

Are Indonesian Muslim Students More Engaged to Religious Organization than Public Organization?

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Abstract

Since 9/11, Muslim students are easily grouped and engaged each other to share knowledge, resources, and soft skill, as a response to reject negative stereotypes from their surroundings. This study aims to analyze the engagement of Muslim students to their organizations based on personality and intrinsic motivation. A comparative study using consecutive sampling between two groups of student organizations; public organization (PO) and religious organization (RO). Personality traits were measured using a big five personality construct with 12-items Newcastle Personality Assessor (NPA-12). The engagement was measured with the 12-items engagement questionnaire (ENG-12). Both questionnaires were validated and reliability tested in Bahasa Indonesia. Intrinsic motivation about the organization was elaborated through essays in three questions; expectations, facts, and future plans. The confidence interval was 95%. Questionnaires are feasible to be used in this study. The number of engaged students between the two groups was significantly different, PO members are more engaged than RO. Engagement in both organizations is affected by conscientiousness. After intrinsic motivation was added in the regression model, it has a mediation effect on engagement; neuroticism is affecting engagement negatively, while intrinsic motivation is affecting positively. Muslim students are more engaged in public organizations.

Keywords

Muslim Student, Engagement, Personality, Organization.

1 INTRODUCTION

The rising of middle class Muslim has become a major issue in this country. This growth is marked by increasing Muslim attention for their religion, and increasing awareness of Islamic education. Many Muslims are united and assembled to join the religious organizations. This spirit is transmitted to Muslim students attending public schools. Although they are in a public school, their passion for carrying Islamic values will not fade. They not only want to excel in common values, but also their Islamic values (Azra and Jamhari, 2006).

Student organization was labeled as “other education” played a big role to facilitate students to learn soft skills they did not learn from university curriculums. Research showed that the more students engaged to their organizations,

the more they learned the soft skills; leadership, teamwork, and entrepreneurship. Disengagement to their organizations was suspected as the main cause of declining of those skills (Montelongo, 2002).

One of the main factors in student involvement with their organizations is personality. Personality affects their intrinsic motivation in pursuit of their personal goals associated with ideals (Reeve, 2012; Judge *et al.*, 2013). For Muslim students, joining an organization not only fulfills their needs for ideals, but also shares those ideals with others. To facilitate the sharing of these ideals, naturally they will look for "people who have the same ideals". They tend to join together in the same religious organizations.

This study attempts to analyze whether engagement of Muslim student is higher to religious organization than public organizations, and whether their engagement is determined by personality and intrinsic motivation.

1.1. Student Engagement in Organization

Since 1990, student engagement has become a particular concern in learning management. Engagement is more than a motivation, in which a student involves all his or her effort to learn, understand, and master the knowledge and skills (Newmann, 1992). Studies have shown that student engagement in both in academic and non-academic learning has direct impact to good achievement, and plays a role in creating a better nation generation through education (Trowler, 2010; Ahmad, 2015).

Engagement can improve the quality of both goods and services as products of an organization, lower production costs, and avoid the organization members from the complaints both physically and psychologically due to burn out and mental fatigue (Vale, 2011).

To explain engagement, the concept of involvement and satisfaction in work were combined. If a person feels uninvolved or dissatisfied with the situation in the organization, he becomes more reluctant to engage in organizational activities (Schaufeli, 2013).

The concept of engagement can be used to explain why a Muslim becomes easy to live in groups. In a world that increasingly corners Islam today, it makes a Muslim feel uncomfortable with his surroundings, then choosing a safe environment that is able to accept them, such as religious organizations (Zine, 2001).

1.2. Student Organization

Student organization is an extension of faculty in continuing education for its students (Coffman-Wolph and Gray, 2016). Many courses are not taught in the classroom, but can be obtained through organizational activities. In addition to being a forum for self-development ("soft skills"), student organizations also place transfer of knowledge especially for "hard skills". Alumni and technology practitioners can be invited to speak, share experiences, and conduct a short course through activities in student organizations.

For a Muslim, student organization is not only a place to develop his skills and knowledge, but also as "identity protection" (Nasir and Al-Amin, 2006). The events of 9/11 and the Iraq War have turned the world's attention to the Muslim community. Muslims may feel the psychological pressure from the negative stereotypes that have developed since then. In an attempt to reject the negative stereotype, many Muslims are driven to study their religion more deeply, and engage with "people with the same frequency" as the safest way to study their religion.

1.3. Big Five Personality Traits

Big five personality theory believes that individuals cannot simply be grouped in the categorization of personality. Personality is something complex, which can be observed through behavior, temperament, mental and emotional. Big five personality theory states that five dimensions of personality are combined in one person; openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Different person has different level of each dimension that make him unique (Mairesse *et al.*, 2007).

This big five concept has been cross-culturally tested with excellent consistency, and is a modern description of the known personality concept. The dimensions mentioned in this theory seem more humanist, being able to describe the happiness, spirituality, and even the potential illness of an individual. This concept is also widely used in employee selection, measuring the potential of learning performance, including organizational skills and teamwork (Egan, 2009).

Studies among Muslim community have bring new insight about personality and religion, which agreeableness and conscientiousness are associated with religiousness (Aghababaei, 2013) and gratitude (Aghababaei and Tabik, 2013), while extraversion and neuroticism are the strongest predictors of life satisfaction (Joshanloo and Afshari, 2011).

1.4. Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is a spontaneous and curiosity-driven behavior even there is no external reward, reinforcement, or punishment. It reflects passion, interest, and confidence, followed by experience of freedom and autonomy to meet their psychological needs. It is more than just desire, is self-determination primarily for improving self-capacity and expressing creativity (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

External reward that satisfies the psychological needs were able to facilitate intrinsic motivation otherwise will diminish it. External reward could be interpreted by its recipients as controller of their behavior (autonomy) or as appreciation of their work (competence) (Olafsen *et al.*, 2015).

Extrinsic motivation is activity driven by external reward such as appreciation or payment, while intrinsic motivation is triggered by the pleasure of the activity itself. This behavior is not always preceded by external reward, such as reward from God for a Muslim, but through internalization and integration, this external reward may become part of the self-determination (Deci, Ryan and Koestner, 1999; Ryan and Deci, 2000, 2014).

Similar to self-determination, (Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen 2003) have formulated core self-evaluation that related to life satisfaction even religiosity. It is viewing God as loving instead of punitive, and negatively correlated with extrinsic religious motivation (Smither and Walker, 2015). Extrinsic religious motivation is religious behavior motivated by others socially and personally (Watson, Chen and Ghorbani, 2014), while intrinsic religious motivation is otherwise (Khan *et al.*, 2015).

2 METHODS

It was two groups of university student organization comparative study using consecutive sampling. First group consisted of members of Student Executive Board as public organization (PO). Second one was members of Islamic Student Board as religious organization (RO). Subjects were gathered in monthly meeting, and asked if they were agreed to complete the survey. Personality traits were measured with Newcastle Personality Assessor (NPA-12). The engagement questionnaire was drawn from several theories, such as Utrecht Engagement, Gallup Engagement, and Maslach's Burn Out, so that 12 key questions were generated (ENG-12) (Chen *et al.*, 2014; Roelen *et al.*, 2015). These theories were combined into 12 key questions to describe the degree of student involvement based on Maslow's theory in the world of organization. This instrument consists of 12 items of statements with 5 points Likert-scale (1—strongly disagree, 2—somewhat disagree, 3—neutral, 4—somewhat agree, and 5—strongly agree). Based on Maslow theories that applied to organizational behavior, one's engagement is depicted in the four stages of engagement. To analyze using 2x2 tables, scores have been adapted in two categorizations based on median of the score (stages 1-2 were considered as low engagement and 3-4 as high engagement).

Personality traits were measured with big five personality construct (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) using 12-items Newcastle Personality Assessor (NPA-12), with 5-points Likert scale (1—strongly disagree, 2—somewhat disagree, 3—neutral, 4—somewhat agree, and 5—strongly agree). Original NPA has four category; low, mid-low, mid-high, and high (Nettle, 2007). In attempt to analyze using 2x2 tables, scores have been adapted in two categorizations based on median of the score. Both questionnaires (ENG-12 and NPA-12) were validated and reliability tested into Bahasa.

The third questionnaire was an essay to elaborate motivation. Participants were asked to explain: (1) their expectation joining this organization; (2) facts were not in accordance with the expectation, and; (3) plans they made to improve the condition. The most topics or keywords were categorized as intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation was indicated by pleasure to share and serve others, and extrinsic motivation was indicated by pleasure to get something from others.

The hypotheses are; personality traits are able to predict student engagement, and intrinsic motivation is the mediation effect to enhance that engagement. Confidence interval was 95%.

3 RESULTS

All Muslim members are included, and response rate are more than 70% (79 Muslim of 92 members in PO, and 47 members of 52 in RO). There are 12 non-Muslim members in PO.

As seen in Table 1, this study examined 79 members of PO, where numbers of females were twice than males aged 17-22 years old and 47 members of RO, where males almost as many as females aged 18-21. The majority of the members of both organizations are Javanese. All students' religion is Islam since they were born, and none of them attended in *madrasah* (Islamic high school).

Table 1: Demographic data.

		PO	RO
Sex	Male	25 (31,65%)	22 (46,81%)
	Female	54 (68,35%)	25 (53,19%)
	Total	79 (100%)	47 (100%)
Age	Mean ± SD	19,19 ± 0,11	18,57 ± 0,12
Ethnic	Jawa	70 (88,61%)	39 (82,98%)

	<i>Madura</i>	8 (10,13%)	6 (12,77%)
	Others	1 (1,27%)	2 (4,26%)
Previous High School	Public	79 (100%)	47 (100%)
	<i>Madrasah</i> (Islamic)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

PO (public organization), RO (religious organization).

3.1. Validity and Reliability

Both questionnaires (ENG-12 and NPA-12) were tested on different subjects to ensure that these questions are culture-free and can be generalized to wider population.

Table 2: Validity result of ENG-12 and NPA-12*

ENG-12 questionnaire			NPA-12 questionnaire		
Item	<i>r</i>	Result	Item	<i>r</i>	Result
E1	0,471	Valid	N1	0,325	Valid
E2	0,492	Valid	N2	0,420	Valid
E3	0,500	Valid	N3	0,417	Valid
E4	0,572	Valid	N4	0,359	Valid
E5	0,604	Valid	N5	0,452	Valid
E6	0,587	Valid	N6	0,512	Valid
E7	0,683	Valid	N7	0,314	Valid
E8	0,431	Valid	N8	0,479	Valid
E9	0,431	Valid	N9	0,119	Valid
E10	0,599	Valid	N10	0,408	Valid
E11	0,515	Valid	N11	0,339	Valid
E12	0,587	Valid	N12	0,478	Valid

* All statistics are valid in $p < 0,01$.

ENG-12 was tested on 212 participants including high school and university students and employees of multinational company aged 17-47 years old. As shown in table 1, all ENG-12 items are valid ($r=0,431-0,683$; $p < 0,01$) with reliability test result is high (α Cronbach=0,776).

Personality NPA-12 was tested on 522 participants from different profession (public and vocational high school, diploma, and university student), from different cities in East Java province (Gresik, Surabaya, Malang, Sidoarjo), aged 17-37 years old gathered in a mental health seminar then asked to complete NPA-12 as self-assessment about their personality. All items of NPA-12 are valid ($r=0,119-0,512$; $p < 0,01$) with reliability α Cronbach is 0,427. Result shows that ENG-12 and NPA-12 are feasible to use in this study.

3.2. Engagement and Personality

Data is not distributed normally (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test's $p < 0,05$) so this study is using median as cut off for all questionnaire. From the mean and median value, table 3 shows that student in public organization are more engaged than student in religious organization. Two groups are significantly different (Mann Whitney's $p < 0,11$) although the number of high-engaged members are not quite different ($n_{PO}=51,90\%$ and $n_{RO}=51,06\%$).

Table 3: Student engagement score and personality traits

	Public Organization					
	SES	Op	Co	Ex	Ag	Ne
Mean	48,39	9,70	7,97	7,32	12,46	5,87
SD	6,39	2,03	1,59	1,38	1,68	2,03
Median	49	10	8	7	13	6
<i>r</i>	1,00	0,12	0,30**	0,28*	0,17	0,10
	Religious Organization					
	SES	Op	Co	Ex	Ag	Ne
Mean	46,19	8,96	8,89	6,47	12,95	6,30
SD	4,84	1,86	1,31	1,54	1,71	2,22
Median	47	9	9	7	13	7
<i>r</i>	1,00	0,21	0,62**	0,16	0,36*	-0,03

*significant in $p < 0,05$. **significant in $p < 0,01$.

r (coefficient of Spearman correlation between SES and personality traits; Op, Co, Ex, Ag, Ne). SES (student engagement score), Op (openness to experience score), Co (conscientiousness score), Ex (extraversion score), Ag

(agreeableness score), Ne (neuroticism score).

Conscientiousness is significantly correlated to student engagement score in both groups, but correlation coefficient is higher in religious group, which is mean stronger correlation. Extraversion is only significant in public organization and agreeableness is only significant in religious organization, both of them in weak correlation.

Along with correlation in table 3, table 4 shows that conscientiousness is significantly affecting student engagement score in both groups, while extraversion is only affecting engagement in public organization. This result answers first hypothesis that personality traits especially conscientiousness and extraversion are able to predict student engagement towards their organizations.

Table 4: Regression model^b

	Adjusted R^2	Coefficients B					
		(Cons)	Op	Co	Ex	Ag	Ne
PO	0,165** ^a	26,19**	0,28	1,34**	1,34*	0,15	-0,48
RO	0,295** ^a	18,53*	0,10	1,59**	0,59	0,74	-0,12

*significant in $p < 0,05$. **significant in $p < 0,01$.

^a Predictors: (Cons), N, C, O, E, A.

^b Dependent variable: student engagement score.

PO (public organization), RO (religious organization), (Cons) (Constant). Op (openness to experience score), Co (conscientiousness score), Ex (extraversion score), Ag (agreeableness score), Ne (neuroticism score).

Based on the adjusted R^2 of regression model in table 4, the contribution of personality traits in predicting student engagement is different between public organization and religious organization, which is 16,5% in public organization and 29,5% in religious organization, the rest is another factors such as demography or intrinsic motivation.

3.3. Intrinsic Motivation

Examples of intrinsic motivation statements are “I want to contribute through my ability,” “This work is part of *da'wah* (sharing values of religion),” “I want to be a person who brings *rahmatan lil alamin* (blessing others and the world).” Examples of extrinsic motivation statements are “I am willing to seek any networking experience,” “This is good for my portfolio,” and “To pursue scholarship.”

Number of respondents who stated intrinsic motivation are 48,10% in public organization and 59,57% in religious organization. Student motivation between both organization are not significantly different ($p > 0,05$). This means that they share similar Muslim characteristic through motivation even in different organization.

Table 5: Chi square correlation with motivation as dependent variable

	SES	Op	Co	Ex	Ag	Ne
PO	0,32**	0,42**	0,40**	0,25*	0,50**	0,35**
RO	0,50**	0,37*	0,56**	0,06	0,51**	0,36*

*significant in $p < 0,05$. ** significant in $p < 0,01$.

PO (public organization), RO (religious organization).

Table 5 shows that intrinsic motivation is correlated with both student engagement score and personality traits, except extraversion in religious organization. This result answers the second hypothesis, that motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) is a mediator for engagement and personality.

Table 6 shows that Hosmer & Lemeshow test in logistic regression model for public group is 0,792 ($p > 0,05$), means that model has no difference with samples observed. Normalized residual for religious group is tested with Kolmogorov-Smirnov, results $p > 0,05$ means that model is also has no difference with samples observed even Hosmer & Lemeshow test result is not satisfying.

Table 6: Logistic regression when motivation is included in model together with personality traits^b

	Hosmer & Lemeshow p	Nagelkerke R^2	Omnibus p
PO	0,030 ^a	0,256	0,010
RO	0,792	0,466	0,003

^a Normalized residual $p > 0,05$.

^b Dependent variable: student engagement score.

PO (public organization). RO (religious organization).

After motivation is added into regression model, R^2 value is increasing more than R^2 in table 4. Omnibus test shows that independent variables (personality traits and intrinsic motivation) are affecting 25,6% in public group ($R^2=0,256$; $p=0,010$) and 46,6% in religious group ($R^2=0,466$; $p=0,003$).

When motivation is included in regression model, only neuroticism has significant affect together with motivation, while another personality traits are not. From B value in table 7, it is concluded that neuroticism has negative effect while intrinsic motivation has significantly positive effect toward student engagement score.

Table 7: B value for independent variable ^a

	Wald B	
	PO	RO
(Cons)	1,124	-0,579
Op	-1,039	-1,268
Co	-0,429	-0,319
Ex	-0,748	0,065
Ag	-0,701	1,043
Ne	-1,441*	-2,624*
Mot ^b	3,113**	3,957*

* significant in $p<0,05$. ** significant in $p<0,01$.

^a Dependent variable: student engagement score.

^b Intrinsic motivation is coded 1, extrinsic motivation is 0.

PO (public organization), RO (religious organization).

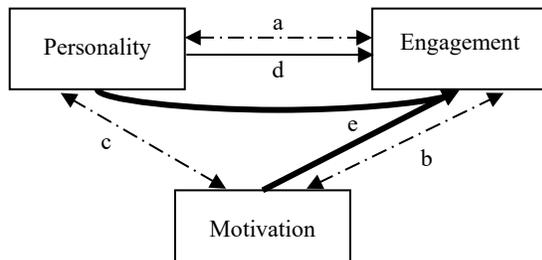


Figure 1: Research scheme and result of each statistic methods.

^a Personality is significantly correlated with engagement (table 3).

^b Motivation is significantly correlated with engagement (table 5).

^c Personality and motivation are significantly correlated (table 5).

^d Personality is able to predict engagement (table 4).

^e Personality and motivation together are able to predict engagement (table 7).

4 DISCUSSIONS

Engagement defined by willingness to do “extra-miles” by giving “more added value” in jobs. In big five personality construct, conscientiousness is needed to form an effective engagement to join any organization. This trait shows responsibility (Bakker, Demerouti and Ten Brummelhuis, 2012), highly organized, trustworthy (Bakker, Tims and Derks, 2012), and well-adaptable to solve the crisis (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002).

Conscientiousness also shows a selfishness and reduce team-member exchange to form an high performance team work (Liao *et al.*, 2013). This study shows that in more plural and competitive community such as public organization, extraversion is needed to enhance team-member exchange. In a homogenous and restricted group, such as religious organization, empathy (as being reflected from agreeableness) is needed to blend with each other.

Muslim minorities in Western countries feel a lot of pressure regarding their beliefs. Grouping and get along together is urgency (Nasir and Al-Amin, 2006). In Indonesia Islam as religion is the majority. This may become the

main reason, why students are more engaged to public organization compared with religious organization. Public organization provides more chance to get together with different people, resources, and experiences.

The effect of intrinsic motivation is becoming the main finding in this study. As it is added to regression model, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness are not taking effect to engagement anymore and replaced by neuroticism. Regression model shows that the higher value of neuroticism, the lower score of predicted student engagement, while intrinsic motivation is otherwise. Neuroticism is a trait that related to anxiety and emotional exhaustion (Azeem, 2013). This finding supports Western research about religion, which neuroticism is linked with perception about God as punitive instead of loving, while agreeableness is linked otherwise (Smither and Walker, 2015).

This study shows that people with intrinsic motivation tends to be easy to experience anxiety, similar with extrinsic motivation that related to anxiety and lack of self-independence. Previous study shows that Muslim may be vulnerable to anxiety in their attachment to God (Ghorbani *et al.*, 2016). A dogma in Muslim's belief, that sin and mistake will be forgiven and blessed with multiple rewards through act of service to other (Khan *et al.*, 2015), including activities in organization.

The need for attachment to significant figures, in this case God, is a simple description of intrinsic religious motivation. In various cultures, including in Indonesia always can be found temples of worship such as *candi*, as the evidence that humans are always looking for the "supreme existence". This "God-attachment" type seems anxious and not self-determined as Western researchers find among Christian. This anxious God-attachment is correlated negatively with avoidance behavior, means that the more Muslims anxious, the more they get closer or in other words, the more they "surrender" to God (Ghorbani *et al.*, 2016).

As long as the need of God-attachment has not been integrated as self-determination, this need will be perceived as demands of necessity that cause emotional exhaustion (Aghababaei and Tabik, 2013; Ghorbani *et al.*, 2016). God will be projected as external object and not integrated in self. Another dogma in Islam that religion is not sourced outside but inside (*fitriah*), believed that God is All-understanding of human needs, and all human need to do is "believe, surrender, and do the good deeds".

Because the interpretation, perception to experience, and commitment about God and religion sometimes influenced by culture (Watson, Chen and Ghorbani, 2014), further research of personality traits that linked to religious orientation and motivation among Indonesian people is needed.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Muslim students are more engaged to public organization. Personality traits alone can predict student engagement through conscientiousness, but intrinsic motivation has mediation effect together with neuroticism to student engagement.

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