Perceptions of How Integrated Primary Schooling Built Their Identities as Futuristic People

Dindin Jamaluddin ^{a,*}, Qiqi Yuliati Zaqiah ^a, and Hariman Surya Siregar ^a, and Saca Suhendi^a

- ^a Department of Islamic Education, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
- * din2jamaluddin@uinsgd.ac.id

Abstract

Primary schooling, in general, is a critical avenue of children's development and plays a crucial role in forming an individual's identities. In contemporary Indonesia, integrated primary Islamic schooling has been of great interest among education policymakers, researchers, and practitioners. Despite this prevalence, the role of integrated Islamic schooling in shaping students' identities in an Indonesian context remains scarcely examined. This paper investigated primary school leavers' perceptions of how integrated primary schooling built their identities as futuristic people. Drawing on findings, integrated Islamic school graduates reported that they could build different identities: (1) well groom, (2) futuristic, (3) mature, (4) self-conscious, and (5) adaptive. The study implies that integrated Islamic schooling as an educational approach can use to enact character education in primary education.

Keywords: identity, Indonesia, Integrated Islamic schooling, primary education

1. Introduction

Integrated Islamic school is a newcomer in the development of the educational landscape in Indonesia. Since its first establishment, at the end of the 20th century, this school has grown to all parts of Indonesia. The educational institution which originated from the Nurul Fikri Learning Guidance has now developed into the prestigious model of the educational institution from kindergarten to high school level (Hisyam et al., 2012). In a very short time, the number of Integrated Islamic schools has reached about 10,000 schools throughout Indonesia (Suyatno, 2013a).

The emergence of these schools is motivated by the dissatisfaction of most Islamic educational actors towards the development of the national education system (Suyatno, 2013b). The existence of a science dichotomy between the religious and public sciences in schools has led to the failure of educational institutions in Indonesia to create full-fledged graduates. This kind of dichotomy is finally institutionalized in the form of dualism in the national education system (Azra, 1999). On the one hand, there are religious schools under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, ranging from RA, MI, MTs, MA, to Islamic Higher Education (PTAI). On the other hand, there are public schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture ranging from kindergarten, elementary, junior high school, to public universities (PTU) (Sutrisno, 2011). The two models of these institutions are considered by the founders of the Integrated Islamic school unable to respond to the challenges and needs of nowadays era. Public education institutions only introducing students to the general sciences far from tauhid values. As the result, although the students have the ability to master science and technology, they have no strong basic of moral education which can lapse into modern cultural diseases, such as; free sex, drug, juvenile delinquency, and so on. In contrast, Islamic educational institutions only equipping students to the religious sciences. Therefore, they are incapable of mastering science and technology. Although they have a strong

moral foundation strong, they cannot exist in the middle of Educational development in the modern era (Hasan, 2017a).

Therefore, Integrated Islamic school comes as a solution that bridge the dualism in the national education system. The students can not only focus on science and technology or, on the contrary, only on religion study, but they also need to be equipped with science and technology and religion study as a whole with an integrative epistemological approach so that it can produce the students with a whole personality as well.

In its development, there are several questions remain regarding the existence of an Integrated Islamic school. What is the quality of the school's graduate students? Is the contribution of Integrated Islamic school to the formation of the character of its students already seen? These questions lead to a theory of identity formation, in this case, the identity formation produced by Integrated Islamic school. Meanwhile, the study on the importance of Integrated Islamic schools in shaping the identity of the students in Indonesia is somehow still limited. Therefore, this study aims to find out how the identity formation of graduate students of Integrated Islamic school with respect to the two criteria of identity formation (exploration and commitment). Based on Erikson's ideas, two criteria for the presence of identity formation were proposed: exploration (originally called "crisis"(Marcia, 1966), and commitment. Exploration referred to some period of rethinking, sorting through, and trying out various roles and life plans. The exploratory period is a time when the students are actively involved in choosing among meaningful alternatives. Commitment referred to the degree of personal investment the individual expressed in a course of action or belief.

2. Methodology

This research will describe the identity formation of graduate students in Integrated Islamic schools. Then, to reinforce the distortion of the research results, the identity formation of the students will be compared with the identity formation of the general graduate school students and also the graduate students of the *pesantren*. This research is qualitative in which the researcher uses questionnaires and interview instruments to then be analyzed into a research result.

This study adapted the questionnaire developed by Guba and Cieciuch (Kłym & Cieciuch, 2015), namely the EIES (The Early Identity Exploration Scale) questionnaires to find out the identity formation of the students since it measures the late childhood exploration and commitment (in line with the participant in this study). EIES questionnaires consist of 66 questions that employ the eleven domains of exploration (Physical appearance, free time, family, work, relationships, perception of own place in the life cycle, self-reflection, future, future family, outlook on life, and attitude towards rules and pluralism). However, this research only occupied 25 questionnaires which reflect 5 domains of exploration regarding identity formation (physical appearance, future, perception of own place in the life cycle, self-reflection, and attitude towards rules and pluralism). The participants are 46 graduate (23 male and 23 female) students of Integrated Islamic school compare to 46 graduate (23 male and 23 female) of public school and 46 graduate (23 male and 23 female) of pesantren in West Java, Indonesia.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Integrated Islamic school in Indonesia

Integrated Islamic school is essentially a school that implements the concept of Islamic education based on Al-Quran and Sunnah. In its application Integrated Islamic School is defined as a school that applies its implementation approach by integrating public education and religious

education into a braid of the curriculum (Zainuddin, 1997). The Integrated Islamic school also emphasizes the integration in learning methods so as to optimize the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

There are three models of educational institutions developing in Indonesia that is a public school (general), madrasah (religious), and *pesantren*. Public school and madrasah are educational institutions which are formally under the auspices of the national education system. Public schools are located under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Meanwhile, Madrasah is under the shade of the Ministry of Religion Affair.

The dominance of *pesantren*, madrasah, and public school that became mainstream models of educational institutions at the end of the 20th century have been experiencing a shift along with the presence of Integrated Islami — c school (Hasan, 2017b). Established the first time in the early decade of the 1990s by the Islamic activist of the Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB) and University of Indonesia (UI), this educational institution has been able to take the hearts of the community (Suyatno, 2013a). In a relatively short time, about 20 years, the number of schools has reached 10,000 schools throughout Indonesia from kindergarten to high school level(Hisyam, 2011). This school development is also supported by the decentralization factor of education policy at the provincial level and district so that each party more freely to establish educational institutions.

3.2 The Trend of Parental Choice of Education in Indonesia

The change of parental choice of education in Indonesian middle-class Muslims become an interesting theme among Muslim scholars in Indonesia (Azra, 2002). A parental choice of education shift occurs when parents of the Muslim middle class in Indonesia prefer to send their children to school in schools with strong Islamic basic, such as Muhammadiyah schools and Integrated Islamic School, compared with a public school. This fact is comparable upside down a few decades before more middle-class parents proud to send their children to a school that has no religious basis (Azra, 1998). This era is also marked a great change in a variety of public landscapes, within the terminology of political system, content, production, distribution, performances, and media discourse in Indonesia (Heryanto & Hadiz, 2005). Fatchurochman (2012) revealed that there have been shift views on education along with social demands developing on a more macro scale. According to him, parents are feared and worried about the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency. Therefore, to anticipate and equip the child as early as possible probably from elementary school with religious habituation, values and noble character, as revealed by Azra, became the main pillar to the implementation of the education system at the Integrated Islamic school (Azra, 1998). As a result, the parents in droves enter their children to the school.

3.3 Students' Identity Formation

Identity formation is process in life that contributes integrally in someone life since her or his childhood, getting strongly important in adolescence period, and continues till the end of life (Erikson, 1993; Luyckx et al., 2005; Schwartz et al., 2011). According to Erikson (1968) identity is as an answer to a reflective question about "who am I?". Therefore, identity determines a united and integrated sense of the person that undergoes to develop as we age. In the Eriksonian tradition, identity is also defined as a self-theory (Berzonsky, 2011).

Marcia (1966), the next expert after Erikson, explains that identity formation consists of two qualitatively different processes: exploration and commitment. Exploration (initially called *crisis*)

is defined as an "adolescent's period of engagement in choosing among meaningful alternatives," and commitment refers to "the degree of personal investment the individual exhibits". During decades, a lot of studies reveal the links between the identity dimensions and personality also a social network, including well-being (Crocetti et al., 2008; Karaś et al., 2015; Luyckx et al., 2005). Well-being can be preserved as a result of mature identity achievement, developed by exploration and commitment processes. Thus, the dimension of these processes early in identity development can have significant implications to know the initial predictors of well-being.

Erikson (1993) and other studies find out the significant role of identity formation in attaining well-being. It is known that both, commitment and exploration, are substantial in terms of their impact on well-being. As the literature indicates (Crocetti et al., 2008), a high-level committee of identity persons was characterized to have a low level of psychosocial problems with less anxiety and depression (Crocetti et al., 2008). They also can easily mingle in any social adjustment (Luyckx et al., 2005). Recent research also agreed that the identity dimensions, including exploration, construct strong predictors of numerous well-being dimensions (Karaś et al., 2015; Waterman et al., 2010). Berzonsky and Cieciuch (Berzonsky, 2011) describe that well-being is predicted by the identity styles, which can be defined as identity exploration style. Ryff's (Berzonsky & Cieciuch, 2016) conceptualized that the contribution of informative exploration is significant in almost all dimensions of well-being. In achieving well-being as an adult, the steps should start with exploration and then commitment. Therefore, investigation about the exploration, which is the beginning phase of identity formation means to search for early predictors of well-being.

Exploration is the process of considering and choosing among meaningful alternatives (Marcia, 1966) as well as the active questioning and weighing of various identity options. Moreover, in line with their goals, convictions, and values, adolescents look for various alternatives in the degree of variation (Luyckx et al., 2005). This process includes exploring and finding who and what a person could be and then followed by commitment making and engagement.

The commencement of identity formation in early adolescence and is related to growing autonomy, the consideration of one's future as an independent entity and establishing one's first romantic relationships (Furman & Shaffer, 1999). These all are built on the basis of the competence sense that is reached in earlier developmental stages (Erikson, 1993) and leads to improving self-strength in self.

3.4 Students' Identity formation of Integrated Islamic school in Indonesia

A shortened version of the EIES (The Early Identity Exploration Scale) questionnaires ¹ was used. Participants were asked to rate 25 items (5 items for each factor) on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (*very rare/never*) to 5 (*always/very often*). The general description of their responses toward their Identity formation among three kinds of schools (Integrated school, public school, and pesantren) is referred to as the frequency distribution shown in Table 1.

¹ The English version by (Berzonsky & Cieciuch, 2016)

Table 1. The Frequency Distribution of Identity formation among graduate students of an integrated school, public school, and pesantren

No.	Interval Class	Percentage	Category	
1	46-76	< 30 %	Low Attention	
2.	76-152	< 60 %	Medium Attention	
3.	152–230	> 60 %	High Attention	

3.5 Physical Appearance

Physical appearance means the students begin to draw attention to appearance, seeking own style; the extent to which the physical self becomes a persistent presence (Brinthaupt & Lipka, 2012). The result shows that most of the graduate students of Integrated Islamic school (78 %) tend to be really concerned about their appearance. They admit beginning to dress differently than before, eager to find their own clothing style, even they to others about their look. Only 3 out of 46 students who really don't care about their appearance. On the other hand, the graduate students of public schools show their medium attention toward their appearance (52 %). However, there is no one of the students who are really don't care about their appearance (0 %). 5 out of 46 show that they rarely to put special attention on their clothing style. Moreover, the different result is shown from the graduate student of pesantren. They show very low attention to their physical appearance. The responses toward their attention on clothing style and their look are really low (10 %). There are only 5 out of 46 who reveal their full attention to their appearance. Moreover, the most interesting point from the result is on the response "in magazines and on the internet, I look for ideas of various outfits and styles to choose the ones that are most suitable for me". There are 40 out of 46 graduate students of Integrated Islamic school who said 'often' dong this in their spare time. It also shows how they put a big effort to perform well regarding their personal appearance.

3.6 Future

Future work is dealing with their considerations regarding what the students want to do in adult life, including ideas about what profession would be the most suitable for him or her (Marcia, 1966). The result shows that most of the graduate students of Integrated Islamic school (80 %) tend to be really concerned about their future. They recently began to wonder what they would like to do in the future, consider how they would like to live, wonder what kind of job would be the most suitable for them. No one of the students who really don't care about their future. On the other hand, the graduate students of public schools also show their high attention toward their future (76 %). However, there are still 4 out of 46 students who are really don't care about their future. Moreover, the different result is shown from the graduate student of *pesantren*. They show their moderate attention to their future (57 %). There are 20 out of 46 who said that they rarely think about their future. However, the three schools show high attention on one point. It is 'the students talk to others about what kind of job would be good for them in the future'. The percentages are 86 % for Integrated Islamic school, 85 % for public school and 78 % for pesantren. It shows that basically, the future is an important point for them to consider and they have a high awareness about their future.

3.7 Perception of own place in the life cycle

The perception of their own place in the life cycle means that the students impressed that he

or she is no longer a child and feelings of discomfort in situations in which others (especially parents) treat him/her as a child. A sense of "growing out" of childhood, entering a new phase, and "fully living in these 'new clothes" (Brinthaupt & Lipka, 2012). This is the most critical point to be revealed because the result shows various categories for every point. The graduate students of Integrated Islamic schools tend to frequently have different thoughts with their parents (76 %). They also often try to convince their parents of their opinion (78 %). These results are really contradictive with the results from graduate students of *pesantren*. Only 5 out of 46 who admit to frequently argue with their parents. Based on the result, it can be concluded that students' perception is really influenced by their school environment. Moreover, according to the interview result to the graduate students of *pesantren*, they are taught to always respect their parents in any situation. Meanwhile, the graduate students of the Integrated Islamic school responded even they should respect their parents but they still have 'space' as humans to share their arguments and opinions.

3.8 Self-reflection

Self-reflection is the point when students thinking about him/herself and asking questions about who he or she is. The desire to discover new things about him/herself and attempts to become further acquainted with him/herself (Brinthaupt & Lipka, 2012). The result shows that most of the graduate students of Integrated Islamic schools tend to be really concerned about themselves. Most of the students said that they frequently ask themselves about 'who they really are' (74 %) and they feel they need to find out new things about themselves (65 %). However, some of them answer that they seldom to reflect on themselves toward something (35 %). The different phenomenon happened with the graduate students of public school. They responded to be rare to ask themselves about 'who they are' (78%) but they also seldom reflect on themselves (72 %). Moreover, the graduate students of pesantren also showed the same result as Integrated Islamic school students. They frequently ask about themselves (70 %) and only 5 out of 46 who often reflect about themselves.

3.9 Attitude towards rules and plurality

Attitude towards rules and pluralism means the students consider different value systems, searching for information and reflections to justify and intensify his/her beliefs, doubts regarding one's beliefs (Boyes & Chandler, 1992). They also pondering whether all rules, orders, and prohibitions are necessary and make sense and considering what would happen if the early adolescent had not acquiesced to such rules (Magnusson et al., 1985). Besides, their responses and attitude toward diversity or plurality lay in front of them. The graduate students of the Integrated Islamic school showed very low attention toward this point. They responded to be very seldom to think about the rule (78 %), moreover only some of them that really matter about the plurality (25 %). Based on their interview results, they seem to consider a lot about themselves despite others. However, the graduate students of *pesantren* showed a very different response. They really often to think about the rule (92 %) and also about plurality (87 %). In the interview session, they said that they have a social responsibility in life besides their own life. The result shows the different identity formation of student's attitudes toward rules and plurality between graduate students of Integrated Islamic schools and *pesantren* are really different.

3.10 Discussion

School is a means of the national education management system. The role of schools'

information of students' character and morals is very important because the most significant part of cultural morality is not acceptable through other aspects besides education (school) (Al-Qurashi, 2010). Families may have the ability to awaken and develop an essential home affection for the moral life and foundation of simple individual relationships. But families are still unable to be the primary means of preparing children to carry out their duties in true social life (Al-Qurashi, 2010). School, essentially, is not just a place of "transfer knowledge". As Erikson points out, "schooling is not simply a place where teachers communicate knowledge through subjects. The school is also an institution that seeks value-oriented enterprise and business processes" (Erikson, 1993). Furthermore, Fraenkel quotes John Childs statement that the organization of the school system is a moral enterprise because it is a deliberate attempt by human society to control its developmental pattern (Crocetti et al., 2008). Therefore, the school that has educational curricula oriented to Islamic creeds such as Integrated Islamic school have a role in their students' identity formation.

The identity development process of early adulthood has been an interesting topic among researchers over the last 10 years. Erikson's writings about identity formation for adolescence (Erikson, 1968) have initiated abundant research writings on processes and contents with initial identity made toward the end of adolescence. Based on the result of this research, the identity formation developed by students of Integrated Islamic schools in West Java, Indonesia has revealed. They showed really high attention to several aspects of identity status. Physical appearance, future work consideration, and self-reflection are the three aspects considered a lot by them. The phenomenon is really in line with some expert statements. Csikszentmihalyi and Schneider (2001) stated that students who are encouraged to take a variety of demanding courses are more likely to develop a sense of self-control and a more consistent sense of what they can do.

The characteristic of Integrated Islamic school fits with the description of school with its' full day concept and a lot of demand courses within. On the other hand, the result also showed that Integrated Islamic school students tend to have a high perception of their own place in the life cycle included how they argue and convince their parents about what they believe to be true. As it is stated that during early adolescence, the peer group begins to exert a stronger influence than teachers and parents (Csikszentmihalyi & Schneider, 2001). Since the social behavior and expectations within the peer group can be negotiated, or alternative peer groups can be chosen, adolescents have an opportunity to decide by whom they want to be influenced.

4. Conclusion

Integrated Islamic school since its first presence in Indonesia has become an alternative education that became the parents' choice to send their children. By carrying out educational management that blends between the intellectual excellence of the public schools and the religious excellence of madrasah/ pesantren, Integrated Islamic school is expected to create the new identity formation of students who can be balanced in the intellectual, emotional and religious aspect. Therefore, this study tried to find out the new identity formation developed by students of Integrated Islamic school in West Java, Indonesia.

Standing on the identity formation theory J. E. Marcia (1966), the exploration domain shown by the students is analyzed. Five indicators of exploration domain (Berzonsky & Cieciuch, 2016) are revealed based on questionnaires and interview sessions. Students of Integrated Islamic schools showed high attention on physical appearance, perception of their own place in the life cycle, future work and self-reflection. However, they showed low attention to attitude toward rules and attitude toward the other people who have different interests than them. This result can become a consideration for the government, educators and parents to hand in hand supporting the education

aspect in Indonesia to develop a different approach to pursuing expected identity which is excellent and successful in any aspect of life.

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