

EFFECT OF ATTITUDE ON RELIGIOUS APPRECIATION AMONG STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: Islam is an official religion Malaysia and despite being an Islamic country, the number of youth involved in social problems such as drugs abuse, pre-marital sex has led to the increasing rate of child abortion and even involvement in terrorism. Youths are the important asset of the country since they will lead the country someday. Although born and raised in Islamic education, they are still interested in getting involved in social problems. There are few aims of this study and the first is to determine the significance and direct effect of attitude towards religious appreciation. Next is to identify the factors that contribute towards attitude namely peers, family, education and environment. Besides that, the intention of this study is to identify the factors that influence religious appreciation namely faith, worship and moral values. A total of 244 students from one public university in Kelantan were randomly selected by using stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used to collect the data and the results were analysed using Structural Equation Model (SEM) by applying Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) while descriptive statistics were derived from Statistical Package Software (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant and direct effect between attitude ($\beta= 0.516$, $p<0.001$) and religious appreciation. Moreover, peers, family, education and environment are the components of attitude. Meanwhile, the factors contributing to religious appreciation are faith, worship and moral values. Therefore, students' attitudes need to be strengthened to produce youths who appreciate religion.

Keywords: Attitude, religious appreciation, social problems, structural equation modelling

1. Introduction

Youth is the greatest asset and pillar of the country. National Education Philosophy of Malaysia outlines that the generation should be balanced in terms of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical. However, the National Education Philosophy's aim to produce the potential of individuals in a firm holistic and integrated manner will face difficulty if the current generation in Malaysia is involved in moral problems which are opposite to eastern value and fundamental of Islam. In Malaysia, there is an institute that has been given the responsibility to manage the education system by providing compulsory education, pre-tertiary education, selective school, and comprehensive school which is the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the Government of Malaysia. The vision of the Ministry of Higher Education is "High Quality Tertiary Education, Excellent Individual, and Prosperous Nation" and the mission is "To Sustain the Higher Education Ecosystem In Order To Develop and Enhance Individual Potential and Fulfil the Nation's Aspiration". In order to achieve this vision and mission, every high education institute needs to play an important role in giving education for the young generation not only in terms of education but also in terms of morality.

Based on the teachings of Islam, the attitudes highlighted by the individual whether good or bad are attributed to one's spiritual aspect. However, with the current globalization of the world that is happening today, the young generation, including youths at institution of higher education are in deviant attitude despite the fact they have gone through the process of religious education in a formal regular basis at school. Family institution is the basis of the youth formation. When divorce happens in a family, the responsibility of the children will go to their grandparents and these cases will cause lack of love, affection and communication between parents and children (Siti Masayu & Narimah,

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2018). Shaiffuddin and Norni (2018) mentioned that family institution has the highest result where it indicates that parents' influence gives the impact in forming youth personality.

Besides that, peers influence is one of the predictor factors that are significant towards youths' behaviour (Yakcop et al., 2016). A study by Nor et al. (2018) revealed that 86.2 percent of the respondents agree with the statement that peers also give influence towards sexual behaviour. Besides that, education institution such as school, college, university or training center also gives an impact by influencing youths' attitude. In addition, Siti Aisyah and Latifah (2017) claimed that teachers' roles have a positive impact on the development and formation of teens' moral and teenagers attitude at Pengasih Warga Prihatin.

Another factor that influences youths' attitude is the environment which is defined as the condition that someone lives or works and a study by Shaiffuddin and Norni (2018) proved that the positive way of life of a community is a powerful factor that leads the youth to do the right thing. Religion is a nature (fitrah) for every human being as a guide to be obeyed in order to limit every single action according to the morality and timing of their existence. The biggest crisis that we are facing is the spiritual, moral and religious issues that happen due to lack of religious appreciation. Mohd and Siti (2018) mentioned that the appreciation of faith involved three main dominant appreciations which are understanding, feelings and practices.

Worship practice is not just an argument in a religious life, but it even builds a good social life for students as it has a direct relationship (Aersuli, 2011). Surprisingly, a study by Shukri et al. (2014) showed that there are still students in one public university in Kedah who do not fully perform prayer five times a day. *Akhlak* is known as moral value which is an Arabic term that denotes the practice of virtue, morality, and behaviour as highlighted in Islamic teaching. According to Mohd and Mohammad (2016), there is a small proportion of respondents in the study who do not practice what they have understood especially moral values matters. Therefore, this study is done to discover these objectives which are to determine the significant and direct effect of attitude towards religious appreciation and also to identify the components of attitude and religious appreciation.

2. Methodology

The target population for this study involved all students from one public university in Kelantan. The total population was 1034 students. The researcher obtained the list names and phone numbers from the Administration Office. The type of research design for this study was a cross sectional design since the data on attitude and religious appreciation were collected only at one time.

2.1 Measuring instrument and method of data collection

The data was collected by distributing questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 3 sections which were demographic information, attitude and religious appreciation. For the demographic section of Section A, the questions were designed in multiple choice form that consisted of 5 questions namely gender, age, type of secondary school, hometown and family background. For Section B which denoted attitude, it was separated into three subsections which were peers, family, education and environment. The last section was Section C that covered components of religious appreciations namely worship, faith and moral values. All latent variables were assessed by using Likert Scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was distributed to the selected students by using google form and they were given some time to answer all questions. The respondents who did not give any feedback within the allotted time were contacted. Therefore, the response rate for this study was 100 percent.

2.2 Sampling

The sample size was determined using Roasoft sample size calculator. With 95% confidence level and 5.5% percent margin error, the minimum sample size required was 244 from a total population of 1034. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample of this study since the population of the students was homogenous. A total of 244 respondents were chosen by using random number generated from the computer.

2.3 Procedure for data analysis

Demographic information section was analysed for descriptive statistics while the Likert scale was analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Descriptive statistics was analysed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Analysis of Moments Structure (AMOS). For demographic variables, the number and percentage of students for each category of variables are reported. Besides that, Structural Equation Modelling is applied for measurement model and structural model.

In dealing with SEM, there are two models involved in the analysis namely measurement model and structural model. The measurement model demonstrates the relationship between response items and their underlying latent constructs. For this model, unidimensionality, validity and reliability should be assessed. Unidimensionality must be achieved, so if the factor loading is less than 0.6, the item should be deleted. If there is modification indices greater than 15, there should be double arrow between the covariance in order to improve the good fit of the model. For reliability and validity, Composite Reliability (CR) must be greater or equal to 0.6 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) must be greater than 0.5. Every measurement model has to be evaluated to have an acceptable goodness-of-fit before the analysis can proceed to produce the structural model. The structural model illustrates the inter-relationship among constructs in the study.

3. Result

The data were analysed using descriptive statistics for demographic profiles of the students. For hypothesis testing, the data were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling.

3.1 Descriptive statistics

This study consisted of 244 students in a public university in Kelantan. Based on Table 1, majority of the students were female with the percentage of 79.9% while only 20.1% of the students were male. The result shows that students who aged 21 years old contributed the highest percentage with 58.6%, followed by students aged 22 years old with 21.7%, the third highest was respondents aged 20 years old with 13.5% while the minority was above 22 years old which contributed to 6.1%. For previous education, most of the students graduated from National Secondary School with about 59.0%, followed by Boarding Secondary School with 23.8% while the remaining 17.2% came from Religious Secondary School. Based on hometown, the percentage of the respondents living in urban area was 55.7%, while the other 44.3% of students lived in rural areas. Regarding family background, most of the respondents had married parents with 88.1%, while respondents with divorced parents were 5.7%.

Table 1: Demographic profile of students

Variables	Number of students (%)
Gender	
Female	195 (79.9)
Male	49 (20.1)
Age	
20 years old	33 (13.5)
21 years old	143 (58.6)
22 years old	53 (21.7)
Above 22 years old	15 (6.1)
Type of secondary school	
National school	144 (59.0)
Boarding school	52 (23.8)
Religious school	48 (17.2)
Hometown	
Rural	108 (44.3)
Urban	136 (55.7)
Family background	
Married	215 (88.1)
Divorced	14 (5.7)
Others	15 (6.2)

3.2 Structural Equation Modelling

3.2.1 Measurement model

The first order model was constructed in order to check the factor loading. The factor loading of less than 0.6 should be deleted. Initially, the path diagram for the 20 items first order model of attitude indicated four subconstructs; peers, family, education and environment. For the attitude variable, one item should be deleted which was P1. After reducing one item, the second order model for attitude is shown in Figure 1. Next, the modification indices were assessed to improve the model fit. Figure 2 shows that two pairs of covariance should be correlated since the value of modification indices were 45.519 (e3 & e4) and 18.824 (e17 & e18). The values of NFI, CFI and GFI were 0.899, 0.940 and 0.874 respectively which revealed that the model fit the data well as shown in Table 2. Therefore, the second order model for attitude suggested that peers, family, education and environment influence the attitude of the students.

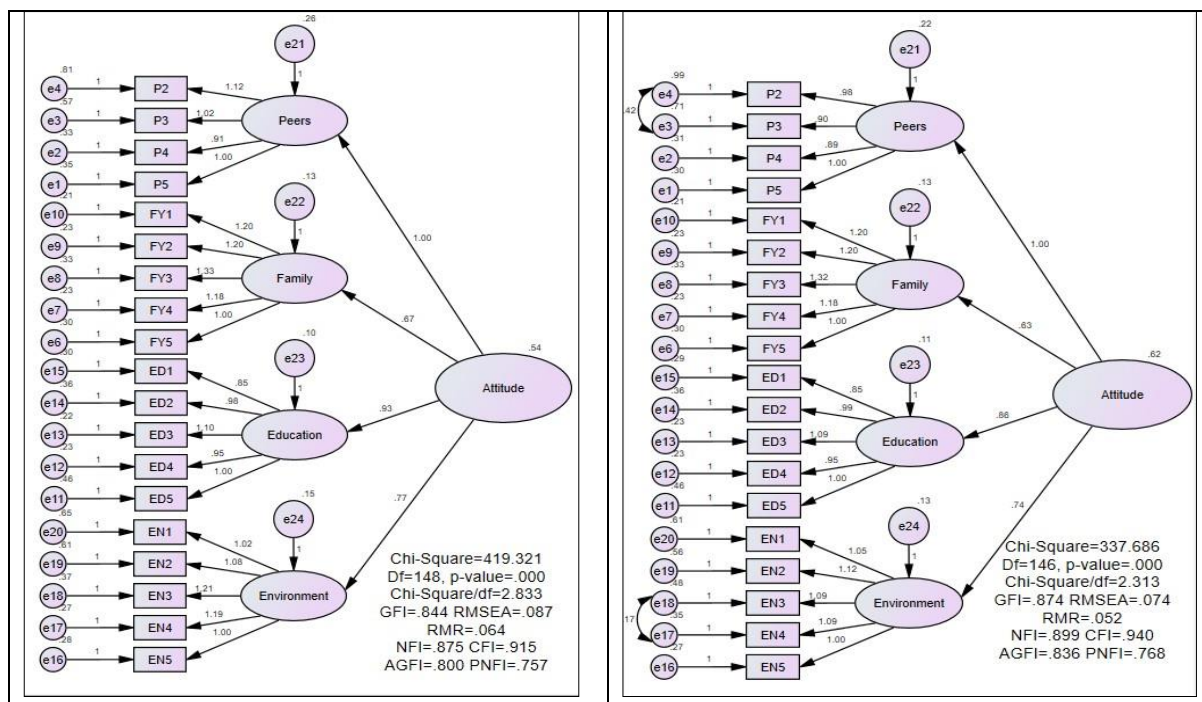


Figure 1: Second Order CFA Model for Attitude

Figure 2: Second Order CFA Model for Attitude after Modification Indices

Table 2: Model Fit for Structural Model for Religious Appreciation

Model	NFI	CFI	GFI	RMSEA
Default Model	0.886	0.916	0.866	0.100

The initial path diagram for the first model of religious appreciation consisted of 15 items. The subconstructs for religious appreciation were faith, worship and moral values. For religious appreciation, two items should be deleted which were W1 and W4. After reducing two items, the second order model was developed as shown in Figure 3. There were no modification indices greater than 15. Based on Table 2, the fitness indices namely NFI, CFI and GFI were close to 0.9 which indicated that the model employed in the study had a good fit. Therefore, the second order model of religious appreciation suggested that faith, worship and moral values influence religious appreciation.

Based on Table 3, all CR and AVE values for peers, family, education, environment, faith, worship, and moral values were greater than 0.6 and 0.5 respectively. Thus, this indicated that all factors used in the study were reliable and valid. It means that faith, moral values and worship had an

influence to religious appreciation. Besides that, peers, family, education and environment affected the attitudes of the students.

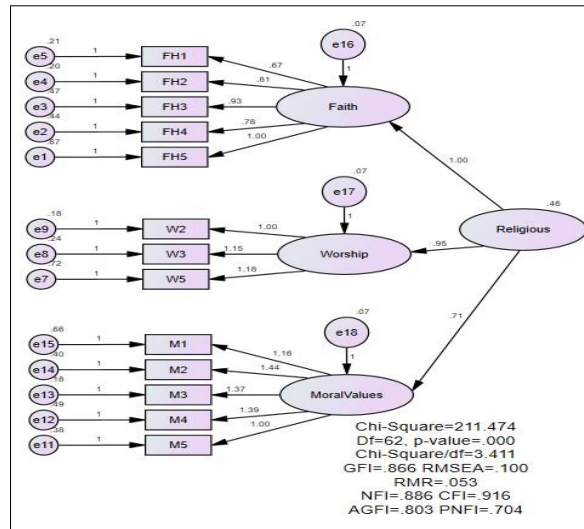


Figure 3: Second Order CFA Model for Religious Appreciation

Table 3: Reliability and validity report

Components	CR	AVE
Worship	0.847	0.651
Peers	0.870	0.627
Family	0.908	0.665
Education	0.897	0.637
Environment	0.870	0.574
Faith	0.836	0.506
Moral	0.858	0.550

3.2.2 Structural model

Figure 4 shows the full model that consisted of two constructs which were attitude and religious appreciation developed to test the significance and direct effect of attitude toward religious appreciation. Firstly, items that have factor loading of less than 0.5 were deleted and the modification indices were checked to improve the model fit, so that the final model was the best model. The fitness indices namely NFI, CFI, GFI were close to 0.9 which indicated that the model employed in the study had a good fit. The values were 0.836, 0.906 and 0.791 respectively. The value of RMSEA was 0.067 which indicated that the model was acceptable since it was in the range of 0.05 to 0.1.

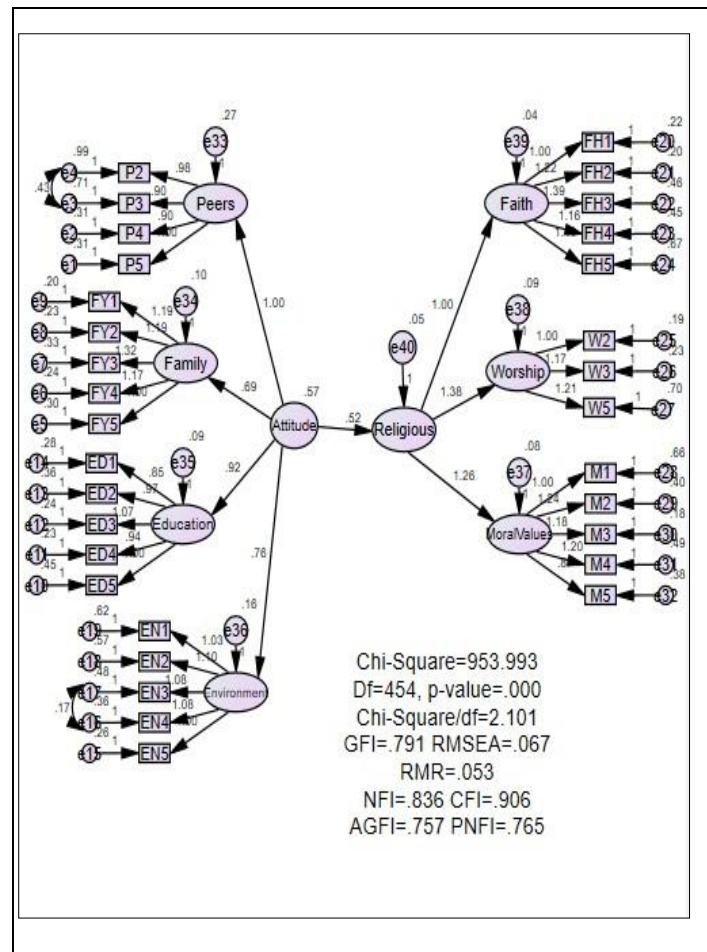


Figure 4: Structural Model

Based on Table 4, since the p-value was <0.001 which was less than alpha value (0.05), it indicated that there was a significant and direct effect of attitude towards religious appreciation. The beta estimate between attitude and religious appreciation was 0.516 which means that attitude is really important to increase religious appreciation.

Table 4: Hypothesis testing for the significant and direct effect of attitude towards religious appreciation

Construct	Construct	Estimate	p-value	Result
Religious	← Attitude	.516	<0.001	Significant

4. Conclusion

The structural model of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied to test the significance and direct effect of attitude toward religious appreciation. Based on the result, there is a significant and direct effect of attitude towards religious appreciation. This result can be supported by a study of Rohana et al. (2016) where the overall result showed that religious education, parents and peers influence are significant towards religious appreciation. Next, the result also showed that family, peers, education institution and environment are the components of attitude. This finding is consistent with a study by Rozmi et al. (2017) where the result showed that these factor components (parents, peers, education institution, and environment) are significant to students' attitude which lead them to misbehave into drug addiction. The last result fulfils the last objective where it shows that faith, worship and moral values are second order factors of religious appreciation. This finding is substantiated by a study of Mohd Safri and Siti Rosalinda (2018) where the result revealed that appreciation and understanding of faith give an impact on religious appreciation.

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