# THE EFFECT OF SIMPLIFICATIONS ON TAX COMPLIANCE AND RELIGIOSITY AS MODERATING VARIABLE



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# LEMBAR PERSETUJUAN UJIAN KOMPREHENSIF THE EFFECT OF SIMPLIFICATIONS ON TAX COMPLIANCE AND RELIGIOSITY AS MODERATING VARIABLE

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# ΜΟΤΤΟ

"I'm not perfect. But I am trying everyday to concentrate on being better"

– Allen Iverson

"If you don't wake up and have your own thing, whether it's writing or reading or traveling or acting or dancing or singing or being a mother or a father, something that drives you, then it's all worth nothing. One of the key elements in happiness is purpose."

- Logic

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The author realizes that there are many shortcomings in the preparation and presentation of this thesis. The author apologizes if there are errors either intentionally or unintentionally. The author hopes that the research conducted can be useful for various parties.

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#### ABSTRACT

# THE EFFECT OF SIMPLIFICATIONS ON TAX COMPLIANCE AND RELIGIOSITY AS MODERATING VARIABLE

#### By: Muhammad Zuhdi

Tax compliance is one of the reasons that affect the amount of state revenue sourced from taxes. Tax simplification is an important thing that can improve taxpayer compliance behavior in carrying out their tax obligations. religious level can also affect the effect of tax simplification on tax compliance. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the effect of tax simplification and religiosity on compliance behavior. This study was conducted in Palembang, South Sumatera. Survey questionnaires were sent to 107 taxpayers that is the owner or manager of angkringan and caffe and only 75 responded. Consistent with previous research, this study shows that the effect of religious belief on obedience behavior is positive and significant. Religious beliefs moderate the relationship between tax simplification and compliant behavior. This study also has practical implications, as the empirical results provide information on compliance behavior to help governments develop strategies to increase voluntary compliance.

Keyword: Tax Compliance, Religiosity, Taxation, Tax Simplification.

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#### ABSTRAK

# PENGARUH PENYEDERHANAAN PAJAK TERHADAP KEPATUHAN PAJAK DAN RELIGIUSITAS SEBAGAI VARIABEL PEMODERASI

#### Oleh: Muhammad Zuhdi

Kepatuhan pajak adalah satu alasan yang mempengaruhi besaran penerimaan negara yang bersumber dari pajak. Penyederhanaan pajak merupakan hal yang penting yang dapat meningkatkan perilaku kepatuhan wajib pajak dalam melakukan kewajiban perpajakanya. tingkat keagamaan juga dapat mempengaruhi pengaruh penyederhanaan pajak terhadap kepatuhan pajak. Tujuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki pengaruh penyederhanaan pajak dan religiusitas pada perilaku kepatuhan. Studi ini dilakukan di Palembang, Sumatera Selatan. Kuesioner survei dikirim ke 107 wajib pajak pemilik atau pengelola angkringan dan caffe dan hanya 75 yang menjawab. Konsisten dengan penelitian sebelumnya, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pengaruh keyakinan beragama terhadap perilaku kepatuhan adalah positif dan signifikan. Keyakinan agama memoderasi hubungan antara penyederhanaan pajak dan perilaku kepatuhan. Studi ini juga memberikan implikasi praktis, karena hasil empiris memberikan informasi tentang perilaku kepatuhan sukarela.

Kata Kunci: Kepatuhan Pajak, Religiusitas, Perpajakan, Penyederhanaan Pajak.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

#### 1.1 Background

Tax is a source of government revenue to maintain welfare. Attempts to increase the state revenues from taxes are not an easy task. Various efforts have been taken by the government to increase state revenue from taxes (kementerian keuangan, 2011). However, the amount of state revenue from taxes taken is not in accordance with the APBN or state budget target. One of the causes of low tax revenue in Indonesia is due to the low level of taxpayer compliance in delivering and paying the taxes. (Nurkhin et al., 2018) Rahayu (2013) explain that tax compliance constitutes obedience, submission, and agreement to taxation provisions. Education efforts, counseling, and many others will not necessarily influence motivation of the taxpayers in fulfilling the taxation obligations because they do not feel the benefits of paying the taxes. This is due to the lack of their motivation in paying taxes and there are still many other things that make them less aware of paying taxes. The manipulation or corruption issue is an ilustration of the situation that is currently happening a lot committed by the tax authorities. With the fraud cases in the field of taxation, the taxpayers will worried and cannot acquiesce on taxes they pay. Such cases can make the taxpayer compliance or motivation to pay taxes decreases (Rengki, Herawati, and Puttri, 2014).

The Annual Report of the Directorate General of Taxes (DGT) in The Table 1.1 shows the ratio index of taxpayer compliance having fluctuated changes since 2012. In 2013 the person's taxpayer compliance ratio significantly increased by 7.16 percent. In 2014 the taxpayer compliance ratio of individuals decreased by 1.99 percent to 58.87 percent. By 2015 the personal taxpayer compliance rate has increased by 1.55 percent. The increase of the taxpayer compliance ratio occurs in N2016, at 2.7 percent. This indicates that the taxpayer compliance is highly sensitive and volatile.

| Year | Taxpayer Compliance Ratio (%) |
|------|-------------------------------|
| 2012 | 53.70                         |
| 2013 | 60.86                         |
| 2014 | 58.87                         |
| 2015 | 60.42                         |
| 2016 | 63.15                         |

**Table 1.1** Taxpayers Obedience Rate and Realization of Income Tax Revenue

Source: DGT (Directorate General of Taxes) Annual Report

One of the factors affecting taxpayer compliance level is tax simplification. The compliance behavior will influenced by Simplification of the tax laws in some number with some ways that are different. Simplification encourages tax compliance by providing the lower opportunity for it. Simplification can also reduce the uncertainty of tax laws and by encouraging greater compliance among risky taxpayers or, conversely, complexity makes taxpayers frustration or confused and thereby reduce their willingness to comply. For the tax laws which is considered simple, tax professionals must be relatively more confident that they have made accurate tax reporting. On the other hand, for the the tax laws that are considered difficult (complicated), tax professionals must lack confidence that they have made the accurate tax reporting. This is because tax professionals want to make correct tax decisions for simple tax laws. Apart from tax simplification, the other variable that can affect compliance behavior is religious beliefs. (Muslichah, 2015) (Pope & Mohdali, 2010) Religiosity affect the lifestyle of people, their choices, and the people they associate with. It requires a deep understanding of the dominant religion and its impact on taxpayer behavior, which is essential for an in-depth understanding of busyness.

Research by Delener (1994), Ger (2005) and Mokhlis (2006) defines that religious beliefs can influence behavior. Research conducted by Richardson (2008) and Palil et al. (2013) found that there is a certain relationship between religious beliefs and tax compliance, which shows that when one's religious beliefs are at a high level, tax compliance is expected to be at a high level.

According to Mokhlis (2008), religion specifically associated with the ones" relationship with God and how they express it in their life among the society. Religiosity will affect someone individually in choosing life goal and what they consider as their responsibility to themselves, others and God. Furthermore, Mokhlis (2008) categorized religiosity into two dimensions, i.e. internal (intrapersonal) and external (interpersonal) religiosity. Internal or intrapersonal religiosity explains about religious identity, religious goal, attitude toward religion, about values and beliefs. While external or interpersonal religiosity explain about religious affiliation, ritual practice, membership in religious community and attendance in religious beliefs on voluntary compliance with tax policies is hardly influenced by the taxpayer's personal religious beliefs. These findings support

research on religious beliefs on tax ethics conducted by Togler and other researchers. In other words, the findings of this study provide important evidence that the definition of moral taxation and voluntary compliance with taxation can be considered the same because it can only be influenced by intrinsic values formed by religious customs or moral obligations. For example the Islamic and Christian teaching, The shadaqah or contributions or tithing is highly recommended in maintaining the value of giving to the needy and these values may only be applied in contributing to nation building by paying taxes. In another words, deterrence may not be effective for Turks because they already have a strong will to fulfill their tax obligations to the country. Therefore, it is the order of the tax authorities to ensure that all actions taken by the tax authorities must not undermine the strong morale of taxpayers, who largely depend on their religious beliefs.

The article is not one of the religious attitudes of moral value when measuring the intrinsic value of the taxpayer; the interviewee's intrinsic value can come from both of these sources. Therefore, based on the request for the influence of religious beliefs with personal moral values (not derived forom the existence of religion) for further research on taxpayers based and obligatory. (Muslichah, 2015) this study is the first attempt to relate the tax simplification and the compliance behavior with religiosity as the moderating variable. This study suggests that religiosity can strengthen and weaken the relationship between awareness and purchase decision. It is claimed in some of the literature that religion is the key of cultural element that determines behavior (Babakus et al., 2004 and Cornwell et al., 2005). In his research, (Saad, 2015) found that the simplified tax rate for compliance behavior was lower. The tax authorities' attempts to simplify tax laws failed. In his research, the authors used the Flesch Reading Ease Index to measure the readability of New Zealand's taxation regulations, tax information bulletin (TIB) and tax filing guidelines. The Flesch Easy Reading Index ranges from zero (hardest) to 100 (hardest) difficulty levels. Their findings suggest that, with the exception of the Tax Declaration Guidelines, there has been no progress in simplification at that time. In addition, Tan and Tower (1992) suggest that shorter sentences and an active writing style will help increase the legibility of tax laws, thereby reducing the complexity of tax laws. Recent research by Pau et al (2007). However, this provides conflicting evidence of tax simplification in New Zealand. Researchers have used readability indicators (i.e., Flesch Easy Reading Index, Flesch-Kincaid Level Index, Average Sentence Length, and Percentage of Passive Sentences) to test the effectiveness of the 2004 Income Tax Law, TIBS and the newly formulated regulations. The researchers found that these steps could greatly simplify taxation.

Sawyer (2007) agrees that measures to simplify taxation have improved, but constant regulatory changes have reworked to some extent (as well as benefits). In addition to previous research, Saw and Sawyer (2010) used the same method as Pau et al. To study sample legibility on selected sections of the 2007 Income Tax Law, TIB and binding decrees. (2007). Overall, the results suggested further significant success to the review project, undertaken by the New Zealand government in its tax simplicity goals in the context of improved readability. Following this rewrite project, the results of this study also indicated that the percentage of people with an education level of Years 11-13 to understand the Income Tax Act 2007 has significantly increased.

A study on taxpayer's perceptions of the production system itself (due for release at that time) reveals the complexities of taxation in Malaysia, particularly in terms of record keeping, tax laws and unclear details. This finding is consistent with the six possible reasons for complexity pointed out by Long and Swingen, who are labeled: ambiguity, computation, change, detail, form, and commentary. McKerchar (2003) further identifies the most common problems that taxpayers understand when understanding the latest. Second, there are problems understanding the rules, soliciting taxes, and other related written information provided by the tax authorities.

Richardson's (2006) study involved 45 countries / territories and found that apart from education, income sources, judicial taxes and ethics, complexity is a major determinant of crime. His findings are in line with Cox and Eger (2006) who focused on State Road Funds in Kentucky, USA. The authors found that the complexity of procedural taxation led to an increase in illegal taxes.

#### 1.2 Statement Of Problem

- 1. Is there any gap in the tax simplification that will affect tax compliance?
- 2. Does tax simplifications affect taxpayer compliance in paying taxes?
- 3. Have the tax laws currently being used have reached simplicity?
- 4. Does religiosity affect taxpayer compliance in paying taxes?

#### **1.3 Research Purposes**

Based on the statement of problem above, the purpose of this study is to obtain information about Tax Simplifications that Affect Tax Compliance and Religiosity as The Moderating Variables, as for the details:

- a. To find out information about the gap in the relationship between tax simplification and compliance behavior.
- b. To find out the information about whether tax simplifications affect taxpayer compliance in paying taxes.
- c. To find out information about whether the tax law has reached simplicity.
- d. To find out information about wheter the religiosity affect taxpayer compliance in paying taxes.

#### 1.4 Benefits Of Research

This study intends to have several advantages, both theoretically and practically, depending on the purpose of the study to be achieved. The advantages of the study are:

1) Theoretical benefits

Theoretically it is expected that the results of this study can provide information to people who want to develop this research or want to use information in new research that is in line and it is also hoped that the information contained in this study can be evidence of the importance of simplification in taxation that will affect payer compliance tax.

2) Practical benefits

Practically, the results of this study are expected to open up the government's thinking about the importance of simplification in taxation so as to reduce ambiguity and improve tax compliance. The result of this research are expected to provide information for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) regarding the ease in carrying out the taxation process so that their financial plans become more clearly organized, increase business credibility and business professionalism.

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