

# Analyses of moral values of student activists' protest demonstrations in Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta

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### ABSTRACT

Protest demonstrations are legal according to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 1998 about the Freedom to Express Opinions in Public. This study aims to comprehensively analyze the moral values of the student activists' protest demonstrations in Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta regarding the causes, demands, and processions. The study was done using the principles of field research which employed the qualitative approach as the case study method. The researcher holistically looked into the activities and processes of the students' protest demonstrations. Data were elicited by several techniques, namely in-depth interviews, questionnaires, observations, and documentation. Data were analyzed by using the NVivo 12 Plus software. Findings show that student activists' protest demonstrations generally focused on the single tuition fee policy and other campus and government policies that do not favor students and citizens. Students' protest demonstrations in Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta carried along 28 good moral values and 15 bad moral values which means that students' demonstrations had more good moral values than bad ones. It can be concluded that it is not appropriate to judge students' protest demonstrations to carry only good or bad moral values.

Keywords: moral values, protest demonstration, student activist

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Universities play a crucial role in questions about free speech and the diversity of political viewpoints (Lukianoff & Haidt, 2018; Baer, 2019). Universities became a central place for the intellectual exchange of ideas and the debate of issues of societal relevance. They were also laboratories for new standards and norms that eventually spread to the wider public (Revers & Traunmüller, 2020).

This study was conducted on the demonstration actions by student activists of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University (Sunan Kalijaga SIU) from time to time. These actions tended to show immaturity in proposing aspirations and behaviors. Furthermore, these also tended to go against the laws, student activists' order rules and code of ethics and deviate from decent moralities. Meanwhile, it is expected that, in staging such protests, student activists must avoid acts of violence, vandalism, and riots (Matthews, 2022; Melchiorre, 2020). In other words, students' protests must be staged properly within moral conduct and decent behaviours in proposing aspirations to the university leaders or the government in accordance with good and proper moral values (in line with the current rules and regulations). It is in accordance with the students' characters as a channel for the society to convey their aspirations to the government by way of demonstrations (Arbinata & Warsono, 2021; Blaxland, 2019). In addition, students' demonstrations of SIU students must have the values of dakwah, amar makruf dan nahi munkar

(religious teaching, and a call of enjoining right and forbidding wrong). This is because the essence of a protest is the conveyance of rational, empirical, and systematic ideas to the policymakers for policies that are not aspirated, on the side of goodness and justice, nor in agreement with students and citizens in their social life in campus and the society.

Protest demonstrations that have moral and dakwah values and are wise and honorable were exemplified by Rasulullah Muhammad saw who was sent by Allah to renew and refine human's moralities. Even though he was heavily contended by the Quraisy tribe in his religious teaching, the great Prophet was persistent, patient, and consistent in asking people to do things in a good way. According to Ibn Hanbal (t.t: 381), the nature of Islamic teaching is the perfection of morality; the moral values in Islam are the perfection and development of moral values that have existed in the society, in line with what the Prophet has said, "I have been sent down to perfect moralities".

From the sociological perspective, social interaction among the civitas academica occurs in the interaction with campus members. This social interaction may bring about both associative and disassociative impacts. Associative interaction formulates cooperation, while disassociative interaction brings about social conflicts. There are at least four phenomena in social conflicts; namely individual differences, differences in cultures and backgrounds of individuals or groups, differences in interests, and rapid social changes.

The student activists' demonstrations are forms of disassociative impacts (Feldman, 2021; Shek, 2020). One example is students' protest demonstration about the single fee policy (SFP). Even though the SFP has been socialized to students many times through dialogues and discussions, student activists persist in rejecting the policy through demonstration actions. Between 2011 and 2015, there were 17 demonstrations rejecting the implementation of SFP, some of which ended in riots. It has brought a stigma to Sunan Kalijaga SIU as a campus of protesters. From these incidents, it can be said that there is an indication that students' moralities degraded. According to Lickona (2015: 20), among these indications, there have been students' ignorance of the existing rules and regulations and the use of bad language. The 06 November 2013 demonstration ended in violent chaos. Students set fire on used tires and smashed window glasses in the rectorate building. Student activists persisted that SFP made the students over-burdened, miserable, and socially suffering. The SFP brought about discrimination among the haves and the poor. Because of these reasons, student activists persisted that SFP is rejected. The students' stance on this problem has persisted up until the time of the Covid-19 pandemic (Dokumentation Data, 2019). According to the data, 50 and 75 students participated in the protests, while the student body of Sunan Kalijaga SIU consisted of 18,000 students; students who rejected SFP accounted for less than 0.5% and students who accepted it for more than 99.5%.

Based on the data of student activist demonstrations at Sunan Kalijaga SIU that have been presented above, the focus of the prominent problem is the main demand and the main point of the student activist demonstration is related to the matter of tuition fees. Because in the sense that SIU students are commonly from low and moderate majority socioeconomic status, it is very sensitive for them when there is a leadership policy related to tuition fees what they are called. This image of low and moderate economics shows the existence of classes. In Marx's theory in Novri Susan (2009), class conflicts are triggered by conflicts of economic interests, the existence of class structures in society; conflicting economic class on lifestyle. In addition, this act of demonstration was also carried out by student activists on the policies of campus leaders and / or the central government which were considered not pro-student / pro-people. Public policies set by the central or local government are considered detrimental to the wider community, student activists act to carry out demonstrations both in and outside campus (Arbinata & Warsono, 2021; Pavlic, 2020; Sripokangkul et al, 2018; Zare, 2020).

Considering these academic concerns, the researcher was convinced that it was time to look into the matter of this subject. This study aims to comprehensively analyze the moral values of the student activists' protest demonstrations in Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta regarding the causes, demands, and processions.

#### **METHOD**

This study was designed and carried out using the principles of field research utilizing the qualitative research approach of the case-study method. Moleong (2018: 6) stated that qualitative research is conducted to know what is happening and has happened to the research subjects in a holistic manner and presented by describing in words and language a specific condition that is natural by utilizing a number of scientific methods. Meanwhile, Creswell (2013: 20) stated that a case study is a piece of research in which the researcher investigates in minute detail a program, event, activity, process, or individual or group of individuals.

To understand the phenomenon, the researcher applied the 'follow your nose' manner of work. The subjects in this study consisted of students, Lecturers, Campus Officials, and Campus security officers. In addition, the researcher also reviewed related documents such as regulations and protest yells. Data were elicited by way of in-depth interviews, questionnaires, observations, and documentation. These data collection techniques were applied to make possible the check and recheck of the data so that data reliability could be achieved. In addition, an extension of the length of the data collection was taken to add to data reliability, particularly on data that were regarded as inconclusive. Careful observation, peer checks through discussions, and member checks (Allyn and Bacon. Inc., 1992: 124), were also executed for triangulation purposes. Collected data were described, reduced, and selected. Meanwhile, the data analyses were conducted by using the NVivo 12 Plus computer software.

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

#### Finding

Data elicited and collected by the researcher are data that are relevant to the topic of the study. These are responses to the open questionnaires subjected to the student activists, interviews with students and campus personnel, fliers' press releases, photos, and yells used in demonstrations and documentation. These data are analyzed by using the NVivo 12 Plus computer software (Figure 1).

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Figure 1. Analysis Display of the NVivo 12 Plus

The data are presented in the form of figures and tables to analyze the moral values reflected by student activists who carried out protest demonstrations in Sunan Kalijaga SIU. The following Figure 2 presents the word cloud display of the collected data.



Figure 2. The Word Cloud Display

In this Figure 2, the size of the words shows the frequency of their use; the bigger the words, the more frequent they appear in the data. The following describes the results of the data analyses in relation to moral values in student demonstrations.

#### Factors Causing Demonstrations

In this phase, the researcher analyzed the factors that initiated the students to stage demonstrations. These factors have been elicited from the interviews with the informants of students and campus leaders. The results of the NVivo for factors that cause students to stage demonstrations are as follows at Figure 3.

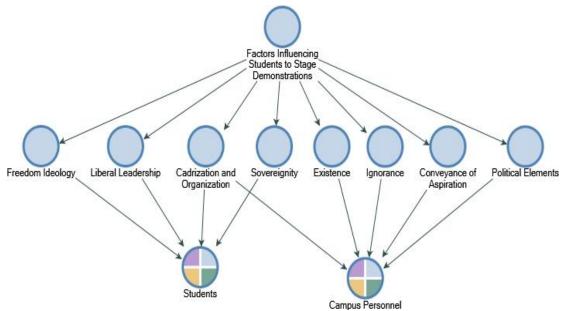


Figure 3. NVivo Analisis on Factors that Influence Students to Stage Demonstrations

Results of the analysis show four factors from the student informants that influence students to stage demonstrations: freedom ideology, liberal leadership, regeneration and organization, and sovereignty. Different factors are elicited from the informants from the campus leaders, for instance, regeneration and organization, existence, ignorance, aspiration conveyance, and political elements. These results can be plotted in the following Table 1.

Factors	A: Students	B: Campus Personnel
1 : Political Elements	No	Yes
2 : Existence	No	Yes
3 : Freedom Ideology	Yes	No
4 : Sovereignty	Yes	No
5 : Ignorance	No	Yes
6 : Liberal Leadership	Yes	No
7 : Aspiration Conveyance	No	Yes
8 : Regeneration and Organization	Yes	Yes

**Table 1. Factors that Influence Students to Stage Demonstrations** 

#### Moral Values in Students' Protests

There are moral values in every student's protest. These moral values can be distinguished into two kinds, namely good moral values and bad moral values. From the field data, it can be found that there are five good moral values and two bad ones in students' protests. This analysis resulted from data of the student informants. NVivo's analytical route path can be presented in the following Figure 4.

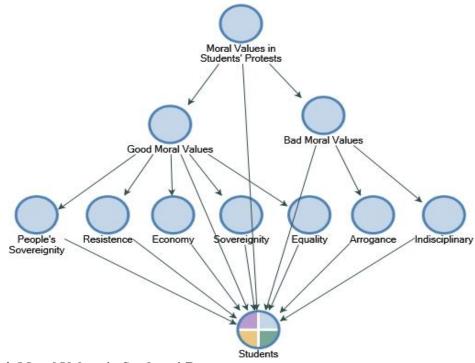


Figure 4. Moral Values in Students' Protests

#### Moral Values in Protest Yells

Yells can be used effectively to mobilize or lead crowds to participate in social protests. Music can make people emphasize a person who sings or shouts a yell. The impact is that other people will, consciously or unconsciously, be involved in what they hear. Yells, therefore, are not merely tools to arouse people's solidarity. They also are media to dispatch messages and unfreeze demonstration awkwardness. Results of the analysis of student protesters' yells can be presented as follows at Figure 5.

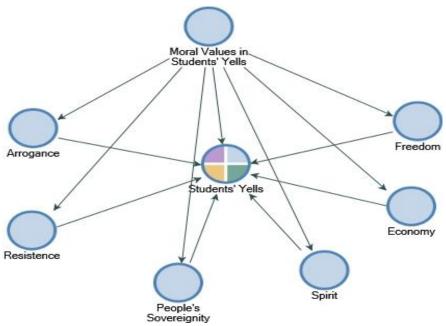


Figure 5. Moral Values in Students' Yells

### Moral Values Emerging from Documentation of Protests

Documentary data are in the form of photos taken during students' demonstrations. These photos can show many pieces interpretations which give the situations during demonstrations. These interpretations are analyzed to see the moral values contained in them—the analysis results in 18 moral values plotted in the following Figure 6.

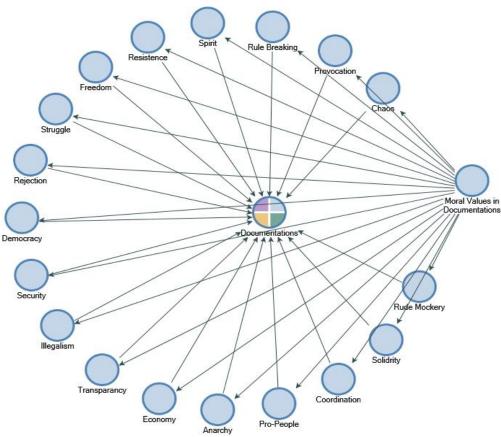


Figure 6. Moral Values Emerging from Documentations of Demonstrations

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#### Moral Values in Demonstrations According to Campus Personnel

There are differences in perceptions of moral values in protest demonstrations between students who stage the demonstrations and campus personnel who are frequently the subjects of the protests. In the study, the researcher interviewed several campus leaders and security coordinators concerning moral values that can be seen in students' protest demonstrations. The results of the analysis are shown in the following Figure 7.



Figure 7. Moral Values that are Formed according to Campus Personnel

#### Moral Values

In this study, the researcher analyzed the emerging moral values based on the data from documentation, security coordinators, students, campus leaders, and protesters' yells. Moral values are distinguished into two categories: good and bad. The results of the analysis show that there are 28 good moral values (positive) and 15 bad moral values (negative). The complete results of the data analysis are presented in the following Table 2 and Figure 8.

The good moral values identified in this study were 28 descriptions. This information was obtained from documentation, campus security coordinators, students, campus leaders and protest yells. The 28 good moral values consisted of transparency, peaceful protest, democracy, economy, existence, humanism, freedom ideology, independence, security, freedom of speech, courage, siding, sovereignty, solidness, freedom, concern, people's sovereignity, equality, leaders' firmness, coordination, creativity, aspiration conveyance, regeneration and organization, struggle, pro-people, spirit, solidarity, socialization.

Moral Description	A: Documentation	B: Campus Security Coordinators	C: Students	D: Campus Leaders	E: Protes Yells
Good Moral Values		Coordinators		Leaders	
1 : Transparency	Yes	No	No	No	No
2 : Peaceful Protest	No	Yes	No	No	No
3 : Democracy	Yes	No	No	No	No
4 : Economy	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
5 : Existence	No	No	No	Yes	No
5 : Humanism	No	No	No	Yes	No
7 : Freedom Ideology	No	No	Yes	No	No
8 : Independence	Yes	No	No	No	No
9 : Security	Yes	No	No	No	No
10 : Freedom of Speech	No	No	No	Yes	No
11 : Courage	No	No	No	Yes	No
12 : Siding	No	No	No	Yes	No
13 : Sovereignty	No	No	Yes	No	No
14 : Solidness	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
15 : Freedom	No	No	No	No	Yes
16 : Concern	No	No	No	Yes	No
17 : People's Sovereignity	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
18 : Equality	No	No	Yes	No	No
19 : Leaders Firmness	No	Yes	No	No	No
20 : Coordination	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
21 : Creativity	No	No	No	Yes	No
22 : Aspiration Conveyance	No	No	No	Yes	No
23 : Regeneration and Organization	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
24 : Struggle	Yes	No	No	No	No
25 : Pro-People	Yes	No	No	No	No
26 : Spirit	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
27 : Solidarity	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
28 : Socialization	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Bad Moral Values					
I : Anarchy	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
2 : Arrogance	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
3 : Egalitarian	No	No	No	Yes	No
4 : Rude Mockery	Yes	No	No	No	No
5 : Ilegalism	Yes	No	No	No	No
6 : Interdisciplinary	No	No	Yes	No	No
7 : Chaos	Yes	No	No	No	No
8 : Needs for Demonstrations	No	Yes	No	No	No
9 : Ignorance	No	No	No	Yes	No
10 : Coercion	No	Yes	No	No	No
11 : Rule Breaking	Yes	No	No	No	No
12 : Rejection	Yes	No	No	No	No
13 : Resistance	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
14 : Provocation	Yes	No	No	No	No
15 : Political Element	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

### Table 2. Moral values from the questionnaire, documentation, yell, and photo data

Another study result was Bad Moral Values, which identified as many as 15 descriptions. The 15 Bad Moral Values included anarchy, arrogance, egalitarian, rude mockery, illegalism, indiscipline, chaos, needs for demonstrations, ignorance, coercion, rule-breaking, rejection, resistance, provocation, and political element.

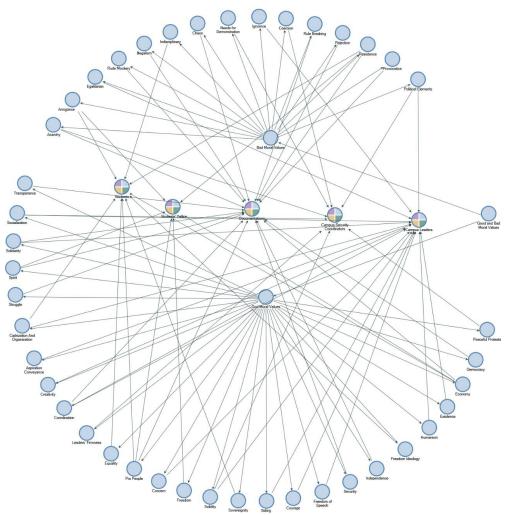


Figure 8. Moral Values Based on Data

#### Discussion

Sunan Kalijaga SIU has the core value slogans of being integrative-interconnective, dedicative-innovative, and inclusive-continuously developing. These core values are constructed on the religion-science paradigms of integrative interconnectedness. It means it becomes whole oneness, integrative and non-dichotomous. These core values become the foundations, souls, and bases to formulate the university visions, missions, and programs, make policies, and establish student rules and regulations.

Decree of the Senate of Sunan Kalijaga SIU Yogyakarta Number 2 of 2011 about the Rules and Regulations of Sunan Kalijaga SIU Yogyakarta Students (Augmentation of Decree of the Senate of Sunan Kalijaga SIU Yogyakarta Number 2 of 2008) is designated to optimize students' characterization in accordance with Islamic teachings and academic characteristics. This Senate decree regulates and manages students' life on campus to be more conducive and orderly in carrying out their duties, functions, and responsibilities as members of the *civitas academica*. On this basis, Sunan Kalijaga SIU Yogyakarta students are responsible for complying with the campus rules and regulations either as a member of the *civitas academica* or as human being. In principle, the decree has facilitated students' freedom of intentions and academic freedom to develop their creativity to achieve their productive capabilities. According to Iqbal, (1986: 35), children's creativities can be developed by actively participating in activities and responding to actions and reactions in accordance with their life environments. In order to facilitate students with skills and capabilities to achieve their individuality and collectivity in their living environment, religious education can be used as a process of *fitrah* maturation in which religious values and human missions are simultaneously implanted. Noeng Muhadjir (1987: 82) stated that educational programs are efforts to develop children's creativities, conserve divine and human values, and provide students with production capabilities.

In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 1998 about the Freedom of Speech, conveying opinions to the public, including demonstrations, is legal and justifiable. A protest demonstration is a protest movement by a group of people to put forward an aspiration or show action with a clear specific objective in front of the public as a form of resistance against injustice by either supporting, rejecting or correcting policies issued by the central or regional government. For students, a protest demonstration is part of their training in developing their creativity and innovativeness as one of the characteristics of excellent students responding to changes. According to AIPI (2017: 270), to produce excellent graduates, the university must implant five fundamental values for students to be able to face changes; these are resilience, adaptivity, integrity, competency, and continuous improvement.

Historically, the situation and condition of the Sunan Kalijaga SIU campus changed drastically since the inauguration of the 2016-2020 rector on 31 May 2016. The rector held to the jargon that all problems on campus could be solved peacefully without students' protest demonstrations that deviate from the campus rules. He is ready to stake his life if student activist protesters are so obstinate as to force an entrance into his office. The firm stance in defending his office in front of the student protesters has a positive influence substantially. The stigma of Sunan Kalijaga SIU as a campus of protesters has been eliminated by student activists' demonstrations that have changed and reflected the characteristics of excellent students who prepare themselves for academic and non-academic competencies.

From the preceding discussion, the researcher can formulate a comprehensive creative synthesis that what is meant by moral values in this study can be seen as "all moral values that become the bases and sources of power to uphold orderliness and obedience to rules and regulations of the students as members of the *civitas academica* to behave with good moral values in or outside the campus in accordance with the university core values, student rules and regulations, and codes of ethics that provide freedom of demonstrations to train their creativities in developing their critical, innovative, and creative characteristics as a mark of excellent students in facing changes." Based on the research findings and discussion, the study shows that moral values in the student activists' demonstrations in Sunan Kalijaga SIU campus can be distinguished into two categories of 28 positive moral values and 15 negative moral values.

Student demonstration is part of students' critical characteristics (Reichert, 2021; Revers & Traunmüller, 2020). Being critical is a general nature of students; it is why students are labeled critical activists. They show their critical attitudes to correct policies made by their superordinates whether or not the policies have implicted losses to students. It is true that students readily accept not all policies (Giersch, 2019). However, students' critical attitudes in responding to policies must be complemented by their responsibilities that students have the responsibility to carry out policies that campus leaders made (Türkoğlu, 2019). It is in accordance with Mahmud (1995: 16) that, on his shoulders, every person has three responsibilities as (1) an individual, (2) a member of the society, and (3) a part of the human being.

Furthermore, Mahmud (2004: 30) has this to say that freedom is generally divided into two categories: freedom of the individual and freedom to act. These two types of freedom are in the corridor of *taklif*; i.e., they require responsibilities. Therefore, every person with character always has two choices in their attitudes and behaviours; the determination of choice will be held responsible before Allah, God the Almighty. Besides, every human is given balance in developing their characters in order to be always good, controlled, and balanced among each other. In the general outline, four characters must be balanced: *hikmah*, courageous, *iffah* (safeguarding purity), and justice.

Scheler (2000) mentioned the presence of values in empirical and non-empirical facts. Meanwhile, morality is a human's habit concerning his behaviours and activities, which contains good and bad or right and wrong; meanwhile, according to A. Kosasih Djahiri (2006), the criteria for morality are norms that live in the society in the forms of religious norms, religious cultures, traditions or traditional habits, positive laws, scientific norms, and transcendental norms. In other words, moral values are related to general ideas of human behaviours that are good and appropriate. Therefore, the integration and relation between values and moralities can be illustrated as follows. In Suseno (2000), honesty is the character of an action that is truthful. Hence, the value of honesty is not the same as everything that has the value of honesty. What has the value of honesty merely becomes the carrier or container of the value. What has value is just a behaviour or relation, i.e., a reality in our world. The action and behaviour may or may not be present. Therefore, this so-called honesty does not 'exist' in a particular place nor at a particular time. In other words, it is the same as all values. They are not empirical realities; they are but apriori. Being valuable does not depend on whether or not there are behaviours that do or do not reflect the values. The value of honesty does not depend on the existence of honest people. Without their existence, the value of honesty is and has always been there.

On the contrary, student demonstrations are sometimes carried out by intimidation and vandalism so that they inflict bad values, violence, and destruction. In this case, the demonstrations are empirical, carried out in bad manners, with intimidation and vandalism. These bad values, violence, and destruction are behaviours that inflict bad characters, intimidation and vandalism. The demonstrations with such character are carriers or containers of the values. What has the values (demonstrations) is an action or relation, realities in our world. This action or relation may or may not be present, and there may or may not be people who conduct bad actions, intimidation, and vandalism. Demonstrations that are good, orderly, and peaceful are accepted by *civitas academica* in general. On the contrary, demonstrations that are bad, intimidating, and cause destruction are not accepted. The first demonstration conveys good, orderly and peaceful values, while the second one brings about bad moral values, intimidation, and destruction.

Student protest demonstrations in the Sunan Kalijaga SIU campus tend to have good moral values more than bad moral values, with a striking difference of 13 moral values. In other words, it is not appropriate to verdict that all students' demonstrations have bad moral values or all have good moral values. It has been shown by this study that students' demonstrations tend to have more good moral values than bad.

From the description above, it can be formulated a comprehensive creative synthesis that what is meant by moral values in this study is "all moral values used as a foundation and source of strength in upholding order in moral behavior both on and off campus for the academic community in accordance with core values, student discipline, and code of ethics by providing freedom of demonstration for student activists to exercise creativity in the development of critical, innovative, and creative traits as a hallmark of students who excel in the face of change". This creative synthesis can be mapped out as follows.

To make it easier to understand the concept map above, it can be explained, (a) the moral value of student demonstrations in and outside the Sunan Kalijaga SIU campus, (b) the existence of moral values core values of Sunan Kalijaga SIU (integrated scientific, Islamic, and nationalistic), (c) the existence of moral values of student discipline, (d) the existence of moral values for the causes and demands of demonstrations , and (e) the existence of moral values of the impact of demonstrations. The five elements in the concept map become a unified whole and contribute to each other's moral values. The implication of this concept map is that all social life activities in the campus of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta SIU are based on the source of moral values for the creation of a conducive and humanist-religious social life on campus.

The implementation of the concept map is represented by the application of moral values comprehensively, massively, systematically, and procedurally from by and to the academic community. Moral values are regulated in the university senate ethics commission. In essence, values, norms, and morals become a whole oneness because values and norms become moral benchmarks, and every moral in them implies certain value. Therefore, values and morals are two things that must be understood into one sense into moral values.

That demonstrations are justified and legal according to the Laws of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 1998. It can be taken to mean that, in essence, demonstrations are not attitudes, behaviours, or speeches that are all bad; on the contrary, they have more good moral values than bad. It is, therefore, appropriate to say that student protest demonstrations should be done with good moral values. Something that is legalized must carry good moral values through the application of the principles of demonstrations that hold fast to the legal rules contained in the Laws Number 9 of 1998.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the comprehensive analyses of the data and discussions of the research results, it can be concluded that student activists' demonstrations are generally focused on the single university fee policy and other campus and Government policies that students see as not pro-students or pro-citizens. Protest demonstrations of student activists in Sunan Kalijaga SIU campus Yogyakarta are found to have 28 good and 15 bad moral values. In other words, student activists' demonstrations in the Sunan Kalijaga SIU campus tend to have more good moral values than bad, with a striking difference of 15 moral values. From this information of the research study findings, it can be said that it is not appropriate to verdict that students' demonstrations all have neither bad nor good moral values. Protest demonstrations on campus begin with students gathering in front of the Multi-purpose building, marching to the rectorate building, and giving orations around this building. Demonstrations protesting the Government's policies begin from the Multi-purpose building and march to the *Revolusi* junction on Marsda Adisucipto Street.

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