The Dynamics of Religiosity Conversion from Followers of Instagram Accounts @*beraniberhijrah*

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Abstract− This paper attempts to discuss the process and dynamics of religiosity conversion from followers of Instagram accounts @beraniberhijrah. Nowadays, many social media platform and accounts in Indonesia are currently using religious background as their attraction to get more followers. One of them is @beraniberhijrah account which has many active followers. Using qualitative method particularly case study method, this research aimed to explore the dynamic of religiosity of @beraniberhijrah followers. The research subjects were two followers of the Instagram account @beraniberhijrah who had been vulnerable since adulthood. Data were collected using interviews, observations, and using qualitative data analysis steps, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results showed that there were differences in the dynamics of religiosity before and after following instagram accounts @beraniberhijrah that contained beliefs, religious practices, all discussed related events, and religious knowledge. The factors that influenced the dynamics of religiosity conversion in following Instagram account @beraniberhijrah were understanding the relationship with religious traditions, invitations/suggestions, and emotional factor.

Keywords: conversion, dynamics of religiosity, Instagram account @beraniberhijrah, religiosity

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of advanced technology in this era stimulates society to have more advanced communication in their daily life. It can be argued as the ease for society to have easier and wider access for various information that they need through the internet. Many people take advantage from the use of internet, including children, adult, and elderly. The internet or cyberspace is a domain that is wider than the real world. In cyberspace, we can communicate with anyone without being limited by space, distance, and time. Various cyber platforms are also available for users such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WA, and Line. In terms of social media application, Instagram is currently the most widely used by society. The main feature of Instagram is Instagram users can share activities in the form of photos, videos, and captions. Statistics data showed that in 2016, the use of Instagram in the world and Indonesia was around 600 million users and there were 22 million active users from Indonesia. Surely this data will continue to increase every year.[1]

Anyone can use Instagram according to the needs of each user. Through Instagram, users can upload various content or information according to their needs. An Instagram account that is currently in the spotlight in Indonesia context is the *da'wah* account. The account contains *da'wah* in various ways. Through this account, the followers can share information about the problems they face by utilizing the features available on Instagram. Based on the researcher's exploration, the account with the highest number of followers in the *da'wah* field is the account of @*beraniberhijrah* with approximately 3.7 million followers in February 5, 2020.

The composition of addicted users from millennial generation is greater than x generations. If we look at internet usage trends according to age, it appears that the younger the person's age, the higher their internet consumption. This means that the internet has become the basic need for the millennial generation to carry out communication and self-actualization. Millennial generation itself is a generation born in 1981-2000, currently aged 20 - 39 years, so it can be said they have entered adulthood.[2]

The high dependency of millennial generation on social media corresponds to the theories of mass communication, namely the hypodermic needle model where media is injected in a passive audience. [3] Information in the mass media appeared just like a virus which attacks on the community where the virus quickly spreads. Passive audiences are people who are not trying to heal the virus, but rather receive information very openly and without deep thought. If the information was shared is good, the results will be good too. But

if the information was shared is bad, the results will be bad.

The shift in learning methods from the traditional way (offline) to the modern way (online) attracts a lot of public attention because it can influence the process of change. The experts call it disruption innovation, where this innovation appears slowly and suddenly can disrupt and replace the old system because it is easier to implement and practice. Disruption innovation plays an important role in the use of technology, where almost all disruption innovation uses sophisticated technology in its application .[4]

The @beraniberhijrah account conveys an invitation to migrate and also to share or to learn religious knowledge online. However, various learning methods have their drawbacks. The disadvantages of online learning methods are there is possibility for receiving misguided information and knowledge because not all information is reliable, and the possibility for unbalance social interaction that makes individuals feel either superior or inferior. Another drawback is the lack of direct (face to face) interaction with teachers that makes individuals getting hard to receive authentic and reliable information from credible sources or teachers. This gifts rise to new habits and makes old habits abandoned, just as the habit of reading books or original references will be diminished and many users only rely on fragments of sentences that require explanation.

All da'wah accounts in social media strive to invite followers to become better individuals, who have better understanding about religious knowledge and be closer to the Creator. This happens because of the dynamics of individual religiosity. The dynamics of religiosity is the cycles of the individual's state. It is related to the state of the individual in terms of living and believing in the teachings of his religion. The dynamics of religiosity will be changed. The individual's religious soul is basically will be in a stable state during adulthood [5]. This is evidence in the relatively fixed behavior (not easily changed) and always refers to the responsibility of the value system that individual chooses, both the values of religious teachings and those that originate from norms in life. The choice of values is based on careful thought. Therefore, a person's religious attitude in adulthood is difficult to change so that if there is a change in religious attitudes in adulthood, the change must have been through a careful consideration process.

The process of getting closer to God do not force someone to convert from one religion to another. However, when someone becomes a better person, it is also Hijrah. Many linguists agreed that etimologically Hijrah is moving from a place to a different place. But, in terminology there were difference among ulama about Hijrah definition.

Sayyid Qutub and al-Munawi explained that hijrah is not only meant as a territorial movement but also leaving things that are prohibited by religion.[6] In Indonesia, Milenial Hijrah movement spreads rapidly. This is due to the desire of individual to be a better person in terms of Islamic religion. The behavior of millennial hijrah follows Islamic religion studies, wearing clothes according to the Shari'a and behave according to religious beliefs. The Hijrah Movement is very influential on millennials, because millennials are more familiar with social media.[7]

According to the opinion of Max Heirich, religious conversion is an act where a person or group enters or converts to a belief system or behavior that is contrary to previous beliefs. Penido argued that the elements forming the conversion of religion are twofold, elements from within oneself where changes based on personal decisions and external elements that control the consciousness within that person.[5]

It can be argued that it is not easy to make changes in adulthood because adults need to make deep considerations and mature decisions which made personally and not by imitating others. However, in reality, the dynamics of individual religiosity are currently fluctuating due to the many problems and innovations in technology. Various factors underlying the dynamics of conversion to religiosity should be studied by researchers particularly for the purpose to obtain the most basic information about the reason why individuals (adults) can make change when the process itself is actually difficult.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Methods

This research was qualitative research using a case study method. The researchers used a qualitative approach to get depth and relevant data. The researcher used case studies as a method because the case study method explores the lives of subjects who want to be studied in detail and in-depth and can use various sources of information. The case study is one type of qualitative research, where researchers conduct an in-depth exploration of a person's programs, events, processes, or activities.[8]

B. Subject Identification

This research focused on the dynamics of the religiosity conversion process of @beraniberhijrah followers. The basic criteria for selecting respondents were: female, the millennial generation (19-37 years old), actively participate in @beraniberhijrah and are active in social media.

C. Analysis Techniques

Data collection in this study used interviews and observations. Researchers made

observation to check or add data generated from the interview. This study also involved the significant others (people who can provide relevant information related to the life of the subject before and after following @beraniberhijrah to the present) who can assist in the process of extracting data research.

The researchers begun the research by searching for respondents who fit the specified criteria. After the researchers have obtained respondents by the criteria, the researchers asked the respondents to sign the informed consent from the beginning of the study to the end of the study. The data collection process begun with the explanation of the interview purpose by explaining the purpose of the interview and asking the informant for approval. The researchers begun the interview process with a semi-structured interview that is giving questions based on interview guideline that have been prepared as an outline of the problem but do not provide limits. Therefore, the researchers interviews based on the situation. During the interview process, the researchers recorded interview process using a voice recorder. The aim was to make it easier for the researcher to transcribe oral data into writing. The researchers also observed simultaneously within the interview process.

The process of data collection and analysis in this study was guided by the steps of qualitative data analysis namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.[9]

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Result

The results of the study explained how the dynamics of religiosity conversion of followers of the @beraniberhijrah Instagram account. The researcher will explain one by one the dynamics of religious conversion from each respondent.
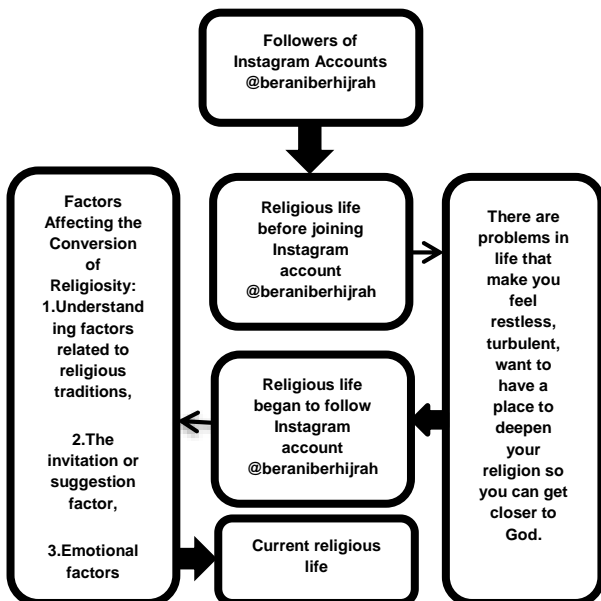
First respondent: Dea

Figure I: Dynamics Model of Dea's Religiosity Conversion

Before following the Instagram account @beraniberhijrah, Dea was far from religious teachings. Dea rarely does worship, the worship she does is the only worship that is done together. She even did not believe in the existence of God. However, several life problems made Dea felt restless, turbulent and need a place to deepen religion so that she can getting closer to God. Dea started to follow the Instagram account @beraniberhijrah and it made Dea find a suitable space for her to get closer to God and gain peace. Dea is happy to study religion, not only through the account (online) but also offline in the *majelis taklim*. The decision to depart was not significant, her faith was still unstable (she had felt the most righteous), but she could control it through studying the Qur'an offline. Factors that influenced the conversion of religiosity in Dea are the relationship with religious traditions, suggestions, and emotions. At this time, Dea has convinced God, carrying out everything commanded by God, not only obligatory worship but also sunnah worship and continues to strive to be a better person and more beneficial in various ways.
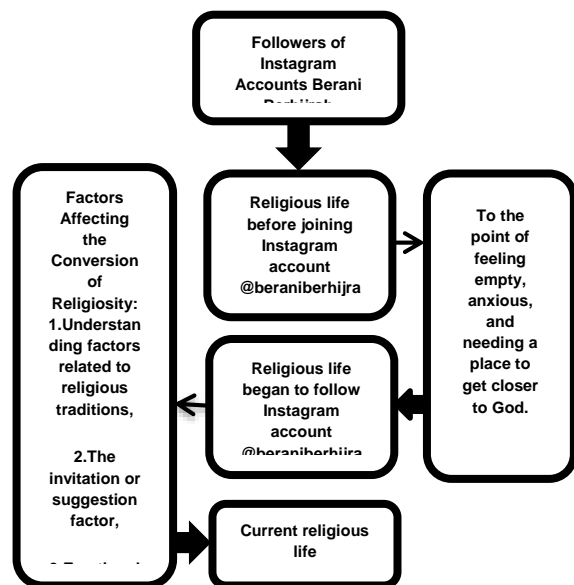
Second respondent: Fafa

Figure II: Dynamics Model of Fafa's Religiosity Conversion

Before following Instagram account @beraniberhijrah, Fafa did not believe in fate because of the feeling that she was always unlucky. She never prayed for years until at one point she felt that God was unjust and even she disappointed with God. Fafa felt troubled, anxious, and needed a place to get closer to God. after following the Instagram account @beraniberhijrah, Fafa felt that she could get a lot of information, obtain a place to

study religion, so Fafa felt compelled to further explore what she got through studying offline or through *Majlis Taklim*. Factors that influenced the conversion of Fafa's religiosity is factors in understanding the relationship between religious traditions, suggestions, and emotions. At present, she believes at the end of the day, when she faced a disappointment again, she feels grateful for being able to realize that the way of human life is not the same and nothing is perfect. Finally, Fafa is often grateful to Allah and has done the obligatory 5 times prayer in an orderly manner and carried out sunnah prayers and fasting.
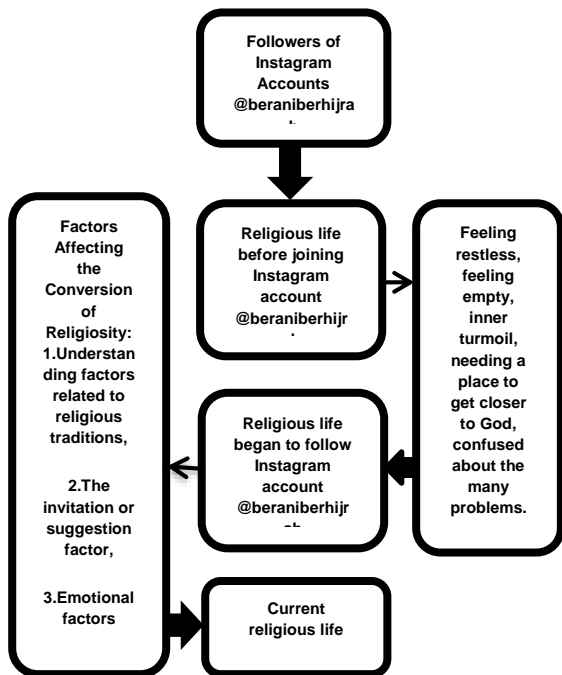
B. Discussion

Figure III: Dynamics Model of Religiosity Conversion

Based on the results of the analysis for each respondent, the researchers formulated the dynamics model of religious conversion as shown above. The model contains the dynamics of the causes and factors that cause respondents to convert. It appeared that all respondents experienced feelings of anxiety, turmoil, and need a place to be closer to God.

Change does not occur easily, many factors were behind the change or conversion in a person. The underlying factors of all respondents were the relationship factors with religious traditions, suggestions, and emotions. There were five factors influence the conversion of religion, namely inner conflict and tension of feelings, relationship with religious traditions, suggestion, emotional, and will.[10]

Various problems and demands of life accompanied by increasingly advanced technological developments made them want to find a space that can encourage them to change. Advanced technology accompanied by social media development makes it easier for anyone. However, it is important that learning directly and more deeply through competent teachers in the field of religion is a necessity to avoid feeling superior among others.

Researchers concluded that the emergence of trust in God, angels, holly book, apostles, the last days, and destiny go hand in hand with other worship activities. The attitude of those who initially did not pay attention to worship became practicing worship in line with their beliefs and beliefs about the existence of God. So if a person cannot yet believe in God, angels, holly book, apostles, the last days, and destiny, she also will not be able to carry out religious rituals properly. Conversely, if someone has believed in God, angels, holly book, apostles, the last days, and destiny, they will able to carry out worship properly because they have believed in a great power that can control all matters related to humans.

Glock & Stark explained that rituals and activities that show obedience as in the formal worship cannot be understood unless the activity is within a framework of beliefs containing the proposition that there is a great force to be worshiped. So if a person cannot yet believe in God, angels, holly book, Apostles, the last days, and good and bad fortune, then she also will not be able to carry out religious rituals properly, and vice versa [11].

The individual process of conversion does occurred either quickly or gradually through several stages. First, the respondents felt calm because religion does not influence their attitude. Second, they felt uneasy and starts questioning religion. Third, the conversion period occurs after the individuals experienced inner conflicts so that the individuals can make decisions in their life. Fourth, the respondents felt the real peace of being satisfied with the decision they have made. Finally, the expression period of individual conversion is when they can accept and obey the consequences of the religion they believed in.

IV. CONCLUSION

Glock & Stark explained that rituals and activities that show obedience as in the formal worship cannot be understood unless the activity is within a framework of beliefs containing the proposition that there is a great power worshiped.[11] Hence, conversion or becoming a better person than before apparently happens because of social media. Social media that conducted media disruption can shift traditional learning into digital learning and can exert influence on followers. Although social media propaganda can have an effect, its application must

continue to coincide with learning or studying directly to be able to strengthen further understanding, so that mutual judgment does not emerge. Several factors can influence the dynamics of religious conversion of a person, namely the relationship with religious traditions, teachings and suggestions, and emotional factors.

Suggestion

The suggestions that can be given based on the results of the research are as follows:

1) For respondent: Every human being is not perfect, humans are not free from mistakes and faults, thus they must try to stay away from everything that must be shunned. Improvements can only be done by the subject itself without coercion so that the subject is not burdened.

2) For the society: It is recommendation for society to be active for reminding each other, if there are still individuals who did mistakes then the society can provide guidance, not judgment.

3) Family: It is hoped that religious knowledge and its awareness are developed in early stage of life within a family, because religion is the initial foundation of a person's life.

4) Further research: future researchers can also conduct comparative studies that reveal religiosity with theories originating from other figures, religiosity from the views of other religions, or compare account of Da'wah @beraniberhijrah with other da'wah accounts. This will certainly add to the diversity of religious aspects of the discovery.

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