

Measurement of Islamic Religiosity in Quantitative Research

Yusuf Haji-Othman

Center for Islamic Finance Education and Research,
Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah International Islamic
University,
09300 Kuala Ketil, Kedah, Malaysia
yusufhajiothman@unishams.edu.my

Mohd Sholeh Sheh Yusuff

Kulliyyah of Usuluddin and Quranic Sciences,
Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah International Islamic
University,
09300 Kuala Ketil, Kedah, Malaysia

Masri Azrul Nayan

Center for Islamic Finance Education and Research,
Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah International Islamic
University,
09300 Kuala Ketil, Kedah, Malaysia

Abstract— Islam is the only true religion recognized and approved by Allah. Islam is wider than religion since it covers religion as well as the world. Religious commitment is used as a key variable to measure individuals' levels of religiosity based on the application of religious values, beliefs and practices in their daily lives. Most of the religiosity scales used with the Muslim population have been adapted from Judeo-Christian-based scales. Therefore, there is a need to develop religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives. This study attempts to reveal reliable and valid instruments to measure religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives. The study employs library research and survey design. Data is collected using documentation as well as a pilot study using questionnaires to test the validity and reliability of the Islamic religiosity instruments. This study finds that the religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives and constructed by [9] are valid and reliable instruments to measure Islamic religiosity. Therefore, this study recommends that these instruments are used by future studies that use Islamic religiosity as one of the constructs.

Keywords— *Measurement; Islamic Religiosity; Quantitative Research*

I. INTRODUCTION

Islam is the only true religion recognized and approved by Allah. Allah says in the Quran: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion" (Al-Qur'an: Al-Maidah: 5, verse: 3). Islam means the acceptance of and obedience to the teachings of Allah which He revealed to His last prophet, Muhammad (PBUH). Islam is a complete religion that covers all aspects of life and is associated not only with religion but also worldly matters. Hence, Islam is wider than religion since

it covers religion as well as the world. Islam is associated with religion and the world, aqidah and Shariah, ibadah and muamalah, da'wah missions and state administrations, and akhlaq and strength [2]. From an Islamic perspective, according to [1], religiosity consists of three dimensions: aqidah, specific ibadah and muamalat with other people (akhlaq Islamiyyah). Religiosity plays an important role in influencing people's ethic [11]. Religious commitment is used as a key variable to measure individuals' levels of religiosity based on the application of religious values, beliefs and practices in their daily lives. The issue in studies related to Islam is that the majority of religiosity scales used with the Muslim population have been adapted from Judeo-Christian-based scales. Therefore, there is a need to develop religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives. This study attempts to reveal reliable and valid instruments to measure religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives. This study tries to examine the acceptable internal consistency for all instruments of the proposed Islamic religiosity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The notion that Islamic religiosity is multidimensional is supported by [6]. The study revealed that there were three dimensions of religiosity: seeking religious education, Islamic current issue and sensitive products. The study concluded that the nature of religiosity, Islam in this case, is a profoundly complex construct to measure. The idea that Islamic religiosity is multidimensional was also supported by [9]. However, unlike the three-dimension proposed by [6], [9] proposed three different dimensions of Islamic religiosity: Tawhid, Special Ibadah and General Ibadah. In addition, [12] proposed items to measure Islamic religiosity that consisted of specific ibadah and faith. Specific ibadah includes, among other things,

performing prayers, paying zakat, performing hajj and giving donations while faith consisted of, among other things, believing in Allah's reward and punishment. On the contrary, a recent study by [18] proposed a measurement instrument which was termed as Muslim Daily Religiosity Assessment Scale, MUDRAS) which consisted of three-dimension: sinful acts, recommended acts, and engaging in bodily worship.

Religiosity is related to many aspects of our lives including ethical sensitivity. [11], who studied the influence of religiosity on ethical sensitivity among Malaysian students, discovered that religious affiliation, religious education background and the type of higher learning institution that the students attended influenced their religiosity and religiosity played an important role in influencing their ethical sensitivity. The study also revealed that the students who had strong religious views had a close relationship with God or had both a good spiritual relationship with God and a good relationship with members of the society.

[24] revealed that religiosity affected the subjective well-being of people in Algeria especially in the case of health deficiencies. This result implies that people turned to God especially when they had health issues and spirituality helped them to heal better. This finding is supported by [3] who revealed that spirituality had positive correlations with satisfaction with life and spirituality was related to prosocial behavior. Thus, this study supported the notion that religiosity made people happy and happy people are more creative and better problem-solvers than unhappy people, which consequently resulted in success in many different areas of life.

Not only that, religiosity was discovered to help people in many other ways. The idea that religiosity was able to prevent youth from engaging in at-risk behaviors was supported by [8]. Subsequently, this finding was reinforced by [8] who supported that rural Muslim youth had significantly higher levels of religiosity compared to their urban counterparts across all of the religiosity variables. These findings imply that rural Muslim youth are less likely to engage in at-risk behavior compared to their urban counterparts because of their religiosity.

Similarly, [16] mentioned that religiosity played important roles in many areas of our lives including tax compliance. This study supports the notion that religious commitment had an impact on tax compliance. In the context of zakat compliance, [21] discovered that the measurement of religiosity has four dimensions. This study found that business owners who are highly religious are also more likely to comply with zakat law, and religiosity played an important role in zakat compliance behavior. On the other hand, [10], who studied the relationships between commitment to moral self-improvement, religiosity, ethical problem recognition and intentions, contradicted this finding. The study revealed that religiosity was not a good predictor of perceived importance of ethics, ethical problem recognition and ethical behavioral intentions.

There are voluminous studies that have examined the impact of religiosity in many areas including tax and zakat compliance. Such studies include [4], [13], [25], [26], [5], [17], [15], [21], [14], [5], [20] and [16].

Most of the previous studies which attempted to measure Islamic religiosity have employed religiosity measures that have been adapted from Judeo-Christian-based scales. Therefore, there is still a gap in the literature regarding religiosity scales from an Islamic perspective.

III. METHOD

The study attempts to employ library research design. Data is collected using documentation. Documentation is where external and internal documents, such as journal articles and websites, are used to gain more insight into the phenomenon of interest or to corroborate other forms of evidence. In addition, this study conducted a pilot study to test the validity and reliability of Islamic religiosity instruments. This study selected a total of 150 respondents which consists of teachers who work under the Malaysian federal government located in the state of Kedah. However, only 100 of them completed and returned the questionnaires. To test the internal consistency and reliability of the items within each scale, this study uses Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's Alpha is a reliability coefficient which shows how well the items as a set are correlated to one another. This study computed Cronbach's Alpha in terms of the average inter-correlated among the items measuring the concepts. The closer Cronbach's Alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. [22] suggested that Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.60 are adequate for testing the reliability of factors.

IV. FINDINGS

This study adapts and adopts the Muslim Religiosity Personal Index (MRPI) as constructed by [8] is a measure of Islamic religiosity.

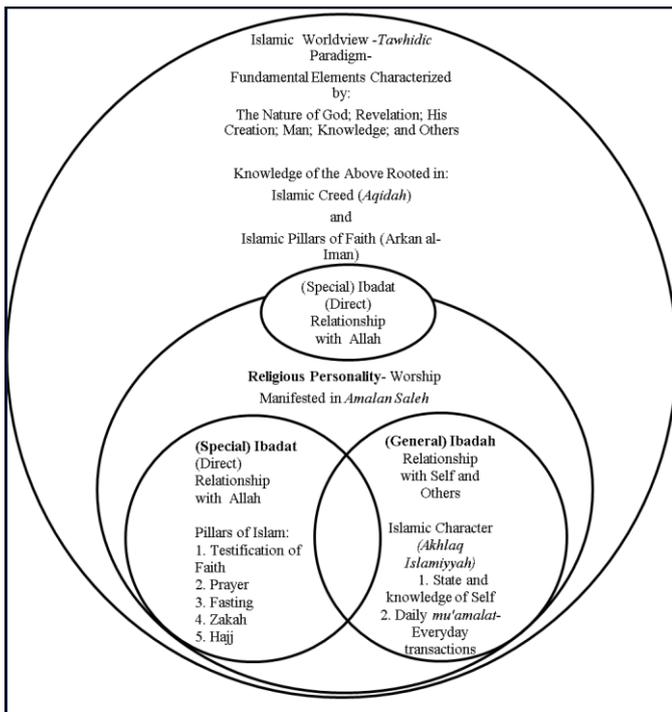


Figure 1: MRPI Muslim Religiosity Measurement Model Adapted from [8].

According to [8], there are three dimensions of Muslim religiosity: Tawhid, Special Ibadah and General Ibadah. Tawhid is measured through Islamic Worldview, which is the Tawhidic paradigm, which has fundamental elements characterized by the nature of God, revelation, His creation, man, knowledge and others. Knowledge of the Tawhidic paradigm is rooted in Islamic creed (Aqidah) and Islamic Pillars of Faith (Arkan al-Iman). Specific Ibadah is a direct relationship with Allah, manifested in the Pillars of Islam: testification of faith, solah five times a day, fasting in the month of Ramadan, zakah and performing Hajj when has the ability. General ibadah is a relationship with self and others, which is expressed in the form of Islamic character (Akhlak Islamiyyah). Akhlak Islamiyyah is manifested in state and knowledge of self and daily mu'amalat with other people [8].

According to [23], most of the previous studies attempting to measure Islamic religiosity have used religiosity scales that have been adapted from Judeo-Christian-based scales. This study finds that the religiosity scales developed using Islamic perspectives and constructed by [8], [7] and [9] are valid and reliable instruments to measure Islamic religiosity.

. This study recommends 18 items to be used to measure the dimensions of religiosity: aqidah, specific ibadah and muamalah with other people. The first 6 items measure aqidah, items 7 through 12 measure specific ibadah and the last 6 items measure muamalah with other people. An example of a statement respondents are asked to assess aqidah is "Certain rules ordained by Allah can be violated to achieve success in worldly life". An example of a statement

respondents are asked to assess ibadah is "I make sure all my family members are following the teachings (sunnah) of Rasulullah". An example of a statement respondents are asked to assess muamalah with other people is "I do not enter a person's house until I am invited". All items chosen have factor loading of greater than 0.5.

For positive statements, score 1 is given to the answer "strongly disagree", score 2 for the answer "disagree", score 3 for "not sure", score 4 for "agree", and score 5 for "strongly agree". On the other hand, for the negative statements score 5 is given to the answer "strongly disagree", score 4 for the answer "disagree", score 3 for "not sure", score 2 for "agree", and score 1 for "strongly agree". The highest score of 90 (18 items x 5 points) indicates the highest Islamic religiosity index, while the lowest score of 18 (18 items x 1 point) represents the lowest level of Islamic religiosity index. This study chooses 18 items that could be used to measure Islamic religiosity in any areas of research as shown in Table 1 (Appendix 1).

This study conducted a pilot study to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire's instruments. This study selected a total of 150 respondents. However, only 100 of them completed and returned the questionnaires.

To test the internal consistency and reliability of the items within each scale, this study uses Cronbach's Alpha. This study computed Cronbach's Alpha in terms of the average inter-correlated among the items measuring the concepts. The closer Cronbach's Alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. Table 2 displays the statistical summary of each variable of the pilot test analysis.

Table 2: Reliability of the Items of the Pilot Study

Variable	No. of Items	Items Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha Values
Islamic Religiosity			
<i>Aqidah</i>	6	0	0.818
<i>Ibadah</i>	6	0	0.894
<i>Akhlak Islamiyyah</i>	6	0	0.865

Table 2 shows that Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.818 to 0.894, which indicates that internal consistency, is acceptable for all instruments of Islamic religiosity. Therefore, this study recommends that these instruments are used by future studies that are interested in measuring Islamic religiosity.

V. CONCLUSION

The majority of religiosity scales used in previous studies have been adapted from Judeo-Christian-based scales. This might be misleading since Islam has its own Islamic worldview. Therefore, there is a need to develop religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives. This study attempts to reveal reliable and valid instruments to measure religiosity

scales using Islamic perspectives. This study finds that the religiosity scales using Islamic perspectives and constructed by [8], [7] and [9] are valid and reliable instruments to measure Islamic religiosity. Therefore, this study recommends that instruments revealed by this study be used by future studies that employ Islamic religiosity as one of the variables in their studies, which is hoped to shed more light on religiosity from Islamic perspectives.

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Appendix 1

Table 1: Items to measure Islamic Religiosity

	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Certain rules ordained by Allah can be violated to achieve success in worldly life.	1	2	3	4	5
2	To fully develop their nations, Muslims cannot completely follow Islamic teachings.	1	2	3	4	5
3	All Islamic laws can be modified to fulfill contemporary needs.	1	2	3	4	5
4	People who impart beneficial knowledge to others will be rewarded for it in this world only.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Islamic teachings do not fulfill the needs of human beings' natural state (<i>fitrah</i>).	1	2	3	4	5
6	Islamic values are applicable only in certain situations, places and times.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I make sure all my family members are following the teachings (<i>sunnah</i>) of the Prophet.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I try to understand the meaning of Qur'anic words/verses.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I make an effort to have ablution (<i>wudhu'</i>) at all times.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I make an ongoing effort to increase the frequency of non-obligatory (<i>nafil</i>) prayers.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I make sure that when I read the Qur'an, I understand its demands.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I make an effort to deepen my understanding of Islamic law.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I do not enter a person's house until I am invited.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I worry if I cannot pay my debt on time.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I respect all opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I feel worried if I hurt my parents' feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I do not expose the shortcomings of others.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I make an effort to make my guests feel as comfortable as possible.	1	2	3	4	5