

## Javanese Gifted Students' Acknowledgement of God's Existence

Nur Eva

*Psychology Education Faculty (FPPsi) Malang State University (UM) Indonesia*

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**Abstract:-**Javanese ethnicity has a very high religiosity. They acknowledge God as the creator themselves and the universe; whom also controls both. The acknowledgement of God's existence is a part of individual religiosity. The gifted students have the excellent thinking ability to acknowledge God's existence. This study aims to determine the gifted students' acknowledgment of God's existence in their daily lives. The method to collect the data was written interviews with 13 Javanese gifted students. Data were analyzed by categorizing the emerged themes. The results showed that in the gifted students' acknowledgement, God's presence in their lives can be felt through various ways, such as; when they had problems, wish fulfillment, when they did something wrong (morally), through worshiped (prayed), and witnessed God's greatness.

**Keywords:-***Gifted Students; God's Existence; Religiosity*

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### I. PRELIMINARY

Indonesia consists of many ethnic, one of which is Javanese ethnicity. Javanese ethnicity has a very high religiosity. Suyanto (1990) stated that religiosity is one of Javanese's characters. In their daily lives, all of the activities are always associated with the God's existence. Javanese acknowledges God as the creator themselves and the universe, whom also controls them. Javanese uses the term *Gusti* (Majesty) and *Pangeran* (Prince) to refer God. Glock & Strack (1973) mentioned in detail of five religiosity's dimensions, which are; ideologies, intellectuals, rituals, experiences, and consequences. Ideological dimension describes the degree of someone's acceptance of the dogmatic things in his religion, including his belief of God. The level of religiosity correlates with intelligence (Rasanen, Tirri, Nokelainen, 2006). Intelligence describes the individuals' ability to think, adapt and solve problems. Religiosity has the intellectual dimension (Glock & Strack, 1973) which describes the individuals' knowledge and understanding of their religion, particularly those which are written in the Holy Scripture. The individuals, whom have deep understanding of their religion, tend to be more religious than those whom don't. The gifted students have superior intelligence level (Wechsler Scale). With their gift, they can absorb the information in an environment very well. The Muslim gifted students study about Islam at home and school. The knowledge that they have, then will form their religiosity. In Islam, the faith in God isn't merely a doctrine, but it is developed through the process of thinking (Nabhani, 2002). By thinking about personal phenomena, the environment, and the universe, those will bring individuals to the path of God. It's not a surprise if the gifted students have the acknowledgement of God's existence very well. Their intelligences were used to analyze a wide range of personal phenomena, the environment and the universe. Based on the phenomena above, researcher is interested to know how the Javanese gifted students acknowledge God's existence in their daily lives.

### II. RELIGIOSITY

Drikarya (1989) explained that the word *religion* comes from the Latin *religio*. The word *religio* itself came from *religare*, which means binding. It can be defined as obligations or rules that must be implemented, whereas, all of them are binders; binding an individual or group of people's relationships with God and their fellow human beings, as well as their surroundings. Mangunwijaya (1982) distinguished the terms of *religion* and *religiosity*. Religion refers to the formal aspects, including the rules and the obligations; while religiosity, refers to the religious aspects which have been internalized by the individuals in their hearts. Glock and Stark (1973) explained that religiosity is how deep the understanding, how strong the faith, how diligent the implementation of worship and how deep the acknowledgement of one's religious affiliation. Technically, Islam covers three things, which are; faith (*aqidah*), norm or law (*sharia*), and behavior (*akhlak*). Therefore, the Islamic religiosity can be defined as the level of one's religious internalization, which can be seen from the acknowledgement of *aqidah*, *syariah*, and one's *akhlak*. Thus, religiosity is a bond between one and his God, which is internalized in the heart. The acknowledgement of God's existence can be seen through various religious activities and the one's relationships with his fellow humans. Glock & Strak (1973) mentioned in detail the five dimensions of religiosity, which are:

1. Ideological Dimension. It is how far one embraces the dogmatic things in his religion, for example; the faith in God, heaven, and hell.
2. Intellectual Dimension. It is how far one understands his religion, particularly all the things which are written in the Holy Scripture.
3. Ritualistic Dimension. It is the level of one's devotion to implement his religion's obligations, for example; prayers, alms, fasting, and Hajj (pilgrimage).
4. Experiential Dimension. They are the feelings or any religious experiences that one had ever encountered, for example; the feeling of close to God, feel protected by God, and the feeling that his prayer has been granted.
5. Consequential Dimension. It is a dimension which measures how far one's social behaviors were motivated by his religion, for example; whether he visited his sick friends (neighbors), or helped a friend who was in trouble.

Thouless (1992) stated that there are four factors which affected one's religiosity, they were; social factors, experiences, necessity (needs), and intellectual. Social factors explained that religiosity was influenced by others through education, opinions, attitudes, and traditions which were thriving in his living environment. Experience factors suggested that one's acknowledgement of God's existence based on his experiences. Witnessing the natural beauties could raise one's religiosity. Natural beauties, natural disasters and various life events, could remind one of God's existence. The violation of religious laws' experiences could lead one into the guilty or sin feeling. Only God could take away the sins and give forgiveness. The need (necessity) factors explained that religiosity was influenced by the needs of security, love, dignity and death. Those needs at some points could be filled by doing the religious activities which were directly related to God and the other fellow humans. Acknowledging God's existence by implementing the worship's rituals could ease the fear or the anxiety of death. Instead, death was the time topic one's rewards for all the religious deeds that he had implemented during his lifetime. Intellectual factors explained that religiosity was influenced by the mental processes. One learned God's existence through his mental processes, by studying various knowledge which were related to God.

### The Javanese's Concept of God

The Javanese people believe that God is the center of the universe and life. God was the one whom had created and are controlling both of them. The center is defined as the source which gives life, balance and stability, and connects the individuals with the world beyond. This particular view is called *Manunggaling Kawulolan Gusti*. In this view, man could achieve harmony with the last strength and unity by surrendering himself as a servant of his Lord or Majesty. The existence of God in Javanese people's lives appears in so many idioms, which are presenting Javanese people's acknowledgement of God's existence as the Creator and the Ruler of life, they can be understood in the following terms:

*"Pangeran iku biso ngawohi kahanan opo wae tan keno kinoyo ngopo."*

(God can change everything which might seem impossible to human beings).

*"Pengeran iku kuaso tonpo piranti, mulo soko kuwi ojo darbe pengiro yen manungso iku biso dadi wakiling Pangeran."*

(God rules without any tools; so, never assume that humans could represent God).

*"Pangeran biso ngerusak kahanan kang wis ora diperlokake, lan biso gawe kahanan anyar kang diperlokake."*

(God can destroy something that is no longer needed, and can create something new that is needed).

*"Ora ono kesakten sing mandhi papesthen, awit papesthen iku wis ora ono sing biso murungake."*

(No magic could match the certainty of God, because there is nothing that could fail God's certainty).

*"Owahono gingasring kahanan iku soko kersaning Pangeran Kang Murbahing Jagad."*

(The changes can only happen by will of God, the ruler of the world (master of the universe)).

The acknowledgement of God's existence based on the life events can be seen through these idioms:

*"Weruh marang Pangeran iku ateges wis weruh marang awake dhewe. Lamun durung weruh awake dhewe, tanggeh lamun weruh marang Pangeran."*

(By acknowledging God, one could understand himself. And if one doesn't understand himself, it would be impossible for him to know God).

*"Gusti iku sambatan naliko siro lagi nandhang kasengsaraan. Pujinen yen siro lagi nompokan ugerahing Gusti."*

(God is inside of you, and to meet God, you will only need to always remember Him (God)).

*"Ojo lali saben ari eling marang Pangeran niro. Jalaran sejatine siro iku h tansah katunggon Pangeran niro."*

(Never forget to always remember God, because the fact remains that you are always protected by your God).  
*"Lamunono jaman ora kepenak siro ojo lali nyuwun pangapuro marang Pangeran. JalanPangeraniro bakal awehpitulungan."*

(If the circumstances (era) is bad, do not forget to ask God's forgiveness, because God will help you).

*"Sing sopo nyembah lembut iku keliru. Jalaran lembut iku sejatine rowangiro, lan ora perlu disembah koyo dene menembah marangPangeran."*

(Worshiping the spirits is wrong, because they (the spirits) are actually your friends, and thus, should not be worshiped).

*"Sing sopo seneng ngerusak katentremaning liyan bakal di bendu dening Pangeran landielehake dening tumindakdhewe."*

(Whoever loves to ruin someone else's peace will face God's outrage, and will be punished for his own actions).

### III. METHODS

#### Participants

The subjects of the study were the gifted students, who are studying at MTs 1 Malang, grade VII. The subjects were 13 in total. The gifted students' criteria were set by the Coaching Directorate of Extraordinary Schools (2009) they have score of intelligence (IQ) at minimum of 130 (Wechsler Scale). The subjects of research are the biological children of the parents of Javanese ethnicity, both father and mother and are Muslim.

#### Design, Procedures and Technical Analysis

This study uses the qualitative paradigm due the purpose of research, which is to determine the gifted students' acknowledgement of God's existence. Bogdan and Taylor (Moleong, 2007) defined the qualitative methodology as a research procedure which produced descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from the observable individuals' behaviors. This approach was directed at the individuals' backgrounds holistically (wholly). Data was obtained through interviews (written) with the subjects. Data from interviews were then analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is a way to identify the phenomenon patterned themes. These themes can be identified, coded inductively (data driven) from raw qualitative data (the interview transcripts, biographies, video recordings, etc.) and deductively (theory-driven) based on the theories and the results of previous researches (Boyatzis, 1998). In this study, thematic analysis was conducted inductively (data driven).

### IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

The results of the interviews were analyzed based on the themes that had been found. The gifted student's acknowledgement of God's existence themes in their daily lives, were; feeling the presence of God when in troubles (when they had problems), wished fulfillment, violated the laws (committing sins), prayed (implemented the religion rituals), and witnessed the greatness of God.

The interviews' quotes "The Theme of Feeling the Presence of God When in Troubles":

*"Whenever I had a problem, I remembered God and I felt like I didn't understand, why did I feel like there is Allah (God) whom always watching over me, to pray to Him (God), so that I could get Allah's ridha (goodwill). The eagerness to get as many pahala (rewards) as possible, so that I would always be protected from every harm and trouble. I am very grateful to my God, because I've been given the chance to live and always be with me wherever and whenever, even though sometimes I felt like there were big problems which always bestowed upon me, and I asked why did God do that to me?! But I believe that the problems were merely some trials which I would certainly be able to solve in the end. I believe that karmas are exists, and those whom threw their problems on me, would receive certain rewards from God".*

Interview excerpt "Scene Sensing God's Existence If Obtain Desired":

*"I feel the presence of Allah every time I was grateful after getting happiness. When I get the ease and smoothness in doing something, I am grateful to God, and also when I get achievements, I am also grateful to Allah SWT. I felt it when I have the ease, smoothness, and a proud achievement".*

The interviews' quotes "Theme of Feeling God's Presence When Committing sins":

*Whatever I did or do, I'm sure God always know. Whenever I did something wrong (against the commands of Allah), sometimes I felt guilty. When neglected the religious rituals, I felt very guilty. Despite always trying to*

*remember Allah, but still I often forgot. Feeling the presence of God in my daily life was usually when I prayed (implemented the religious rituals), remembering how many sins we had committed. Particularly, when we were about to commit a sin (immoral behaviors), I often felt the presence of God, because I know Allah sees and knows everything.*

Interviews' quotes "Theme of Feeling the Presence of God When Implementing Religious Rituals":

*"Always there, in my mind and in my heart, even though I'm busy with my daily life, I always remember God. No matter how busy I was or I am, I always make time to pray (implement the religious rituals). When I was in trouble, I always asked God to show me the way. I will always remember God, I wish everything that I've done or about to do, will always be gratified by God and my parents. I will always try to obey all God's rules in my every breath. God is always near me, shows me the right way. Every step I took feel easier merely because of God".*

Interviews' quotes "Theme of Feeling God's Presence through Witnessing God's Greatness":

*"God exists, the simple prove is the existence of human being (parents, friends, teachers), they were certainly created by God, neither by the other creatures nor the inanimate objects. Besides, through the existence of the other creatures and the inanimate objects, there must be one true higher power which created them. All those things couldn't be exist out of nowhere. God created and creates them. God is the one who makes me alive, makes the other people around me alive, every single event in my life was destined by God, and it affected both me and the other people. God is a Dzat(essence) whom always watches over me, the world and God is the only one who could put me in hell or heaven. That's why I have to obey God's rules (commands)".*

## V. DISCUSSION

Based on the data that had been obtained, it shows that the Javanese gifted students acknowledge of God's existence when they had a problems, got what they want (wished fulfillment), committed sins, implemented the religious rituals (prayed), and witnessed the greatness of God. This research explains that Javanese gifted students acknowledge the existence of God through the ritualistic dimension and experiential dimension. In the ritualistic dimension, the gifted students acknowledge God's existence by implementing the religious rituals, such as; prayer, *dhikr*, and etc.

Acknowledging the God's existence through worshiping (implementing the religious rituals) can be seen from this idiom: "*Ojo lali saben ari eling marang Pangeran niro. Jalaran sejatine siro ikuh tansah katunggon Pangeran niro.*" (Do not forget to remember God every day, for the fact remains that you are always protected by your God). Thus, the ritualistic dimension is concerning various religious rituals, such as; praying, *dhikr*, and etc, can be used as a way to remember God. Through performing the religious rituals, the gifted students can feel the presence of God in their lives. The gifted students have a very busy schedule, but they still try to make time to do the religious rituals, such as: praying five times a day, praying *sunnah*, etc.

In the experiential dimension, the gifted students feel the presence of God through the granted of their prayers (wished fulfillment), committing sins, and pondering God's creations. Through the granted prayers, they felt that God is listening to their requests. They got what they desired. The gifted students also feel the presence of God when they were in troubles. They felt God was always near them and helped solve the problems. The gifted students also feel that God is watching them, so they feel guilty when they committed sins.

Acknowledging God's existence when in trouble and when got what one desired, can be expressed through this idiom:

*"Gusti iku sambatan naliko siro lagi nandhang kasengsaraan. Pujinen yen siro lagi nompokan ugerahing Gusti."* (Hail the name of God if you are being ill-treated. Be thankful to Him if you are gifted).

Acknowledging God's existence when one is committing sins can be expressed through this idiom:

*"Lamun ono jaman ora kepenak siro ojo lali nyuwun pangapuro marang Pangeran. Jalan Pangeran niro bakal aweh pitulungan."* (If the circumstances (era) is bad, do not forget to ask God's forgiveness, because God will help you).

Acknowledging God's existence when one is witnessing or pondering God's greatness, can be expressed through these idioms:

*"Pangeran iku biso ngawohi kahanan opo wae tan keno kinoyo ngopo."* (God can change everything which might seem impossible to human beings)

“Pengeran iku kuaso tonpo piranti, mulo soko kuwi ojo darbe pengiro yen manungso iku bisodadi wakiling Pangeran.”(God rules without any tools; so, never assume that humans could represent God)

“Pangeran biso ngerusak kahanan kang wis ora diperlokake, lan biso gawe kahanan anyar kangdiperlokake.” (God can destroy something that is no longer needed, and can create something new that is needed).

“Oraono kesakten sing mandhi papesthen, awit papesthen iku wis ora ono sing biso murungake.” (No magic could match the certainty of God, because there is nothing that could fail God's certainty).

“Owahono gingasring kahanan iku soko kersaning Pangeran Kang MurbahingJagad.”

(The changes can only happen by will of God, the ruler of the world (master of the universe)).

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The gifted students' acknowledgement of God's existence are manifested when there had problems, when their prayers were granted, when they committed sins, when they implemented the religious rituals (prayed), and when they were witnessing or pondering the greatness of God. The factors which affecting the gifted students' acknowledgement of God existence are intelligence and social. As the individuals with excellent intelligence, the gifted students can absorb the information from their surroundings very well. The MTs Negeri (MTs N 1 Malang) and the students' families provide the Islamic education.

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