

ANALYSING THE VALIDITY OF EXCELLENT UMMAH PERSONALITY AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS USING CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

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Abstract: *This study was carried out to confirm the validity of the excellent ummah personality scale. The excellent ummah personality was represented using six sub-constructs, namely ibadah (worship), akidah (faith), akhlak (attitude) towards self (6 items), akhlak (attitude) towards family (6 items) and akhlak (attitude) towards society (6 items). Using purposive sampling technique, a total of 415 respondents from six universities were chosen as the participants. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using the AMOS software version 25.0. Initially, the measurement model of excellent ummah personality had demonstrated poor-fit indices whilst the correlation between sub-constructs was shown to be high. However, after undergoing the goodness-of-fit, results for the fit indices for measurement model were found to have been improved. The evaluation on the validity and reliability has also been performed for the measurement model. The number of items remaining for modified measurement model was 3 items for ibadah, 3 items for akidah, 3 items for akhlak towards family and 3 items for akhlak towards society. Therefore, this scale, which has undergone the CFA process, is valid as the measurement tool to assess the level of excellent ummah personality among Muslim students.*

Keywords: *The Excellent Ummah Personality, Ibadah, Akidah, Akhlak Towards Family, Akhlak Towards Society, Muslim Students*

Introduction

The ummah of Nabi Muhammad SAW (p.b.u.h) were stated as the best ummah. Those were described as enjoining what is right (ma'ruf), forbidding what is wrong (munkar) and believe in Allah SWT (al-Quran 3:110). This personality proved that there is relationship between the ummah's excellence with the faith to Allah SWT (al-Quran 2:1-6, 23:1-11, 3:104). An excellent ummah are those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what Allah has provided for them, believe in al-Quran and what was revealed before and believe the

Hereafter (al-Quran 2:1-6, 31:5). In addition, they are also humbly submissive during prayer, turn away from ill speech, are observant of zakah, and guard their private parts, are attentive to their trusts and promises, maintain the prayer carefully, and will enter paradise (al-Firdaus) eternally (al-Quran 23:1-11). They also obey the Messenger, make lawful the good things and prohibit the evil, believe in the Prophet (p.b.u.h), honour him, support him and follow his teachings (al-Quran 7:8,157), fight for Islam with wealth and lives (a-Quran 9:88), obey God and his Messenger (al-Quran 24:51), give rights to the relatives, as well as the needy and the traveller, desire the countenance of Allah (al-Quran 30:38), does not have affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their family on its own (al-Quran 58:22), give priority to others (ithar) and protect from the stinginess of his soul (al-Quran, 59:9, 64:16).

Meanwhile, al-Quran expresses the term Ulu al-Albab to describe the excellent ummah personality which is described as knowledgeable and believer. They have a good understanding on every of Allah's command, righteous (Quran 2:197), give wisdom from Allah (al-Quran 2:269), desperately seek (al-Quran 3:7) and understand the signs of Allah in the creation of the universe, give remembrance of Allah (al-Quran 3:90-91), are able to differentiate between the good and the evil in all conditions (al-Quran 5:100), understand the lessons from the history (al-Quran 12:111), believe in Quran, fulfill the covenant of Allah and does not break the contract, join that which Allah has ordered to be joined and fear their Lord and are afraid of the evil of their account, patient, seek the countenance of their Lord, prevent evil with good (al-Quran 13:19-22; 38:43), understand the greatness of Allah (al-Quran 14:52), pay attention to the lessons from Quran (al-Quran 38:29), are devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrate and stand in prayer, fear the Hereafter and hope for the mercy of his Lord (al-Quran 39:9), listen to speech and follow the best of it (al-Quran 39:18), understand the secret behind natural phenomena (al-Quran 39:21), grant guidance (hidayah) and warnings (al-Quran 40:54) and fear of severe punishment from Allah (al-Quran 65:10).

The excellent personality stated in al-Quran and proved by the companions and al-salaf al-salih encourages various studies for further exploration. One of the findings is a concept namely al-Insan al-Kamil which means a perfect man. This concept reflects a personality that reaches a stage of devotion and submission to Allah SWT after reaching the love for Him beyond the other (Fariza Md. Sham, Salasiah Hanin Hamjah and Mohd Jurairi Sharifudin, 2013). Al-Insan al-Kamil also refers to scholars or knowledgeable people who practise their knowledge with full of awareness until they are able to manifest a perfect personality without eliminating his identity as a man and Allah's servant. The balanced personality is demonstrated through their calmness compared to those who are not. In fact, the unbalanced personality always shows a tendency to other than God (Nor Hayati 2014; Wan Mohd Nor 2014). This kind of personality is also named as a good personality by al-Ghazali which can be achieved because of self-discipline (mujahadah) and self-purification (tazkiyat al-nafs) which signifies the perfection level of soul or al-nafs al-mutmainnah (Fariza et al. 2013; Nor Hayati 2014).

Therefore, developing Mukmin personality is important to build an excellent ummah. Faith will act as the foundation in life and is manifested through worship as well as the responsibility as a God's representative that had certain obligations and rules need to be fulfilled. This ritual worship should be attached to ikhlas (sincerity) which was also a part of ihsan or piety. Further than that, the excellence achieved should be shared and spread to the community towards development of an excellent ummah (Nooraini 2011a; Nooraini 2011b). This perfectly matches the criteria of al-insan al-kamil such as understanding that every deed has meaning by itself,

noticing that ikhlas is vital in every deed, practising Islamic akhlak at all time as Allah SWT is his basis of religion, believing in the Hereafter as a time to reap everything he does in his life and performing his duties as a Caliph. Therefore, to produce a perfect man, it needs the education process and society that helps strengthen the man's value as well as enrich iman and taqwa (Nor Hayati, 2014).

Regarding the psychological instruments or scale in Malaysia, there were few number of Malaysian researchers created the Islamic oriented scale to be used with the Muslim population. There are *Inventori Personaliti Muslim* (Jamiah 2005), *Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory* (Krauss et al. 2005), *Skala Penghayatan Pendidikan Islam* (Azma 2006), *Inventori Penghayatan Akhlak Pelajar* (Azhar 2006), *Inventori Personaliti Ummatik* (Nooraini 2008; 2011a; 2011b), *Inventori Pentaksiran Akhlak Berasaskan Rakan Sebaya* (Ajmaain@Jimaain 2012) and *Inventori Penghayatan Akidah* (Norsaleha 2015). Besides, there was study on religiosity's level (Rohana, Norhasni dan Andi Suwirta 2016), few studies on personality (Nurwahidah, Nooraini dan Siti Norayu 2013; Elmi dan Zainab 2015), perception of Islamic *akhlak* (Sarimah, Mohd Kashfi, Ab Halim dan Kamarulzaman 2011) and relationship between religiosity and academic learning (Fatanah 1997; Nooraini 2009; Salasiah Hanin, Ermy Azziaty, Rosmawati dan Zainab, 2012) as well as the personality impact on one's performance in everyday life (Nurul Hudani et al. 2015; Buerah dan Zoolhilmi 2015). These show the importance of personality in Islam. Thus, this study was carried out to confirm the validity of the excellent ummah personality scale in order to develop a model using Structural Equation Modelling approach.

Research Methodology

Sampling Method

The sampling method used was purposive sampling. The required respondents were Muslim students in higher education institutions including public and private universities. This method was chosen to get the appropriate respondents so that the objectives could be achieved. The purpose of getting Muslim students as respondents was because the questionnaires consisted of Muslims duties whether towards God or others. This study also focused on Klang Valley and Nilai because of the high numbers of universities there compared to other areas in Malaysia.

Research Instruments

The scale on excellent ummah personality was modified from Ummatic Personality Inventory (Nooraini, 2008). This scale contains 3 dimensions namely *ibadah* (worship), *amanah* (trustworthy) and *'ilm* (knowledge). The modifications on questionnaires items were done with the help of 4 experienced lecturers from 3 different universities. The subject-matter experts' help was required since they were able to identify the weakness or problems in the items which in turn, improved the questionnaire's validity and reliability. The item distribution for each *ibadah*, *akidah*, *akhlak* toward self, *akhlak* toward family, *akhlak* toward friends and *akhlak* toward society is presented in Table 1. Three aspects of akhlak are included to portray the connection with human being (*habl min al-nas*) while akidah and ibadah are related to Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*). Establishing connection with human being is important because it will help excellent ummah to accomplish mission as representative of Allah on the earth so that they can develop it for human well-being.

Table 1. Number of items that measure excellent ummah personality

Sub-construct	No. of item
<i>Ibadah</i>	6
<i>Akidah</i>	6
<i>Akhlak towards self</i>	6
<i>Akhlak towards family</i>	6
<i>Akhlak towards friends</i>	6
<i>Akhlak towards society</i>	6
TOTAL	36

The Likert scale of five point choices of answers was used for scoring the excellent ummah personality questionnaire (Vagias,W.M 2006). All items in the excellent ummah personality are positive. The respondents have to decide on a single choice answer for their response out of the five options available as sampled in Table 2. These scores offered that the higher the excellent ummah personality score, the higher the excellent ummah personality level among higher students.

Table 2. Score for the excellent ummah personality scale

Answer	Positive Marks
Always	5
Often	4
Sometimes	3
Rarely	2
Never	1

Measurement Model

Measurement model was constructed to assess how the observed constructs (items) rely on the latent constructs (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, 2014). In other words, the measurement model was part of a model which expressed how constructs (items) depended on unobserved constructs or latent constructs. To meet this purpose, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out using AMOS software version 25.0. Following Hair et al. (2014), CFA is a way of testing how well measured variables represent a smaller number of constructs. It is applied to test the extent to which a researcher's a-priori, theoretical pattern of factor loadings on prespecified constructs represents the actual data. The measurement model is measured in two stages, firstly evaluating for the aspect of goodness-of-fit and secondly evaluating both the reliability and validity of each construct.

Goodness-of-fit Evaluation

Goodness-of-fit requirement was achieved through three stages, firstly when the loading values for each item for that particular latent constructs had attained the recommended level. According to Hair et al. (2014), loading values of 0.50 and above are accepted. The second stage is when the correlation values between the sub-constructs did not exceed 0.85 (Kline, 2005). The last stage is when all the fit indices for the measurement model reached the requirement level. In the Structural Equation Model (SEM), a number of fit indices illustrate to what extent the model corresponds to the data that have been derived. However, no agreement seemed to have been achieved among scholars on which one of the fit indices should be adopted. Hair et al. (2014) suggested the use of at least one of the fit indices from each category of model fit. There are three categories for model fit namely absolute fit, incremental fit and parsimonious fit. Three absolute fit indices are as follows: (a) discrepancy Chi square

(Chisq), (b) the root mean-square error of approximation; (RMSEA) and (c) goodness of fit index; (GFI). Incremental fit consists of (a) adjusted goodness-of-fit; (AGFI), (b) comparative fit index; (CFI), (c) tucker-lewis index (TLI) and (d) normed fit index (NFI). Lastly, parsimonious fit can be measured by dividing the chi square value with the degree of freedom (chisq/df).

If the measurement model did not adequately fit the research data after removing the items that possess low loading values, two examinations namely modification index and standardized residual covariance can be carried out (Hair et al. 2014). Through this analysis, two actions can be adopted, either discarding the recurring items (Hair et al., 2014) or setting the recurring items as free parameter estimates (Zainuddin 2013). However, the evaluation measurement model is not totally dependent on the statistical assessment alone, but it also considers the theoretical justification that has been recommended by the previous literature (Hair et al., 2014; Kline, 2005).

Convergent validity

The indicators of a specific construct should converge or share a high proportion of variance in common. There are several ways could be done to estimate the relative amount of convergent validity among item measures such as factor loadings, *average variance extracted* (AVE) and reliability. At a minimum, all factor loadings should be statistically significant. The standardized loading estimates should be .5 or higher and ideally .7 or higher. As for AVE, it must .5 or higher and construct reliability must be at .7 or higher (Hair et al. 2014).

Results

The measurement model of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) presented in Figure 1 shows that *ibadah* was formed by 3 items while Figure 2 shows that *akidah* was formed by 3 items. Figure 3 have displayed somewhat poor fit indices where Chisq/df = 4.161, GFI = 0.911, AGFI = 0.862, CFI=0.907, and RMSEA =0.807. After items were discarded and the fit indices compared, *akhlak* was formed by 2 items (*akhlak* toward family and *akhlak* toward society) that meet the criteria and convergent validity. Table 3 shows the result of AVE for the measurement model on excellent ummah personality.

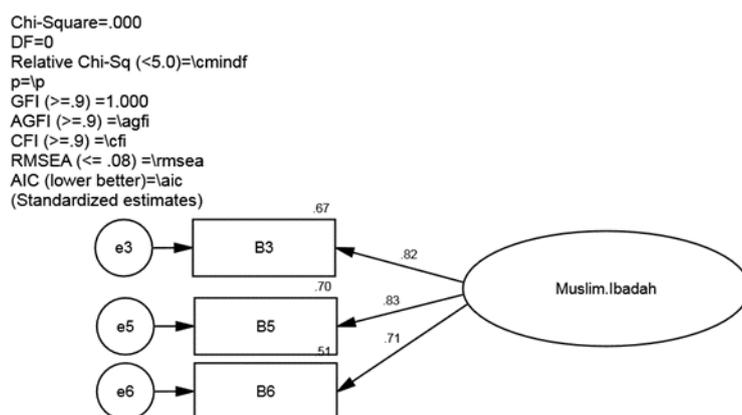


Figure 1 CFA results for *ibadah*

Chi-Square=.000
 DF=0
 Relative Chi-Sq (<5.0)=\cmindf
 p=\p
 GFI (>=.9) =1.000
 AGFI (>=.9) =\agfi
 CFI (>=.9) =\cfi
 RMSEA (<=.08) =\rmsea
 AIC (lower better)=\aic
 (Standardized estimates)

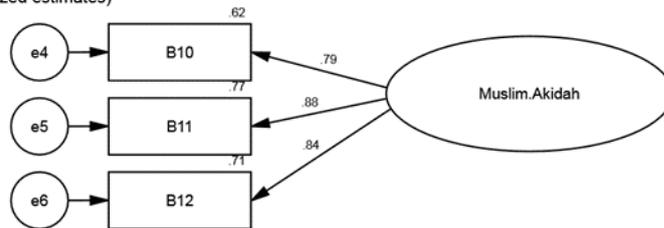


Figure 2 CFA results for *akidah*

Chi-Square=245.502
 DF=59
 Relative Chi-Sq (<5.0)=4.161
 p=.000
 GFI (>=.9) =.911
 AGFI (>=.9) =.862
 CFI (>=.9) =.907
 RMSEA (<=.08) =.087
 AIC (lower better)=309.502
 (Standardized estimates)

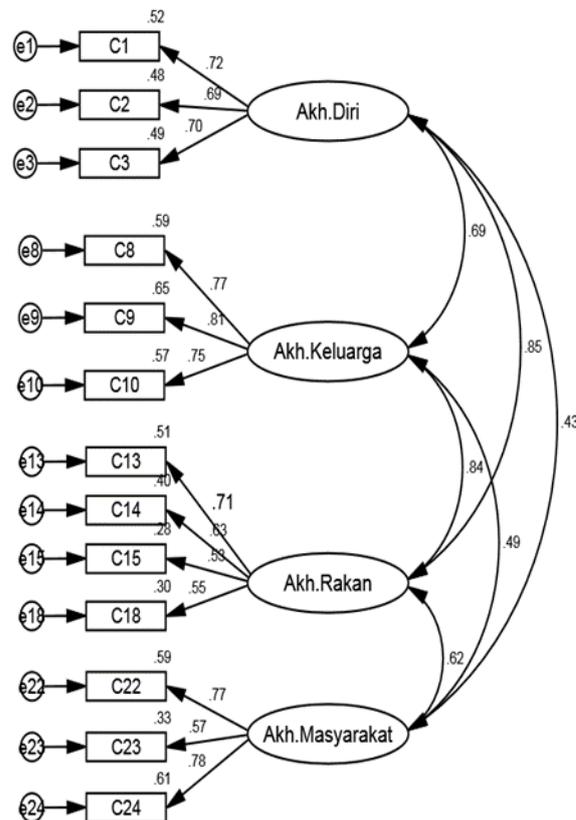


Figure 3 CFA results for *akhlak*

Table 3 Convergent validity for sub-constructs of excellent ummah personality

Construct	Sub constructs	AVE	Interpretation
Excellent Personality	Ummah <i>Ibadah</i>	0.622	Valid
	<i>Akidah</i>	0.79	Valid
	<i>Akhlak</i> towards self	0.495	Invalid
	<i>Akhlak</i> towards family	0.64	Valid
	<i>Akhlak</i> towards friends	0.371	Invalid
	<i>Akhlak</i> towards society	0.509	Valid

As for the construct reliability value (composite reliability) (CR), Table 4 shows that all of the constructs meet the reliability value, > .6.

Table 4 Construct reliability value for excellent ummah personality

Construct		CR	Interpretation
Excellent Ummah Personality	<i>Ibadah</i>	0.831	Very good
	<i>Akidah</i>	0.876	Very good
	<i>Akhlak towards self</i>	0.746	Good
	<i>Akhlak towards family</i>	0.820	Very good
	<i>Akhlak towards friends</i>	0.700	Good
	<i>Akhlak towards society</i>	0.753	Good

The CFA result shows that four out of six sub-constructs are valid as representing the excellent ummah personality. In addition, all sub-constructs have good reliability. As a result, the factors that contributed to the excellent ummah personality have been verified as *ibadah*, *akidah*, *akhlak* towards family and society. The questions for each construct are as below.

Table 5 Questions for each construct

Construct	Items
<i>Ibadah</i>	B3: I remember Allah every day. B5: I recite <i>selawat</i> upon Rasulullah SAW. B6: I repent to Allah SWT by reciting <i>istighfar</i> everyday.
<i>Akidah</i>	B10: I believe that everything happens for a good reason. B11: I understand that everything I do is under surveillance of Allah SWT. B12: I understand that I will be accounted for every deed in the Hereafter.
<i>Akhlak towards family</i>	C8: I ensure that my family members cover their aurah. C9: I try to forbid my family members from wrongdoings. C10: I invite my family members to perform <i>solat</i> .
<i>Akhlak towards society</i>	C22: I report to authorities when I come across a crime. C23: I am ready to fight for my country. C24: I participate in activities that restrain social problems.

Discussion

Based on this finding, it shows that those who have excellent ummah personality focus on establishing their connection to Allah SWT through remembrance Him as much as possible (*dhikr*). This is one of Mukmin criteria that Allah SWT mentions in al-Qur'an (33: 41) and it related to belief in Rasulullah SAW. As believers of Rasulullah SAW also, they always send blessing upon the prophet by reciting *selawat*. As a human who is never escape from wrongdoings, they always repent to Allah SWT by reciting *istighfar*. In fact, all these *ibadah* have strong relationship with *akidah*. In other word, pure *akidah* will lead to a perfect *ibadah* which is done with *ikhlas* (Nor Hayati 2014) because of having a good understanding on every of Allah's command (Quran 2:197). While from aspect of *akhlak*, enjoining what is right (*ma'ruf*) and forbidding what is wrong (*munkar*) become a main feature to protect those who are around whether family or society. This kind of personality signifies the perfection level of soul or *al-nafs al-mutmainnah* (Fariza et al. 2013; Nor Hayati 2014). It is also named as criteria of *al-insan al-kamil* who understood the meaning for every deed, noticing the importance of *ikhlas* and practise Islamic *akhlak* at all time because of the belief in the Hereafter as a time to reap everything he does in his life (Nor Hayati 2014).

Conclusion

The study results describe that the modified measurement model of excellent ummah personality contains four sub-constructs namely *ibadah*, *akidah*, *akhlak* toward family and society. Therefore, all the sub-constructs were verified Azma (2006), Nooraini (2008) and Rafiza (2015) that suggested religiosity based on *ibadah*, *akidah* and *akhlak*. Nevertheless, the number of items measuring these three dimensions is different from Nooraini (2008) because the modified measurement model in this study was represented by 36 items only namely *ibadah*, *akidah* and *akhlak*. The modified measurement model also meet the criteria for CFA such as goodness of fit, validity and reliability. Thus, this particular modified measurement model can be utilized to measure the excellent *ummah* personality among students. In the same time, it does not escape some limitations. This is because the measurement only based on action and recognition from respondents and not include their inner sincerity (Azimi et al. 2006). Besides, respondents participating in this study only covered the students of six universities while the development of excellent *ummah* personality is important in all education institute including schools. Therefore, the use of this measuring tool to evaluate the level of excellent *ummah* personality among students outside Klang Valley and Nilai must be carried out.

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