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STUDIES ON FAITH, RELIGIOSITY AND SPIRITUALITY IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This paper presents several studies conducted on faith, religiosity, and spirituality (FRS) for the past couple of years. The objective of this paper is to present various of researches on FRS using different methods and including different ages, level of education, and religious backgrounds. The purpose of the paper is to provide variety of research problems, methods, subjects, as well as findings in the area of faith (e.g. faith development), religiosity (i.e. dimensions of religiosity, religious coping, religious conversion), and spirituality (i.e. spiritual development). Pertaining to research methods, the studies include methods of survey and case studies. The subjects participated in the studies are vary from students of Pesantren, university students involved in Campus Ministry, students leaders of different religious group, church members, and seminary students. Some results will be presented and discussed quantitatively as well as qualitatively. It is recommended to explore more intensive and extensive research from the findings presented in this paper.

Keywords: *faith, religiosity, spirituality*

Studies on faith, religiosity, and spirituality has been mushrooming for the couple of years in Indonesia. Starting with an international conference on spirituality in conjunction with national conference on positive psychology in 2010 at Maranatha Christian University, various researches on faith, religiosity and spirituality were conducted, presented and published. Ever since, this author has been promoting collaborative studies with students interested in conducting research on faith development, religious dimensions or religious coping, as well as spiritual development. Referring to journal articles on student development in higher education (Astin, 2004; Barnett, 2003; Love & Talbot, 1999; Smith, 2004; Stannard&Painter, 2004), several studies have found significant findings about faith development of adolescents and young adult, profiles of religious dimensions of students of an Islamic boarding school, a Catholic seminary, and a Christian Protestant university.

Beside conducting collaborative research, this author also discussing the issue of faith, religiosity, and spirituality integrating with psychology in the class of Integrative Psychology he has been teaching for several years. From the perspective of integrative psychology individual is viewed as a whole person – consist of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of personality. This perspective inspired by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century that called for a radical reform of higher education to incorporate deeper dimension of morality and spirituality (UNESCO, 1988). The American Council of Higher Education committee in 1949 also suggested that “the concept of education is broadened to include attention to the student’s well rounded development – physically, socially, emotionally, spiritually -- as well as intellectually” (NASPA, 1987 as cited in Barnett, 2003). The Council for the Advancement of Standard in Higher Education (CAS), the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC), and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program (CACREP) have all incorporated faith, religiosity and spirituality in their standards and competencies that they advocate for individuals working as educators in the counseling and student affairs fields.

In spite of some efforts in conducting several collaborative studies, there are some concerns with regard to different understanding about the three related terminologies: faith, religiosity, and spirituality.

Faith, religiosity and spirituality are three related concept which often used interchangeably. As Newman (2000) proposed in her paper, faith is understood as the universal concept of what a person belief about something or a Someone (a Supreme-Being); while, religiosity is the communal concept of beliefs, and spirituality is the subjective-personal of belief. Religiosity and spirituality from the perspective of Fowler’s Faith Development Theory, provides a universal perspective on spirituality; it does not require particular subscription to any religious affiliation. It applies to any religious backgrounds. The Fowler’s theory should be viewed the context of cognitive development – as a way of knowing and making meaning of the world they live in and the experiences they have (Love, 2002). The stages of development show how far an individual reach certain level of knowledge and belief with regard to something he or she has faith on. In a nut-shell, faith is the matter of KNOWING, religiosity is the matter of DOING, and spirituality is the matter BEING components of humang belief system.

Fowler (1981) understands faith as dynamic and generic human experience, which means it may or may not related to religion; faith is also understood as a multidimensional concept, which includes the activity of meaning making, in which one place a trust on one or more centers of values, such as money or wealth, career, family, sexuality, nation, environment, etc. In a sense, Fowler’s understanding of faith is actually refers to spirituality; faith development is the core of the theory of spiritual development (Fowler, 1981; Love, 2000, Parks, 2000)

Fowler (1981) stated that, just like the moral development theory developed by Lawrence Kohlberg and the cognitive development theory developed by Jean Piaget, faith is developed through recognizable and sequential stages. Fowler proposes a one pre-stage and six-stage faith development theory: *Pre-stage*:

Undifferentiated Faith; Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective Faith; Stage 2: Mythic-Literal Faith; Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith; Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith; Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith; Stage 6: Universalizing Faith.

Stage 0: Primal Faith. It is also known as the pre-stage, because various structures of the subsequent stages are not available for the same empirical verification as the remaining stages.

Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective Faith. This is an emotional and idiosyncratic faith involves powerful images and a fluidity of thought not bound by the logic of later cognitive structures (cf. Piaget 1970). "God" is viewed as a powerful creature of the imagination, not unlike Superman or Santa Claus. The acquisition of language marks the emergence of this first true stage which is characterized by the abundant imagination of the pre-school child.

Stage 2: Mythic-Literal Faith. Characterized by a new way of knowing and engaging the world as the result of maturity process, an individual has ability what Piaget (1970) called concrete operational thought. This new way of seeing and interacting with the world and others allows the child to infer intentions and to perceive continuity to actions; justice is now seen as concrete and reciprocal. There is a faith that the ultimate environment is inhabited by a cosmic judge ("God") who guarantees a kind of simple, reciprocal fairness.

Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith. The emergence of formal operational thought brings other possibilities for construing and relating to the ultimate environment. This stage is characterized by meaning-making and committing to values takes on a more interpersonal dimension not previously available. Self-identity and faith are closely tied to valued others, and thought deeply felt, is unexamined. "God" takes on the interpersonal qualities of a good friend.

Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith. This stage of faith is characterized by intentional reflection on one's faith and its influence on the self. This intense, critical reflection on one's faith (one's way of making meaning) requires that inconsistencies and paradoxes are vanquished, which may leave one estranged from previously valued faith groups. "God" is the embodiment of principles of truth, justice, love, etc.

Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith. This stage characterized by a desire to enlarge the bounds of social inclusiveness – a way to bring together the seeming paradoxes of faith may emerge. Although one does not naively or uncritically accept contradictions, "God" is seen to include mystery and paradox.

Stage 6: Universalizing Faith. Finally, Fowler posits a movement toward a style of "universalizing faith" that seeks inclusiveness while still maintaining firm and clear commitments to values of universal justice and love.

Religiosity refers to the definition provided by Glock & Stark (in Ancok dan Suroso, 1995 : 77) who suggested that there are five dimensions of religiosity: 1). Ideological dimension, 2). Ritualistic dimension, 3). Experiential dimension, 4). Intellectual dimension, and, 5). Consequential dimension. Ideological dimension refer to some expectations based on theological doctrine and teaching of particular religion hold by someone by which he believe. For instance, a Moslem believe in Allah, the angels, and the Prophet Muhamad or a Christian believe in God, the Holy Spirit and the salavation through Jesus Christ.

Ritualistic Dimension is the behavioral or action of belief individual shows as an expression of submission to the teaching of his religion. The degree of submission can be measured through ritualistic dimension. For example, how many times is a Moslem conducting *shalat*, fastbreak during Ramadhan, Qur'an reading, etc. Or, how many times does a Christian attending Sunday service, read the Bible, or giving tithe.

Experiential Dimension refers to religious experiences, feeling, perceptions, as well as sensations of someone which related to supernatural and subjective experiences. This includes feeling of closeness to God, feeling loved by God, feeling that his prayers are answered, feelings of peace and joy for having a God, feelings of obedience to God, and touched by God's Words, as well as feelings of gratitude to God.

Intellectual dimensions or religious knowledge refers to knowledge possessed by believers of a particular religion about the foundation of belief system, rites, holy scripture, and traditions. It includes the level of knowledge and understanding of a person regarding basic teachings of his religion. For instance, the knowledge about the content of Al Quran, the history of Islam, the knowledge about five pillars of Islam, et cetera.

Consequential dimension or religious effect refers to individual behavior motivated by the teaching of his religion or how one implements the teaching of religion in his daily life. For instance, behaviors such as helping others, fighting for justice, being honest, forgiving others, taking care of environment, staying away from stealing or gambling, complying to the Islamic laws in sexual behaviors, striving for successful life in accordance to the standards of religion.

Based on their assumptions on spirituality, Love and Talbot (1999 cited in Estanek, 2006) offer five propositions that form their definition: 1) Spiritual development involves an internal process of seeking personal authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness as an aspect of identity development; 2) Spiritual development involves the process of continually transcending one's current locus of centrality; 3) Spiritual development involves developing a greater connectedness to self and others through relationships and union with community; 4) Spiritual development involves deriving meaning, purpose, and direction in one's life; 5) Spiritual development involves an increasing openness to exploring a relationship with an intangible and pervasive power or essence that exists beyond human knowing (pp. 364-367).

Similar to Love and Talbot (1999), Tisdell (2003, in Estanek 2006) defined spirituality with seven-part definition: 1) Spirituality and religion are not the same, but for many people they are interrelated; 2) Spirituality is about an awareness and honoring of wholeness and the interconnectedness of all things through the mystery of what many interviewed referred to as the Life-force, God, higher power, higher self, cosmic energy, Buddha nature, or Great Spirit; 3) Spirituality is fundamentally about meaning-making.; 4) Spirituality is always present – though often unacknowledged – in the learning environment; 5) Spiritual development constitutes moving toward greater authenticity or to a more authentic self; 6) Spirituality is about how people construct knowledge through largely unconscious and symbolic processes, often made more concrete in art forms such as music, art, image, symbol, and ritual which are manifested culturally; 7) Spiritual experiences most often happen by surprise (pp. 28-29).

Estanek (2006) found that there are several general themes are common to

both Love and Talbot (1999) and Tisdell (2003) ; that spirituality is both deeply individual and communal, that there is some sort of power beyond human existence, and that humans develop in trying to make sense (meaning-making) of their existence in light of this power.

Discussion

Study 1

The first study is a quantitative research aims to describe stages of faith of forty-two students, with the age range between 18 to 23 years-old, who are also cell-group leaders. Using a survey techniques, the Faith Development Test (FDT) – constructed based on the Faith Development Theory, the study found that approximately two-third of the subjects has reached stage 6 of faith development. The measure is a 66-items forced-choice survey, consist of two statements which respondents must choose one that represents their situation. The validity of the measure is in range between .30 to .78; while the reliability using Alpha Cronbach criteria is .798. It means that the FDT can be used to measure the stage of faith development.

The findings lead to a conclusion that most cell-group leaders of the church have reached stage 6 of faith development, the highest level of faith or belief; although, they still show characteristics of previous stages of faith (stage 1, stage 2, stage 3, stage 4 and stage 5. Several suggestions are given for further researches as well as for practical purpose. Further research should consider other measuring tools other than forced-choice to explore possibility of correlation between each stage of faith and other variables. It is also suggested that the result of the study will be beneficial to the pastor and church leaders in developing the cell-group leaders. Besides main findings, the study also found some indication of relationship between age difference and stage of faith.

Study 2

The second study aims to examine the level of religiosity on students aged 16-18 years at Pesantren (an Islamic boarding school) in Tasikmalaya, West Java. The level of religiosity is measured in terms of its dimensions: ideological, ritualistic, knowledge, experiential, and consequential dimensions. A questionnaire, constructed based on Glock and Stark theory by Turmudhi (1991, in Anceck & Suroso, 1995)) is given to 30 participants selected purposively. The instrument consists of two parts; questionnaire I (70 items) measuring ideological, ritualistic, experiential, and consequential dimensions of religiosity, and questionnaire II (40 items) measuring knowledge dimension of religiosity. The validity of the measure is ranging from 0.334 to 0.759, while the reliability is between 0.577 to 0.862. It means the instrument is acceptable. Data analysis using Pearson Product Moment correlation test with SPSS 17.0 shows that 23.3% students have a relatively high level of religiosity. Most students (about 63.3 %) reached high level of religiosity in the consequential dimension, which indicate that the students apply the teaching of their religion. Other finding is that the level of religiosity related to the age, school environment, formal education and the length of staying at the boarding school. However, further research should consider examining the dimensions of religiosity of students from non-pesantren school. Since the level of religiosity of the students are relatively low, the

management of the boarding school should consider the using of a more interactive and creative ways of teaching religion in order to increase students interest and appreciation of the teachings of their religion.

Study 3

Another research on religious dimension intent to describe the profile of religiosity dimensions of the university students who are involving in the small groups of student fellowship or Persekutuan Mahasiswa Kristen (PMK) at a private university in Bandung, West Java. The participants of the study is 120 university students selected by using purposive sampling A modified instrument on religiosity, based on Glock and Stark theory, was given to the participants. The validity of the measure is ranging between .30 to .69; the reliability is .89 for questionnaire I that measure the ideological dimensions, the experiential dimensions, and the consequential dimensions consist of 39 items. Questionnaire II, that measure the ritualistic dimensions obtain validity which range between .32 to .60; with reliability .66. The Questionnaire III that measure the intellectual dimensions was validated by using content validity. The results reported show that the level of religiosity dimensions of the students who are involving in small groups of student fellowship are relatively low. The study found that 53.3 % of students has low level of religiosity in the ideological dimension, while 58.3 % has low level of religiosity in the religious practice, 51.7 has low level in experiential dimension, 50.8 % in religious knowledge, and 55 % low in consequential dimension. Suggestion for further research is to explore more in-depth to examine different variables influencing on the level of religiosity. Practical suggestions are given to the leaders of student fellowship to improve the level of religiosity of the students involving in the small group.

Study 4

This study was conducted to determine the picture of profile the dimensions of religiosity of students of Catholic seminary in in Bandung. The study attempt to describe the profile describes religious dimensions of 34 students of Catholic seminary from a particular Catholic Order. The instrument is a 125-items Likert Scale consist of two part of questionnaires modified from the instrument constructed by Turmudhi (1991 cited in Ancok & Suroso, 1995)) based on Glock and Stark theory. The results show that the profile dimensions of religiosity of the Catholic seminary students is that most student reach high level on the Ideological dimension, religious practices dimension, experiential dimension, consequential, and religious knowledge. The study also found indicative findings on relationship between religious dimensions and social support (from parents and communities); and between religious dimension and extroverted personality types. Practical suggestions given are to use the measure in selecting candidates of the seminary as well as in giving spiritual development of the students of Catholic seminary.

Study 5

The final study to present in this paper is a study on spiritual development of student leaders of religious organization in a private university in Bandung. This is a case study on four subjects that intent to explore deeper spirituality of each subject, to analysis the trends and the differences between the subjects, as well as the influence

of spirituality to academic performance. The researcher constructed a semi-structured interview based the Spiritual Development Theory of Love and Talbot (1999), that proposed five prepositions on spiritual development represent in 43 items of interview. Before delivering the instrument, a content analysis was conducted. The results of the study show that there are similarities and differences of spiritual development of the students' leaders. Differences in spiritual development due to the difference in religious experience. Other result is that the student involvement gives positive impact on their academic achievement. It is suggested that further researches on spiritual development of students considering larger scale of respondents. Practical suggestion is to integrate spiritual development in the learning process, since it gives positive influence to academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on experiences conducting and supervising undergraduate researches on faith, religiosity, and spirituality, this author come to some conclusion. Firstly, the five studies presented above are considered as new breakthrough in the research of psychology with faith, religiosity, and spirituality as variables. As a new venture in academic research, not too many faculty members familiar with the concept of faith, religiosity, and spirituality yet. However, although the measures used in the studies above need to be developed, the validity and reliability of the measure are moderate to high. Consequently it brings some challenging discussion regarding perspective in understanding the three concepts (faith, religiosity, and spirituality) as well as in developing research on these three constructs. Secondly, researches in faith, religiosity, and spirituality are as important as researches on other area of interest such as neuropsychology, psychosocial development, as well as biopsychosocial. Therefore, a biopsychosociospiritual approach in teaching and studying psychology is a need to have a more comprehensive on human behavior and personality. Lastly, psychology programs need to provide an Integrative Psychology class or subject in order to encourage students to explore more knowledge and understanding on the concept of faith, religiosity, and spirituality; and how to integrate them with psychological dimensions (biological, psychological, and social dimensions) of human being.

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