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Students` Islamic Personality on Ibadah: A Structural Modelling Approach

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the factorial structure of the Ummatic Personality Inventory. One of the constructs in UPI, *Ibadah* (worship) was measured to understand the relationship among the factors namely, *Fardhu 'Ain* (articles of Faith and Islam), *Fardhu Kifayah-Deen* (Islamic-related activities), and *Fardhu Kifayah- 'Aql & Mal* (Nurturing mind and wealth). The sample of this study was a group of female students ($n= 287$) in a government school. Data was analysed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling. The findings for the structural model revealed that *Fardhu 'Ain* correlated to the *Fardhu Kifayah* (commitment to Islam). This reflects that *Fardhu 'Ain* -closing to God, following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad- is significantly related to Islamic-related activities, more particularly participating in Islamic organization and giving charity. The closing to God and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad has a strong direct effect on mental health and well-being. Thus, more efforts should be put on educating the closing to God and following up Prophet, representing *Fardhu 'Ain*. In future, a deeper analysis of this nature could be made on the other remained construct of Ummatic Personality Inventory and personal functioning of commitment to Islam.

Keywords: Ibadah; Faith in God; Prophet Muhammad; Islam; Islamic personality

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1. Introduction

Personality in the Islamic tradition is understood through the total makeup of human being-body, mind and soul (Ansari, 2002). It is psychologically grounded in moral quality (Frager & Fadiman, 2005) which covers beliefs, behaviors, attitudes and social manners (Francis, Sahin, & Al-Failakawi, 2008) taught by Qur`an and Prophet`s sayings and actions (*Sunnah*). To understand the overall psychological nature of man and his personality development, the inner workings should be understood well. Personality insight into the inner workings reflects the relations and situations between an individual with his Lord, Prophet, himself, family and society in Islam. Feeling closeness to God and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad are seen as an indicator of healthy personality (Qaradawi, 1985/2013). In this way, psycho-spiritual well-being can be improved by a strong sense of Islamic personality (Tekke, Ismail, Adnan & Othman, 2015). Closeness and submission to God spiritually and physically captures a central feature of Islam and also seen as an act of *Ibadah* (worship).

Based on currently pertaining literature, *Ibadah* is not only limited to the specific acts of rituals such as joining Islamic organization and giving charity, but also all activities of Muslim can be considered as *Ibadah* (Salleh, 2012), activities from waking up in the morning to going to bed at night. In essence, it is in itself a motivation for one to be obedient to Allah and to be aware of the limits set by Him. Furthermore, the concept of *Ibadah* is a system of life prescribed by Islam (Cloninger, 2004), in order to fulfill the responsibility toward God (Boeree, 2006) and improve a person's relationship with Allah and people (Achour, Grine, MohdNor & MohdYusoof, 2015; Aghababaei, et al., 2015). God commands in the verse of Holy Qur'an, saying that ``I did not create Jinn and Human except that they should worship Me." (51:56). *Ibadah* as the purpose of human creation ((Nursi, 1918/2003) is viewed as a beneficial to Muslim, so as to reach the highest state of spiritual and physical fitness (Ibrahim 1997). In line with this contention, Nooraini (2011) suggested that personality in Islam will be incomplete unless *Fardhu 'Ain* (articles of faith and Islam), *Fardhu Kifayah-Deen* (Islam-related activities), *Fardhu Kifayah 'Aql &Mal* (nurturing mind and wealth), representing *Ibadah* are observed regularly. All acts of these worships are essentially on Muslims for their spiritual nourishment to strengthen and renew their faith (Achour, Mohd Nor & MohdYusoof, 2015).

Expanding on this statement, according to Nooraini (2008), human is subject to worship to God, that leads him to be personally responsible for *Fardhu 'Ain* and obliged to be collectively responsible for *Fardhu Kifayah* (commitment to Islam). Generally, *Fardu 'Ain* represents generally the closing to God, and following the teachings (saying and actions) of Prophet Muhammad. Whereas, *Fardhu Kifayah* stands for more actively associated with commitment to Islam. These two domains of Islam rooted in Islamic personality of Muslim. In addition, *'Aql & Mal* (mind & wealth) initiated by *Fardhu Kifayah*, refers the protection of system of life in Islam. In other words, *'Aql & Mal* should be potentially maintained on behalf of God and in His way, for example avoiding stress, saving time, act wisdom and caring health. These are all part of Islam in a personal life of Muslim to form *Ibadah*. *Deen* (religion) stands for Islam-related activities, more particularly participating Islamic organization and caring the poor by giving charity. It is sort of contribution of a person to become a good Muslim. They are all viewed an important factors to capture the purity and sincerity of *Ibadah*. Hereby, *Ibadah* domain in a Muslim's life considering as a whole, plays a great role to shape personality.
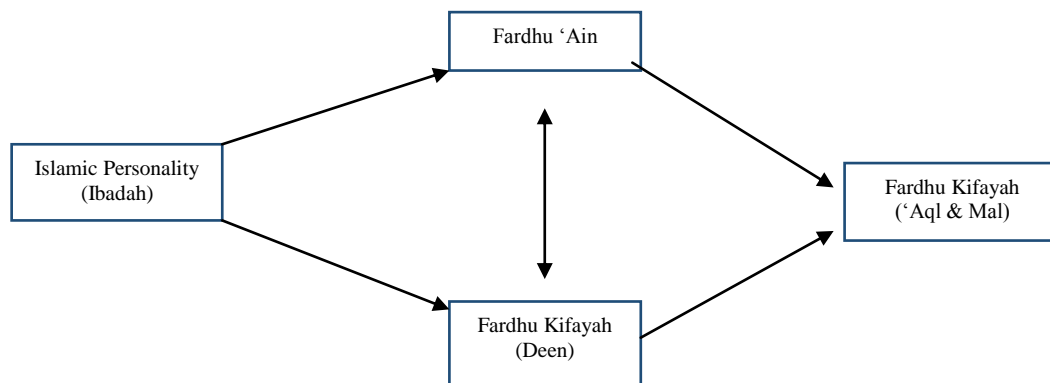

Fig. 1. Islamic Personality on Ibadah (Nooraini, 2008)

Ummatic Personality Inventory (UPI) is psycho-spiritual measurement devised according to Islamic spirituality. In this measurement, *Ibadah*, one of the constructs of UPI, is testing the degree of *Ibadah* with *Fardhu 'Ain* and *Fardhu Kifayah,* as shown in Fig. 1. In this context, *Ibadah* can be divided into two areas, namely *Fardhu 'Ain* and *Fardhu Kifayah*. Likewise, *Fardhu Kifayah* can be divided into two parts, called *'Aql & Mal*, and *Deen*. However, researchers also separated these two factors in order to explore the effect of *'Aql & Mal* on the other factors. It is important to know that all these subscales concurrently have effect on each other. Nooraini (2008) identified two more constructs, other than *Ibadah*, in order to measure personality. They are *Amanah,* which is studied by Tekke et al. (2015) and *Ilm*. These are all three constructs forming Ummatic Personality Inventory which could be used to understand Muslim`s personality. With the presence of this Inventory, Muslims have an alternative tool or method for evaluating their personality from Islamic perspective. More importantly, Muslim individuals would be able to understand their strengths and weaknesses based on their own religious context.

In brief, evidence indicates that *Ibadah* is an important concept in the context of Islamic personality. This study uses the Ummatic Personality Inventory (UPI) developed by Nooraini (2008) to investigate this concept across female groups. This inventory measures Muslim personality from the perspective of Islam, more specifically Quran and Sunnah. The main goal of this study was to investigate the statistical properties of this scale and examine if this scale could be applied across female individuals only. Towards this end, we evaluated the applicability of the goodness-of-fit of the measurement model testing structural equation modeling (SEM). The relationships among the variables were also measured to satisfy the research hypothesis as follows:

H_1: *Fardhu 'Ain* has an effect on *Fardhu Kifayah-'Aql & Mal*
H_2: *Fardhu 'Ain* associated with *Fardhu Kifayah- Deen*

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

Data were collected from a convenience sample of 287 students from a government female secondary school. A total of 19 % of the respondents have two siblings, 65 % of respondents have three to five siblings, the rest of the respondents have above five siblings. As for parental status, 84 % of the respondents have mother and father living together, the rest of the respondents have a stepmother/father, 10 % of the respondents have a single mother/ father. Selected sample for this study was considered adequate to justify statistical significance according to the general rule of thumb (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010).

2.2. Measure

2.2.1 Ummatic Personality Inventory (UPI)

The Ummatic Personality Inventory (UPI) was adapted from an instrument developed by Nooraini (2008). UPI has been used in several studies involving almost 2,000 school teenagers in Malaysia and findings proved that the three constructs are valid and reliable. (Nooraini & Khairollah, 2013; Tekke, et al., 2015). The UPI consists of 69 items representing three constructs namely, *Ibadah*, *Amanah* (trust) & *Ilm* (knowledge). The instrument indicated that the overall reliability value of Cronbach's Alpha was .963. The reliability value for *Ibadah* construct was .918. It consists of 30 items addressing one's act of worship, spiritually and physically.

Ibadah, contained five underlying factors; *Fardhu 'Ain, Fardhu Kifayah-Deen, Fardhu Kifayah-Nafs, Fardhu Kifayah-'Aql & Mal and Fardhu Kifayah-Nasab*. Items in the factor labelled *Fardhu 'Ain* generally pertain to an individual's faith in fulfilling responsibilities as a Muslim in accordance with the components of the articles of faith and Islam. The items related to *Fardhu Kifayah* denote the participation of individuals in performing the obligation in a collective manner. Here, five following elements are termed as for *maqasid al-syariah* (main elements) by Al-Ghazali in his work *al-Mustasfa*; a) *deen* (religion), b) *nasab* (progeny/offspring), c) *aqal* (mind), d) *mal* (wealth), and e) *nafs* (psyche). The items in *Fardhu Kifayah-Deen* measure the individual's willingness and actions in protecting and promoting the values of Islam as a way of life. The items related to *Fardhu Kifayah-Nafs* imply the

need for taking care of oneself so that a person is individually fit and at the same time can contribute to others in any way possible. The items grouped as *Fardhu Kifayah-'Aql & Mal* are a combination of items from 2 factors, 'Aql & *Mal*. These items are about nurturing the mind and the wealth. In Islam, *'Aql* must be put to good use and be well nurtured to mental health. Only good minds think well. As for *Mal* is about maintaining dignity or wellbeing, which is the reason why Islam forbids begging. The items related to *al-Nasab* are about protecting the future generation. This factor was labelled *Fardhu Kifayah-Nasab*. It becomes the responsibility of every Muslim to participate in and play a role as a member of the community in preventing the destruction of existing and future generations. However, after all, in this study only three factors (*Fardhu 'Ain, Fardhu Kifayah-Deen, and Fardhu Kifayah- 'Aql & Mal*) were left for further analysis. For another two factors (*Fardhu Kifayah-Nafs and Fardhu Kifayah-Nasab*), residual covariance did not improve the model fit to an acceptable level. Therefore, we decided to exclude *Nafs* and *Nasab* from further analysis of measurement.

3. Results

3.1 Adequacy of UPI Measurement Model

As for obtaining divergent validity, the values for composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were needed to examine. It is suggested by Hair et al. (2010) that the threshold of composite reliability should be greater than 0.7. The factor loadings should be removed if they are smaller than the recommended level of 0.5. Discriminant validity can be tested by comparing the square roots of the AVE with correlations among the factors. A preliminary exploratory analysis of the data found that the average variance extracted (AVE) for the one factor ranged from .336 to .562 (Table 1); indicating that the results of convergent and discriminant validity indicated that all the AVE estimates except *Fardhu Kifayah- 'Aql & Mal* (0.336), were higher than 0.5 recommended by Hair et al. (2010). As for factor of *Fardu Kifayah Aql & Mal,* it indicates the latent factor is not well explained by its observed variables. However, AVE is a strict measure of convergent validity. Malhotra and Dash (2011) noted that "AVE is a more conservative measure than CR. On the basis of CR alone, the researcher may conclude that the convergent validity of the construct is adequate, even though more than 50% of the variance is due to error." (Malhotra & Dash, 2011, p.702). Therefore, researchers remained the factor of *Fardu Kifayah Aql & Mal* due to the fact that the model fit and construct reliability were adequate and reasonable. To examine the internal consistency reliability of the observed item questionnaire, Cronbach`s alpha was assessed. The resulting alpha values ranged from .768 to .826, which were above the acceptable threshold, as shown in Table 1.

The overall model fit shows that all the fitness measures in this study accordingly fell into acceptable ranges using CFA. As a result, the proposed model provided a suitable fit. The hypothesized 3-factor measurement model was evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis with AMOS (version 21) to assess the factorial validity of the measurement model. This model was consistent with data; $\chi 2(51) = 81.8$, $p = .000$; CFI = .959, RMSEA = .052). The direction and magnitude of the factor loading were substantial and statistically significant.

Table 1**.** Estimates of the Measurement Model

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	α	CR	AVE	Fardhu Kifayah-'Aql & Mal	Fardhu Kifayah-Deen	Fardhu 'Ain
Fardhu Kifayah-Aql & Mal	I schedule my time to avoid stress.	0.735						
	I take care of my health	0.654						
	I write my ideas properly.	0.647	0.784	0.774	0.366	0.605		
	I spend less and save more for future use	0.577						
	I exercise my brain by thinking serious matters	0.432						
	I take care of my conducts.	0.421						
Fardhu Kifayah-Deen	I attend a meeting when invited to discuss about Islam.	0.872						
	I join Islamic functions.	0.853	0.826	0.786	0.562	0.322	0.749	
	I give my things for Islamic charity.	0.446						
Fardu 'Ain	I recite the praises (salawat) for the Prophet	0.861						
	I recite the rites (zikr) for Allah.	0.668	0.768	0.758	0.513	0.471	0.512	0.716
	I make continuous effort to internalise the conducts of Rasulullah in my daily life	0.581						

Note. α = Cronbach's alpha; CR= Construct Reliability; AVE= Average Variance Extracted

3.2 Analysis *of Structural Equation Modelling*

Based on the good fit of the measurement model, the structural equation modelling was then estimated. Fig. 2 shows the results of structural modelling. Theoretical reasonableness and practical importance concern of model structural paths, parameter estimates, and tests of statistical significance generated in the model estimate output (Kline, 2011). As suggested by Kline, path coefficient should be equal to or greater than .2.

3.3 Empirical Findings

According to the structural modelling, results shows that *Fardhu 'Ain* had positively direct influence on Fardhu Kifayah- 'Aql & Mal (β = 0.410, *p* < .001), supporting hypothesis 1. *Fardhu Kifayah- Deen* significantly and positively associated with *Fardhu 'Ain (r* = 0.510), so hypothesis 2 was supported.

4. Discussion

This study has evaluated the *Ibadah* factors of students` Islamic personality. The findings reaffirmed that the UPI is a valid and reliable scale consist of *Ibadah* as one of its dimensions. The results of confirmatory factor analysis provide support for the model. The *Ibadah* dimension was represented by three indicators, namely *Fardhu 'Ain, Fardhu Kifayah- Deen*, and *Fardhu Kifayah- 'Aql & Mal*. In this study, the concept of *Ibadah* is positively associated with *Fardhu 'Ain* and *Fardhu Kifayah*, as supported by Holy Quran that implies purpose of human creation. In other words, *Fardhu 'Ain* indicates, as a Muslim, closing God, and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad positively affect on mind and wealth. It is obvious that nourishment mind with knowledge and gaining wealth with health are the result of Islam, more particularly submission to God and practicing the teachings of His Prophet (Ismail & Tekke, 2015).
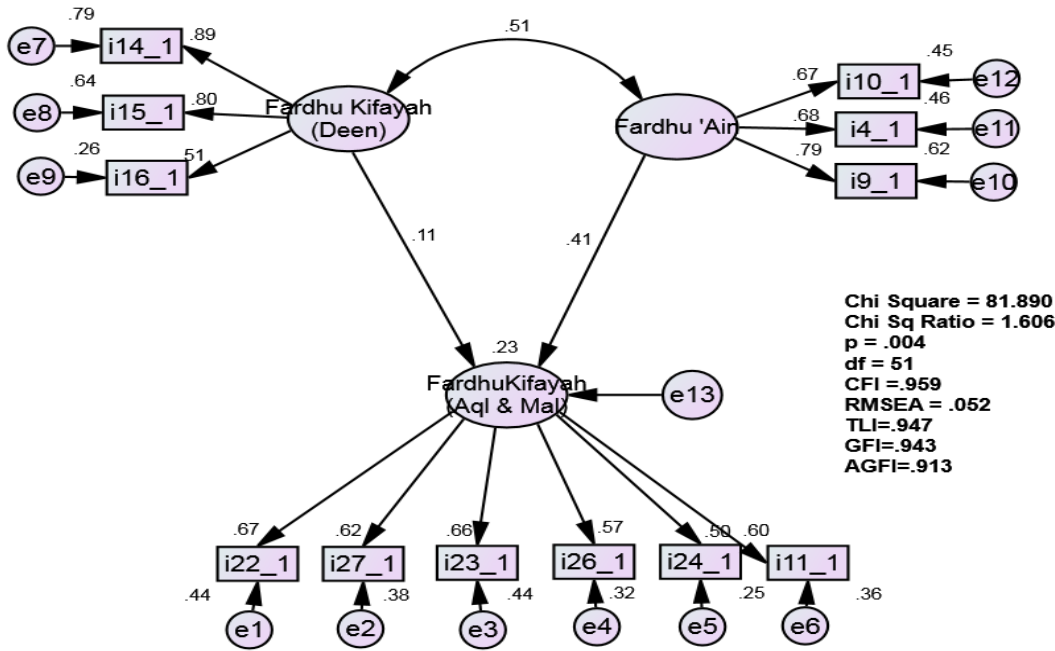
Fig. 2. Structural Model of Students' Islamic Personality on *Ibadah*.

The finding shows that the believer's submission and adherence to the practice of Prophet as a way of life in Islam had significant effect on *'Aql & Mal* of Muslim. The concepts of psychological mental health (*'Aql*) and wellbeing (mal) are promoted by Islam and positively shown with this analysis. Bonab and colleagues (2013) asserted that the benefits of a personal relationship with God arise from God functioning as an attachment figure, which the individual feel comfort in times of anxiety. In West, Galanter, Rabkin, Rabkin and Deutsch (1979) reported that "comfort that individuals obtained from relation with the divine being" and "feeling their close and intimate connection with the divine being" were two best predictors of emotional wellbeing in their study." Therefore, the relationship between Divine and human is clearly predictor of psychological variables such as mental health and well-being. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) reported individuals who were closing to God scored lower on psychological symptoms including loneliness, depression, anxiety, and physical illness. In general, studies have presented that closing to God is persuasively linked with better coping abilities (Pargament, 1997), well- being, positive mental health, and superior relationship functioning (Dozier, Stovall- McClough, &Albus, 2008). Thus, the authors believe that due to this reasons, this study found that *Fardhu 'Ain*, articles of faith and Islam, (closing to God and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad) positively and significantly affect on mental health and well-being. This study also shows that female students adhere to close to God and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. As a result of this, female students protect and promote the values of Islam as a way of life (i.e., participating Islamic organization and giving charity).

Additionally, the relationships among variables as being hypothesised shows that *Fardhu 'Ain* is associated with the *Fardhu Kifayah- Deen*, Islam-related activities (participating Islamic organization or meeting and caring the poor by giving charity). For example, the Sunnah of the Prophet emphasizing charity is proof of faith of a person and essential act toward society, so as to implicitly promote the value of *Fardhu Kifayah* representing one of the *Ibadah* domains in Islam. Overall, this finding indicates that if someone commits to Islam, he or she strongly feels close to God and practices the teachings of His Prophet. Therefore, commitment to Islam is based upon the closeness or submission to God, according to Goaib (2003), Islam is the commitment to the fundamentals of the Islamic religion empirically and theoretically through the fulfilment of Allah's rights, the protection of the rights of others, following Allah's orders, avoiding bad acts, and performing *Ibadah*. Participating Islamic organization and meeting, and giving charity should improve a person's relationship with Allah and people (Ghazali, 2004).

However, in this study commitment to Islam is more dominantly supportive of social than personal functioning. It would be useful to further investigation on the relationship between commitment to Islam and personal functioning.

Finally, in the context of Islam, personality has been spelled out in the Quran and Sunnah. Muslim scholars studied and elaborated the subject matter from various perspectives, more particularly psychology and personality. The Ummatic Personality Inventory is one of such efforts that tried to study the personality theoretically and empirically. In this research, the present researchers tried to validate and test the Islamic personality inventory on *Ibadah*, which was developed by Nooraini (2008), on secondary school female students. Despite the limitation of this study (e.g., relying merely on student sample from female secondary school), this study significant contribution to the line of research examining the closing to God and following the teachings of Prophet Muhammad toward Islamic-related activities, and mental health and wellbeing of Muslim female groups. This study elaborated in detail on the relationships among the factors within one of the constructs namely *Ibadah*. The findings indicated that more efforts should be put on educating the students to closing to God, and practicing the actions and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (*Fardhu 'Ain*). The two most important agents of change and institutions namely family and school must function to instill this element as a good practice in life to create an Islamic commitment to individual and society. However, it should be noted that the element of wisdom in nurturing mind and wealth must be presence at all time. Ultimately, it will become well embedded in one's personality and translated into one's self-concept. In future, a deeper analysis of this nature could be made on the *Ilm* construct of UPI, including the relationship between commitment to Islam and personal functioning.

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