

The Existence Of Students And Contemporary Problems

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ABSTRACT:

This article analyzes the phenomena of fashion culture, food and funny among students of university in the perspective of contemporary sociology at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences University of Halu Oleo (2013). The research used interpretive paradigm which is emphasis on interpretation on the existence of a person or group of people against a sense of symbolism. In this context, the qualitative approach cored on a phenomenological study to describe phenomena and social reality at the work place (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). The results showed that students today are faced with various problems of contemporary social life that directly and indirectly affect their learning process. Apparently, the tendency of students to try fashion culture, food and funny (F3) is, in turn, adds to the burden of parents in the process of the course completion of their children and nephew as well as their grandson.

KEYWORDS: Existence, Students And Phenomena

INTRODUCTION

It is common when young people have successfully completed his or her education at the Secondary School level intends to proceed his or her study to university level in accordance with his or her interest as well as talents. When he or she successfully entered into a university where he or she interested in, he or she will be happy as well with both parents. In addition, some parents argue that continuing study at university level would bring a better life.

Indeed, male and female students as an elite youth is not only a hope for the future parents, but they are the greatest expectation for the community, state and nation. In other words, the wheel of development of any country lies on the shoulder of how productive and creative the youthful are. It is because they have intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, creative intelligence as well as spritual intelligence (Matta, 2002; Hawari, 2009; Vaneetha, 2016).

It is unfortunate when a potential intellectuals and future leaders failed to show the positive attitude and good behavior as an elite youth logically, aesthetically and ethically in the social context as expected by their all interested stakeholders. Ascertainly, it can be predicted how the future condition of the society, the nation and the country when it fails to mobilize a set of human generations to be smart and to be ethical (Piliang, 2008).

The existence of university as a life campus aims to develop all aspects of its students through educational process. Furthermore, the institution of higher education should give a priority to the process of enlightenment, so that the students later have intellectual, emotional as well as spiritual intelligence (Agustian, 2000; Freire, 2008; Nasution, 2009).

The effort to increase a spiritual intelligence seem more urgent when we deal with the social living conditions of contemporary society with its complex problems. It is undeniable to said that the complexities of current situation, moreover, effect students and becomes a virus of their life. The deployment of that virus also can be seen at family life, social environment of education and government bureaucracy. In addition, the students are confronted with a variety of phenomena of fashion culture, food and funny (F3) which are begin to permeate the campus environment today, as well as those compounded by the lack of the role model as a result of massive irregularities occurred within politic, bureaucracy and government (Peribadi 2007; Notoseputro, 2008).

METHODS

The paradigm used in this study is an interpretive paradigm that emphasizes the meaning or interpretation of a person against a symbol. It is intended *to interpret or to understand*. On the contrary, it is not to explain and to Predict as contained in the paradigm of positivism (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Therefore, this study used a qualitative approach in the context of phenomenological design as one of the qualitative strategy of the five types of design (ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenology and narrative) referred to Creswell (2013). Phenomenological design aimed to understand the response and experience within interaction. In this context, the study aimed to explore the meaning of the natural process of students interaction with regard to phenomena of fashion culture, food and funny (F3) at the campus of Halu Oleo University.

According to Van Manen (in Creswell, 2013) hermeneutic phenomenology attempts to interpreted the result of human thought that characterize the social world and cultural. In order to answer the phenomena, then the process of gathering the data developed through participative observation, in-depth interviews with informants, as well as the *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) and documentation.

Finally, after gathering data, and then it is analyzed qualitatively through phenomenological approach. So in the process of observation the ethnographic methods of communication was used heuristically with the result that the factors which are play a role within interaction can be investigated. Similarly, the transcription of conversation was analyzed through ethnomethodologic (Muhadjir, 2011). Moreover, Sanders (in Rahayu and Affandy, 2007) divides four steps when analyzing data, namely: (1). Description of the phenomena, (2). Identification of themes, (3). Develop *Noetic/noematic correlates* and (4). Essence abstract or *universals of Noetic/noematic correlates*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The phenomena of fashion culture, food, and funny (F3) have colored people lifestyles. They often spend their money without taking into account the benefits of the goods they consume. Ironically, the students also tempted to possess these different products and even began to fond of vieding to own the luxury items which do not deserve to possess. The students propensity and predilection to spend their parents shipment that should be used to meet their tuition, seemed to far away from an effort to increase their identity as a potential intellectuals. The phenomena would be clearly described in the following discussion.

1. The Phenomena of Fashion

There are many opinions evolved among informants regarding of fashion phenomena that has began to spread beyond the walls of university, including at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences University of Halu Oleo (Note: The acronym FISIP UHO stands for Faculty of Social and Political Science University of Halu Oleo, will be used henceforth). In this context, according to Peribadi, a lecturer at Department of Sociology FISIP UHO, that:

“It is very difficult, currently, to find a leader of young intellectuals who will faithfully provide the service of his or her community. One reason is because the younger generation has now become a slave of the results of human creation itself which is reflected in the pattern of attitudes and consumptive actions as well as hedonism, so lightly they "mortgaged their idealism" in the political arena, especially at the time of general election (Interview, May 20, 2013)”.

The statement above indicates that the consumptive behavior and hedonism which have been affecting the majority of students can be a future threat of a leadership crisis. Unfortunately, they are actually supposed to be agents of future change trapped into hedonism culture at the campus life. Currently, students tend to give priority to an enjoyment as well as pleasure in living their lives. Their interest to the surrounding environment has began to be forgotten by contemporary enjoyment. Furthermore, students nowadays have been confronted by a variety of exciting and bewitching temptations, thus they deviate from their idealism.

The results showed that students at FISIP UHO tend to spend their more time outside of the campus and waste it to do some useless activities which are not intellectually oriented. In general, they are caught up with the pleasure of urban communities which always on the spree by buying some expensive goods they interest in. It is recognized by one of the informant from students of Sociology graduated in 2010:

“Regarding of consumptive behaviors that occurred among students at FISIP UHO, I have seen that it has widely expressed in terms of style or fashion they complied both in the form and type of goods that are used at the campus environment as well as where to obtain those goods, whether purchased at the mall or through online shopping, it would provide satisfaction for them” (Interview, Saldi Suardi May 20, 2013)”.

The picture of life shown by contemporary communities, including campus communities begin to trapped by virus of hedonism and consumerism as the concept of pursuing pleasure and achieving satisfaction by following the flow of contemporary lifestyle. According to informant from student of sociology graduated in 2010 that:

“Today we are in the modern era, and if we want to go forward we have to keep up with developments, including the issue of this fashion, others have been in the moon while we are still on earth. Moreover, we are students, while still young we should strive to give the best of ourselves first before helping others. And according to me fashion is a development that should be

followed by the students, which is important in a way that is reasonable and can be balanced with our main duty to follow the progress of science in accordance with our respective disciplines” (Interview, Desti Felani May 20, 2013).

Currently, we can easily find some students on campus who always change their clothes, bags, shoes, cosmetic tools, electronic devices and some accessories with a variety of famous foreign and domestic brands. It is quite ironic when compared to the amount of students who are spending money to buy books, attending seminars and other academic activities. A student from Department of Sociology pointed out that:

“If we want to compare between students’ desire in spending their money to buy textbooks and the matters relating to the fulfillment of desires relating to fashion, of course, the percentage of spending it into fashion more than what has been mentioned first, because this is an indispensable requirement for teens especially as a student at university level. Fashion, moreover, is not just limited to shirt and trousers, but it is also about accessories, perfumes, handbags, shoes and so on. Furthermore, we would feel too embarrassed to appear on campus when most of our friends have used the latest clothing styles while we still wear the old one. (Interview, Jusniati May 21, 2013).

Frankly speaking, the tendencies of students of FISIP UHO to spend their money with the aim to follow fashion trends are greater than the desire to own some books or other academic facilities. This is because the fashion world is seen as an absolute requirement to be followed by a teenager especially by students. These symptoms indicate the existence of a strong prestige rooted within the student that he or she would feel incomplete if he or she does not use the latest fashion style.

There are many kinds of catalog of products wide spreaded within student environment at FISIP UHO, such as Oriflame which offers a wide range of beauty and body care together with a list of costs and benefits. Furthermore, there are amount of students utilised these catalogues to develop their business skills as well as to help them to have more latest items. They also at the same time can be a distributor with a marketing system in the credit form as stressed by student of Communications Department graduated in 2010:

“I have a lot of bags and branded shoes such as Sophie Martin, I sometimes use cosmetic products from Oriflame which has good quality but the price is also quite expensive. However, to get a cheap price then I have to be a member first by paying Rp. 50,000 to Rp. 70,000 then I will get a discount of

30% from the normal price listed in the catalogue when buying each product. So I can still reach the price of such products even the shipment of parents from home is limited. In addition, the ability to recruit new members gives a distinct advantage up to 30 % of all direct sales. So having the latest and branded goods no longer a very difficult thing for the students, because there are several ways they can do without having to buy at a very high price as it appears in the catalogue” (Ria Yayasanita, interview on May 23, 2013).

The amount of promotions of luxury goods that influenced the mind of students could be transferred to the intellectual development. Imagine, if that promotion is transferred in the form of sales of books and other educational facilities that can improve scientific instincts, then of course the students can develop positive competition among them in reading the interesting things. Unfortunately, it becomes a *quo vadis* because there is no the same promotion found within the framework of scientific development of students.

Furthermore, the phenomena of use of *soft lens* or contact lens and braces have been coloring students fashion style at FISIP UHO. Contact lens is generally used by people who have a deficiency in the sense of vision. Whereas braces used to align and streighten teeth and help to position them with regard to person’s bite. There is no logical reason that led to the students using the contact lens and braces, as defined as an integral part of the fashion.

It is undeniable to said that there are many female students at FISIP UHO decide on one hand to wear *hijab*, on the other hand they are helpless to resist the fashion trends that wriggling into a “*sea of the veil*”, so that “*Hijab Style*” is not able to be avoided. Some female students keep wearing tidy *hijab* with tight clothes, thin and even too transparent with different unethical style. Apparently, there is an ethics violation behind wearing that stylish *hijab*, due to the female students who wear *hijab* trapped by the phenomena of hair coloring. However, for some of them consider it as a common thing as expressed by one of the informant from student of Department of Administration graduated in 2012 that:

“For me the *hijab* or veil does not mean we have to look cheesy, it can also be fashionable as well as with hair coloring, rebonding or smoothing also be owned by the veiled female. In my opinion, it is a common as long as it does not interfere with other people's interests, the negative opinions of people regarding of veiled female together with her hair coloring and so on, according to me, are too relative, because there is a condition when we wear *hijab* also at the same time looked good at a different atmosphere, as if we are go outside the campus,

for example, go to the mall and so on. (Lusiana, Interview on May 27, 2013)

The statement above seem that one thing led to the rise of ethical violations in the form of hair coloring behind the hijab is the student who has decided to wear hijab does not able to interpret the meaning of wearing it, so the temptation of stylish hair and fashionable clothing is still more dominant within female students rather than their religious beliefs.

In fact, the necessary needs from a young intellectuals are passions and motivations to seek and deepen knowledges in accordance with their discipline of science. While the physical appearance, beauty and fashion are supporting factors that should not take precedence over other things, especially with regard to their main task as students. Finally, the students who have affected by consumptive culture will gradually lose their critical power, logic as well as analysis. As a result, we could lose our next idealists generation.

2. The phenomena of Food

In addition to the phenomena occurred within students at campus environment which tempted by various types of luxury goods as described above, the students also seemed to enjoy a variety of foods such as instant foods and so on. If the varieties of expensive fashion are able to possess, it can be assumed that the various types of food also have a same chance to be enjoyed. All informants who were interviewed stated frankly that every time they either alone or with their friends always come to places which provide special menu.

The effort to experience those typical foods it is by no means have to go to a expensive restaurant. However, there are certain places that serve simple food and the price also can be reached, as at the courtyard of Koni Building with its cool and comfortable environment provided various types of food which its acceptable costs. This place has prepared many kinds of foods and beverages such as chicken porridge, pisang ijo (green banana), toast, meatball, chicken noodle, ice coconut, fried cheesebanana and pure water coconut. Moreover, this place has visited by people with various socio-economic levels.

The students come to the place in addition to take meal, at the same time also they intended to discuss their various issues of life, whether related to their learning difficulties or even associated with their romance. The results of interview from informants showed that there are two typologies regarding of these various types of foods.

First, a group of minority students who are classified into middle income upward more likely to visit a place for singing in which it prepare a variety of music and songs that can be played. Furthermore, there are also varieties of foods and drinks that can be ordered in accordance with

each taste. For students who like to sing at the singing place would find multiple satisfaction, they make it as a strategic chance to develop their talent as a singer candidate as well as they also can enjoy various kinds of foods and beverages while hearing some songs on the stage.

Second, there are some students who come directly to a fast food restaurant like KFC in certain times to fulfill their wishes or appetite for that fast food. For those who come to this place doesn't mean that they are at the middle income upward level. On the contrary, it also often attended by students from the middle income downward class, because they can take pleasure from a comfortable atmosphere equipped with air conditioner and also the fee can be reached. Perhaps some of them are actually not able to go to these places, but because of the friendship with students at the middle income upward, so it brings them enjoy that delighted place.

The consumptive behavior among students and office workers seem to have significant correlation with urban development, especially in Kendari city as a capital of Southeast Sulawesi province which at the end of this decade has a very rapid progress in various fields of development, including the development of arts as well as cultures, and especially the development of building of supermarket and hypermart. This means that the social implications of economic and socio-cultural seemed to evolve and go hand in hand with its various problems.

Moreover, the atmosphere of urban developments invited directly and indirectly for the residents to take advantage of everything that can be reached and even to be enjoyed as much as possible. At the first they may be just come to walk around and look at its surroundings, but in turn they begin to make certain innovations to add the costs of their study which are actually unexpected costs.

The phenomena mention above, actually distinguishes between the behavior of students in the past and contemporary students, as a result of the rapid and swift urban modernization with its social implications. In that sense, there are some students often have irrational ways of thinking as well as an unfavorable action, whereas as an elite youth they are supposed to be agents of change, moral force and student government. A lecture of Department of Sociology at FISIP UHO stated that:

“Today's students are very much different from the students in previous decades, especially regarding of their identity. Students at previous decades, can be recognized as students from their daily appearance, best behavior, neat, polite and thoughtful act. However, today's students are very rarely have these conditions mentioned, so sometimes they are indistinguishable from other youth who are not students. Furthermore, students

at previous decades most certainly spend their resting time at the library. Unfortunately, a library today is too silent and only certain students come to visit it, whereas most others are in supermarkets, entertainment venues, restaurants and other crowded places” (Tanzil, Interview on May 25, 2013)

The citation above implies that the phenomena of antithesis and counterproductive reality of the existence of the student as a moral force and social control against government policies has occurred. It means that it is not in line with their identity and idealism as shown by previous generation when they support to the fall of Old Order regime in Indonesia. Similarly, in the history of the student movement that acted by a force 74 known as *Malari Affair* (happen on January 15, 1974) was confusing Soeharto as a president at that time when students demonstrate against the visiting of the Prime Minister of Japan to Indonesia.

Now, the unexpected behavior occurred in connection with a rapid practical politic or political pragmatism that promises a pile of material from some politicians. Therefore, a fundamental question arise is where they obtained that money to buy those some luxury goods as well as prestigious foods? In this context, according to the best graduate female student in 2013 who is now continuing her master degree at Indonesia University that:

“The student who force his or herself to have it all, though by means of peddle his or herself, is because he or she intends to be seen by others that he or she has those luxury goods. In addition, there is an internal factor which influence such habit that is the consumptive behavior that can not be blocked which eventually he or she would not happy before owning everything. In the end he or she uses all means in order to satisfy his or her ego”. (Musdalifah Bachmid, interview on 23 September 2013)

The rhetorical statement above which specifically targeted to the students who had the luxury goods and for those who enjoy the expensive foods is the self-imposed factor to pawn their pride for the sake of fulfilling their consumptive desires. A similar statement was expressed wisely and cautiously by a female student that:

“It seems there is no compulsion factor, but normally the surrounding environment forces them to appear like classy people. However, according to me, this should not be a reason to behave such that, but I do not know exactly because it is a privacy of everyone. I have seen many of them work at rich people place, and the salary they got from their job used for shopping and so on”. (Jusmawati, interview on 23 September 2013)

The student tends to eat at a restaurant together with his or her friends after attending a lecture. This shows that there are habits which influence each other, and the habit of gathering in public places is an adolescent identity that is difficult to avoid. However, if this habit continue for several times, it will give unfavorable impact on their future. Rabam Mall is a favorite place among students, because at this place they can find a number of foods and eat there, at the same time they can also relieve their fatigues by playing games at the timezone as well as going directly to the Gramedia Building.

There are some students who allocate their scholarships for fun activities and argued that the act is a perfectly natural thing because it is not done continuously. But somehow the portrait of students today which identical with having fun, consumptive culture and hedonist behavior being phenomena that should receive a serious concern from various stakeholders. Finally, the image and identity of ideal students can be found back on today’s students.

3. The phenomena of *Funny*

The students attendance rate at lecture that should reach 80% as well as completing their lecture assignments, are two things which always shown by students that seem to be funny. In addition, the laziness as well as *copy and paste* behavior have always been coloring students in their study. *Copy and paste* behavior applied to both assignments of friends who have completed it first or even through internet. A student from the Department of Public Administration pointed out that:

“I do not care about my lecture assignments and I frequently copy and paste my friends assignments, especially if I have most diligent one in doing the task. However, there are certain times when I do it by myself without copying my friends work. I push myself to find a similar assignment out through internet and then I copy it without editing anymore. Finally, I print it out and submitted it to my lecturer. It is useless also if I do my assignment whereas sometimes my lecturers do not check it at all, they simply listed down the names of students who already submitted such assignments”. (Aksar, Interview on June 15, 2013).

The informant’s statements above indicated that the *copy and paste* culture to the assignment becomes a habit that have been coloring today’s students. They are apathetic and do not taking seriously their role as a student. The various justifications then they delivered very wisely, began from a laziness reason, misunderstanding lectures or because of the lecturers do not examine in detail their given tasks.

It is, on one hand, supposed to be taken into consideration by the lecturers as well as the academic community in order to foster the spirit of student learning. However, the various

reasons mentioned above can not be accepted rationally as well as become a justification for students to do their duties improperly. *Copy and paste* behavior as unscientific action among students should be kept away from their habit since early. Because it will negatively impact on the emergence of uncreative, silly and indifference generations in performing their obligations.

The number of students at FISIP UHO follow the lecture with a nonchalant manner and it continues until the end of the semester. Ironically, there are some of them require a relatively high mark of what they have done for one semester. A lecture from Department of Public Administration noted that:

“There are also some among certain students who do not understand and come to claim their marks. They forgot that only a few meetings they attended the lectures, doing tasks carelessly, simply copy and paste others’ job as well as just answer a few questions or even cheated others work in examination, then they deserve poor marks because it is according to their efforts during that time. But that’s the reality of our students today, they want always gain something more than their efforts”. (Muh. Yusuf, interview on June, 2013).

The information above suggests that most students at FISIP UHO are still far from the criteria of ideal students. The desire to get something more with minimum efforts seems to have entrenched among students. This is proved when the number of students who often protested against their final marks obtained at the end of the semester, without realizing their minimal efforts during the semester, including the number of lecture processions that they should fulfilled.

Inevitably, students inability of preparing their thesis itself and the increasing number of students who use the services of thesis-making are evidences that students today are more inclined to things that are instant. Avoiding the assessment references together with escaping from the troublesome observation at the research site, or even ignorance of the methods of social research are the fundamental things for students to perform that unexpected action. It is recognized by several informants who do not want to be mentioned their identities that:

“Honestly, my thesis is done by my friend, I am lazy to make it by my own, I am lazy to bother myself and I do not understand how to put it together. So I ask additional costs to my parents in order to pay my thesis”. (Compiled from multiple informants, interview on June 21, 2013).

The information above provides an overview of how the students very clearly admitted their inability to conduct a

scientific research which is a prerequisite for them to achieve a degree. They do not follow seriously some subjects, such as social research methods, quantitative and qualitative research methods and some other important subjects in the lecture. It then becomes a burden for the parents to provide additional thesis-making service payment that should not be necessary. The extra costs strengthened the perception of parents, especially for those who far away from hometown, that the cost of education is more expensive, so it will affect their decision weather to send their children to university or vice versa. This condition is confirmed by one of the lecture at the Department of Communications FISIP UHO that:

“The actions of the students who use the services of thesis-making is very detrimental to many stakeholders in general, especially to students themselves and to their family. It will appear at the time of exam paper those who do not compile their own thesis, they do not understand the concept of their writing. Finally, they admitted that the thesis was made by others, it means you embarrass yourself. The other disadvantage is for parents who have to spend millions of rupiah for financing this thesis that should no longer imposed on them, will impact their motivation for sending their children to university in the future. In addition, it would damage the reputation of the institution if its students should be graduated by others through the making of this thesis. So it should be minimized as much as possible”. (Sirajuddin, Interview on June 25, 2013).

Unfortunately, there are some lectures who do not care about this situation. It is reflected in their indifference in guiding as well as directing the students on how to create a good final paper. In general, the supervisor approval sheet should be signed by supervisors after second consultation. Nevertheless, there are some of them put their sign on the sheet directly without any corrections.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

First, the phenomenon of fashion within students at FISIP UHO causes many pupils spend their more time outside of the campus as well as waste their time to activities that are not intellectually oriented. Generally, they are caught up with the pleasures of urban communities which always having fun while purchasing expensive items they wish. This portrait is a concrete manifestation of the consumptive as well as hedonic behavior of today society that has colored students idealism.

Second, the phenomenon of food shows the behavior of the students to eat at a restaurant or a particular place that serves variety of foods is done together after attending a lecture. This indicates the habits that influence each other, and the habit of gathering at the public places is an

adolescent identity that are difficult to avoid. However, if these habits continue, undeniably, it will give unfavorable impact on students future.

Finally, funny phenomenon in the form of *copy and paste* tasks is one of the actions that have been entrenched among students which are apathetic and do not taking seriously their role as knowledge-seeker. The various reasons are then submitted diplomatically ranging from feeling lazy, misunderstanding lectures or because of the lecturers do not examine in detail their given tasks. Furthermore, copy and paste habit impedes students to do their work in dead earnest, because they assume that doing a good job with that *copy and paste* will have the same relative mark.

The last but not least, to all students, especially students at FISIP UHO to perform consistently their academic tasks as well as their obligations as students. Furthermore, to parents and to academic communities as well as to all stakeholders should always guide and supervise their students in order for them to behave according to their identity as the academic communities.

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