



Gerontology concept: Toward ego integrity through Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran (TPA) in order to second demographic bonus 2035

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Abstract

Aim: To prepare for the demographic windfall of 2035, this study seeks to understand how Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPA) contributes to developing strong identities among the elderly. For the elderly, TPA is a tool for achieving ego integrity. Learning to recite the Quran while upholding Islamic principles is known as TPA.

Methodology: This research, which employs qualitative methods such as interviews and observations, examines the experiences of three elderly female victims of the Mount Merapi eruption in Yogyakarta, which is currently being monitored by the TPA.

As a result, we can state the following as our "findings:" The results show that TPA helped the elderly maintain their sense of self-worth. This study's findings will help the elderly achieve TPA ego integrity. The elderly who can put aside their pride and contribute meaningfully to their communities will help the government reap the benefits of the demographic dividend.

Novelty/Implications: The results are helpful because elderly people with strong senses of self-worth can contribute to government efforts to deal with the demographic dividend by helping to maintain economic stability and social cohesion in their communities.

Key Words: TPA, Ego Integrity, Elderly, Gerontology, Second Demographic Bonus

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INTRODUCTION

According to government data, there are currently 18 million people who are 65 and older, and that number is expected to rise to 41 million by 2035 and to more than 80 million by 2050. (Haryanto 2015). Indonesia's elderly population may soon outnumber children under the age of five and rank fourth globally, behind only China, India, and the United States, as the life expectancy will be above 70 years (Stiabudhi and Hardywinoto 2005). When the proportion of the elderly population becomes unmanageable, the second demographic dividend occurs. If they are resilient, healthy, and productive, the large elderly population could have many positive effects. However, ensuring that the elderly remain healthy, robust, and productive calls for extensive planning and support from various sources, particularly by enhancing nutrition, sanitation, and a healthy environment (Haryanto 2015).

According to Erikson, people with high levels of ego integrity will be able to accept death, have a strong sense of purpose in life, take ownership of their actions, and believe that their lives are successful (Stiabudhi and Hardywinoto 2005). Ego integrity refers to maintaining a sense of ego and not losing physical and intellectual strength, and despair refers to the opposite. Erikson's late adulthood theory is about the elderly, from age 60 until the end of life (Feist and Feist 2014). Wisdom results from ego integrity turmoil and despair, which become the elderly strength, where individuals have an active interest with no desire. Individual ego integrity will arise if individuals have a strong ego identity and have experienced the intimacy and experience of looking after other people or other things. Even as their cognitive and physical abilities deteriorate, people who have developed a pearl of mature wisdom can keep their sense of self intact.

Meanwhile, hopelessness manifests itself in disgust, depression, disgust at the attitude of others, or other attitudes that do not show any acceptance of the lack of their lives among the elderly (Feist and Feist 2014). Grandparents tend to their grandchildren and other community members when they are elderly. The elderly can

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still be productive and creative in ways that they may not have been able to when they were younger, despite their decline in physical and cognitive ability (Feist and Feist 2014). In interviews conducted before the eruption of Mount Merapi, ten elderly residents reported that they had never learned to read the Quran or how to pray properly, despite having lived on the mountain's slopes all their lives. This suggests, obliquely, that the informants have a lower level of familiarity with Islamic moral teachings.

The informants were otherwise healthy before the eruption of Merapi, and their only pre-eruption symptoms were temporary loss of hearing and vision and extreme exhaustion. The sources had to stay in temporary housing far from their hometowns. Their social life is unaffected by the catastrophic eruption, and there are no issues between the elderly. However, the loss of homes and livestock left them feeling restless, anxious, and sad. Chatijah (Birohmatika and Diana, 2012) investigated the state of mental health in Bali's Badung District and found that the local elderly frequently report problems with sleep and general functioning.

The elderly are depressed and concerned about their environment because they have many unmet needs. Many of the elderly's needs were unmet, and they felt sad and concerned about their surroundings. When people fully adopt and live out the teachings of their religion, they experience fewer of these issues. In other words, if the elderly are willing to investigate the significance of religious life, they might be able to deal with their issues peacefully without succumbing to psychological illness (Birohmatika and Diana 2012). The informants also had access to resources and teachers who helped them learn Arabic to read the Quran and dig deeper into Islam. The informants have a very high spirit, which is a huge help in learning the Quran, although they cannot read the Qur'an correctly.

To be able to read the Qur'an fluently, to experience peace, happiness, good health, and tranquility, and to receive sustenance for life and preparation for death to live well in this world and the next are the goals and expectations of the informants who attend TPA (Quran class). Their participation in the TPA program facilitated the informants' memorization of key passages from the Quran, including the opening and closing ayats, the daily and evening prayers, and the five-times prayers. TPA is also great for meeting new people and learning about different religions. After participating in TPA, the informants reported experiencing various changes, including increased happiness and contentment, a broader social network, a stronger desire to learn, and a deeper appreciation for literature and religious texts.

Students in TPA learn to read and write the Arabic script used in the Qur'an. In addition, TPA teaches Islamic virtues like honesty, tolerance, gratitude, and trust. Krause found that belief in a higher power is associated with higher happiness and contentment later in life (Santrock 2012). A higher sense of self-worth, contentment, and optimism could be gained by the elderly, who could learn to appreciate the meaning of life from a religious perspective (Santrock 2012). The spiritual needs of the elderly can be met by religion, which can also aid in coping with death, finding meaning in one's life, appreciating its significance, and accepting the inevitable declines that come with aging. Research by Daaleman, Perera, Stundenski, and Mcfarland (Santrock 2012).

The researchers attempted to characterize the role religion played in forming the character of the elderly who attended TPA, Huntap, Sleman, and Yogyakarta, based on the abovementioned explanation. The researchers were curious about how the elderly participants in TPA maintained their ego integrity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gerontology Concept

Gerontology is derived from the Greek words *Geros* which means elderly and *logos* which means science. Gerontology can be defined as a branch of science which studies the aging process and the problems experienced by the elderly as well as the consequences of the aging process on the lives of the elderly and a group of community (Dewi 2012). Gerontology is the study of the problems of the elderly whose aim is to make the elderly and their families prosperous (Stiabudhi and Hardywinoto 2005). Gerontology is also the study of physiological, psychological, social, cultural and economic changes in the process of aging (Yusuf 2007).

Elderly

Elderly is seen as a period of decline, in which the elderly experience some deterioration which occurs in

them both physically and psychologically. The elderly live and interpret their elderly period in different ways. Some of the elderly people are able to see the significance of being old in the context of human existence, which is a period of life which provides the elderly some opportunities to grow and have a desire to do something which is meaningful to others (Sulandari, Martyastanti, and Mutaqwarohmah 2009).

Present Study

A research conducted by (Indriana, Desiningrum, and Kristiana 2011) states that there is no one who is not religious who falls under the category of being well-adjusted. This means that elderly people with a high level of religiosity in all its dimensions will be more adaptive, including in all activities and social relationships so that they will achieve social welfare. Religion can fulfill several psychological needs which are important in the elderly, to help them face death, gain and maintain a sense of being meaningful in their lives, as well as accept any kinds of loss which are unavoidable in the elderly (Indriana et al. 2011) showed that religious activities are significantly correlated with a high good-adjustment in the elderly.

Second Demographic Dividend

The demographic dividend is an abundant number of productive population in the working age (15-64 years) which constitutes about 60 percent, or reaches 160-180 million people in 2020, while the remaining 30 percent of people who are not productive (aged 0-14 years as well as 65 years and over) which will occur in 2020-2030 (Konadi and Iba 2011). In the perspective of demographic economics, demographic dividend is an economic benefit due to a growing number of productive populations so as to spur investment and economic growth. Many countries could become rich by successfully utilizing the opportunity related to demographic dividend to boost per capita income so as to achieve public welfare (Jati 2015).

However, Adioetomo (Jati 2015) stated that this brings a negative effect as well, namely a soaring number of old populations, while the transition of young age into productive age is not yet perfect. Regarding the current situation, Indonesia is expected to reach the peak of "demographic dividend" in 2017 until 2019 in the first wave and in 2020 until 2030 in the second wave of demographic dividend. This means that the composition of the population in the productive age 15-64 years reaches the maximum point, compared to that of the non-productive age 0-14 years as well as 65 years and over. This results in an increase in the number of potential labor force. However, it should also be emphasized that the demographic dividend will not bring any significant impact if the state only has minimal investment in human resources (human capital investment). Therefore, the demographic dividend can also turn into a wave of mass unemployment which will eventually increase the burden of the state budget (Jati 2015).

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative method. According to Poerwandari (Birohmatika and Diana 2012), to get a deeper and more specific understanding of the phenomenon and to understand human beings with all their complexity as an informative creature, qualitative approach is the most appropriate method to use. The nature of this research was descriptive, in which the study is a deep description related to the process being researched or related to situations (Idrus 2007). The data were collected through interview and observation. These techniques were considered appropriate for the data collection because the informants were only a few people and in specific cases. The interviews in this research used structured interviews with open-standardized interview guidelines which were prepared and consulted with experts, who in this case were lecturers. The observations were in the form of participant observation. The interviews started with early interviews of 10 elderly people who attended the Quran classes in TPA, Huntap village, Sleman, Yogyakarta. It was then followed with follow-up interviews with three informants to dig deeper information related to ego integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the interviews and observations with the three informants indicate that each informant can achieve ego integrity. The first informant whom we interviewed was 75 years old who had no history of diseases, lived with children and grandchildren since the husband had already passed away. The activities of the informant were taking care of the grandchildren, cleaning the house and attending TPA. The informant did not feel burdened when raising her children and she felt that she had successfully raised them. The informant only wished to always remain healthy because she was already so happy and felt loved by her family. She was also grateful for what God has given to her. In addition, she also had self-acceptance by willingly reading the Qur'an even though she no longer had clear vision and could not pronounce the Arabic alphabets correctly according to the tajwid. Taking a prayer was what she did to prepare for the impending death.

The second informant was 74 years old who lived with grandchildren. She said that she faced difficulties when raising her children, but she was also pleased at the same time. She never regretted in the upbringing of the children because she felt that all her children had become successful. She worked by collecting woods in the forest and sometimes by making tempe. Although she felt that she no longer had as many daily activities as she used to, she remained happy that she did not feel like returning to the past. She could accept and feel grateful for her life. She expressed her gratefulness by taking a prayer and reading the Quran in TPA. She hoped that her children and grandchildren will get ease in earning money and in studying. However, she had an aspiration which she had not realized, but she was not burdened by it. She had a health history of high blood pressure, but she never complained and when the disease relapsed, she went to get treatment. She prepared for her death by worshipping and not feeling anxious when the death comes.

The third informant was 73 years old. She lived with her husband and had 8 children. Informant felt success in educating children, although educating children was not easy, but the informant enjoyed doing that. Informant also had to give advice to interviewer to be a child who could return the favor, and devoted to parents. She does daily activity with planting and caring chicken. She said that she has no specific expertise that is different from her friends, but she feels satisfied with her life. She hopes to be able to perform the Hajj. In the study informant has very high spirit in reading the Qur'an. She said that she knew how to read the Koran in TPA. In addition, she did not forget to prepare for her death to pray hard way.

The results of the follow-up interviews and observations of the three informants who were 73-75 years old showed that they were successful in raising their children, they had no regrets in raising the children, remaining productive and hard-working, feeling loved by their families, accepting and feeling happy with their lives, and being grateful for their lives. These things make the three informants feel satisfied with their lives, never complain, and also not feel like returning to their youth. They express their gratefulness by applying what is taught in TPA, such as praying, reading the Quran, reciting dzikir, and taking a prayer. They also express their acceptance on the impending death, and make preparations for this by worshipping. One of them even gave advices to the researchers on how to become a child who could return the favor of parents. Finally, they all feel that their lives have been in accordance with what they want.

These three informants still actively participate in TPA. Regarding TPA, they have the same experience i.e. it is their first time attending TPA in their lifetime to learn to read and memorize the Quran and study Islam. This is because there was no one who taught the Qur'an in their past neighborhood. Unlike Huntap (the housing provided by the government for the victims of Merapi eruption), there are facilities and facilitators assisting the informants in learning to read the Qur'an and study religion.

Due to the existence of TPA, the three informants are able to know the purpose of life. TPA facilitates the informants to make their lives more meaningful, prosperous and happy. It can be seen from the results of the first interviews, i.e. the reason why the informants attend TPA is to obtain tranquility, happiness, and health; to be given sustenance; and to prepare for the wellbeing in the world and the hereafter. (Indriana et al. 2011) says that religious activity is significantly associated with a higher good-adjustment in the elderly. All religious people fall into the category of being well-adjusted. This means that the elderly with a high level of religiosity in all its dimensions are more adaptive, including in all activities and social relations. Therefore, these elderly will achieve social welfare.

Religion can fulfill several psychological needs which are important in the elderly, help them face death,

gain and maintain a sense of being meaningful in their lives. This theory supports the result of this research in which the activities of TPA can make the elderly reach the stage of ego integrity.

According to Erikson and Kivnick (Papalia, Olds, and Feldman 2008), the highest achievement in the elderly is their ego integrity which is an achievement which is based on the reflection of one's way of life. The eighth and last stage of the human life span is ego integrity versus despair; the elderly need to evaluate, accept their lives, and accept death. The results of the seven previous stages: the elderly try to achieve a feeling of coherence and ego integrity rather than feeling of despair because of the inability to do anything which is different from the past. People who are successful in these last tasks will gain a sense of meaningfulness of their lives in a higher social level (Papalia et al. 2008).

Based on the theory of ego integrity, it can be concluded that the three informants have ego integrity. This achievement is inseparable from the role of TPA as a facility for the elderly to learn the Quran and the religion of Islam which can improve the religiosity of the elderly. Such religiosity makes the elderly reach the stage of ego integrity because after learning in TPA, the elderly may reflect on their lives, have a purpose and meaning in life, feel more peaceful, grateful, happy in their daily productivity, and prepare for the impending death. All those things are the characteristics of the elderly who achieve ego integrity.

Ego integrity achieved by the elderly can cope with the second demographic dividend which will be faced by Indonesia in 2035. In the second demographic dividend, there is an increasing number of the elderly people. This is the biggest job of the current and future government regarding how to create programs which can make its population more productive so that they can become a driving force of development, especially for the elderly. The elderly who have despair cannot be productive, and eventually only become a burden for the state. Some of the forms of the burden are: the government should allocate substantial funds for the welfare of the elderly in which the funds can actually be allocated for more useful sectors, such as education, technology, and industry. Another negative impact is that they will experience a change in their social roles in the society. This may possibly lead to discrimination and isolation by the surrounding environment to the elderly. The elderly with despair also tend to experience a change in psychosocial aspects and emotional instability, such as getting more easily offended and irritable (sensitive), controlling and prohibiting because of having fear of losing (possessive). Besides, this research is expected to contribute to the development of science, especially in psychology, and to provide information and insights related to the elderly, particularly on improving the ego integrity of the elderly as an attempt to deal with the second demographic dividend.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The conclusion of this research is that the TPA can help elderly in achieving ego integrity, based on research (Indriana et al. 2011) said that religious activities are associated significantly with high adaptability in the elderly. People with high religiosity entered the category of well-adjusted that can help elderly to be more adaptive to activities and included in all social fields, so that older people can achieve the social welfare. So the high religiosity can make the elderly obtain social welfare, with a prosperous elderly then the ego integrity is achieved. With the ego integrity of the elderly will become a productive age and can help the country's economy in the face of second demographic bonus. However, it will not be realized if the elderly get no support facilities to help elderly gain prosperity.

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