

Research Article

The Role of Religiosity in Enhancing Academic Persistence among Adolescents in Orphanages

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Abstract

Adolescents require support from their parents to help them face the challenges that arise during their development. However, in reality, not all adolescents receive parental guidance, and some end up living in orphanages. Adolescents in orphanages tend to experience pressure and problems more easily, especially in the academic field. Initial data shows that orphanage adolescents are more prone to giving up when faced with academic failure, and some have not yet determined their goals or aspirations after completing their education, which relates to academic persistence. Adolescents with a high level of religiosity tend to have better guidance and resilience. This study investigates how religiosity influences academic persistence in orphanage adolescents, highlighting its significant contribution to fostering resilience and goal-setting. The sample in this study consisted of 361 respondents, all of whom were adolescents living in orphanages in Makassar, selected using purposive sampling. The measurement tools in this study used the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CSR-15) with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.713 and the Academic Persistence Scale with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.672. The results show that religiosity influences academic persistence among adolescents in orphanages in Makassar, with a significance value of 0.000 (sig 0.000; sig < 0.05) and an R-square of 0.277 or a contribution effect of 27.7% contribution of religiosity to academic persistence and the broader implications. Based on the study's findings, orphanages should increase the focus on religious education to foster adolescents' motivation to continue and complete their education to the fullest.

Keywords: *academic persistence, orphanage, religiosity*

Abstrak

Remaja memerlukan dukungan dari orang tua untuk membantu mereka dalam menghadapi tantangan yang muncul selama proses perkembangan, namun pada kenyataannya tidak semua remaja mendapatkan pendampingan dari orang tua hingga beberapa remaja berujung tinggal di panti asuhan. Remaja yang tinggal di panti asuhan cenderung mudah mengalami tekanan dan masalah, khususnya dalam bidang akademik. Hasil data awal menunjukkan bahwa remaja panti asuhan merasa mudah putus asa jika dihadapkan pada kegagalan akademik, beberapa juga belum menentukan cita-cita ataupun tujuan mereka setelah menyelesaikan Pendidikan, hal tersebut mengacu pada persistensi akademik. Remaja yang memiliki religiusitas yang tinggi tentu memiliki pedoman dan daya tahan yang lebih baik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat apakah terdapat pengaruh religiusitas terhadap persistensi akademik pada remaja panti asuhan di kota Makassar. Sampel pada penelitian ini berjumlah 361 responden yang merupakan remaja yang tinggal di panti asuhan kota Makassar yang diambil dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Alat ukur pada penelitian ini menggunakan skala Centrality of religiosity scale (CSR-15) dengan koefisien Cronbach Alpha sebesar 0,713 dan skala The Academic Persistence Scale dengan koefisien Cronbach Alpha

sebesar 0,672. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat pengaruh religiusitas terhadap persistensi akademik pada remaja panti asuhan di kota Makassar dengan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0.000 (sig 0.000; sig < 0.05) dan Rsquare 0.277 atau kontribusi pengaruh sebesar 27.7%. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, pihak panti asuhan semestinya memperbanyak aspek pendidikan religiusitas agar menciptakan remaja panti asuhan yang terus termotivasi untuk menyelesaikan dan melanjutkan pendidikannya secara maksimal.

Kata Kunci: *persistensi akademik, remaja panti asuhan, religiusitas*

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Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. During adolescence, individuals undergo various emotional, physical, and psychosocial developments that affect their lives (Khoeriyah & Harahap, 2020). Adolescence, also known as adolescence, has a broader meaning, including emotional, mental, social, and physical maturity (Hurlock, 2014). During adolescence, personality changes can occur very quickly and cause tension that can lead to emotional disturbances and affect an individual's thoughts and actions (Ayurani, 2023).

Adolescents need support and guidance from parents and other adults to help them face challenges during their development. This support will help adolescents cope with the changes they are facing. However, in reality, not all adolescents receive guidance from their parents. Several factors cause adolescents to be separated from their families and placed in orphanages. Orphanage adolescents are placed and live together regardless of their family backgrounds and are given guidance per existing norms and rules (Khoeriyah & Harahap, 2020).

Orphanages serve as a substitute for parents or families for teenagers and are responsible for meeting their mental, physical, and social needs. Teenagers who live in orphanages tend to be more vulnerable to various problems and pressures. This is due to the many rules, prohibitions, and certain restrictions every teenager must obey. Based on the initial data collection results from several orphanages, we found that half of the adolescents still had difficulty determining their dreams or goals for the future. Some also felt indifferent to their student duties and easily discouraged when faced with academic failure. The above issues can affect their resilience in learning or academic persistence.

In education, persistence can be understood as a conscious action by students to maintain their learning status and continue the educational process at a higher level (Mortenson, 2005). Constantin, Holman, and Hojbota (2011) conceptualize persistence as something unique and an inherent and unchangeable trait. Persistence consists of three dimensions, namely long-term purposes pursuing (LTPP), current purposes pursuing (CPP), and recurrence of unattained purposes (RUP). Internal and external factors influence students' persistence in completing tasks. Internal factors consist of gender, age, and religiosity, while external factors consist of culture, involvement in learning activities, and the learning environment. Donahoo and Caffey (2010) state that students actively involved in religious activities show that motivation and academic success are driven by faith and belief and that religious practices can help students. Research conducted by Brooks and Allen (2016) shows that fictitious kinship and religiosity play an important role in students' progress towards graduation.

Persistence is one of the character strengths possessed by individuals. This variable is important in realizing desires and achieving goals despite obstacles, difficulties, or feelings of despair (Seligman & Peterson, 2004). In learning activities, students have varying degrees of tenacity and persistence regarding their ability to acquire knowledge, master skills, and so on. Constantin, Holman, and Hojbota (2011) conceptualize persistence as something unique and an inherent trait that cannot be changed. One factor that can influence academic persistence is religiosity, which is in line with the results of research by Brooks and Allen (2016) that shows that religiosity can influence academic persistence in adolescents.

Religiosity is a Muslim attitude, as seen from various aspects of religion, which is practiced daily (Ancok & Suroso, 2015). Huber and Huber (2012) define religiosity as a person's thoughts and beliefs in viewing the world that influence their experiences and behavior in daily life. In this study, religiosity is constructed into five dimensions that refer to Glock and Stark's theory, namely the intellectual dimension, the ideological dimension, the public practice dimension, the private practice dimension, and the religious experience dimension.

Dynamically, religion plays a very important role in human life. Research by Khairuddin and Mukhlis (2019) found that adolescents with high levels of religiosity have higher levels of well-being than adolescents with low levels of religiosity. Thus, religiosity is related to a person's happiness (Khairiah, Hafnidar & Amin, 2023). This research shows that religious individuals or individuals with high religiosity certainly have better guidelines or resilience in managing the anxiety they face.

In addition, religiosity plays an important role in students' progress towards graduation, especially with the internalization of religious values within individuals. This internalization is related to belief in religious teachings in the heart and speech. Huber and Huber (2012) developed Glock and Stark's (1965) concept of religiosity, which states that there are five dimensions of religiosity, namely the intellectual dimension, the ideological dimension, the public worship dimension, the private worship dimension, and the religious experience dimension. Beliefs in adolescents are also closely related to a person's religiosity, which stems from their religious values. The existence of religious values in individuals will make adolescents more focused so that they can find solutions to the problems they face. This limited research has explored how religiosity directly impacts academic perseverance, especially among adolescent orphans.

In the last five years, there have been few research results that integrate religiosity and learning outcomes in the context of children in orphanages. Some research results only use orphanage children as an example of an intermediary to increase gratitude or other forms of religiosity by interpreting their conditions (Chanifah et al., 2021). Others have developed the religious character of children in orphanages from an early age (Rochanah et al., 2022), linked their social roles and religious development (Lestari, 2024),

and studied the nutritional fulfillment of children in orphanages who are students at Islamic schools (Gita et al., 2022). Given the limited specifications of the latest research results on orphanage children and the opportunity to explore the study of religiosity on the dynamics of striving in learning, this study aims to see how academic persistence in orphanage adolescents can be influenced by their level of religiosity.

Method

The subjects in this study were obtained using a non-probability sampling method with purposive sampling. This sampling technique was chosen based on several considerations, such as the total population, which could not be determined with certainty, the status of children living in orphanages but still having parents, and the uneven distribution of orphanages in each sub-district in Makassar. There were 361 adolescent subjects (158 males and 203 females) aged between 12 and 21 years (88 aged 12-15 years, 226 aged 16-18 years, and 47 aged 19-21 years). The majority of subjects were in high school (223 adolescents), followed by junior high school (94 adolescents) and college (42 adolescents).

Data collection used two scales, namely the CRS-15 and the Persistence Scale. Each scale had undergone logical, face, and construct validation tests. The CRS-15 (Centrality of Religiosity) scale was adapted into Indonesian by Chairani, Wimbari, Subandi, and Wibirama (2023) based on Huber and Huber's theory (2012). The CFA analysis results obtained an RMSEA value of 0.035 and showed that 15 items were valid, while the reliability results obtained a Cronbach alpha value of 0.713. The researchers adapted the Academic Persistence Scale using the persistence scale developed by Thalib, Hanafi, Aufar, Irbah, and Eduardus, (2018). The CFA analysis results obtained an RMSEA value of 0.049 and showed that of the total 45 items, 22 items were invalid or discarded. In contrast, the reliability results obtained a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.672.

This study used simple linear regression analysis using SPSS version 23 software. Simple regression analysis was a simple way to investigate the functional relationship between different variables. The simple regression analysis obtained an R-square value of 0.277, indicating that religiosity had a 27.7% effect on academic persistence. The F value obtained a result of 137.388 with a significance value of 0.00 or <0.05.

Results

The results of this study show several things, namely a descriptive overview of the subjects and the influence of religiosity on academic persistence. The following is an explanation of the descriptive overview of the subjects.

Table 1. Distribution of religiosity scores

Categorization	Categorization Formula	Result	n	%
Very High	$+ 1,5 \sigma < \mu$	$X > 70$	2	0.01%
High	$+ 0,5 \sigma < \mu \leq + 1,5 \sigma$	$64 < X \leq 70$	153	0.42%
Moderate	$0,5 \sigma < \mu \leq +0,5 \sigma$	$58 < X \leq 64$	80	0.22%

Low	$1,5 \sigma < \mu \leq 0,5 \sigma$	$52 < X \leq 58$	92	0.25%
Very Low	$\mu \leq -1,5 \sigma$	$X < 52$	34	0.09%

Description: $\mu = 61$; $\sigma = 6$; $N = 361$

Based on the Table 1, data analysis is conducted on the religiosity variable with a sample size of 361, which obtains the lowest score of 45 and the highest score of 71. The mean value obtained is 61, and the standard deviation is 6. With this data, the frequency of categorization of the religiosity level of orphanage teenagers is also determined, with the following description:

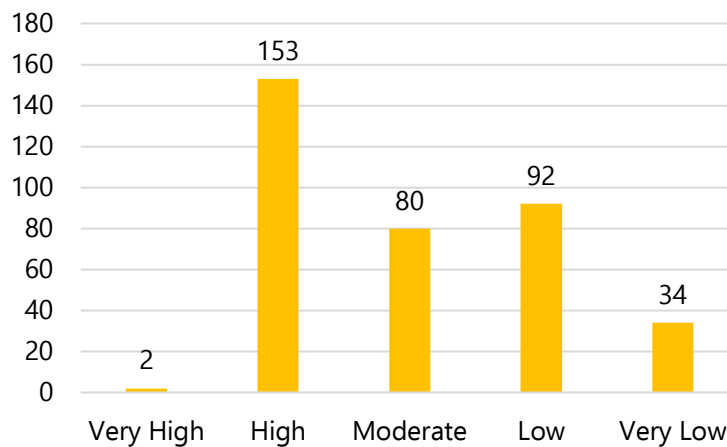


Figure 1. Frequency of categorization of the level of religiosity among orphanage youth

Based on the Figure 1, the religiosity variable's categorization scores are as follows: 2 adolescents (1%) obtain a very high score, 153 adolescents (42%) obtain a high score, 80 adolescents (22%) receive a moderate score, 92 adolescents (25%) obtain a low score, and 34 adolescents (9%) obtain a very low score.

Table 2. Distribution of academic persistence scores

Categorization	Categorization Formula	Result	n	%
Very High	$+1,5 \sigma < \mu$	$X > 90$	10	0.03%
High	$+0,5 \sigma < \mu \leq +1,5 \sigma$	$90 < X \leq 80$	131	0.36%
Moderate	$0,5 \sigma < \mu \leq +0,5 \sigma$	$80 < X \leq 70$	98	0.27%
Low	$1,5 \sigma < \mu \leq 0,5 \sigma$	$70 < X \leq 60$	90	0.25%
Very Low	$\mu \leq -1,5 \sigma$	$X < 60$	32	0.09%

Description: $\mu = 75$; $\sigma = 10$; $N = 361$

Based on the Table 2, data analysis is conducted on the academic persistence variable, which obtains the lowest score of 49 and the highest score of 94. The mean value obtained is 75, and the standard deviation is 10. The frequency of categorization of the subjects' academic persistence levels can be seen as

follows.

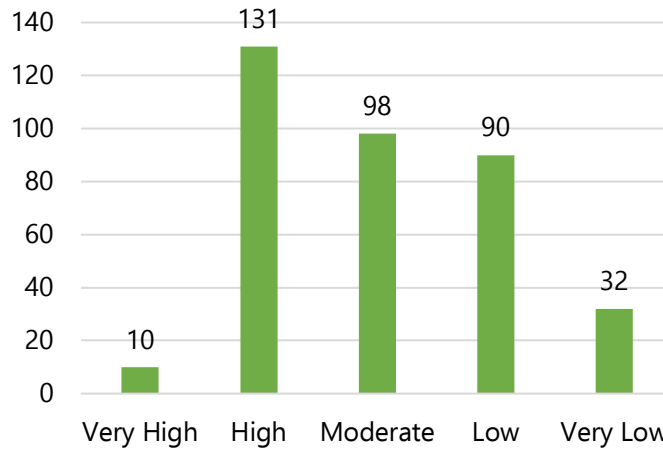


Figure 2. Frequency of categorization of academic persistence levels among youth in orphanages

Based on the Figure 2, 10 (3%) adolescents obtain a very high score, 131 (36%) adolescents obtained a high score, 98 (27%) adolescents obtained a moderate score, 90 (25%) adolescents obtained a low score, and 32 (9%) adolescents obtain a very low score. The following is a diagram of the categorization score for the academic persistence variable.

The effect of religiosity on the academic persistence of adolescents in orphanages can be seen from the results of a simple regression test as follows:

Table 3. Regression test

Variables	R Square	F	Sig.	Details
Academic persistence - religiosity	.277	137.388	0.000	Significant

Based on the Table 3, an R-square value of 0.277 was obtained, indicating that the religiosity variable affects academic persistence by 27.7%. In comparison, the remaining 72.3% is influenced by factors other than religiosity. The F value of 137.388 with a significance of 0.00 or <0.05 indicates that H0, which states that there is no influence of religiosity on academic persistence among adolescents in orphanages in Makassar, is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that religiosity influences academic persistence among adolescents in orphanages in Makassar.

Discussion

Based on the results of data categorization regarding religiosity among adolescents in orphanages in Makassar, 153 respondents (42%) fall into the high category. This shows that, in general, the sample of adolescents in orphanages in Makassar has a relatively high level of religiosity. Orphanage adolescents with high levels of religiosity tend to be better able to manage problems that have the potential to cause stress and anxiety, including the academic issues they often face. Hawari (1997) states that a religious person or

someone with a high level of religiosity certainly has good resilience in facing conditions that cause anxiety.

The level of religiosity can be influenced by several factors, one of which is the existence of needs. Broadly speaking, these needs are divided into four categories: the need for security, the need for love, the need to gain self-esteem, and needs arising from a threat (Radisti et al., 2023). Orphanage teenagers with high levels of religiosity have guidelines that make their lives more focused. Therefore, orphanages need to improve their understanding and also organize activities that can increase the religiosity of teenagers in orphanages.

Based on the results of data categorization related to academic persistence among orphanage teenagers in Makassar, there are 131 respondents (36%) who are included in the high category, which means that, in general, the orphanage teenagers in Makassar who are sampled have average academic persistence in the high category. There are several factors that can influence the level of academic persistence in adolescents. Internal factors that can affect a person's level of academic persistence include age, gender, and religiosity. Meanwhile, external factors that can influence the level of academic persistence are cultural factors, involvement in learning activities, and the learning environment.

Persistence increases the chances of achieving difficult goals, maintains a sense of comfort with success, and improves one's skills, understanding, and self-confidence (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Orphanage teenagers with high academic persistence certainly have high resilience, remain committed to continuing to develop themselves, and are consistent in achieving their goals. In addition, adolescents with high academic persistence can overcome obstacles or problems that hinder their journey in achieving their dreams.

The results of the simple regression analysis that has been carried out show a significance value of 0.000 or <0.05 , so it can be concluded that religiosity affects academic persistence. The R-squared value is 0.277, which shows that the religiosity variable contributes to influencing academic persistence in adolescents in orphanages in Makassar by 27.7%. The results of the above analysis illustrate that aspects of religiosity are important for orphanages to pay attention to in order to create adolescents in orphanages with persistent behavior and who continue to have dreams of continuing their studies.

The results of the analysis above illustrate that aspects of religiosity are important for orphanages to pay attention to to create orphanage teenagers with persistent behavior who continue to have dreams of continuing their studies. This is in line with research by Donahoo and Caffey (2010) conducted on students actively involved in religious activities, which showed that motivation and academic success were driven by faith and belief as well as spiritual practices, which are included in the dimension of religiosity.

Orphanages are important to pay attention to and fulfill every aspect of religiosity in adolescents'

daily lives by organizing and actively participating in social activities related to religious teachings and practices. Adolescents who are active in spiritual activities will have a stronger sense of meaning in life (King & Furrow, 2008). This is in line with Abar, Carter, and Winsler's (2009) findings, which show that adolescents with high religious commitment tend to have good self-regulation skills, which can then influence academic achievement.

In other words, aspects of religiosity can help orphanage teenagers set long-term goals, minimize setbacks, and remain focused on a single goal: academic persistence. Fulfilling these aspects can certainly prevent a decline in religiosity, leading to a decline in the academic persistence of orphanage teenagers. The factors that orphanages must consider so that adolescents can remain persistent in completing their studies are divided into two categories: internal factors, such as gender, age, and religiosity, and external factors, such as culture, involvement in learning activities, and the learning environment (Huber & Huber, 2012). Orphanages need to pay attention to these factors so that orphanage teenagers can develop persistent behavior in completing their academic studies. Research by Brooks and Allen (2016) indicates that religiosity plays an important role in students' progress towards graduation. The results of this study explain that religiosity has an influence on individuals' academic process.

The research described above supports the results of this study, namely that academic persistence will continue to increase if the religiosity of orphanage teenagers is fulfilled. Based on these research results, orphanages must be able to fulfill this aspect of religiosity in order to create orphanage teenagers who are continuously motivated to complete and continue their academic studies.

Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that adolescents living in orphanages in Makassar generally have a high level of religiosity and academic persistence. This shows that religious values play an important role in shaping perseverance and learning commitment among orphanage adolescents. The higher their level of religiosity, the stronger their motivation to persist, strive, and complete academic tasks despite various challenges. Thus, religiosity becomes one of the key factors that support the formation of positive academic persistence, although other factors also contribute. The findings of this study provide benefits for adolescents as a guide to enhance perseverance and motivation in achieving their goals, especially in the academic field. In addition, this research serves as a reference for orphanages in developing guidance programs that support the improvement of religiosity and academic persistence among their adolescents. Future researchers who wish to explore related topics are expected to pay greater attention to the distribution of research subjects and the use of more controlled experimental methods.

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