

Contribution of KKS Students in Fostering Faith and Piety of the Young Generation in Rural Indonesia

Abstract

The young generation in rural areas often faces challenges in fostering consistent faith and piety due to limited access to religious education and adequate resources. The KKS program is one of the strategic efforts to overcome this challenge by utilizing the potential of educated students to contribute directly to society. This study aims to analyze the contribution of KKS students in fostering the faith and piety of the young generation in rural areas, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in improving religious knowledge and practice among adolescents. The research method used is qualitative descriptive with a case study approach. Data was collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with KKS participants and villagers, and analysis of documents related to KKS activities. The results of the study show that KKS students have succeeded in making a positive contribution to the development of faith and piety of the younger generation through various activities such as religious teaching, mosque youth development, and the implementation of religious and social activities. This activity not only increases the religious knowledge of teenagers but also strengthens the sense of togetherness and social responsibility among the younger generation.

Keywords: Real work lectures, faith and piety development, rural young generation, religious education

1. Introduction

The development of faith and piety is a fundamental aspect in shaping the character of the younger generation with noble character and integrity (Ismail, 2016; Komariah & Nihayah, 2023). With globalization and modernization, the challenge of maintaining moral and spiritual values is increasing, especially among rural communities. The young generation in rural areas often faces limited access to quality religious education and the role of adequate religious leaders (Roy et al, 2020; Marshall, 2001). Therefore, collaborative efforts are needed to ensure that the development of faith and piety can be carried out effectively and sustainably.

Students, as agents of change, have great potential to contribute to the development of faith and piety of the younger generation through the Real Work Lecture (KKS) program. Students who take part in KKS are those who are in the final semester at the university and this program is mandatory for every student before ending their studies at the university. This program is carried out every year by every campus in Indonesia. KKS is a form of community service that provides opportunities for students to go directly to villages, identify existing problems, and provide real solutions based on the knowledge they have gained in college. Through KKS, students not only play the role of educators but also as facilitators who can encourage active community participation in various religious and social activities.

The KKS program provides opportunities for students to initiate various activities oriented toward the development of faith and piety, such as recitations, lectures, and social activities that integrate religious values. In addition, students can also provide non-formal education that teaches the application of faith and piety values in daily life. Thus, KKS not only functions as a means of service but also as a forum to strengthen the character of the younger generation through comprehensive spiritual coaching.

This article aims to explain the urgency and relevance of the role of students in the KKS program for the development of faith and piety of the young generation in rural areas. This article outlines the various contributions that can be made by KKS students, the challenges they face, and the strategies that can be applied to achieve these goals. Thus, it is hoped that there will be synergy between various parties, including the government, educational institutions, and the community, to build a young generation who are faithful and devout.

2. Literature Review

The development of faith and piety is a crucial element in the development of individual and community character (Muhibbin et al., 2022; Sider & Unruh, 2004). The development of faith and piety instills strong moral and ethical values in individuals. A person who has good faith and piety tends to have an honest, trustworthy, patient, and responsible attitude and behavior. These values are very important in forming a character with noble character and integrity. Faith and piety help individuals to become aware of God's existence and His role in daily life. This spiritual awareness provides a more meaningful guide to life and a clear direction in living life. With strong spiritual awareness, individuals can face various challenges in life more calmly and confidently.

Values instilled through the development of faith and piety, such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility, contribute to improving the quality of life. Religious individuals tend to lead more orderly, healthy, and balanced lives. In addition, a life based on religious principles often leads to more harmonious and peaceful social relations. The development of faith and piety can serve as a deterrent against various deviant behaviors, such as drugs, criminality, and promiscuity. By having a strong spiritual foundation, the younger generation is better able to distinguish between right and wrong and is more likely to stay away from behaviors that harm themselves and others. People who have strong faith and piety usually also have a high sense of social concern. They are more sensitive to the needs of others and are more likely to engage in social activities aimed at helping others. This is important in building a community that supports and cares for each other.

The young generation who are fostered with strong faith and piety will become future leaders who have high integrity and morality. They will be able to make wise and fair decisions and prioritize the public interest over personal interests. Leadership based on religious values will bring progress and prosperity to the wider community. In the era of globalization and modernization, the challenges faced by the younger generation are increasingly complex (Cole & Durham, (2007; Larson, 2002). The development of faith and piety provides a solid foundation for the younger generation to remain firm in holding religious values amid various temptations and pressures. Thus, they are not easily influenced by negative things that can damage their morals and spirituality.

The development of faith and piety is a sustainable effort and must be carried out systematically and involve various parties, including families, schools, and communities (Bouta et al., 2005; Huda et al., 2020). Through good coaching, it is hoped that the younger

generation can grow into individuals who are not only intelligent and skilled, but also faithful and devout, so that they are able to make a positive contribution to the nation and state.

3. Research Methods

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach (Kim et al., 2017; Stanley, 2014) to explore the contribution of KKS students in fostering the faith and piety of the younger generation in rural areas. The location of the research was in Pungak village, Pulubula District, Gorontalo Regency. The research participants consisted of KKS students, the younger generation in the village, local religious leaders, and other villagers. The following are the criteria and procedures for selecting participants for such a sample. KKS Students: actively participating in KKS activities. Younger Generation in the Village: generally between 18-30 years old, must reside in the village, and be active in community activities or events. Local Religious Leaders: recognized as a religious leader in the community, a minimum of 5 years serving the community, and a high level of respect and influence within the village. Other Villagers: over 18 years old, permanent residents of the village, and representation from different demographics (e.g., gender, occupation, social status).

In collecting data, researchers used observation, interview, and document analysis methods. Through the observation method, the researcher followed and directly observed various KKS activities related to faith and piety development. This observation aimed to understand the process and dynamics of the activities carried out. Interviews were conducted with KKS participants, the younger generation, religious leaders, and villagers to get their views on the contribution of KKS in fostering faith and piety. These interviews were semi-structured to allow for in-depth exploration. As for document analysis, the researcher analyzed various documents, including reports on KKS activities, religious teaching modules, and documentation of religious activities. The analysis of this document helped identify the types of activities carried out and their impact on the younger generation.

The data obtained from observations, interviews, and document analysis were analyzed thematically (Terry et al., 2017; Guest et al., 2012). This analysis involved encoding the data, identifying key themes, and interpreting the meaning of the findings. The researcher also used data triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings by comparing information from various sources.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 The Role of Students in Community Development

Students have a strategic position in community development and development. Armed with knowledge, skills, and high enthusiasm, they can play a role in various aspects of people's lives to encourage positive change and improve the quality of life. Students are considered agents of change who can influence and move society toward improvement. With their analytical and critical thinking skills, they can identify social problems and offer innovative solutions (Vertesi, 1999; Gambrell, 2016). Students can promote new ideas, such as gender equality, social inclusion, and social justice.

Students play an important role in improving community literacy and education, especially in rural and remote areas. They can hold tutoring classes, skills courses, and digital literacy training. These activities help improve the academic ability and practical skills

of the community, opening up greater opportunities for their future. Students can help empower the community's economy by providing entrepreneurship, business management, and marketing training. They can assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in developing products, improving quality, and expanding marketing networks. Students can also help in accessing capital and using technology to increase productivity.

Students can play a role in preserving local culture and the environment (Suatma & Miranda, 2019; Handayani et al., 2023). They can hold cultural activities such as art festivals, and traditional art training, as well as environmental conservation programs such as tree planting and waste management. This helps preserve cultural heritage and raise environmental awareness. Students from various religious backgrounds can initiate religious activities that aim to increase the faith and piety of the community. They can hold recitations, lectures, and other socio-religious activities. This activity helps strengthen the spiritual and moral values of the community.

Students can research various aspects of people's lives, such as social, economic, health, and the environment. The results of this research can be used to formulate more effective and targeted policies and programs. Students can also play a role in the development of technology and innovation that is beneficial to society. Students often have better access to information and networks with governments and non-governmental institutions. They can act as facilitators and communication bridges between the community and the government or other institutions. Thus, students help connect the community with existing resources and programs. The role of students in community development is very diverse and essential.

Through various initiatives and programs, students can make a significant contribution to improving the quality of life of the community and encouraging inclusive and sustainable development. Support from educational institutions, the government, and the community is needed to maximize the role of students in community development.

4.2 Benefits of the KKS Program for Faith and Piety Development

The KKS program not only functions as a means of community service for students but also has significant benefits in fostering faith and piety, especially in rural areas. The KKS program allows students to interact directly with the village community, providing opportunities to teach and reinforce religious values. Through lectures, group discussions, and recitations, students can spread a deeper understanding of religion, helping people internalize and apply religious values in their daily lives (Chickering et al., 2015; Galonnier & De Los Rios, 2016).

The activities carried out in the KKS are often designed to increase the spiritual awareness of the community. This includes programs such as religious counseling, joint religious activities, and religious rituals that involve the entire community. Increased spiritual awareness can strengthen community bonds and provide a clear direction in people's lives.

Students who are involved in KKS can be a positive example for the young generation in rural areas. By demonstrating attitudes and behaviors that are by the values of faith and piety, students can motivate and inspire the younger generation to follow in their footsteps. This positive example is very important in shaping the character of the young generation who are faithful and devout. Many villages lack the resources to provide

quality religious education. Through the KKS program, students can fill this void by providing religious lessons, holding Quran-reading courses, and organizing other religious activities. This helps to improve the quality of religious education in rural areas and ensures that religious values are properly instilled in the younger generation.

KKS programs often include educational and social activities that integrate religious values. For example, mutual cooperation activities, social services, and skills training can be taught from a religious perspective, teaching the community about the importance of cooperation, solidarity, and kindness. This helps people understand that religious values can be applied in various aspects of daily life. KKS allows for intergenerational dialogue in society. Students can act as a bridge between the old and young generations, helping to convey religious messages in a way that is easier for the younger generation to understand (Savage et al., 2006; Diana Oblinger et al., 2005). This dialogue is important to ensure that the values of faith and piety are continuously passed down from one generation to the next.

Religious activities initiated by KKS students can strengthen bonds between community members. For example, joint recitation activities, joint iftar, and other religious activities can create a sense of togetherness and mutual support. Strong and compact communities are better able to face challenges and work together to achieve common goals. Through KKS, students can learn to be more concerned and involved in social and religious issues. This experience is not only beneficial to society but also enriches students with valuable experiences that can shape their character as individuals who are more caring, responsible, and have a strong commitment to religious values.

Students involved in the KKS program learn to understand and experience firsthand the condition of the community. This fosters a sense of social responsibility and a desire to continue contributing to the development of faith and piety after the KKS program ends. They become more sensitive to the needs of the community and are encouraged to continue to play an active role in social and religious activities. Overall, the KKS program provides great benefits for the development of faith and piety, both for rural communities and for the students themselves. By bringing students closer to the realities of community life and allowing them to contribute directly, KKS helps build a young generation that is faithful, devout, and committed to bringing positive change in society.

5. Conclusion

The KKS program plays an important role in fostering the faith and piety of the young generation in rural areas. Through various activities carried out by students, religious values can be strengthened and applied in the daily life of the village community. Students, as agents of change, can provide quality religious education, organize religious activities, and become positive role models for the younger generation. KKS activities allow students to interact directly with the community, understand their spiritual needs, and provide relevant solutions. The program not only improves spiritual awareness and the quality of religious education but also promotes moral and ethical values, which are crucial in the formation of the character of the younger generation.

Students also play a role in facilitating intergenerational dialogue, integrating religious values in various aspects of life, and building strong and compact communities. This experience enriches students with valuable insights and skills, fosters a sense of social responsibility, and encourages their involvement in future social and religious activities.

Overall, the contribution of students in KKS is very significant in fostering the faith and piety of the young generation in rural areas. Support from educational institutions, the government, and the community is urgently needed to maximize the benefits of this program. With good cooperation, KKS can continue to be an effective forum to build a young generation who are faithful, devout, and committed to bringing positive change to the nation and state.

6. Limitation and Study Forwards

The implementation of KKS lasts for a limited period, only in the range of two months, so the assessment of the long-term impact of this program on the development of faith and piety of the younger generation may not be carried out comprehensively. The limited number of research participants, both from KKS students and the younger generation and villagers, can affect the generalization of research findings. The small number of participants may not represent the entire population. The data obtained from interviews and observations are qualitative and depend on the interpretation of the researcher. This can affect the objectivity of the findings, although researchers have attempted to use data triangulation to increase validity.

Further research can be carried out by focusing on the long-term evaluation of the KKS program in the development of faith and piety. This will provide deeper insights into the program's ongoing impact on rural youth. Involving more participants from different villages in different regions can improve the generalization of findings and provide a more representative picture of the contribution of KKS throughout Indonesia. Using a quantitative approach with structured surveys and questionnaires can provide more objective data and measure the level of change in faith and piety of the younger generation before and after the implementation of KKS.

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Consent

As per international standards or university standards, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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