



RECEPTION OF PERSONAL VALUES AMONG MUSLIM UNDERGRADUATES IN UNITEN

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ABSTRACT

The balanced development of the overall personality of human beings can be reached through the process of education. As a whole, higher education institutions must hold the important role of establishing not just an academic priorities nevertheless building a values and a new culture in the society. The aim of this paper is to study the nature of the undergraduate students on their reception towards values. More specifically, this paper carries out a survey on Muslim students' reception of the personal values in their daily life. The study was conducted on the basis of a statistical sampling survey amongst the undergraduate Muslim students in UNITEN.

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1. INTRODUCTION

University students are the utmost explored group in the population. This is relatively because they are the most sensitive group to shift in the cultural climate and also the future leaders of the nation which their attitudes are important to know. Through the knowledge, customs, curricula, rules and regulations, images and campus social life, universities seeks to convey to students a way of life that they should be followed in campus and beyond graduation.

Over the past twenty years, universities have become increasingly engaged with the moral values and character development of their students. It has become a persistent and widespread activity in almost all types of higher education institutions to cultivate moral values and ethical behaviors in undergraduate education. Research on university student spirituality (Astin *et al.*, 2011) indicates that most students expect higher education to provide opportunities for spiritual exploration and growth but the most universities fall short of their expectations. This can be an important factor for higher education institutions to foster more direct connections between

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students' academic experiences and their beliefs and values.

Values are seen as the basic criteria or standard in term of which, evaluation are made. The obedience to a certain value system leads us to adopt a particular ideology or approach over others. On the basis of our value system we make a point of view about others and evaluate their conduct towards a particular issue. In this study, a group of respondents amongst the undergraduate students were gathered for the reason of their educational background and their organized and collective power which makes them more vocal and active than the non student youth.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is carry to achieve the objectives as below.

1. To study Muslim students reception towards values in UNITEN.
2. To identify the attitude of students towards values.
3. To identify the most important personal values for the students in their daily life.
4. To identify the values that mostly opposed to the students values.

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Halsey (1985) observes that there are many studies of various discipline have come out with several definition and explanation of values. Beginning with the understanding of values as refer to some of the commodities for which an equivalent medium of exchange that can be acceptable, values have recently taken into new meaning as something related to human behavioral and motivation.

According to Syed and Aidit (1994) a value is normally understood to be a thing towards which society has affective regard or even strong belief in its goodness or otherwise. He divided value into positive (such as cleanliness, education, generosity etc.) and negative (for example crime, greed, miserliness etc.). Alhabshi discussed the value from Islamic point of view which is underlined by the three fundamental principles of Unity, Vicegerency and Justice. The Islamic value system not only contains the value but also the manner, and the basic element which has to be included in this value system is *Shari'ah* itself. This conceptualization has three distinct implications as listed below:

1. The Islamic value system is not changeable with time or space because of the nature of Islamic Shari'ah.
2. It should be acceptable to all societies, and
3. It has to be similar to other systems of values which originating from other world religions.

Values have been an essential perception in the social sciences since their beginning. Playing an important role in sociology, psychology, anthropology and all related disciplines, values are used to characterize societies and individuals to trace change overtime and to explain the motivational bases of attitudes and behavior. For Durkheim (1893) values were crucial for explaining social and personal organization and change.

The primary content of a value is the type of goal or motivational concern it expresses. Values fulfil five criteria: (a) they are concepts or beliefs, (b) they pertain to desirable end states or

behavioral, (c) they transcend specific situations, (d) they guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) they are ordered by relative importance (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987; Schwartz, 1992).

Rokeach (1973), in particular has come out with a definition which has been widely adopted, and this definition has influenced a majority of research in the area. According to Rokeach, 'value' is 'an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence'. Rokeach further asserts that a person would have a system of personal values, and each value within the system could take different priorities in one's life. While the system and priority order of these values are relatively stable, they may still be altered by the influences of institutions and societal changes. This has been supported by others who found that personal values are affected by family (Saroglou, 2004), religion (Shinn, 1979; Schwartz and Huisman, 1995), and biology (Michod, 1993).

(Schwartz, 1992; 1994) has developed empirically a schematic representation of what he finds to be an almost universal structure of human values. Values are defined by Schwartz (1992) as desirable, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives. He developed a theory on the structure of personal value systems that focuses on the motivational property of each value. Schwartz argued that people would have a universally important set of values, but individuals would differ in the relative importance placed on each value type within the set.

The model of ten values has been established in psychology of values as a comprehensive, cross-culturally stable model that can predict series of external constructs. Schwartz reports that the following ten values, each defined in terms of its motivational goal, are recognized in approximately 70 cultures around the world:

1. Achievement: competitive personal success
2. Benevolence: preserve and enhance welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact
3. Conformity: self-restraint and subordination of one's own inclinations to the expectations of others
4. Hedonism: self-centred sensual gratification
5. Power: status and prestige, control people and resources
6. Security: stability, safety, and harmony of society, relationships and self
7. Self direction: autonomous thought and action (idea of agency)
8. Stimulation: encourage risk taking and adventure
9. Tradition: traditional and religious activities
10. Universalism: tolerance and concern for welfare of all others

The list below is the related values to value type

- 1 Achievement Ambition, influential, capable, successful
- 2 Benevolence Loyal, honest, helpful, responsible, forgiving

3	Conformity	Polite, self discipline, honoring elders, Obedient
4	Hedonism	Pleasures, enjoying life, self indulgence
5	Power	social power, wealth, authority, preserve self image
6	Security	social order, national security, reciprocate favor, family security, clean
7	Self direction	Freedom, Creative, Independent, Choose own goal, Curious
8	Stimulation	Exciting life, Varied life, Daring
9	Tradition	respect tradition, moderate, humble, portion in life, devout
10	Universalism	Equality, world at peace, unity with nature, social justice, wisdom, world of beauty, broadminded, protect environment

4. METHODOLOGY

This study involved 30 respondents from two different colleges in UNITEN. With equal distribution 15 students were gathered from each college i.e. College of Engineering and College of Information and Technology. The profile of respondent generates information about their year of study, gender, age, growing up area, and the educational level of their parents.

This study employed a survey research design to investigate undergraduates' reception of values. This study also examined differences in personal values amongst undergraduates with different demographic variables in Universiti Tenaga Nasional (Uniten).

The discussion for mean interpretation score are based on the table below;

Table- 1. Mean interpretation score

Mean Score	Mean interpretation score
1.00 - 2.33	Low
2.34 - 3.66	Medium
3.67 - 5.00	High

5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Values were assessed by The [Schwartz \(1992\)](#) which consists of 57 single-value items representing 10 motivationally distinct value construct. The ten constructs are self direction, stimulation, conformity, tradition, security, benevolence, universalism, hedonism, achievement and power. Respondents rate the importance of each value item 'as a guiding principle in my life' on a 5-point scale from 5 (of supreme importance) to 1 (opposed to my values).

6. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The questionnaire was distributed to the subjects in the classrooms and all subjects were volunteers. Data analyses were carried out with the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences Version 18.

7. SAMPLING

The subjects for this study were 30 undergraduates at Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN). The age of the subjects was ranging from 17-27 years old. Majority of the subjects were in the 22-24 age groups. The respondents were gathered amongst the final year students, which we believed that the culture of the university and its social environment may have created a positive impact on

the development of the student's values. In addition, this group was amongst the students who already sit and passed their paper of Islamic Studies I and II which are compulsory for the Muslims students.

8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

8.1. Demography

The demographic characteristics of the subjects are shown as below (Table 2).

8.1.1. Year of Study

The respondents were selected amongst the final year students. For engineering, final year students are the group of students in the fourth year, while for IT, the final year students are in the third year.

8.1.2. Age

In terms of age, it can be combined into three groups in the range of (17-21), (22-24) and (25-27). 13 students or 43% of the respondents were in the range of (17-21), 16 students or 53% of respondents were in the range of (22-24) mean while only a student or 3% of the respondents were represent from the range of 25-27 years old.

Table-2. Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
17-21	13	43	43
22-24	16	53	96
25-27	1	3	100
Total	30	100	

8.1.3. Upbringing Area

The respondents were also studied base on their upbringing area. Out of a total of 30 respondents, 56.7% of the respondents were from the urban area, while 43.3% of the respondents came from the rural area. The data are shown in table 3

8.1.4. Parents' Educational Background

The educational level of the parents can be divided into five groups i.e. no formal education, primary level, secondary level, higher education and others. Out of a total of 30 respondents, only one respondent reported that his father has no formal education background. Mean while the others have reported that 6.7% of their fathers and 10% of their mothers have gone through the primary school. 40 % of their fathers and 50% of their mothers attended the secondary school while 46.6% of their fathers and 40% of their mothers were graduated from the higher institution. The data are shown in table 4.

Table-3. Upbringing area

Area	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
Urban	17	56.7	56.7
Rural	13	43.3	100
Total	30	100	

Table-4 Fathers and Mothers education background

Education	Frequency		Percentage		Cumulative %	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
No formal	1	0	3.3	0	3.3	0
Primary	2	3	6.7	10	10	10
Secondary	12	15	40	50	50	60
Higher	14	12	46.6	40	96.6	100
Other	1	0	3.3	0	100	100
Total	30	30	100	100		

8.1.5. Secondary School

Data on secondary school indicated that 90% of the respondents attended the national secondary school and only one respondent attended the Islamic school.

Table-5. Respondent's secondary school

Education	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
National	27	90	90
Islamic	1	3.3	93.3
Other	2	6.7	100
Total	30	100	

8.1.6. Colleges

As mentioned earlier, the respondents were gathered from two colleges' i.e. College of Engineering (COE) and College of Information and Technology (COIT). 15 students were representing from each college.

Table-6. Respondent's college

College	Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
COE	Male	8	26.6	26.6
	Female	7	23.4	50.0
COIT	Male	7	26.6	76.6
	Female	8	23.4	100
Total		30	100	

8.2. Descriptive Analysis on Values

SVS basically shows an individual's values in which distinguishing values would assume different degrees of priority in the person's life. Based on the descriptive analysis, the mean value for Values is 3.48 and std. deviation is .294. This showed that the respondents' level of value is in the medium level which based on the mean interpretation score table. Although, overall level for the respondents is 'medium', according to (Bardi and Schwartz, 2003) values are still the matters that are significant to individuals in their lives. It could influence people's action without requiring them to consciously think about their values.

Mean while, the detail analysis for the values type was rank as presented in the table 7.

Table-7. The rank of values

Rank	Values	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Conformity	3.77	.406
2	Benevolence	3.72	.425
3	Security	3.51	.391
4	Self Direction	3.48	.471
5	Achievement	3.48	.449
6	Tradition	3.44	.474
7	Hedonism	3.41	.544
8	Universalism	3.36	.505
9	Stimulation	3.12	.646
10	Power	2.95	.644

As shown in above table, the highest mean (3.77) is reported for conformity followed by Benevolence (3.72) and Security (3.51) and on the contrary, the lowest mean is for Power (2.92) and followed by Stimulation (3.12) and Universalism (3.36). Based on the mean interpretation score, respondents from both colleges have a high value on 'Conformity' and 'Benevolence' value type. As for 'Conformity' value type, it is consists of polite, self discipline, honoring elders and obedient, and for 'Benevolence' it is consists of loyal, honest, helpful, responsible, and forgiving. As regards the ten types that represent distinctive motivational construct, 'Conformity' (mean: 3.77) was considered as most important by both COE and COIT respondents. On the contrary, 'Power' is perceived as the least important value type (mean: 2.95). With the range of mean from 2.95 to 3.77, the engineering and IT students can be regarded as holding considerably high level of value for 'Conformity and Benevolence' value type and in the moderate level of value for the rest value type.

Table-8. Values amongst COE and COIT

COE			COIT		
Value	Mean	Std. Deviation	Value	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conformity	3.8167	.33363	Benevolence	3.7867	.41034
Benevolence	3.6667	.44508	Conformity	3.7333	.47684
Security	3.4667	.31773	Self Direction	3.5867	.48087
Achievement	3.4667	.39940	Security	3.5600	.46105
Self Direction	3.3867	.45649	Tradition	3.5467	.45649
Tradition	3.3467	.48678	Hedonism	3.5333	.58824
Hedonism	3.2889	.48578	Achievement	3.5000	.50885
Universalism	3.2833	.54171	Universalism	3.4417	.47214
Stimulation	3.1333	.66428	Stimulation	3.1111	.65060
Power	3.0000	.66144	Power	2.9000	.64642

As regards the ten value types in Schwartz's values framework, 'Conformity' (mean: 3.8167) was considered by COE's students as their most important motivational factor. The second most important value type is 'Benevolence' (mean: 3.6667). Conversely, 'Power' (mean: 3.000) was regarded the least important value type by COE's students which followed by 'Stimulation' (mean: 3.1333). As for COIT's students, 'Benevolence' (mean: 3.7867) was measured as their most important value. The second most important value type is 'Conformity' (mean: 3.7333). On the contrary, 'Power' (mean: 2.9000) was regarded the least important value type and followed by 'Stimulation' (mean: 3.1111). According to Saroglou (2004) religious people, across a variety of contexts, tend to attribute high importance to conservation values i.e. Tradition and Conformity as well as low importance to hedonistic and openness to change values (Hedonism, Stimulation, and Self-Direction).

There is a difference between COE and COIT's students as regards their most important value and their second most important value type. As for Gangrade (1975) values and attitudes as empirical elements in human behavior certainly arise out of human experience and hence may be affected by any conditions such as social, economic and political that affect experience. Based on the descriptive statistics which refer to the personal value items, female respondents from COE have considered 'family security' as their most important value item (mean: 4.29) while, the male respondents considered 'meaning in life' as their most important value (mean: 4.50). On the contrary, 'social power' emerged as the least important value item for both male and female respondents from COE (mean 2.62 and 2.14). For COIT, female respondents' considered 'family security' as their most important value item (mean: 4.63) and for the male respondents, 'true friendship' has been considered as their most important value item (mean: 4.57). On the contrary, 'social power' emerged as the least important value item for both male and female respondents (mean: 2.43 and 2.13).

9. CONCLUSIONS

Values play a very important role in the human life. They provide ends to the people for which they strive for in their lives. It is very important for the people to understand their end-goals on which their means or actions which are required to achieve their goals would be based. The task of predicting future values, especially amongst the future leaders as discussed in this study is growing more and more difficult. As the value change occurs when a specific value is redistributed through society, when it elicits greater or less commitment from its holders and when the holders of a value alter the criteria by which they measure its attainment and so on. However, individual value priorities arise out of adaptation to life experiences. Adaptation may take the form of upgrading attainable values and downgrading dissatisfied values.

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