

Gratitude to God among Indonesia Moslem Students

Djudiyah, Suryana Sumantri, and Diana Harding

Abstract – Gratitude has been explored mainly in general context and there are not many research on gratitude based on religions such as Christian, Catholic, Islam, Hindu and Budha. This research was held to describe and analyze Islam-based gratitude among students. There were 53 Islamic students of Psychology Department recruited for this research. The analysis results showed that students' gratitude level is moderate to high and Islamic educational background played a role in gratitude.

Keywords: gratitude to God, moslem students

I. INTRODUCTION

SEVERAL previous researches on gratitude found that gratitude and forgiveness were considered as important factors for one to have strong resiliencies. The research carried out by [1] to 90 survivors of Mount Merapi eruption in Yogyakarta – Indonesia showed that gratitude was influential to post trauma growth. Gratitude was also a part of spirituality. The research held by [2] to some Indonesians' materialistic values and gratitude found that people with strong materialistic values had low level of gratitude. Another research held [3] found that the students who participated in the research, shared their experiences with their partners. And they were more satisfied with their life, happier and have stronger vitality.

Indonesians are mostly faithful believer in Islam. And this religion teach its followers lot of life ethics and these ethics are written in Islamic Holy Books, the Al Qur'an and As Sunnah. One of the Islamic teaching is about gratitude upon everything God has given to human beings. When people understand that they have been given lot of lucks and prosperity, people will be happy and show positive emotions in their life. Happiness or positive emotions are important to promote people's gratitude toward God, or toward human beings and the whole world as the luck deliver [4].

People with high level of religiousness and spirituality tend to positively perceive their life environment and this perception is not due to human actions but to God as the highest moral agent. On the other hand, people with low level

of religiousness and spirituality tend to less grateful in their responses toward challenges in daily life. Gratitude is the deepest feeling toward God. Most people are very religious because they are grateful for their life. People with high transcendental spirituality are also more grateful for their life compared to those with low transcendental spirituality level [5].

One's religiousness and spirituality facilitate his gratitude. Gratitude help people feel that God love them and give them lots of luck. There is strong relationship between gratitude and religious. People with high level of religious and spirituality tend to positively perceive every events in their life which are not caused by humans' actions but by Strongest Powerful God [6]. Consequently, they are able to be happily accept good or bad events in life [4].

There are many researches on gratitude today and they found that gratitude improve well-being, resilience, mental health, problem solving skill and supportive interpersonal relationship [7]. Gratitude is also important for youth since gratitude can promote late adolescence to stabilize his self-identity, establishing career and facilitate them to have his own family [8]. Achieving self-identity, establishing career and starting family life are possible when people are happy with their life. Grateful youth are happy with life so they try to improve themselves and be satisfied with life. Nevertheless there are not many researches on gratitude with students as subjects. This research was held to describe gratitude among moslem students.

II. METHODS

A. Research Subjects

Fifty three moslem students of Department of Psychology in the University of Muhammadiyah Malang participated in this study.

B. Measures

The gratitude measurement instrument used in this research was the questionnaire developed based on the theory proposed by [9], combined with the gratitude concepts of [4]. There were three dimensions of gratitude: grateful, thankful and appreciate.

C. Method of Data Analysis

The data analysis method was statistic descriptive using the mean of groups.

D. Results

This research found that most students have moderate to high level of gratitude. This is because many of their scores

Djudiyah is a student of the Psychology Faculty, University of Padjadjaran Bandung, Jl. Ir.H. Juanda 438B Bandung, INDONESIA (corresponding author's phone: +6282216442045; e-mail: djudiyahdahan@yahoo.com).

Suryana Sumantri is a lecturer of the Psychology Faculty, University of Padjadjaran Bandung, Jl. Ir. H. Juanda 438B Bandung, INDONESIA (e-mail: profsuryana@yahoo.com).

Diana Harding is a lecturer of the Psychology Faculty, University of Padjadjaran Bandung, Jl. Ir. H. Juanda 438B Bandung, INDONESIA (e-mail: dhard_harding@yahoo.com).

were above the group Mean. The complete description are shown below:

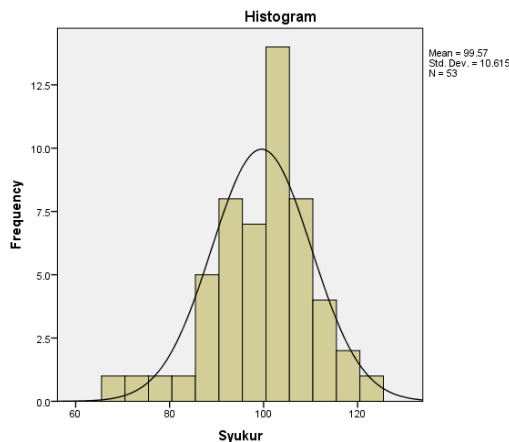


Fig 1. Gratitude in college students

This research also found that male students (Mean=100.74) were more grateful than female (Mean=98.91), as shown in the following table:

TABLE I
STATISTIC DESCRIPTIVE OF GRATITUDE
BETWEEN GENDER

Gender	Mean	N	SD	% of Total N
Male	100.74	19	10.999	35.8%
Female	98.91	34	10.504	64.2%
Total	99.57	53	10.615	100.0%

III. DISCUSSION

The research found that students' gratitude was on the level of medium to high. There are three reasons of this result. First, the research subjects were moslem students in Islam affiliated university. Consequently, they have learned about Islamic values in daily life and they responded positively toward the questionnaire items.

Secondly, they have Islamic educational background. Accordingly they were more grateful than students of public schools. This was obvious from the group Mean. The teachings in Islamic schools contributed to the internalization process of Islamic values since they were in the kindergarten level to the high school. The complete description is shown below:

TABLE II
STATISTIC DESCRIPTIVE GRATITUDE BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
BACKGROUND

Education level	Mean	N	SD	% of Total N
Public Kindergarten	97.19	31	10.666	58.5%
Islamic Kindergarten	102.9	22	9.822	41.5%
Public Elementary	98.43	37	9.409	69.8%
Islamic Elementary	102.19	16	12.947	30.2%
Public Junior High School	98.19	36	10.569	67.9%
Islamic Junior High School	102.47	17	10.423	32.1%
Public High School	97.29	34	10.203	64.2%
Islamic High School	103.63	19	10.367	35.8%
Total	99.57	53	10.615	100.0%

Third, the high gratitude scores among students possibly caused by their high religious commitment. This is suitable to the research findings of [10] who found that there was significant positive correlation coefficient between gratitude and religious commitment. People with high religious commitment promote gratitude through recognizing the positive luck acquired from God in their daily life. They acknowledge God's intervention in their fortune and this makes them feel the God's glory [11]

This research also found that male students were more thankful than female ones. This finding is on the contrary with the previous research finding held by [12]. This was probably because Islam teaches boys to be responsible and to lead females when they grow up. Consequently, boys or males explore their environment so they have wider view about life and higher spiritual experience. They also get more lessons and experiences from life and this makes them happy in their life.

IV. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the above explanation that moslem students have moderate to high level of gratitude. This partly because the instrument used measured the gratitude toward God and the subjects were all moslem. Their educational background was mostly Islamic education so Islamic values have been internalized very well. They also showed high religious commitment so their responses were suitable with the values.

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