTUN, especially in the general scientific field in the health sector, are more religious in nature because they continue to explore the Koran and implement it in their daily lives** (DEP, Interview, 4 June 2021).*

*I see that the phenomenon of our students at PTUN is more religious, marked **by the way they dress, the majority of whom wear the syari veil**. Indeed, in my class, there are students who wear the niqab. **There are active recitation groups** in our faculty which, although they are not religious faculties, are carried out by the student community together with lecturers and I see that they often attend them, such as religious seminars and liqok (PF, Interview, 4 June 2021).*

The Expectationof Society on PTKIN Students Must Have Higher Religious Coping Than PTUN Students

Emotionally, all respondents acknowledged that society's expectations were very high for students at PTKIN because it was considered that pursuing an Islamic university meant that they were more religious than students at state universities. As revealed by SIL (PTKIN lecturer) and ILL (PTUN lecturer):

*"It's normal if **the society** considers that the religious coping of PTKIN students must be higher than that of PTUN students, because they know that there are differences in the curricula of the two universities. For me, this is actually a challenge for lecturers to educate students at PTKIN. (SIL, Interview, 4 June 2021).*

*In my view, **the society's perceptions and expectations of PTKIN students are very high in terms of** religiosity. As a result, if there are cases of non-religious PTKIN students, society will not tolerate them. It is different if it is done by students from PTUN. For example, society considers dating behavior among students at PTKIN wrong, and they are more permissive when PTUN students do it. (IIL, Interview, 4 June 2021).*

Dealing with these two statements it can be seen from the experiences of PTKIN and PTUN lecturers that the society expects a lot from universities to build student religiosity, especially at PTKIN.

The Leading Program for Training of Religious Coping Students at PTUN; It turned out that there was none at PTKIN

The interesting thing that was obtained from the interview was that PTUN lecturers felt happy if the leading islamic program was implemented on their campus. Even though it does not have a specific vision and mission to produce religious graduates, PTUN actually implements programs for students to increase religiosity, as conveyed by lecturer informants at PTUN SY and DES as follows:

> *We are **happy** that the Fajr Mubaroh program is being carried out online during the pandemic which is held every Friday. Faculty and university leaders instructed the entire academic community to take part in the activity. Apart from that, there is a circular letter from the Chancellor when the call to prayer is called, all activities are stopped. Students and lecturers are expected to pray in congregation and we **are happy to follow**. We also have a representative mosque for congregational prayers. (SY, Interview 5 June 2021)*

> *At our university, there is an Islamic studies forum which has special members for lecturers and is also available for students. **I am also actively involved in these activities, and am happy to be able to explore Islamic scholarship. I see a tendency for children who are active in Islamic forums to be high achievers who can be role models for their peers. This recitation forum becomes one community, for example students in a boarding house and then they study Islam together, tahajjud together**. (DES, Interview, June 5, 2021*

This is in contrast to the statement of lecturer participants from PTKIN who were disappointed with the limited infrastructure supporting religious activities. In addition, they see that special regulations for religious activities on campus still need to be regulated, and they feel they have not become a priority in campus management. This was expressed by the respondents as follows:

> *In a fact, I am **disappointed**, the mosque on our campus has not been completed. We pray together in the local area which functions as a prayer room. There must be funds for religious facilities for the academic community in Islamic universities in this country. This facility will be used by students to develop their religion, such as studying sermon or kotbah, becoming priests and studying Al-Qur'an. (FS, interview, 4 June 2021)*

> *At our PTKIN, there are no **specific rules that assess the implementation of religious subject in students' daily lives.** They learn about verses and hadiths, even though that is just knowledge that cannot be put into practice, nor can it be measured by practice. (RT, interview June 2, 2021).*

The results of this study have indicated that the experiences of PTKIN and PTUN lecturers found that the religiosity of students at PTKIN was not better than that of students at PTUN. Religiosity itself did not happen suddenly in university but has started from family and previous education. They believe that the background of a student's life before pursuing college is considered to have more influence on the formation of his religious attitude, compared to the number of meetings he attends in lectures. In this context, student religious coping is not only the responsibility of the lecturer, however, it must be seen as the result of the collaboration of many parties, including families, educators in formal and non-formal institutions that students have attended since entering school. including society and electronic media.

It cannot be denied, currently, the effect of internet media is always being used by the millennial generation, it could help in building their religious coping, and being recognized by research participants. In this case, it is necessary to realize that social media as a medium for increasing religiosity is very vulnerable to misinformation, disinformation, or hoaxes. Vosoughi, et. al (2018) confirmed that hoaxes can actually spread faster on social media. A study conducted by Andrew M. (2021) shows that religiosity in social media circles is often seen as irrational, irrelevant, or inappropriate, and can be detrimental to increasing religious literacy. Furthermore, lecturers need to pay attention to and remind students to use social media for online safety and morality issues, such as disclosing student data related to religious rituals, opportunities for hate speech, or cyberbullying (Ybarra, M., et al, 2007).

Further, the lecturers at the two universities also believed that student activities in organizations and extracurricular activities had an influence on religious coping. This is possible because of the findings from Diniaty's research (2014) that students prefer extracurricular leadership types (70%), and organizations that increase their motivation to broaden their horizons, knowledge and think more critically (44.67%), including religion. The choice of organizations in the religious field that equip them makes them more religious than students who do not actively participate in them.

The experience of PTKIN lecturers shows their disappointment when they find their students are less religious, such as taking off the hijab when outside the campus. They are also disappointed with the inconvenient worship facilities for developing religious programs on campus. This finding illustrates the high expectations, moral burden and concern of PTKIN lecturers for student religiosity. It is in line with lecturers at PTUN in a positive context experience the emotion of awe in exploring general knowledge with Islam. They found scientific explanations in the Qur'an that motivated the students and lecturers themselves to study the Qur'an and practice it in everyday life.

The big challenge for PTKIN is that it is important for students to have religious coping, especially as part of the vision of a State Islamic university, and to have an impact on lifestyle, attitude, experience, observation, personality, self. concepts, motives, perceptions, social class and culture of PKIN graduates later. (Nugraheni 2003:15). As emphasized by Pargement, (in Kesberger, 2002) that religion is believed to have an important role in managing problems, stress, directing, guiding, providing hope and emotional support to someone. Religious coping is needed as a form of treatment with a cognitive behavioral approach to manage stressful situations with consideration of one's spiritual and religious beliefs (Pargament, 1997), which are associated with divine elements (Wong & Wong, 2006). Its implementation by praying, worship causes the stress experienced by a person to be overcome because of hope and comfort (Rammohan, Rao & Subbakrishna, 2002)

Conclusion and Suggestion

The experience of lecturers in both types of institutions (PTKIN and PTUN) confirms that society expectations are higher for graduates of PTKIN to be religious than graduates of PTUN, so that the development of student religiosity in Islamic

tertiary institutions must pay more attention. Regarding to this reason, it is suggested that programs to increase religiosity, regulations and management of religious facilities such as mosques should be carried out better at PTKIN. Besides, it is suggested that PTKIN leaders pay more attention to efforts to implement religious values in the lives of the academic community. Such as providing rewards for academics who behave religiously on campus and conversely providing punishment for those who don't, so that the religious material studied at PTKIN is not only limited to theory but is implemented in everyday life.

The following research that must be developed is how the religiosity of PTKIN lecturers is compared to lecturers at PTUN. The effectiveness of the formulation of religious programs (especially outside lecture activities) in PTKIN needs to be further investigated, such as the Islamic study community to integrate knowledge with daily behavior. Other studies can examine more specifically the emotional experiences of PTKIN lecturers in integrating their lecture material with religious content in order to improve students' religious coping, with a larger number of respondents and a wider scope.

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