Five Motivations to Take Islamic Studies in Higher Education

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Abstract

Islamic studies in universities are places for self-development in Islamic way towards Islamic morality. However, not all students are interested in participating this activity if it is not driven by strong desire and personal motivation. This study aims to analyze what motivates students to participate in Islamic studies in university. Therefore, this research is conducted by qualitative method with a case study approach. The data were collected from fifteen informants through in-depth interviews which selected by using purposive sampling technique, all informants are students who are members of Islamic studies in universities. Afterwards, the interview's result be analyzed thematically. Overall, the results of the analysis show that there are five student's major motivations to take part in Islamic studies in university. The five motivations are; i) self-desire, ii) desire to deepen Islamic knowledge, iii) expanding relations, iv) desire to always be around religious people, and v) to hone organizational skill. This study result can be used as initial data for future researchers in addressing this issue in different context and issues.

INTRODUCTION

Talking about motivation is a very significant aspect because the existence of motivation can have an impact on an individual's effectiveness in improving the quality of their work (Sugioko et al., 2016). Several previous studies, such as those conducted by Andjarwati, (2015); Cahyorinartri, (2019); Mann et al., (2013); Steg et al., (2014), concluded that motivation refers to a state within a person that encourages him to take action to achieve a certain goal.

Experts also express their views regarding motivation, where motivation is explained as the drive that drives someone to carry out an action because the good or bad quality of the action can depend on the motivation that drives it (Reiman & Pietikäinen, 2012). The concept of motivation also discusses how to stimulate a person's work enthusiasm, by providing optimal support for their abilities and skills to achieve goals (Cook & Artino, 2016). Berelson and Steiner, as mentioned by Oktiani, (2017), define motivation as a conscious effort to influence someone's

behavior in order to achieve organizational goals.

Believes that motivation is an energy that comes from a person to generate,direct and give the individual the strength to remain in that direction in achieving a goal (Setiawan, 2016). Motivation can also foster passion, happiness and enthusiasmabout doing something. Someone who has strong motivation will have the energy to carry out their activities well, motivation will also determine the intensity of a person's effort in doing something (Handhika, 2012). Based on the opinions of the experts above, in general, motivation is a condition that makes a person motivated, enthusiastic, and enthusiastic in carrying out their activities so as to create an optimal situation for achieving the goals they want to achieve.

The task of students is of course not only to study in class and be good academically but also to have sufficient soft skills to be able to enter the world of work well (Robles, 2012). In improving soft skills through various scientific, academic, and religious activities, as well as in terms of channeling hobbies all these activities are accommodated in student organizations at the university. Soft skills are not only obtained through lectures, on the contrary, they can be obtained outside of lecture hours, namely by organizing. There are various kinds of organizations in higher education depending on the goals and focus of the founding of the organization. Such as intra-campus organizations, extra-campus organizations, campus activity units, and campus communities (Ramdani et al., 2018).

One of the student activities on campus is Islamic studies which is usually called the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus. Organization that was formed legally and formally on campus which aims to accommodate students learning Islamic values as well as organizing (Arifianto, 2019). Based on the issues presented by the author in this research, Islamic studies in higher education are a forum for students for self-development, a means of learning about Islam and also a place for students to gather to carry out the mission of da'wah in higher education.

Regarding the motivation of students to take part in Islamic studies in higher education, as is the issue raised in this research, it needs to be explained that each campus has its own campus da'wah institution whose name is different on each campus. For example, Padang State University has a campus missionary institution, namely the Spiritual Activity Unit or what is abbreviated as UKK.

As the author explained previously in the introduction, in doing something someone needs motivation so that someone can carry out their activities well and optimally because this motivation is like energy which can encourage someone to be more synergistic in carrying out their activities so that the goals they want to achieve are achieved (Rotman et al., 2012).

Motivation has a very important role for someone in carrying out an action. No one does anything without motivation, no motivation means no action, for this reason, in order for the role of motivation to run optimally, the principles of motivation not only need to be known but also must be applied in everyday life. Someone who is motivated will show good behavior, for example, respect for other people (Anggraeni, 2020).

Motivation is very important because it influences the results, someone who does not have motivation will not be able to carry out their activities well and someone's encouragement to do something goes hand in hand with strong motivation (Efendi et al., 2019; Muswara & Zalnur, 2019). Motivation is also considered a continuum that underlies a person's behavior to obtain a given reason or goal for carrying out an action (Cahyorinartri, 2019).

METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods with a case study type, according to Taylor, (2013); Murniyetti et al., (2016), case study is a type of research if the

researcher wants to observe in depth phenomena or events both individually and in groups of society. The data source was taken from fifteen informants from several universities, such as Universitas Negeri Padang, Universitas Islam Riau, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, and Universitas Riau. All informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique. According to Nurwahidin et al., (2019); Rahman et al., (2018); Rishan et al., (2018); Waldi et al., (2018); Syafril & Yaumas, (2017), the selection of informants must meet four criteria, namely still active in the field being researched, having competence related to the problem being researched, willing to take the time to provide information to researchers, and honestly providing information according to the facts that occur in the area field.

After the interviews were completed with all informants, the process of transcribing the interview data was carried out and themes were then extracted according to the aims and needs of the research data. According to Castleberry & Nolen, (2018); Clarke & Braun, (2018); Herzog et al., (2019); Neuendorf, (2019); Renz et al., (2018), thematic analysis is one of the analytical techniques that researchers can use in analyzing interview results so that they can be seen clearly and are easy for readers to understand.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews conducted with fifteen informants, the results of the analysis clearly found that there were five important themes related to the true motivation of students to join campus missionary organizations. These five themes can be seen in Figure 1, below.
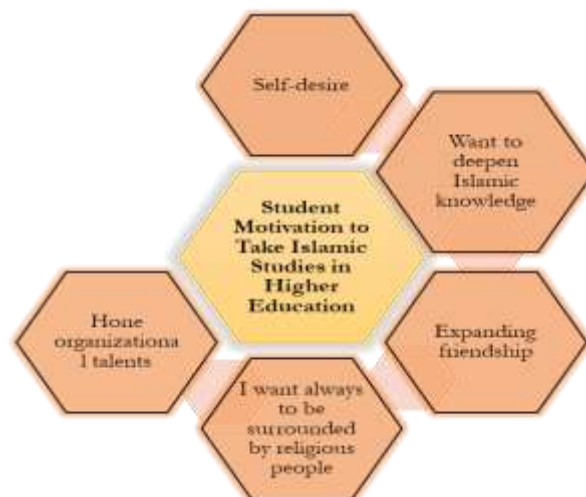

Fig 1. Student Motivation to Take Islamic Studies in Higher Education

Based on Figure 1, the author can explain that after holding in-depth interviews with informants, there are five motivations for students to take part in Islamic studies in higher education, five themes are i) Self-desire, ii) Wanting to deepen Islamic knowledge, iii) Expanding friendship, iv) Want always to be surrounded by religious people and v) Sharpen organizational talents. To make it clearer, below the author will describe quotes from interviews with informants based on the five themes as explained above. The description of the interview that the author will display is a quote from a short statement from the informant when the interview was conducted. Even though the interview quotations were conveyed by informants in slightly different languages, they actually have more or less the same aim and meaning.

First namely self-desires, according to informants one of their motivations for taking Islamic studies in higher education is because it comes from their own will

and the urge to take part in Islamic studies in higher education. This theme was conveyed by informants as excerpts from the below:

... Want to be even better (I-1), ... Want to deepen your Islamic knowledge, improve yourself, learn how to preach (I-3).

Second want to deepen Islamic knowledge, according to informants the desire to deepen Islamic teachings is one of their motivations for taking Islamic studies at higher education. This theme was conveyed by informants as excerpts from the below:

... Want to learn about Islam, cultivate Islamic values in yourself (I-2), ...Want to achieve the blessing of Allah SWT, by understanding the importance of Islam in life (I-4), ... Become a Memorizer of Al Quran by studying and studying (I-6).

Third expanding friendship, in the campus world students are also required to expand their communication network with fellow students and based on the results of interviews with informants they said that there is a desire to join with friends who have the same desires, namely in a good atmosphere. This theme was conveyed by informants as excerpts from the below:

... Want to find friends who invite you to goodness (I-5), Increase Relationships & Networking, etc (I-7), Want to increase relationships with people who can bring goodness (I-8), Have friends who have the same frequency/same vision, want to be coached (I-9).

Fourth namely wants always to be surrounded by religious people. The environment really influences a person's personality, if the environment is good then you can be sure that he will be good too. Having this foundation creates a desire for students to take part in Islamic studies. This theme was conveyed by informants as excerpts from the below:

... Want to have an organizational environment that reminds of goodness (I-10), ... I just want to enter an organization that is the same as a university, and that organization can be a means of improving myself (I-11), ... Want to be in an environment that can have a positive influence, maintain social relationships, learn to organize, socialize, etc (I-12), Want to deepen your knowledge, improve yourself, share with others and learn to organize (I-14)

Fifth namely honing organizational talent. Talent is an ability that already exists in a person, for example, talent in Islamic matters such as giving lectures, recitations and so on. Having this foundation is one of the motivations for students to take part in Islamic studies at university. Hard work. This theme was conveyed by informants as excerpts from the below :

... Want to deepen Islamic religious knowledge, and improve and spread Islamic values to students (I-13), ... Want to channel your talents/self-actualization (I-15).

Research and issues related to motivational aspects have been widely discussed both in the world of education and the world of work. However, previous studies only focused on the results of this motivation for students. For example, student motivation and success Muswara & Zalnur, (2019), and achievement motivation for students studying in the major chosen by their parents (De Castella & Byrne, 2015).

As the author explained previously, motivation plays an important role in every person's achievement in doing something. Because having strong motivation or encouragement will further increase the optimization of the work. Regarding students' motivation to take part in Islamic studies in higher education, the results of this research clearly found five important themes that underlie students' participation in Islamic studies in higher education. namely as follows.

First One's own desires, one of the factors that motivate students to take Islamic studies in higher education is their own personality factor. According to several previous studies such as Cahyorinartri, (2019); Komsi et al., (2018); Sugioko et al., (2016), concluded that motivation is an aspect of personality that greatly influences a person's performance in doing something, especially if the motivation

comes from oneself so that they get maximum results from the work they have done and one of the motivations for students to join an organization is because they have an interest and felt that this activity was beneficial for him.

Second Wanting to deepen their Islamic knowledge is one of the students' motivations to take part in Islamic studies at universities because they want to learn about Islam through activities carried out by Islamic studies institutions at universities (Benn et al., 2011). Islamic study institutions in universities often organize various activities, such as seminars, discussions and workshops, which can provide an in-depth understanding of certain aspects of Islam. Students who participate are expected to experience direct benefits from these activities. Through Islamic studies, students can be introduced to various perspectives and interpretations of Islam. This helps them understand the diversity of views within the Muslim community, enriches their intellectual experience, and gives them the skills of critical analysis of diverse opinions.

For students who have the ambition to be involved in religious leadership or da'wah, Islamic studies in higher education can provide the basic knowledge and skills needed to lead and provide teaching about Islam. By participating in Islamic studies in higher education, students can gain intellectual, spiritual and social benefits that can shape their understanding of Islam and help them become more competent individuals and committed to the values of their religion.

Third Expanding relationships, by joining an organization you can expand your network and gain lots of friends, one of the goals of which is to make it easier for students to carry out post-campus activities later (Hidayat, 2017). Within the organization, you will get to know many new people, fellow students from the same year, seniors, and students from other majors who might be able to help us in the campus and post-campus world later (Townsend & Wilson, 2008; Putri et al., 2018). The first reason it is important to join an organization is to meet lots of inspiring people and build relationships (Hidayat, 2017). These relationships will be very useful because they could be the ones who will help you with your difficulties in the future. By meeting many people from various different backgrounds, one can learn each person's character and get used to behaving in accordance with what is required in society. A person will learn to be selfless and able to respect others (Bereczkei et al., 2010). Both friends in the organization and work partners from outside organizations play an important role in building relationships in the future. Who knows, in the future, they all have an important role in making someone successful.

Campus organizations usually consist of people from different faculties and departments and you may not necessarily know them if you only study in class. The many activities carried out together in the organization will of course make you close to those from different faculties and departments. Having lots of friends and relations is of course a very exciting and enjoyable thing. Apart from that, having lots of relationships is of course very beneficial for someone, they could be people who will support us when we have difficulties after graduating from campus.

Fourth wants to always be surrounded by religious people, the example of a Muslim and another Muslim is like one body, so in the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus each other is brothers, family and also like one body that supports each other (Amriah & Widodo, 2015; Widiati, 2018). Learning to improve ourselves together and learning many things together will make each other like family and comrades in arms in the hope of achieving Allah's blessing (Warburton, 2009; Cantika et al., 2018).

In an organization, each member will interact with each other and from here everyone who joins an organization or community will learn to adapt to the environment and people (zahara, 2018). However, in the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus there is a plus point that will be studied more than in organizations in general, namely

the manners of interacting in an Islamic manner, Islam regulates many things, from the manners of waking up to going back to sleep and also regulates the manners of interacting (Minkel et al., 2012). Apart from that, by joining the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus you will get a positive atmosphere to work with the intention of serving Allah alone so that your work is purely for other purposes. Socializing can also add friends or relations. More than just friends, at the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus you can find pious and pious friends.

Fifth hone organizational talents. One of the functions of student organizations is as a means of supporting education and a means of developing personal abilities (Ardiana & Putra, 2019; Kosasih, 2017). The existence of student organizations in non-curricular activities is able to develop students as academic people who have skills in academic fields who have skills in academic and non-academic fields (Lee & Matusovich, 2016). Student organizations have a very important role in developing students so they are ready to enter society (Kosasih, 2017). Soft skills can simply be interpreted as reasoning and mental abilities that must be learned to survive on campus, especially post-campus life (Firdaus, 2017). The Lembaga Dakwah Kampus is also an organization, where someone can practice the organizational knowledge that has been learned here. The Lembaga Dakwah Kampus also has a membership and committee structure. Organizing large and interesting events and routine work that will demonstrate the existence of the Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (Maghfuri, 2019; Riyadhi et al., 2018).

CONCLUSION

This research has succeeded in uncovering five student motivations for participating in Islamic studies in higher education. The five motivations are self-desire, wanting to deepen Islamic knowledge, broadening friendships, wanting always to be surrounded by religious people and honing organizational talents. At least this research can be used as a basis and reference for future researchers to research this problem in different contexts and issues.

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