

# The Diversity of the Asmat Tribe Student at the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School, Magelang, Central Java

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**Abstract:** This research is a descriptive-analytic study about the diversity of the Asmat students at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School Muntilan Magelang, Central Java. This study aims to describe the religion of the Asmat students at the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School along with the factors that influence it. The location of this research is Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, precisely in Patosan, Sedayu, Muntilan, Magelang Regency. The population was all male and female students of Asmat. The sample of this research is 40 students. Data collection techniques in this study were consist of observation, interviews, questionnaires, documents, and literature studies. The data analysis technique used was descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative descriptive analysis. From the data analysis, the conclusion of this research is as follows: **Religious Factor**, Based on Glock and Stark's theory of five dimensions of religiosity are; confidence dimension 95%, Dimensions of religious practice 70%, Dimensions of religious feelings 87.5%, Dimensions of knowledge 82.5%, Dimensions of consequences 57.5%. The confidence dimension of Asmat students has reached 95%, meaning that in terms of their *aqidah* are mature. It is because supported by very intense guidance from the pesantren. The dimensions of religious practice reach 70%, meaning that they are good at practical, especially in basic worship (*fardhu*). And regarding the dimension of religious feelings, the percentage achieved is 87.5%, which means that their sense of responsibility towards their religion is good. And regarding the dimensions of knowledge has reached 82.5%. This figure shows that their insight into religious knowledge is good, especially regarding the law, and the last one regarding the dimensions of the consequences of religion is 57.5%. This figure is low, meaning they are still lacking in social terms. It is because bound by the discipline of the pesantren, so they lack socialization with the local community. Factors that affect the diversity of Asmat students at the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School. These factors consist of internal and external factors: (1) Internal Factors; heredity, Age level, Personality, Psychiatric Condition, All of the above factors do not support the development of their religious spirit so that their religion is still not good enough. (2) External Factors, include Family environment, Institutional Environment, Community Environment. From the three external factors above, only 2 (two) factors strongly support their religion. Hopefully, they will have an impact on internal factors through intensive guidance that is needed to increase religiosity.

**Keywords:** Islam, pesantren, religiosity.

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## Introduction

Islam in Indonesia influences the development of society, especially in education and culture. At first, the spread of Islam in Indonesia was only in coastal areas. It is because coastal communities, in general, have a much more open attitude than people in rural areas.

The same thing happened to the Asmat tribe. The Asmat people live in lowland areas that are swampy and muddy and covered by tropical rain. They live on the southwestern coast of the province

of Irian Jaya, in the sub-districts of Sawa, Ema, Agats, and Pirimapun, including Dati Regency, II Merauke. The Asmat tribe lives in very remote areas which are wild nature (Sudarman, 1986). One of the factors that cause them to have a more closed attitude from outside influences that is because of their previous strong customs and culture. Along with the start of the transmigration program in the 70s, Islam spread widely in Irian Jaya. Although, at first, it was only an introduction to Islam.

Christianity and Catholicism brought by the missionaries were able to influence the lives of the

Asmat tribe. They began to know about wearing clothes, cleanliness, and other things. However, the traditional rituals of the Asmat people seem untouched. Some Asmat people still seem to worship two things or gods. The myth of Fumeripits is sometimes still stronger than faith in Almighty God (Hadi Yunus, 1994).

Gradually, Islamic religious leaders in Irian Jaya and outside Irian Jaya began to promote Islamic *da'wah* by intensifying teachings. There are several methods, but one of the methods is providing opportunities to learn more about Islam by sending converts to areas outside Irian Jaya, such as Sulawesi, Maluku, Java, and others. One of the areas in Java that accepts converts from Irian Jaya is the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School, Magelang, Central Java.

Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, located in Muntilan District, Magelang Regency, Central Java Province, has been trying to carry out Islamic religious development for various regions in Indonesia since 1986. The converts came from Irian Jaya to assist the government in realizing the goals of national education that form pious people.

If we look at the background of the Asmat tribe themselves, we will be surprised if they later become Muslims in terms of their geographical location, cultural backwardness, and isolation from other tribes. And through this study, the author intends to examine the religious attitudes of the Asmat tribe to measure their religious practice, especially those who live in the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, as well as the factors that influence their religious attitudes. On the one hand, it is essential for writers, who may one day act as a proponent of Islamic teachings in the Asmat tribe, where until now, only a few have come to that area to teach Islam.

### Research Methods

In obtaining clear and detailed data, this study used field Research. The researchers saw firsthand the diversity of the Asmat students at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School. The methods used in this study are Subject research methods. The participant of this research and act as sources of

data in this study are the leaders of the Islamic boarding school, Asmat students, religious tutors, the upbringing of students, and other parties deemed necessary. Because the number of subjects was not that many, the population in this study were male and female students at Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, and the sample was 40 Asmat students.

In collecting data, this study used several techniques observation, interviews, questionnaires, documentation, and literature study. Then it was analyzed by using the Non-Statistical Analytical Descriptive Method (Qualitative) and Descriptive Statistical Analysis Method (Quantitative) (Suharsini, 1993).

### Literature Review

#### Religious Issues

In religious studies, Jalaluddin Rahmat explained two studies, namely religious teachings and religiosity. Teachings are sacred oral or written texts and become a reference for religious adherents. Meanwhile, diversity is behavior that comes directly or indirectly from teachings (Taufik Abdullah, 1991).

While Psychologists R. Stark and CY Glock, in their work on Religious Dimensions cited by A. Fedyani Syaefuddin (Roland, 1993), religiosity means obedience or commitment to religion which includes many elements, namely Church membership, belief in religious doctrine, and many other things. Among the underlying understanding of religion is the existence of religious dimensions, namely:

- a. Dimensions of Religious Belief contains expectations where religious people believe in theological views, acknowledge truth and doctrine.
- b. The dimension of religion that including worship behavior, obedience, and things people do to show their commitment.
- c. Dimensions of Religious Experience. It relates to religious experiences, feelings, perceptions, and sensations experienced by religious actors.

- d. The dimension of religious knowledge relates to the hope that religious actors know the basics of beliefs, rituals, scriptures, and traditions.
- e. e. Consequences dimension of religion. It refers to the consequences of one's religious beliefs, practices, experiences, and knowledge from day to day.

### Factors Affecting Religion

- a. Internal Factor:
  - 1) Heredity. Hereditary factors or nature are innate or genetic characteristics from parents to their children. So, these factors are biological factors from birth (Rini Hildayani et al, 2012).
  - 2) Age Level. According to Elisabet, quoted from Nursalam (2003), age is an individual's age from birth to their birthday. Meanwhile, according to Huclok (1998), the elder you are, the mature you will be. The maturity and strength of someone make them better at thinking and working. That also affects public trust. Someone more mature is more trusted.
  - 3) Personality. Personality or psyche consists of all thoughts, feelings, behavior, consciousness, and unconsciousness. Personality guides a person to adjust to the social and physical environment. From the very beginning of life, personality is a unity that can form it. When developing a personality, one should maintain unity and harmony among all the elements (Alwisol, 2009).
- b. External Factors: Family Environment, Institutional Environment, Community Environment (Jalaludin, 1996).

### Research and Discussion

Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School is about 30 km north of Yogyakarta and 12 km south of Magelang city. Precisely located on the edge of the road Talun Km. 1 Patosan Hamlet, Sedayu Village, Muntilan District, Magelang Regency, Central Java Province. The environment around the Madrasa is an unspoiled and shady area with a rural

atmosphere that can support teaching and learning activities.

Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School was pioneered in 1937 by Ustadz Yunus Muhammad Alwan and established in November 1942. Ustadz Yunus Muhammad Alwan is an alumnus of Madrasah Alawiyah Arabiyah in Singapore. He was born in Tepuk Pulai Sabakberenam, Selangor Malaysia on 24 April 1929. He was intelligent, so he quickly finished school at Madrasah Alawiyah Arabiyah Singapore. Then continued his search for knowledge further from his hometown, sailed to the island of Java, and became a student at the Tremas Islamic Boarding School in East Java. For six years at the Tremas Islamic Boarding School, he studied jurisprudence and interpretation, continued to the Tebu Ireng Islamic Boarding School in East Java for approximately three years, and then migrated to Central Java.

On his way, he stopped at the great mosque of Kauman, Muntilan, Magelang Regency. In Kauman Village, Kyai Haji Alwan started his first *da'wah* by filling out interpretations in the morning and evening and finally decided to settle down and marry a Javanese girl named Umi Salamah. Day by day, the number of worshipers was increasing. It made the Dutch colonialists who were then in power in the Kedu Residency worried. Dutch army spied on the Tafsir recitation several times. The recitation (*pengajian*) conducted by Kyai Haji Alwan was considered the new Ustadz in the Muntilan area. With security considerations, they decided to look for a new location. The location chosen was the Beteng Sleko Muntilan residential complex or about one kilometer from the Kauman Muntilan Mosque. The recitation or *pengajian* turned into a college institution named Al-Iman with the initial number of students not more than ten Kalong students who did not stay.

The curriculum of the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School was improved in 1963. It was by adopting an integrated curriculum according to the Joint Decree of the three Ministers. By following the curriculum, Islamic Boarding School Al-Iman Muntilan combines non-formal education with formal education by opening educational institutions from several levels of education, including Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Madrasah

Aliyah. On November 26, 1986, Ustadz Yunus Muhammad Alwan died, then the leadership of the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School was continued by his son, Ustadz KH. Muhammad Hadi Y. MA. To accommodate the growing number of students, the location of the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School moved from Beteng Hamlet, Muntilan Village to Patosan Hamlet, Sedayu Village, Muntilan District, around five hundred meters from the old location. Now the foundation is led by Kyai Juhdan Fathoni, while the daily management of the Al Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School is led by Ustadz Kyai. Dr. Muhammad Zuhaery Yunus, MA who is the son of almarhum KH. Muhammad Hadi Y. MA.

The development of Islam in the Asmat tribe is not only a journey. The belief and enthusiasm of the Asmat community towards Islam have led to Islamic teachings going there. Once a journalist from Amanah magazine named Mu'in Ahmad stopped by Asmat to meet Yusuf Bandar, the first person who has converted to Islam. According to history, Yusuf Bandar was previously a Catholic. His previous name was Tedious. It said that he had heard the call to prayer while wandering, then he was interested.

One of the factors of Yusuf Bandar's interest in converting to Islam is because Islam teaches about equality. Islam views all humans as equal and not the same as the Asmat culture. Asmat culture distinguishes between the upper and lower classes. So he feels Islam values more the freedom of a person's life.

Besides that, the main reason interested in the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School is because the pesantren is tolerant to the arts. Even this pesantren has art activities as one of the extracurricular activities for the students. It is related to the local culture that is close to the arts, especially music, singing, and dances. And this makes him feel that Islam fulfills his needs and can be an alternative to developing Islamic *da'wah* so that Islam becomes easy.

The pattern of education for Asmat students at the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School is divided into two periods, namely:

1. The education of the first generation of Asmat students, consisting of adults aged between 30-50 years. They were the first propagator of Islam in the Asmat valley.
2. Education for the new generation of Asmat, the current student of Asmat tribes is the average students SD, MTs, and MA. They came to the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School after receiving Islamic teachings and formal education in the Asmat area.

The curriculum or patterns of education applied in the early generation of the Asmat are closely related to humanistic education. Because as explained above, the background of this early period of Asmat students is a cultural background that is still very underdeveloped, so there is a need for coaching to adapt to the new environment. Therefore, there is a need for humanistic education.

Humanistic education is an educational approach that focuses on human development. The main goal of education is humanity that includes normative and personality. The first generation of Asmat students is Yusuf Bandar. The curriculum that fosters the Asmat people is the first step to provide cultural insight, civilized humanity. Because as we hear and see, numbers of isolated tribal communities still only use the koteka. Then the next education is Islamic education itself, whose emphasis is on monotheism, practical worship, morality, the difference between Muslims and non-Muslims to achieve perfect morals without forgetting physical and intellectual education.

The pattern of education applied to the new generation of Asmat students is different from the previous generation. It is due to differences in educational background, knowledge, age, understanding of Islam, and others. From this background, the education of Asmat students is adjusted to their abilities, and the level of education they have attended in the Asmat area like the elementary is the same as the Ibtidaiyah Madrasah, which will immediately enter the Tsnawiyah (MTs) level.

In this study, the authors took samples from the new generation of Asmat students (40 students) at the Al-Iman Islamic boarding school because the

previous generation had returned to the Asmat valley, and some of them had died.

Since the arrival of the Asmat tribe in the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School in 1988, until nowadays, various developments and changes have occurred, both in terms of numbers, customs, educational patterns, joys, and sorrows in learning activities, many others. It is interesting to discuss.

The development of Asmat students in terms of cultural customs has progressed. It can be seen from the adaptation of Asmat students to the environment of Islamic boarding schools and the community. According to Ustadz Zuhaery, the Head of Asmat Santri Care, some students can adapt to the community environment and Islamic boarding schools, but only some still have difficulties. It is due to cultural factors that are deeply rooted.

Likewise, Asmat students feelings while living at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, most of them are happy, while those are less happy to live in Islamic boarding schools because the environment is less supportive. They remember their parents and hometown, feel jealous, and sometimes feel insulted by other students (ordinary students).

Adaptation does take a long time. There is a correlation between adapting and happiness to live in a boarding school. The easier to adapt, the happier they live.

The pattern of education for Asmat students itself changes every year. It is related to the conditions and level of difficulty faced by the pesantren. From the first until the current generation, several changes are considered essential in the development of Asmat students.

The first generation of Asmat still used a humanistic approach and practical knowledge of Islamic teachings, namely lessons on manners, BTA, cults, speeches, reading prayers and movements, medical science (health), and many others.

The next generation of Asmat is no longer taught how to ride a boat, to make nets because they are deemed unnecessary and what is important is how to absorb as much knowledge as possible from the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School.

It is closely related to the educational background they have received.

The mental development of Asmat students who live in Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School is related to the treatment of Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School administrators. 40 Asmat students stated that the treatment of the administrators was kind and friendly, but some argued, the administrators are disciplined. From the development of a healthy soul with good guidance, it turns out that they still have difficulties in directing these Asmat students. The students who have lived in the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School for up to a year in average is about 45%, and who have lived for more than two years is about 55%. Based on how long they have lived at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, it doesn't mean that they can leave the negative culture. On average, Asmat students who study at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School are hard to get rid of their bad habits such as love to play, laziness to learn, and being naughty.

The learning development of Asmat students depends on the ustadz who teaches and the student's discipline. Most Asmat students stated that the lessons they received at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School were moderate, some considered it easy, but of course, some thought it was difficult.

In general, Asmat students think that learning at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School is easy because the average intellectuality of the Irian Jaya people (Asmat) is somewhat lacking.

From several developments and changes to the Asmat students who live in the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School, thanks to the support from the pesantren administrators, especially the boarding school leader, KH. Muhammad Hasdi Y, MA. According to the respondent's answers, the 40 Asmat students stated that they were all financed by the pesantren, related to food, clothing, lodging (dormitory), and free education fees.

The pesantren implements a foster student system by finding a foster father for Asmat students to finance all activities and equipment for Asmat students. In this way, the pesantren does not spend too much money. Currently, 90% of them have foster fathers.

Describe the religious condition of the Asmat ethnic students at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School. They divided into dimensions regarding the religious division of Glock and Stark, namely the belief dimension, practice dimension, knowledge dimension, and consequence dimension. The five dimensions of religiosity are detailed divisions to explain the characteristics and qualities of religion, both individually and in groups.

The quantitative data in this chapter are processed or presented in a relative frequency distribution table or a percentage table. Quantitative data were obtained by giving questionnaires to respondents, the respondents choosing the alternative answers that were available for each statement. To find out the condition of religiosity, each dimension of religiosity is followed by six statement items.

Of the 75 Asmat students living at the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School, the authors only took 40 people as samples from the entire population, and all of them were Muslim.

## Conclusion

### Religious factors

Based on the theory of Glock and Stark of five dimensions of religiosity, 95% confidence dimension means that in terms of their aqidah are mature. It is because supported by the guidance of the pesantren which is very intense. The dimensions of religious practice reach 70%, meaning that they are good at practices especially, basic worship (*fardhu*). And regarding the religious feelings, the percentage achieved is 87.5%, which means that their sense of responsibility towards their religion is good. Furthermore, regarding the dimensions of knowledge, it has reached 82.5%. This figure shows that their insight into religious knowledge is good, especially regarding the law. And finally, regarding the dimensions of religious consequences, reaching 57.5%, this figure is low. They are still lacking in social terms. It is because bound by the discipline of the pesantren, so they are less socialized with the local community.

### Factors that affect the diversity of the Asmat students at the Al-Iman Muntilan Islamic Boarding School.

#### 1. Internal Factors,

- a. Heredity. Regarding the heredity factor, this does not support the togetherness of Asmat students in Islamic boarding schools, because in general, the Asmat community pays less attention to religion.
- b. Age level is less supportive because most of them are teenagers, so they are still immature and not very good at religion.
- c. Personality, because they are still teenagers and unstable. Sometimes, they do bad things like their previous habit before going to the pesantren.
- d. In terms of their personalities, they are still unstable, so they are easily affected by mental disorders. For example, when they believe in their religion are sometimes lazy and sometimes diligent in worship, and many others.

#### 2. External Factors

- a. Family environment. It consists of two those whose parents are obedient to worship that they become obedient to, even though their families have different religions. Meanwhile, whose parents disobeyed worship, it also affected them. So they also rarely practice worship. The family greatly influences their development.
- b. Institutional Environment. The institutional environment for Asmat students is the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School. Through the special Islamic religious education for Asmat students and intense teaching, they are already quite good at religion.
- c. The community Environment Asmat students are lack socialization with the local environment because they bound by the discipline of the pesantren. So that outside influences only slightly affect their religious development at the Al-Iman Islamic Boarding School.

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