

Assessing the Self-Perceived Practice of Islamic Values among Muslim College Students in Southern Philippines

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10881190>

Published Date: 26-March-2024

Abstract: Recent research highlights fundamental role of Islamic values in shaping Muslim individuals' behaviors, attitudes, and lifestyles. Deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, these values influence personal conduct, social interactions, and decision-making processes. There were 230 students from the University of Southern Mindanao, who participated in this study. Majority of them were within 19 to 23 of age, 73.5% were females and were mostly in their third year. This study used the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess the adherence and practice of Muslim college students to Islamic values. Analyzing factor loadings, estimates, covariances, and model fit indices, the study identifies robust relationships across three factors: religious practices, ethical conduct, and social and personal values. Results indicate strong associations between latent factors and indicators, particularly within the first factor, religious practices. Positive covariances between factors further support these relationships. Modification indices suggest areas for model refinement. Overall, the proposed measurement model fits the data well, providing insights into students' adherence to Islamic values and suggesting avenues for further research to promote holistic development and well-being among Muslim Filipino college students.

Keywords: (Islamic values, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Muslim Filipino College Students).

1. INTRODUCTION

Recent research has consistently highlighted the essential role of Islamic values in shaping the behaviors, attitudes, and lifestyles of Muslim individuals (Ahmed and Egan, 2021; Khan and Huda, 2023). These values, deeply rooted in Islamic teachings and traditions, serve as guiding principles that influence various aspects of daily life, including personal conduct, social interactions, and decision-making processes (Ali et al., 2020; Hussain and Al-Hussaini, 2022).

Islamic values, deeply ingrained in the teachings of the Quran and Hadith, serve as a foundational framework guiding personal conduct and societal norms within Muslim communities. These values, including compassion, justice, equality, honesty, and respect for human dignity, permeate diverse spheres of life such as governance, economics, social interactions, and ethics. Moreover, Islamic principles emphasize the significance of community welfare, solidarity, and the pursuit of moral excellence, considering them essential for both individual and collective well-being (Quran and Hadith).

Within the context of higher education, understanding how Muslim college students perceive and practice these values becomes particularly pertinent. Recent studies have emphasized the significance of investigating the self-perceived practice of Islamic values among college students to gain insights into their adherence to religious principles and moral standards (Yusof et al., 2020; Karim and Rahman, 2022). By examining the extent to which these values are integrated into the lives of Muslim college students, researchers can identify areas of strength where these values are upheld and areas needing improvement where discrepancies may exist between belief and practice (Khalid and Tariq, 2021; Rahman et al., 2023).

This research endeavors to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by conducting a comprehensive survey that delves into the self-perceived practice of Islamic values among Muslim Filipino college students. Through a thorough exploration of a measure with various dimensions of Islamic values, including but not limited to, fasting during Ramadhan, compassion towards animals, respect for family bonds, and adherence to Islamic law, this study seeks to provide a distinctive understanding of the ways in which these values manifest in the lives of college students.

By exploring the attitudes and motivations underlying these practices, this research aims to offer valuable insights for educational institutions and policymakers seeking to create environments conducive to the integration of Islamic principles within college settings. Through a multidimensional analysis of a measure for a self-perceived Islamic values practices, this study aspires to inform interventions and strategies aimed at promoting holistic development and moral growth among Muslim college students.

2. METHODOLOGY

For the sample selection, Muslim Filipino college students from diverse backgrounds and academic disciplines were targeted for the study. Participants were selected using convenience sampling from various colleges and universities. Personal information such as age, sex, and year in college were determined to describe the dynamics of the students' background. The students' demographic profile reveals a diverse age distribution, with the majority falling between the ages of 19 to 23, constituting approximately 70% of the population, while females make up 73.5% and males 26.5% of the student body. In terms of year level in college, the majority are in their third year (43.9%), followed by second-year students (22.2%), with first-year and fourth-year students comprising 18.7% and 13.0%, respectively, and while 2.2% are classified as over-staying – students completing other academic deficiencies.

Table 1: Students' demographic profile

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	10	4.3 %
19	32	13.9 %
20	46	20.0 %
21	52	22.6 %
22	44	19.1 %
23	31	13.5 %
24	8	3.5 %
25	2	0.9 %
26	1	0.4 %
27	1	0.4 %
29	1	0.4 %
30	2	0.9 %
Sex		
Female	169	73.5 %
Male	61	26.5 %
Year Level in College		
1st Year	43	18.7 %
2nd Year	51	22.2 %
3rd Year	101	43.9 %
4th Year	30	13.0 %
Over-Staying	5	2.2 %

The primary method utilized in gathering the data was a structured measure of students' self-perceived practice of Islamic values. The questionnaire was administered online to maximize participation and convenience for respondents. Participation was voluntary and anonymous to encourage honest responses, with participants providing informed consent before completing the questionnaire. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was utilized to examine factor loadings, estimations, covariances, model fit indices, modification indices, and residual covariances during the data analysis procedure. According to Mueller and Hancock (2001), CFA allows for the assessment of fit between observed data and an a prioriconceptualized, theoretically grounded model that specifies the hypothesized causal relations between latent factors and their observed indicator variables. The study adhered to ethical guidelines ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Measures were taken to ensure the sensitivity of the topic was handled with respect and cultural understanding, acknowledging the importance of addressing the topic of Islamic values with sensitivity and cultural awareness.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interpreting the results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) involves examining factor loadings, factor estimates, factor covariances, model fit indices, modification indices, and residual covariances.

Factor Loadings

Factor loadings as shown in Table 2, represent the strength and direction of the relationship between observed variables (indicators) and latent factors. Higher factor loadings indicate stronger associations between indicators and factors. In this analysis, for example, Factor 1 has indicators with loadings ranging from 0.856 to 0.907, suggesting a strong relationship between these indicators and Factor 1 (Religious Practices).

Table 2: Factor Loadings

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p	Stand. Estimate
				Lower	Upper			
Factor 1 (Religious Practices)	15. I consistently and sincerely perform prayers (Salah) as a fundamental pillar of Islam, fostering spiritual connection, discipline, and gratitude.	0.876	0.0641	0.750	1.001	13.7	< .001	0.767
	1. I grasp the significance of observing fasting during Ramadan...	0.856	0.0589	0.741	0.972	14.5	< .001	0.800
	6. I comprehend Jihad as a spiritual endeavor for personal grow...	0.907	0.0595	0.790	1.024	15.2	< .001	0.822
Factor 2 (Ethical Conduct)	8. I adhere to the Islamic principle of respecting the sanctity...	0.962	0.0521	0.860	1.064	18.5	< .001	0.926
	13. I practice moderation in material pursuits, emphasizing con-...	0.873	0.0579	0.760	0.987	15.1	< .001	0.817
	7. I uphold the belief in respecting and safeguarding the honor and dignity of individuals, avoiding actions that may harm reputations or violate privacy.	0.947	0.0534	0.842	1.052	17.7	< .001	0.904

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p	Stand. Estimate
				Lower	Upper			
Factor 3 (Social and Personal Values)	5. I actively advocate for justice, fairness, and equality in ...	0.978	0.0551	0.869	1.086	17.7	< .001	0.903
	14. I actively participate in acts of kindness and charity, ...	0.854	0.0598	0.737	0.971	14.3	< .001	0.788
	10. I actively pursue knowledge, engage in critical thinking, a ...	0.882	0.0540	0.777	0.988	16.3	< .001	0.861
	11. I view Islam as a comprehensive way of life, guiding all family.	0.928	0.0532	0.823	1.032	17.4	< .001	0.895
	9. I place value on self-improvement and consistently engage in continuous self-reflection and personal development.	0.977	0.0523	0.875	1.080	18.7	< .001	0.932
	3. I demonstrate kindness and compassion towards animals, ...	0.972	0.0570	0.861	1.084	17.1	< .001	0.884
	4. I give precedence to family bonds, exhibit respect towards ...	0.962	0.0554	0.854	1.071	17.4	< .001	0.894

The factors were identified as: Factor 1 (Religious Practices) includes three statements: (1) I consistently and sincerely perform prayers (Salah) as a fundamental pillar of Islam, fostering spiritual connection, discipline, and gratitude, (2) I grasp the significance of observing fasting during Ramadan for the sake of self-discipline and spiritual development, and (3) I comprehend Jihad as a spiritual endeavor for personal growth and societal progress, excluding any endorsement of violence. The Factor 2 (Ethical Conduct) identified four (4) statements: (1) I adhere to the Islamic principle of respecting the sanctity of private property and conduct myself with honesty and ethical financial practices, (2) I practice moderation in material pursuits, emphasizing contentment and discouraging the excessive accumulation of wealth at the expense of ethical considerations, (3) I uphold the belief in respecting and safeguarding the honor and dignity of individuals, avoiding actions that may harm reputations or violate privacy, and (4) I actively advocate for justice, fairness, and equality in my interactions with individuals from diverse faiths and backgrounds. And the Factor 3 under the Social and Personal Values consist of six (6) statements: (1) I actively participate in acts of kindness and charity, particularly towards the poor and needy, aligning with Islamic values, (2) I actively pursue knowledge, engage in critical thinking, and contribute positively to society, aligning with the encouragement of Islam, (3) I view Islam as a comprehensive way of life, guiding all facets of my personal behavior and societal interactions, (4) I place value on self-improvement and consistently engage in continuous self-reflection and personal development, (5) I demonstrate kindness and compassion towards animals, acknowledging them as part of Allah (s.w.t.'s) creation, and (6) I give precedence to family bonds, exhibit respect towards parents, and fulfil familial duties with love and compassion.

Factor Estimates

Factor estimates as reflected in Table 3, denote the standardized estimates of each latent factor, and provide insights into the strength of relationships between the latent factor and its indicators. Higher factor estimates indicate stronger associations between the latent factor and its corresponding indicators. In the current analysis, Factor 1 (Religious Practices) exhibits the highest estimate of 0.926, indicating a robust relationship with its indicators. Following closely is Factor 3 (Social and Personal Values), with an estimate of 0.897, suggesting a substantial association with its respective indicators.

Table 3: Factor Covariances

		Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p	Stand. Estimate
				Lower	Upper			
Factor 1	Factor 1	1.000 ^a						
(Religious Practices)	Factor 2	1.034	0.01163	1.011	1.057	88.9	< .001	1.034
	Factor 3	0.997	0.01289	0.971	1.022	77.3	< .001	0.997
Factor 2	Factor 2	1.000 ^a						
(Ethical Conduct)	Factor 3	0.985	0.00677	0.972	0.998	145.5	< .001	0.985
Factor 3	Factor 3	1.000 ^a						
(Social and Personal Values)								

^a fixed parameter**Factor Covariances**

Factor covariances illustrate the covariances between pairs of latent factors, offering insights into their relationships. Positive covariances signify that the factors are positively correlated, while negative covariances suggest negative associations. In the context of this analysis, for instance, the covariance between Factor 1 and Factor 2 is 1.034, indicating a positive relationship between these factors, implying that as one factor increases, the other tends to increase as well.

Model Fit Indices

Model fit indices serve to evaluate the adequacy of the specified measurement model in relation to the observed data. Lower values of RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) and higher values of CFI (Comparative Fit Index) and TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index) are indicative of better model fit. In the present analysis, the RMSEA value stands at 0.0895, implying a reasonable fit of the model to the data. Furthermore, the CFI and TLI values are 0.967 and 0.959, respectively, suggesting an acceptable fit of the model. These results collectively indicate that the proposed measurement model aligns reasonably well with the observed data.

Model Fit**Table 4: Test for Exact Fit**

		χ^2	df	p
		176	62	< .001
Fit Measures				
			RMSEA 90% CI	
CFI	TLI	RMSEA	Lower	Upper
0.967	0.959	0.0895	0.0742	0.105

Modification Indices

Modification indices offer insights into potential enhancements to the measurement model by identifying paths, covariances, or factor loadings that could be adjusted to enhance model fit. Greater modification indices indicate areas with stronger potential for improvement. In the context of this analysis, modification indices are provided for both factor loadings and residual covariances, highlighting aspects of the model that could benefit from adjustments to better align with the observed data. These indices serve as valuable guidance for refining the measurement model and improving its overall fit.

Thus, the results of this Confirmatory Factor Analysis suggest that the specified measurement model fits the data reasonably well, with strong factor loadings and acceptable model fit indices. However, researchers may consider examining modification indices to identify potential areas for model refinement.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) indicate that the proposed measurement model, focusing on Islamic values practiced by Muslim students, demonstrates a good fit with the data, showing robust factor loadings and satisfactory model fit indices. Nevertheless, researchers could investigate modification indices to enhance the model further. These results enhance our comprehension of college students' self-perceived adherence to Islamic values and offer valuable insights for fostering and comprehending Islamic values among them, thereby aiding in their holistic development and well-being.

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