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Generation Z on the Choice of Religious Authorities: A Case Study of Religious Communities in Yogyakarta

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Abstract

The Internet emergence among generation Z in Yogyakarta portrays a unique phenomenon in selecting religious preachers. This research investigates how generation Z perceives religious authority. The formulation is answered by Carette's psychological-religious experience theory. This is a descriptive qualitative research describing the phenomenon of generation Z in perceiving religious authorities. The objects were 15 respondents from 6 religious communities in Yogyakarta. The data were collected through questionnaire and interviews to gain in depth analysis and analyzed through collective case study. The research reveals: first, those who utilize internet as their main resource put more belief on new preachers such as Abdul Somad, Felix Xiaw, etc. and believe that traditional *kyais* hold less Islamic spirit; and second, those who utilize internet as their additional resource respect more traditional *kyais* such as Mustofa Bisri, Buya Syafii Maarif, etc. who emphasize on Islam Nusantara, and consider that new preachers hold rigid Islamic values.

Abstrak

Munculnya Internet di kalangan generasi Z di Yogyakarta menggambarkan fenomena unik dalam memilih pengkhotbah agama. Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana generasi Z memandang otoritas agama, baik pengkhotbah baru dan kyai tradisional. Rumusan tersebut dijawab dengan menggunakan teori pengalaman psikologis-keagamaan Carette. Ini adalah penelitian kualitatif deskriptif yang menggambarkan fenomena generasi Z dalam memahami otoritas agama. Objeknya adalah 15 responden dari 6 komunitas agama di Yogyakarta. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara untuk mendapatkan analisis mendalam dan dianalisis melalui studi kasus kolektif. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan: pertama, mereka yang menggunakan internet sebagai sumber utama lebih percaya pada ulama baru seperti Abdul Somad, Felix Xiaw, dll dan percaya bahwa kyai tradisional kurang memiliki semangat Islam; dan kedua, mereka yang menggunakan internet sebagai sumber tambahan lebih menghormati kyai tradisional seperti Mustofa Bisri, Buya Syafii Maarif, dll. yang menekankan pada Islam Nusantara, dan menganggap bahwa para ulama baru memiliki nilai-nilai Islam yang kaku.

Keywords: Generation Z; religious authority; internet

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Introduction

Generation Z is defined as a millennial generation who was born in 1980 to 1997. They are characterized as an active user of social media and media platforms supported by the internet. This occurs since generation Z lives in an era when the internet is massively available and easily accessed. Furthermore, in this era the internet is provided in low price that enables all people from all classes can easily afford the internet. The internet has changed people's life because they use the internet in all parts of life such as working, entertainment, communication, business, education, etc. Generation Z puts the internet as part of their life, and it becomes one of information sources, particularly in getting religious or Islamic information. The availability of the internet is also utilized by some people to spread Islamic values or *da'wah* with the belief that people can easily find and learn Islam, and it is one of effective media. However, another generation Z still holds traditional method in learning religion in which they listen and consult to traditional *kyais* to get more Islamic knowledge. This group uses internet only as an additional source to learn Islamic knowledge.

Campbell (2012) introduced the concept of "networked religion" for such a phenomenon (p. 64). This concept is defined as a method which shows how religion functions in the society, exemplifies social keys, and shifts authority through the existence of internet. In this era, generation Z utilizes internet for various purposes, particularly spreading and learning Islamic knowledge. It is no wonder that the number of preachers uses internet particularly social media to perform *da'wah*. Social media also assists the preachers to communicate with the people or immediately answer their questions. This condition brings several benefits because preachers can explain religious practice and perform social interaction in networked society (Campbell, 2012, p. 64). Recently, religion online through the use of internet has brought transformation religious beliefs and practices since religious authority, community, identity, and rituals are performed through internet. This group is known as religion online.

The opposite group of religion online is religion offline. The term can be interpreted that this group does not utilize internet as a main source, instead of a secondary source which completes information search. This group may still holds on traditional way in finding information, particularly religious information. The condition also occurs in generation Z which holds religion offline. Different from religion online, the actors of religion offline prefers offline media rather than online media (Campbell, 2012, p. 65). However, they still utilize online media such as social media as a secondary media with very rare intensity.

The phenomenon above occurs in many parts of Indonesia, particularly Yogyakarta, a city of students for many prominent universities. Students from various background and areas come to this city to learn in the reputable universities. Their diverse background of course determines their response and experience in the emergence of the internet, particularly in

finding information of Islam and learning Islamic knowledge. This phenomenon undoubtedly creates unique condition in which generation Z perceives Islamic knowledge and chooses preachers as their Islamic leader.

The previous phenomenon results in different-religious perceptions among generation Z in choosing religious authorities. It occurs since the two groups use different approaches in perceiving religious information. This research aims to investigate how generation Z perceives religious authority, both new preachers and traditional *kyais*. To answer the question, this research employs Carrette's psychological-religious experience theory (2007). Studying religion on the internet and non-internet not only provides insights into religious practice and belief, but also explains current trends within choosing religious authorities and social interactions.

Research on online and religion offline has been conducted by some researchers. Campbell and Teusner (2011) in their research entitled *Religious Authority in the Age of the Internet* reveals that the emergence of internet has shifted people's understanding of authority by creating new positions of power, weakening traditional hierarchies, and providing new media which makes voice to the voiceless. Furthermore, the research reveals that the emergence Internet reshapes Christian leadership and institutions of authority. Campbell (2012) investigates relationship between religion online and offline in a networked society. His research reveals that the use of internet has shifted Western culture in receiving religious experience, performing religious practice, and shaping the identity. The research also reveals that online communities and online participation affect religion and community offline. These two studies imply that the emergence of internet has transformed people's perspective in finding religious information and selecting religious authority. The two studies do not investigate how generation Z perceives the dynamic phenomenon of religious practice and authority in this internet era. Therefore, this research aims to encapsulate generation Z's insight in perceives the dynamic phenomenon of religious practice and authority in this internet era.

This is descriptive qualitative research which describes phenomena of a certain context (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009, p. 35). With this method, the researcher does not have any control on the research variable. Thus, she only reports and describes the phenomena. This research employed 15 informants of 6 religious communities: IPNU, IPM, HMI, KAMMI, PMII, and Majelis Rosul in Yogyakarta. The data were collected through questionnaire, to gain comprehensive information, and interview, to gain in depth analysis of the phenomenon (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009, p. 201). The collected data were then analyzed through collective case study because it involves a comparison of several related cases (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009, p. 209).

Religious Authority

Cline (2018) asserts that the investigation of a religious institution's role in a society must be correlated to the structure of religious authority because its followers will legitimate the actions or law of the religious institution if they believe in religious authorities (para. 4). For an instance, when Indonesian Ulema Council legitimates for not consuming certain food product considered as not *halal*, Moslem will directly obey the rule and consider it an obligatory mandate. What basis makes the Muslim obey this rule is their belief to the religious author who can bring them to safety, happiness, blessing, and peace. Furthermore, religious authority has a very strong power to control people's behavior and command people though it is in the form of murder (Hamil & Smith, 1998). Followers obey the rules set by their religious authority with the belief of bringing them to happiness and peace. However, in some cases, some religious followers argue rationale choice of religious authority. This typical follower will analyze the sermon of their religious authority and might disobey the instructions based on their logical reasons. This is as stated by McBride (2016).

A primary insight is that (religious) authority exists to coordinate social action. I then argue that social coordination is a fundamental aspect of religious life, perhaps equally important as the social dilemma problems that have received attention in the literature.

This is to say that rejecting religious authority comes after social dilemma as the consequence occurs. However, logical reasons of the followers can defend their religious authority to obey and follow the *fatwa*. As another choice, people would rather to find another religious authority who agrees with their rationale choice.

Most of religious leaders build their authorities from charismatic (Cline, 2018, para. 6). The examples of charismatic authority of Muslim in this recent era, particularly in Indonesia, are *kyai*, *ustadz*, or *habib*. Those figures are believed to have charismatic, religious knowledge, and special power and thus, their *fatwa* is obeyed to gain the goal of life. People, particularly generation Z has their own choices in deciding charismatic of their religious authority. Their choices are strongly influenced by the emergence of internet, technology, and recent lifestyle.

Other religious leaders build their religious authority from traditional authority that regulates people's behavior, distinguishes wrong from right, and brings them to blessing and eternal happiness (Cline, 2018, para. 14). People consider the position of these religious authorities based on their personal competence and knowledge of religion, not gender, age, or family (para. 15).

Moreover, some religious leaders build their authorities based on rational, legal, and professional authority that mostly appears in a modern era as the answer of human behavior change (Cline, 2018, para. 26). These authorities posit that performing religious practices is

not related to their personal relationships or traditional norms. Competence, logical reasons, and knowledge base their decision. In Indonesia, such authorities are frequently considered as liberal and frequently rejected by some other authority groups. Despite this rejection, rational, legal, and professional authority still strongly believes that their spirit is built under Islamic values which are in line with eras. The Indonesian Ulema Council has declared that liberalism in Islam is perverting and following this concept is forbidden (Mudzhar, 2011, para. 2).

Psychological-Religious Experience

Religion plays a very important role in shaping a generation's character. Therefore, Indonesian government obliges schools to teach religion to the students. However, learning religion at school is not enough for the students; as the result, generation Z needs to find another figure to learn religion. In this era, the internet provides all the information we are searching for. It is no wonder that people, particularly generation Z utilizes internet as a way to find any religious wonder. Many studies reveal that in recent era, generation Z prefers internet-friendly religious authorities because of its ease and practical ways in providing religious knowledge (Intan, 2018, para. 1). The generation Z can access religious knowledge from their gadgets anytime and everywhere. This is in line with the spirit of generation Z that is practical.

Argyle (2012) explains that religion is more closely correlated to human nature, and knowledge of religious phenomena is possibly relevant to human's decisions and becomes one of the considerations (p. 79). Human basic need of religion and or religious experience urges them to find the best way to find any information and shape religious experience (Proctor, 2005; James, 2009). This occurs since people believe what they experience, and even, their belief is derived from their experience (Carrette, 2007, p. 1). In religious practice, experience in receiving something or learning something becomes their consideration in deciding what source to take or which authority to listen.

Webb (2018) defines religious experiences as an individual's subjective experience related to religion and objective reality of an individual's life (para. 1). The individual's religious experience will be different from one religion to another religion and from one religious sect to another. This occurs since they have different ritual and practices to believe and follow (para. 3). Religious experience becomes a consideration of generation Z to draw a decision and choose religious authority. On the other hand, decision and religious authority determine what experience generation Z perceives. Carrette (2007, p. 19) explains that

If experience is shaped by interpretation and interpretation by the social conditions, then the social agencies or institutions that have the power to provide the model of interpretation always shape experience, even as they form spirals of inter-dependence with other institutions.

It can be inferred that experience considers what generation Z selects in all aspects of their life, not excluding religious information or leaders. Both of them are interconnected and influence each other so that they are not separated.

Webb (2011) distinguishes religious experience from religious feeling (para. 2). He states that religious feeling comes from the presence of religion or experiencing religion. However, religious feeling does not change an individual's perception toward a religion. This is different from religious experience which influences an individual's perception and belief. Furthermore, Webb (2011) distinguishes religious experience from mystical experience (para. 3). Although religious experience strongly relates to mystical experience, not all-religious experience is mystical experience. Some of the mystical experience occurs for not agreeing with religious practices.

Religion Online and Offline

Religion online is betrayed by a set of common characteristics designed by the network structure and function of information communication technologies (Campbell, 2012, p. 64). These characteristics include networking community, creating storied identities, changing authority, performing convergent practice, and creating multisite reality (Campbell, 2012, p. 65). In the last ten years, facts have showed that religious authority, community, identity, and rituals are performed on the internet. This condition proves that religion online puts high influence on the society particularly n religious side.

Religion online becomes one of the choices for generation Z in finding religious information and religious leaders in performing the *da'wah*. There are many social media are utilized to perform *da'wah* in Indonesia. One of the most commonly used is Youtube. Youtube is widely used by religious leader to perform *da'wah* because they can upload a long duration of video which broadcasts full version and comprehensive learning. Internet platforms are mostly utilized by new preachers such as Ustadz Abdul Somad, Ustadz Khalid Basalamah, and Ustadz Felix Xiaw. However, old or classic preachers also utilize internet to perform their *da'wah* such as Gus Mus, Gus Sholah, KH Said Aqil Sirodj, dan Quraish Shihab. Their preference in utilizing internet platforms to perform their *da'wah* is because it is effective. This condition is a proof that the emergence of the internet is a revolution which brings social transformation in doing business, educating youth, performing daily tasks, and living with religion (Campbell and Teusner, 2011, p. 59). Furthermore, Campbell

(2015) posits that many studies present that the internet use in any religious purposes change religious practice and ideology, and it shifts the roles of traditional religious authorities (p. 66). It possibly occurs since internet enables people to be connected everywhere and at any time.

Besides religion online, religion offline still exists and some of Z generation consults to preachers with religion offline method. Most of classic preachers prefer religion offline to spread their belief and teach religion. They face to face meet their students giving sermon, teaching religious knowledge, and do religious consultation. This practice is basically performed in *pesantren* which emphasizes the presence of religious preachers (*kyai* or *ustadz*) and the existence of religious book (*kitab*). Campbell (2015) argues that religion offline with its traditional preachers adapt the condition of massively using internet as proved by many traditional preachers use internet platforms to spread their belief, teach religious knowledge, or perform *da'wah* (p. 78). They adopt the contemporary method as a secondary way to ensure that their teaching is perceived by all people and wider society (Campbell and Teusner, 2011, p. 62).

Campbell (2015, p. 74) posits that the emergence of internet use in *da'wah* results in shifting authority from religion offline to religion online.

The malleability of religious community and identity online has contributed to a struggle between traditional sources of religious authority and new authority figures appearing online.

This statement shows that the society is flexible in receiving any shift and change occurring in their world. When internet emerges with providing various platforms, they utilize it to spread their belief, share their Islamic knowledge, and search for Islamic information. However, this situation results in new struggle between two different types of religious authorities. Such a condition occurs in almost all religions because the emergence of internet has changed people's life in recent era (Kim, 2005).

This research reveals two big groups of generation Z in learning religion; they are religion online group and religion offline group. The two groups have different perspectives in gaining information and Islamic studies. Their preference in choosing religious leaders is influenced by their religious experience, and their preference influences the way they perceive religious practice (Siddiqui, 2016, p. 143).

Generation Z in Yogyakarta

Yogyakarta is known as a student city in Indonesia because tens of reputable universities in Indonesia are located here. The students of the universities come from any regions of

Indonesia with different background, education, economy, religion, and culture. Furthermore, great number of foreign students are also found in this city to continue their study in this city. Central Bureau of Statistics (2017) reports that there are more than 351.293 students learn in 110 universities or college in Yogyakarta.

Besides taking formal education in universities, the students learn informal education, particularly religion from various sources. Some students stay in *Pesantren* (Islamic Dormitory) such as Krapyak, Almunawir, Pandanaran, Wahid Hasyim, etc. Those are well known *pesantrens* in Yogyakarta which teach religious knowledge to its students with classical learning method by using *Kitab Kuning* or classical religion textbooks. The students learn religion from their teachers known as *ustadz* or *kyai* who are believed as their religious authorities because they master religious science such as Al Quran, Hadits, Fiqh, etc. Furthermore, it takes years for their religious authorities to master religious issues or able to read classical religion textbooks. Most of students who stay in *pesantren* or learn these traditional techniques are considered as the followers of NU. Another group of students learns in modern *pesantren* and does not read *Kitab Kuning* or classical religion textbooks. They have their own learning methods to understand Islam and sharia.

Some other students learn Islam and sharia from a ritual discussion or *liqo*. They gather and learn Islam from a chosen mentor in their community. Furthermore, they come to mosque or any learning places (*majlis*) to learn Islam. Meanwhile, some others learn Islam from their favourite religious authorities on social platforms such as Youtube, Instagram, Facebook, etc. They use these platforms as the main sources since they could not attend *majlis* or *pesantren* to learn Islam. They are more familiar with social platforms in gaining Islamic knowledge because they are digital natives.

Some generation Z who is eagerly learn to religion are participating in religious organisations such as IPNU (Ikatan Pemuda Nahdaul Ulama), IPM (Ikatan Pemuda Muhammadiyah), HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia), KAMMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia), PMII (Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam), and Majelis Rosul in Yogyakarta. These religious organizations are organized to affiliate with religious authorities since they have their own perspective in believing certain religious experience.

Religion Online Group

Religion online group is defined by Campbell (2015) as a group of people who utilize internet as their main source to learn. The respondents in this group believe that in this era, learning Islam can be conducted everywhere by only clicking their smartphone. Furthermore, they believe that they need to learn new knowledge in a fast time. The emergence of internet assists them learn access the Islamic knowledge in a quick time though they cannot attend

the *ta'lim* or the class. As digital natives, generation Z utilizes internet or social platforms as their main sources to learn Islam and sharia. Therefore, they will prefer internet-friendly preachers because they can easily learn Islam from them. Furthermore, they can download the video to repeatedly watch and listen to it. When they have problems related to Islamic values, they will directly search on Youtube or Google to find the answer. This occurs since the two platforms provide much information needed.

Some generation Z argues that the emergence of internet assists them to find any information easily. They do not need to attend a meeting or class to find the answer of their curiosity. They can either read the articles on Google or watch *tausiyah* on Youtube. Many people claim that finding information from the internet can be dangerous because the sources are not reliable. However, this generation Z has already claimed that they have their own role model and believe in several Islamic preachers and thus, they are not worried with reading misleading sources.

The emergence of the internet is also utilized by some new preachers who see that internet can be one of the effective in spreading their belief and teaching Islamic values to Z generation. They argue that most of generation Z is tightly bounded with the internet, and thus, more generation Z will learn Islam when they provide it on the internet. There are several names appearing as famous-new preachers who utilize the internet platforms as their media to perform *da'wah*. They are Ustadz Abdul Somad, Ustadz Khalid Basalamah, and Ustadz Felix Xiaw. The video of Ustadz Abdul Somad on Youtube has been watched 38.4 million times, Khalid Basalamah 40.5 million times, and Felix Xiaw 184,000 times. These are huge numbers presenting that the new preachers have significant viewers. Generation Z in this group utilizes the internet as their main sources to gain Islamic knowledge. The group also uses conventional method to learn Islam by attending *majlis* or class, though it is not as a primary source. These three examples of Islamic preachers actively upload their sermon on their social platform because their main listeners are generation Z as active internet users. It can be denied that their main goal uploading the sermon on social platforms is to embrace generation Z to learn Islam by using internet because generation Z spend more time on the internet and deliver the message to more people without any border. If these internet-friendly preachers do not utilize internet for *da'wah*, they could not spread Islamic to these digital natives who heavily rely on internet.

The sermon of some traditional *kyais* or Islamic preachers are also found on the internet either their articles or videos. This occurs since their followers or students upload the sermon with the purpose of spreading the knowledge and the belief to the people based on traditional techniques of learning. This condition enable religious online group to have more choices in studying Islam. They will choose a teacher or Islamic preacher who suits their belief and perspective. For example, the sermons of K.H. Bahauddin Nur Salim, a traditional

kyai who is teaching Islam based on classical textbooks, are massively found on social platforms such as Youtube. He routinely teaches Islam in his *pesantren* and teaches Islam for the basic understanding. His students upload his sermon to social platforms since he does not to spread Islamic knowledge to others. However, most of the viewers of his sermons are those who are learning or previously learn in traditional *pesantren*. This phenomenon occurs since the people has already had belief in what religious preachers or learning technique they should take.

The nature of human is to believe in what they learn, hear, and see. Furthermore, their experience will impose them to have new perspective and insight of world including experience in religion (Carette's, 2007, p. 22). Generation Z who belongs to this group will apply and believe in what they have learnt from their preachers. Furthermore, they will follow the *fatwa* or religious explanation of their preachers because they have believed it as the right one. Some respondents argue that after frequently listening to their preachers, they apply to what they have learnt. Most of the new preachers are discussing various topics related to Islamic law, belief, and even current-social issues.

Generation Z prefers religion online media as their way to gain knowledge because it is more suitable with their condition. Furthermore, they can access the knowledge anytime and everywhere since they do not have enough time to attend *majlis*. Furthermore, most of the respondents in this group are unable to read classic Islamic books known as *Kitab Kuning*. Thus, the emergence of new preachers who utilize the internet becomes a solution for their willingness to learn Islam. The condition then creates a new insight of seeing traditional or old *kyais* who teaches Islam in traditional way. In some cases, the respondents show disagreement with the argument of traditional *kyais* because the new preachers also show disagreement. It could be concluded that what the new preachers believe and argue will be agreed by the members of this group.

Generation Z also argues that they refer to articles to answer their religious questions. It is no wonder that many websites occur to provide Islamic knowledge. Zaenudin (2018) explains that internet has become a medium of *da'wah* because almost 75% of Indonesians are accessing internet in their daily life (para. 1). This condition urges many institutions to create Islamic sites with different contents for different readers or followers. Those sites provide Islamic knowledge, issues, and sharia frequently needed by people. Ali, a founder of Islami.co posits that website is considered as having more features because it has long lasting search engine, will not easily be disappeared, and people can easily get any required information (as cited in Zaenudin, 2018, para. 5). Some most popular-Islamic websites in are *eramuslim.com*, *voa-islam.com*, *almanhaj.or.id*, *muslim.or.id*, *nu.or.id*, and *muhammadiyah.or.id*. Ali classifies Islamic websites in Indonesia into four main big categories: conservative, politic, multicultural, and commercial (as cited in Zaenudin, 2018, para. 8). These categories are

believed to urge ideological competition among religious authorities to gain more followers or readers. This statement is proven by their massive advertisement to attract people to read their websites because their main goal is to campaign their ideology and concept in understanding Islam.

Conservative website refers to *salafi* or *wahabi* and is characterised by its prohibition to music, statues, and woman's appearance on the website. Though this category is considered as orthodox, websites with this category such as *muslim.or.id* and *almanhaj.or.id* are visited by 6.76 million of visitors within a year (Zaenudin, 2018, para. 11). Meanwhile, political category of website refers to political Islam that exploits religious sentiments and considers reformation in Islam as a motor of Muslims. Two most outstanding websites with this category are *eramuslim.com* and *voa-islam.com*. The third category is multicultural category of websites which strongly campaign religious harmony in Indonesia. Two outstanding websites with multicultural category are *nu.or.id*, and *muhammadiyah.or.id*. Zaenuddin reports that *nu.or.id* becomes the most outstanding website with Islamic content with 4.48 million of visitors. The last category is commercial which emphasising on building business from Islamic web contents. This website category does not emphasize on *da'wah* instead of building a new business by providing religious topics on websites.

From the four categories, Ali explains that websites with conservative category has the highest traffic on the internet because their visitors are the most compared to other categories. Table 1 presents the statistical data of several most popular Islamic websites in Indonesia.

Table 1. Statistical data of several most popular Islamic websites in Indonesia

No	Website	Category	Total of Visitors	Rank of Website in Indonesia
1	<i>nu.or.id</i>	Multicultural	4.48 million	579 th
2	<i>eramuslim.com</i>	Political	4700	604 th
3	<i>almanhaj.or.id</i>	Conservative	6.76 million	667 th
4	<i>muslim.or.id</i>	Conservative	5.07 million	729 th
5	<i>voa-islam.com</i>	Political	2400	1200 th
6	<i>muhammadiyah.or.id</i>	Multicultural	197.000	3252 nd

(source: alexa.com)

Table 1 shows that though NU is the biggest Islamic organisation with the biggest followers in Indonesia, its websites has less visitors compared to *almanhaj.or.id* and *muslim.or.id*. The data indicates that the traffic of visiting website is not considered the number of followers (*jamaah*), but it is considered by people's habit to utilize internet as the main source to gain information. It can be assumed that most of *Nahdliyyin* (NU followers) prefer traditional way of learning such as attending *majlis talim* or *pesantren* to learn from their religious authority. Furthermore, it can be assumed that most of the visitors of *almanhaj.or.id*

and *muslim.or.id*. are generation Z who relies on the use of internet as their main source to gain information. The consistency of website managers in routinely update information also becomes one of factors that make a website has high visitors.

Religion Offline Group

Jogjakarta has many big Islamic dormitories (Pondok Pesantren), such as Pesantren Pandanaran, Pesantren Krapyak, etc. The existence of these *pesantrens* brings influence on the existence of religion offline group. Generation Z who live in a *pesantren* will consult to their *kyais* or read *kitab kuning* to gain Islamic information and learn Islam. This occurs since they have easy access and capability to do so. Other respondents who do not live in a *pesantren* in Yogyakarta put more respect on traditional *kyais* such as Mustofa Bisri, Gusdur, and Buya Syafii Maarif. They may have background knowledge and experience to prefer these preachers before their coming to Yogyakarta. To learn the Islamic knowledge, they may come to *pesantrens*, *majlis*, *maiyah*, etc. to learn Islamic law and belief. Generation Z in this group utilizes internet as their secondary source for example when they do not have plenty of time to read *kitab kuning* or find preaching of their favorite preachers uploaded on the internet.

Generation Z in religion offline group believes that the preachers in this group emphasize on Islam Nusantara which is significantly understood by all Indonesians to hold the country's diversity, maintain national harmony of life, and refuse national disintegration. Islam Nusantara is defined as a concept of practicing Islam in the middle of diversity in Indonesia. The concept teaches Muslim in Indonesia to respect diverse culture, ethnics, and religion in Indonesia, and it is believed to effectively build harmony and peace in Indonesia.

Generation Z in religion online group shows disagreement with traditional *kyais* in some cases and has particular insight about them. On the contrary, generation Z in religion offline group considers that new preachers hold rigid Islamic values. It occurs because new preachers' ideas are not in line with their Islamic perspective. However, they believe that new preachers bring significant roles and impact in teaching Islam to generation Z who utilizes the internet as a main source.

Religion offline group claim that learning religion cannot be performed instantly. They need teacher who will lead them to find the truth. Furthermore, learning religion cannot be done with any untrusted sources such as teacher or books. Therefore, this group put more high interest on learning religion with traditional *kyais* who has capability and credibility in learning Islam. Furthermore, the *kyais* master the Holy Koran, Hadiths, *tauhid* knowledge, *fiqh*, *ushul fiqh*, etc. To be able to understand an Islamic question, a preacher must comprehensively learn many subs of subjects, and thus, he can answer the question with correct answer without any misinterpretation. For example, in understanding a verse of Al Quran, a preacher must understand several sciences including *asbab al nuzul* (occasions

or circumstances of revelation), Quran science, Hadith science, Fiqh, and *usul al fiqh*. Thus, understanding Arabic with its linguistic science is not enough to understand a verse with its meaning.

Conclusion

In this era, internet contributes to construct religious identities, encourage new forms of society, shift the understandings and preference of religious authority, blend traditional and new forms of social and religious practice, and build connection between religion online and religion offline. The research reveals two categorizations of generation Z. First, those who utilize internet as their main resource put more belief on new preachers such as Ustadz Abdul Somad, Ustadz Khalid Basalamah, and Ustadz Felix Xiaw, want to apply Islamic rules based on their perspective, and believe that traditional *kyais* hold less Islamic spirit. Second, those who utilize internet as their additional resource respect more traditional *kyais* such as Mustofa Bisri, Gusdur, and Buya Syafii Maarif who emphasize on Islam Nusantara, and consider that new preachers hold rigid Islamic values.

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