Malaysian muslim youth perception towards management of spirituality program in Malaysia

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Youth development will focus on moulding a generation of youth who are educated, united, democratic, liberal and tolerant, competitive, ethical and scientifically and technologically progressive. The development of this group is crucial since they will be future leaders, professionals, technocrats, skilled and productive workforce necessary to attain developed nation status. The objectives of this paper is to measure Muslim Malaysian youth perception towards management of spirituality program. The methodology used in this research is quantitative methods to gather the primary data through questionnaire. In this study, we employed stratified sampling technique and the respondents are Muslim Malaysian youth within the age of 15 to 40 years old. The data was gathered from 3,648 respondents analysed by using descriptive analysis, t-test and Anova. From the findings, to be successful in developing Muslim youth in Malaysia, improvement need to be done on the management of spirituality activities, in term of the quality of the content and the design of the program, its implementation and the role and contribution of the knowledgeable moderator are decisive factors.

1. Introduction

Youths of today are the citizens of the future upon whom the continuity of development depends. Therefore, the development of youth potential is vital in determining the success of the country's socio economic development. One of the objective of youth development was to nurture youth potential and talents and harness their energies in order to enable them to contribute effectively to the national development. In addition, emphasis was also given to the spiritual aspects of human development such as the inculcation of high moral values and ethics among youths in line with national aspiration of developing a nation building.

Other than that, youth development will focus on moulding a generation of youth who are educated, united, democratic, liberal and tolerant, competitive, ethical and scientifically and

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technologically progressive. The development of this group is crucial since they will be future leaders, professionals, technocrats, skilled and productive workforce necessary to attain developed nation status. But, the accelerated pace of economic development and industrialization will demand new skills and work ethics among youths. Rapid urbanization is anticipated to affect youth values and lifestyle, particularly in major urban areas. This will demand new approaches and creativity in developing youth programmes.

In order to enhance youth development, various programmes are conducted which covered aspect such as leadership and skill training, entrepreneur skills, healthy lifestyle as well as preventive rehabilitative programmes were implemented by various agencies. The government as well as private sectors including the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also need to manage various program and activities in order to develop and improve spirituality among youth. It is because to develop positive Muslim youth spiritual factors are important components of health and well-being. However, many activities have been implemented for a long time and a lot of cost, including time and money spend, the effect of spirituality activities among youth are not certain. Therefore, in this study to identify whether the management of spiritual program do not impact on Muslim in Malaysia and what is the Muslim Malaysian youth perception towards management of spirituality program conducted? Therefore, the objectives of this paper is to measure Muslim Malaysian youth perception towards management of spirituality program.

2. Literature Review

Spirituality encompasses all aspects of being human and is a means of experiencing life. Related studies on spirituality showed that although roughly half of the studies indicated that religiosity/spirituality had positive effect on youth health attitude and behaviour, there were theoretical and methodological limitations of the studies [1-3]. It seems clear that spirituality can be beneficial for the quality of life and well-being of people with a variety of physical.
In youth, spirituality is significant for the healthy, positive development of a person's sense of self (his or her identity) and for enabling identity to frame the individual's pursuit of a life path eventuating in idealized adulthood, that is, an adulthood involving mutually beneficial relations between the individual and his or her social world [4].

Review in Islamic perspective, spirituality based on Kamil [5] defined the Islamic Spirituality as in the Qur'an comprises of certain salient spiritual aspects associated with the pious people. These include; careful observance of the Rituals (Ibadat) which comprises of prayers (solat), fasting (saum), charity (zakat) and pilgrimage to Mecca (at least once in a life time) i.e. (haj); Forgivingness attitude (Al a'fw); Belief in Allah (Iman bil-Lah) and constant Remembrance of Allah (Dhikrullah). The first pillar of Islam is the declaration of faith in Allah the Almighty (kalimat shahadah).

In addition, Islamic spirituality have a relationship between man and God. As stated by Khaliq [6] considered spirituality synonymous with purification of the heart, which is required to set right all the parts of the human body. He stressed that for the heart to be purified (spiritual) it must be strong in Islamic belief (Iman). To be spiritual, one has to have the firm belief in Allah's greatness and develop divine qualities like "Taqwa", (piety) "Tawakkal" (trust in Allah) "Qana'ah" (contentment) "Sabir" (patience) "Ikhlas" (purity of intention) "Akhirah" (the life Hereafter).

In Malaysian contexts, research on religiosity and spirituality almost exclusively focuses on Christian population [7]. Although psychology of religion is a rich and complex field of inquiry, it has largely been influenced by Christian perspectives (predominantly American Protestant), and majority of the concepts and measurement tools may be less relevant for Muslim populations [8]. As such, "one of the major impediments in conducting research related to Muslims continues to be the glaring

absence of reliable, valid, and culturally sensitive instruments for measuring Islamic religiosity and other Islamic religious constructs" [8].

3. Methodology

The quantitative data were collected through survey technique using questionnaire on a macro scale in order to be able to make convincing representative on the Muslim Malaysian Youth Perception towards Management of Spirituality Activities organized by both government and private sectors. This study relies mainly on the primary data collected through a developed questionnaire distributed to Muslim youth in Malaysia. The population of this study is the Muslim Malaysian youth from the age of 15 to 40 years throughout Malaysia. A total of 3,648 questionnaires were distributed to whole Malaysia. The questionnaires were divided into three parts which in section A the questionnaires is about the respondent's background, Sections B is about youth perception towards spirituality activities and Section C is consists of their views and recommendation towards the study. In Part B, the respondents were required to select each of the statement in Likert-Scale format that ranging from 1 to 10 where 1 is 'Strongly Disagree' and 10 is 'Strongly Agree'.

In this study, Cronbach's alpha was used to test reliability of the research instruments. Furthermore, we also used factor analysis to confirm the construct validity of the scales through the principal component analysis. These result confirm that the instruments used in this study is valid and reliable. The data gathered from 3648 respondents were analysed by using descriptive analysis, t-test and Anova.

4. Results and Findings

This section will discuss findings from the data was analysed by using descriptive analysis, t-test and Anova. It divided into three part which are (i) demographic factors, (ii) mean for effectiveness of management practices towards spirituality activities and iii) significant different based on demographic factors.

4.1 Demographic Factors

The demographic factors in this research are gender; age; marital status, Highest Academic Qualification at School, Types of Secondary School, School Streams, Secondary School Category, Highest Academic Qualification (Higher Education), age they start learning about religious lesson and age they started to perform pray/solat. The characteristics of the respondents are listed in the Table 3.1 in frequency distribution and percentages.

Based on the table, the number of female were only 1625 or 44.5%. While male respondents were slightly higher than female with 2021 respondents (55.4%). In term of age, there are five different categories of respondent's age. Most of respondents is at the age of 21-25 years old (31%). There are four group of marital status used in this research are single, marries, divorced and widowed. Majority of the respondent are single and consists of 2142 respondents.

While in term of education, most of the respondents achieved SPM/O Level (77.7%) in the highest academic qualification at school. While for types of secondary school, majority of the respondents are from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan, in which they represent 88.5% of total respondents and mostly from arts for the category of school streams (46.4%), and the majority of the respondents comes from daily school with 64.3%. In term of highest academic qualification (Higher Education) majority of the respondents hold diploma in which they represent 24.3% of total respondents. These

background can be conclude that the respondents which are youth are having moderate level of education.

In term of age Muslim youth started learn about religious lesson and age they started to perform praying, majority Muslim Malaysia Youth started learn about religions from age 1-5 years old with they represent 56.2%. However they started perform praying in age 6-10 years old. This is because in Islam parents are required to educate children to pray since 7 years old.

Table 1
Demographic Factors of the Respondents (N=3648)

No	Item	Characteristics	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	2021	55.4
		Female	1625	44.5
2	Age	15-20 years	806	22.1
		21-25 years	1132	31.0
		26-30 years	683	18.7
		31-35 years	496	13.6
		36-40 years	531	14.6
3	Marital Status	Single	2142	58.7
		Married	1428	39.1
		Divorced	53	1.5
		Widowed	18	0.5
4	Highest Academic Qualification at School	Below UPSR	31	0.8
		UPSR	56	1.5
		PMR/SRP	171	4.7
		SPM/ O LEVEL	2834	77.7
		STPM/ A LEVEL	556	15.2
5	Types of Secondary School	S.M. Kebangsaan	3230	88.5
		S.M. Persendirian Cina	21	.6
		Sek Agama	268	7.3
		Others	129	3.5
6	School Streams	Technical	528	14.5
		Science	906	24.8
		Art	1694	46.4
		Religion	263	7.2
		Others	48	1.3
7	Secondary School Category	Full Boarding	311	8.5
		Semi Boarding	787	21.6
		Daily	2346	64.3
8	Highest Academic Qualification (Higher Education)	Diploma	888	24.3
		Degree	719	19.7
		Master	127	3.5
		PhD	21	0.6
9	Age of starting Religious lesson	1 - 5 years old	2051	56.2
		6 - 10 years old	1326	36.3
		11 - 15 years old	38	1.0
		16 - 20 years old	11	0.3
		More than 20 years old	7	0.2
10	Age started perform pray/solat	1 - 5 years old	770	21.1
		6 - 10 years old	2425	66.5
		11 - 15 years old	206	5.6
		16 - 20 years old	27	.7
		More than 20 years old	14	.4

4.2 Mean for Effectiveness of Management Practices Towards Spirituality Activities

In order to describe the mean score for the effectiveness of management practices towards spirituality activities is 7.67 out of 10 points. Based on Table 4.2, the highest mean for the item on effectiveness of management practices is 7.82 which is item 'I think spirituality activities that I involved in is very effective to me'. Its shows that the level of the effectiveness of the spirituality program is really effective to the respondents based on their opinion. However, based on this result, there are room to be improved on the management side in managing the spirituality program especially for youth.

Table 2
Mean for Effectiveness of Management Level

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
I always involve in spirituality activities (example like religious lecture)	7.47	1.796
I think spirituality activities that I involved in is very effective to me.	7.82	1.730
I am satisfied with the spirituality program that I involved in.	7.73	1.720
In my opinion, the moderator who handle the spirituality activities is very suitable.	7.67	1.739
Overall	7.6734	1.52395
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.895		

4.3 Significant Different Based on Demographic Factors

Based on the T-Test and Anova analysis, the results showed that there are significant differences based on demographic factors towards the management level of spiritual activities among Muslim Malaysia Youth. The demographic factors can be divided into three categories which are demographic profile, education background and religion background. Based on the table below, the results showed that the management level of spiritual activities among Muslim Malaysia Youth is significantly different based on their Highest Education Level at School and Highest Academic Qualification. On the other hand, the results showed that the management level of spiritual activities among Muslim Malaysia Youth is significantly different based on age started learning religious lesson and age they started pray/solat.

5. Conclusions

In order to bring Muslim Malaysian Youth into the mainstream of the national development, the government as well as private sectors including the NGOs need to improve the management of spirituality programs, in term of the quality of the content and design of the program, its implementation and the role and contribution of the knowledgeable moderator are decisive factors. Especially in terms of selecting professional facilitator or moderator who conduct the spirituality programs.

Besides, the quality of the contents in spiritual programs should be focused on three main pillars in Islam which are akidah (belief), ibadah (worship) and akhlak (moral). These three components are closely related as a sign of a Muslim's faith and servitude to God [9]. Islamic education is a physical, spiritual and mental guidance or process towards the formation of a good Muslim character [9].

According to Zakiah Daradjat [11], Islamic education is the formation of a Muslim character through belief and practice. The course is one of the living subjects which encompass all aspects of human life. It is not just a compulsory subject but more importantly, it aims to develop a Muslim youth personality.

From the findings it showed that Muslim Malaysian youth need spiritual programmes. They realized that spiritual program have good impact on themselves. Furthermore, the result shows that Malaysian youth agree that spirituality is important in enabling them to contribute in strengthening the nation building.

Given the importance of spirituality, there are several ways to promote youth spirituality. The first strategy is to understand different forms of religions and spirituality via different media, including print and non-print media. Enhanced understanding is important as far as religions and spiritual beliefs are concerned. All the agencies should fully accommodate and concern their media channel to promote and embark spirituality programs.

Table 3
Significant Differences based on Demographic Factors

No.	Item	Sub-item	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value /F-value	Sig.
1	Gender	Male	7.6254	1.54697	-1.648	.099
		Female	7.7187	1.49372		
2	Highest Education Level at School	Below UPSR	7.4194	1.42505	3.208	.012
		UPSR	7.7932	1.57746		
		PMR/SRP	7.4722	1.63632		
		SPM/ O LEVEL	7.6502	1.52791		
		STPM/ A LEVEL	7.8557	1.45410		
3	Secondary School	S.M. Kebangsaan	7.6587	1.52866	2.093	.099
		S.M. Persendirian Cina	8.2381	1.37948		
		Sek Agama	7.8324	1.49706		
		Others	7.6176	1.46129		
4	Highest Academic Qualification (Higher Education)	Diploma	7.7184	1.49780	4.541	.004
		Bachelor	7.6142	1.56860		
		Master	8.1071	1.29090		
		PhD	7.7091	1.51669		
5	Age started learn about religions	1 - 5 years old	7.7350	1.50861	2.812	.024
		6 - 10 years old	7.6102	1.54261		
		11 - 15 years old	7.4539	1.60432		
		16 - 20 years old	6.7955	1.26895		
		More than 20 years old	7.5631	1.52467		
6	Age started pray/solat	1 - 5 years old	7.7700	1.46932	5.270	.000
		6 - 10 years old	7.6911	1.51742		
		11 - 15 years old	7.4199	1.60533		
		16 - 20 years old	6.8241	1.94617		
		More than 20 years old	7.4818	1.58842		

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