

Religious Personality and Gender Differences in the Perceived Behaviour towards Inter-ethnic Everyday Life among Youths

Fazilah Idris^{1*}, Khairul Anwar Mastor¹, Azimi Hamzah², Ezhar Tamam²,
Wong Su Luan² and Nur Riza Suradi¹

¹*Pusat Pengajian Umum, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia,
43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia*

²*Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia*

**E-mail: ifazilaz@streamyx.com*

ABSTRACT

The present study examined the influence of religious personality, as the manifestation of one's religious belief, on the inter-ethnic perceived behaviour among the different ethnic and gender backgrounds. Religious personality comprises of three major factors: pro-social behaviour, ritual behaviour and anti-social behaviour. It was hypothesized that religious personality of the youth might influence inter-ethnic perceived behaviour by enhancing mutual understanding and respect, tolerance, and appropriate behaviour to live in peace and harmony. Respondents were 563 high school students, who were randomly selected from various schools in Selangor. The Inter-ethnic Tolerance Questionnaire (IETQ) was used as a self-designed questionnaire to measure the inter-ethnic perceived behaviour and the Universal Religious Personality Inventory (URPI) (Krauss et al., 2006). The findings gathered in the present study indicated that Indian, Malay and Chinese students scored the highest levels of the pro-social behaviour, ritual behaviour and anti-social behaviour, respectively. Comparing the genders among all races, female students were found to score higher than the male students in the pro-social behaviour, but scored lower in the anti-social behaviour. The multiple regression analysis indicated that the pro-social factor was found to be a significant positive predictor of the inter-ethnic perceived behaviour.

Keywords: Religious personality, perceived behaviour, inter-ethnic, youths

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is recognized as a unique multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious country. While celebrating diversity is logical and expected in the pluralistic Malaysian society, a more important issue in managing this pluralistic society is ensuring unity in diversity. Among the bases of diversity, religion often acts as a force of division and conflict (Monsma, 2006). However, according to Emmons (1999), "Religion invests human existence with meaning by establishing goals and value system that pertain to all aspects of a person's life, with the potential to confer unity upon discordant impulses and strivings." He further added that, "spiritual

or religious goals, beliefs, and practices are not only distinctive components of a person, for many they are the core of the personality" (1999: 875). Religious/ Traditional values are interpersonal values which are functional or dysfunctional to impersonal survival outside the family/group. They are either tolerant or intolerant depending upon the religion's/ tradition's maturity. Such understanding leads to the notion of religious personality, defined briefly as the personality owned by a person who is upholding the religious values in his or her daily lives.

Indeed, the religious personality reflects the manifestation of one's religious worldview

and God-consciousness in 'righteous works', as promoted by all major religions, and this refers to a wide variety of behaviours. Such actions or behaviours can be analyzed at four levels: actions towards God; actions towards fellow human beings; actions toward non-human beings (animals, the environment, etc.); and actions towards oneself (Family Development Foundation, 2002). Consequently, it is no doubt that the need to empirically study various religious traditions in terms of religious personality is well-timed.

Furthermore, in a country like Malaysia, fostering unity is the responsibility of all, especially the youths (15-39 age groups) because they comprised 41.5% of the total population in 2005. Moreover, they are the assets of the country, partners in the development and leaders of tomorrow. In addition, several studies suggested that religious values could positively influence the behaviour and attitude of youths. In fact, youths who subscribe to religious values are more likely to be involved in community service, less likely to be depressed and less likely to use drugs (Donahue and Benson, 1995a, 1995b; Eklin and Roehlkepartain, 1992; Bahr *et al.*, 1998; Brewster *et al.*, 1998). Consequently, it is therefore crucial to identify the inner strength of our individual youths, i.e. the religious personality, which could contribute to their behaviour in every day life with the people from different ethnics.

The main objective of this study was to assess the relationship of religious personality, ethnic differences and gender differences in the perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life among youths.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION

The importance of religion to human beings, in numerous facets of day by day living, has made it an essential area of investigation to many researchers. Nonetheless, the importance of religion or to be more specific religious personality, as an area of focus, has not been a universal effort. Efforts to study religion as a social scientific phenomenon have been mainly conducted in the Western context, as well as Judeo-Christian responsibility or effort. A total of 126 different psychological measurements have been aggregated and analyzed in measuring religiosity (Hill and Hood, 1999). However, according to Grace (2000), researchers interested in finding measures pertinent to the non-Western religions and spirituality could not locate them in

Hill's and Hood work. Grace further argued that there was a dearth of instruments appropriate to other religions; in view of the fact that much of the research focus had been on the Christian religion, in particular, American Protestantism.

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), the psychology of religion intends to understand the function of religion in people's lives and it contains such themes as religious motivation, religious cognition and religious behaviour (Spilka *et al.*, 2003). In other words, the focus has been on the mechanism, in which religion impacts an individual's life. Thus, it can be said that personality is not referred to as a component of religiosity, but rather an independent variable or independent factor. However, there a small number of attempts have been attempted in the effort to understand religiosity and personality as an integrated whole.

YOUTH AND RELIGION

Youths regard religious beliefs as important in which most of them indicated to believe in the existence of God, and about half stated that their religion is important to them (Donahue and Benson, 1995a; Gallup and Bezilla, 1992; Johnston, Bachman and O'Malley, 1995; Bachman *et al.*, 1993; Benson, 1993; Brightman, 1994). By and large, females were found to be more religious than males - a finding that was held true for children, adolescents, young adults, and older adults (Donelson, 1999). In addition, several studies also suggested that religious values could influence the behaviour and attitude of the youths. In fact, youths who subscribe to religious values were found to be more likely to be involved in community service, less likely to be depressed and less likely to use drugs (Donahue and Benson, 1995a, 1995b; Eklin and Roehlkepartain, 1992; Bahr *et al.*, 1998; Brewster *et al.*, 1998).

RELIGION AND PERSONALITY

The Five Factor Model (FFM) is often used to measure the five personality dimensions and their relationship between the different levels and aspects of religiosity (e.g. fundamentalism, intrinsic/extrinsic, religious coping, etc.). Hence, according to the FFM model and several studies (Saraglou, 2002b; Block, 1995) which were employed to uncover the relationship between religion and personality, a religious personality is trait-based. Likewise, the Eysenck Model does not take personality and religion into account as 'peers

or partners'; however, it looks at them separately. Jones (1994) argued that there was very small effort done in understanding the integration of religiosity and personality using such a model which focused on the personality trait.

In addition, research on scientific work on religion conducted by the religious psychologists and personality by the personality psychologists have existed for decades (Mastor, 2003). The personality psychologists have recognized the important and powerful role religion in all aspects of human functioning. Allport (1950, cited in Azimi Hamzah *et al.*, 2006) mentioned in his classic text on personality and religion that religion had a strong impact in the lives of people, and little was known about it from a psychological perspective. He further emphasized that the study of religion and religiosity served as an important element in understanding human personality. Furthermore, there is lack of mentioning of religion in a majority of modern-day treatments of personality.

RELIGIOUS PERSONALITY

Emmons (1999) pointed out in his writing that "Spiritual or religious goals, beliefs, and practices were not only distinctive components of a person, they are "the core of the personality" for many (1999: 875). He further mentioned that "religion invests human existence with meaning by establishing goals and value system which pertain to all aspects of a person's life, with the potential to confer unity upon discordant impulses and strivings." This is further supported by the theologian Tillich (1957, cited in Krauss, 2005), who stated that "the ultimate concern gives depth, direction, and unity to all other concerns, and with them, to the whole personality." A more recent approach in the personality psychology literature has been put forth by a number of researchers in the attempt to understand the relationship between personality and religiosity. This trend has been the representation of motivation in terms of personal goals and strivings (Emmons, 1999).

Personality is the manifestation of our characters in everything that we do in life. Merriam-Webster (2001) defined personality as "the complex characteristic which distinguishes an individual or a nation or group; the totality of an individual's behavioural and emotional characteristics." In other words, personality is how our basic character is displayed to the world. In addition, many world religions stress the importance of their unique beliefs; besides,

religion is a system of life and belief and it is an accepted fact that all religions uphold certain values which are universal in nature-values that cut across religions and cultural lines. Thus, religious personality represents the manifestation of one's religious belief or the particular way in which a person expresses his or her traits or adapts to diverse situations in the world; these include their behaviours, motivations, attitudes, and emotions. It is hoped that by having a religious personality, youths would be able to understand, tolerate, respect each other and behave appropriately in order to live in harmony.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

The present study attempted to provide answers to the four research questions, as follows :

1. Is there any significant difference in the mean scores of religious personality among the three major races, Malay, Chinese and Indian?
2. Is there any significant difference in the mean scores of religious personality facets between males and females within the three major races?
3. Is there any significant difference in the mean scores of youths' perceived inter-ethnic behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life among the three races?
4. Is there any significant influence of religious personality on the youths' perceived inter-ethnic behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life among the three races?

(i) Instruments

Two sets of questionnaires were distributed to the chosen youths:

- (a) Inter-ethnic Tolerance Questionnaire (IETQ) consists of four sections, which cover knowledge, attitude, behaviour in inter-ethnic everyday life and social background of the respondents. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were also used in the development of the questionnaire. In addition, the IETQ utilized a five-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree in measuring the respondents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviour towards their inter-ethnic everyday life; and

(b) Universal Religious Personality Inventory (URPI) (Krauss, Fazilah and Azimi, 2006), which is an adapted version of the Malaysian Religious-Personality Inventory (MRPI) (Krauss *et al.*, 2006). To adapt the MRPI Religious Personality scale, a multistage process was undertaken. A critical aspect of the process was done to ensure the content validity of the new scale, so that it would be applicable and relevant to the different religious communities. This required the involvement and expertise of religious leaders from each faith community involved, apart from the two additional leaders from faiths not included in the current sample.

(ii) Content Validity

The most critical aspect of the adaptation process was ensuring that the Religious Personality scale was applicable and appropriate for use with the different faith traditions. To address the issue of content validity, the research team interviewed leaders from five non-Muslim faith groups (Buddhist, Hindu, Protestant, Catholic and Sikh) for their expert feedback on each item listed on the scale.

First, after indicating their agreement to be involved in the research, each leader was sent a copy of the original Religious Personality questionnaire and a cover letter. This was followed up by a phone call to repeat the instructions and answer any preliminary questions the leaders had. All these leaders took about 1 – 2 weeks to edit the scale. Once the leaders had completed their editing and comments, the researchers personally met up with each individual leader and went over each item in order to provide feedback as to whether the item was applicable to their faith or required further editing. Each meeting took up to three hours. Following the first meeting with all the leaders, the researchers edited the scale accordingly and re-sent it to each leader for validation. At this point, the leaders would either approve the scale or request further changes. The copy of the scale given to the religious leaders was in English, and the final copy was translated into Malay by the researchers.

Appendix A shows the adaptation of the items, and the original MRPI Religious Personality scale items (with original items given on top). In total, 35 items were revised, three were removed and one was added for a total of 99 items.

(iii) Scale Development

Like the original MRPI Religious Personality scale, the adapted scale utilized a five-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) Never to (5) Always, to measure the respondents’ frequency of behaviours, attitudes or intention to commit behaviours.

Sampling

Data for the current study were collected in the state of Selangor, which was randomly selected from the four ‘mix belt states’ (i.e., Selangor, Malacca, Negeri Sembilan and Johor). The mixed belt states are those states in Malaysia which comprise of significant percentages of all the three main ethnic groups, i.e. Malay, Chinese and Indian.

The selected respondents comprised of youth chosen from nine schools in the seven school districts. The schools were also randomly selected and they represented a mix of rural and urban schools. The researchers started the procedure by contacting each school via phone calls asking for the permission to conduct the study, and this was followed by sending copies of the support letters from the Ministry of National Education and the State Education department. Once the schools had stated their agreement to take part, they were asked to select and prepare respondents which are of the Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic groups, according to a ration of 5:3:2, in concordance with the breakdown of the population the country. For this purpose, a total of sixty youth were requested from each school. School liaisons were asked to select mainly ‘average’ youths (B grade range) to participate in the current study.

TABLE 1

The demographic compositions of the respondents

Race and Gender	Frequency (Percentage)
Malay	212 (37.7 %)
Male	85 (40.1%)
Female	127 (59.9%)
Chinese	184 (32.7%)
Male	91 (49.5%)
Female	93 (50.5%)
Indian	167 (29.7%)
Male	78 (46.7%)
Female	89 (53.3%)

(iv) Samples

A total of 563 secondary school youths completed the questionnaires. Accordingly, there were 212 Malays (37.7%), 184 Chinese (32.7%) and 167 Indians (29.7%), as presented in Table 1. The percentages of the females were slightly higher than that of the males in all races.

Data Collection

In this study, the required data were collected using the survey method. At each site, the research team members administered the questionnaires in groups. Copies of the questionnaire were given to the respondents and collected as soon as they completed them. The respondents were given forty-five minutes to one hour to complete the surveys. Based on the data gathered, the scores for each scale were then summed up (negatively worded items were reverse scored). Meanwhile, missing data were addressed by replacing all the missing values with series means.

(i) Data Analysis

Descriptive analyses, including the mean, standard deviations and the frequencies, were used to represent the demographic compositions of the respondents. The Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were also conducted to test the differences in the youths' religious personality among the three different ethnics, while the t-tests were carried out to compare the religious personality between male and female youths within each different ethnic. Consequently, the correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis were used to analyze

the respective relationships and the influences of religious personality on the youths' perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life.

RESULTS

The analysis of descriptive was performed so as to obtain the measures of mean and standard deviation of the three aspects of religious personality, namely the pro-social, ritual and anti-social across the three major ethnics of youths. As presented in Table 2, the results showed that Indian youths scored the highest level of pro-social behaviour, followed by the Chinese, and then the Malay counterparts. The mean score for the pro-social behaviour was 132.982, with a standard deviation of 16.901. As for the ritual behavioural, the Malay youths scored the highest (Mean = 74.004, SD = 11.440), as compared to the Indian and the Chinese youths. The Chinese youth had the highest mean score for anti-social behaviour (Mean = 28.819, SD = 5.240). Meanwhile, the Indian youth scored the lowest mean for the anti-social behaviour.

Table 2 presents the comparison of the mean scores for the religious personality among the three major races in the youths selected from various secondary schools in Selangor, comprising of Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic groups.

The analysis on the differences in the mean scores for the religious personality resulted in significant differences amongst the Malay, Chinese and Indian youths for all the three aspects or domains given in the Universal Religious Personality Inventory (URPI), namely the pro-

TABLE 2
Comparisons of the mean scores in the religious personality traits

Race	Pro-Social		Rituala		Anti-Social	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Malay	0.167	0.971	0.396	0.767	-0.126	1.998
Chinese	0.156	0.884	-0.793	0.912	0.258	0.824
Indian	0.383	1.056	0.372	0.827	-0.444	1.038

Test for RP mean comparison among races:

<i>T</i>	18.529	123.816	26.512
<i>p-value</i>	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**

**Significance at 0.01 level

Highest score for each domain is given in bold

RP – religious personality

social behaviour, ritual behaviour and anti-social behaviour. All the p-values were smaller than 0.01. In other words, as a whole, the students of different ethnic groups were shown to possess different levels of religious personality behaviour.

Furthermore, the mean scores for the pro-social behaviour for the Malay and Chinese youths were not significantly different from each other, but both were significantly different from the higher values of pro-social behaviour mean scores of the Indian youths. As for the ritual behaviour, the mean scores were significantly different between the Chinese and the Malay youths, as well as between the Chinese and the Indian youths. The mean scores of the ritual behaviour for the Indians and the Malays were also not significantly different. As discussed in the earlier section and shown in Table 2, the Malay youths had the highest scores for the domain of religious personality, and this was closely followed by the Indian youths.

The results gathered from the mean comparison tests, on the mean scores in the anti-social behaviour among the three different races, showed that the Chinese had the highest mean scores, and that the second highest scores of the Malay youths were significantly different from that of the Indian youths'. However, both these mean values were not significantly different from each other.

Religious Personality across Gender

Further analyses on the mean scores of the religious personality, amongst the different ethnic groups, were conducted by incorporating the information regarding the youth's gender. Table 3 shows the comparison of the male and female youths in terms of their mean scores for the religious personality domains for the Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic group. The comparison of the mean score values, for the males and females within a particular race with that for the entire samples in the race, is shown in Table 2. Based on the data, it was found that the female youths scored higher than the male youths (for all races) for the pro-social behaviour, but they scored lower in the anti-social behaviour. As for the ritual behaviour, the female youths showed higher mean scores compared to the male youths for the Malay and Indian ethnic groups. However, as for the Chinese ethnic group, their male youths scored higher than their female counterparts.

Within the Malay group, the male and female youths were found to significantly differ in terms of their mean scores for the pro-social behaviour (p-value = 0.004), but not in the ritual and anti-social behaviour. On the other hand, the female Chinese youths and male Chinese youths showed no significant difference for all the three domains

TABLE 3
Comparisons of the mean scores for the RP between genders within each race

	Pro-Social		Ritual		Anti-Social	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
	(Std. Dev)	(Std. Dev)	(Std. Dev)	(Std. Dev)	(Std. Dev)	(Std. Dev)
Malay	-0.397	-0.122	0.357	0.422	0.135	0.120
	(0.010)	(0.087)	(0.076)	(0.072)	(0.107)	(0.089)
<i>T</i>		-2.877		-0.621		0.106
<i>p-value</i>		0.004**		0.536		0.916
Chinese	-0.192	-0.121	-0.699	-0.887	0.330	0.189
	(0.097)	(0.087)	(0.096)	(0.094)	(0.092)	(0.799)
<i>T</i>		-0.542		1.399		1.162
<i>p-value</i>		0.588		0.164		0.247
Indian	-0.021	0.738	0.082	0.626	-0.099	-0.748
	(0.132)	(0.084)	(0.104)	(0.068)	(0.113)	(0.104)
<i>T</i>		-4.829		-4.380		-4.224
<i>p-value</i>		0.000**		0.000**		0.000**

of religious personality (all p-values > 0.05). As for the Indian group, the male and female youths revealed significant differences in the pro-social behaviour, ritual behaviour, and anti-social behaviour.

Perceived Behaviour in Inter-ethnic Everyday Life among Youth

The Indian youths were found to have the highest mean scores on their perceived behaviour towards the inter-ethnic everyday life (Mean = 58.608, SD = 11.344). This was followed by the Chinese youths who scored the second highest, and the Malay youths. The mean scores were found to be significantly different among the three different races (p-value < 0.01). Detailed results are displayed in Table 4.

Post Hoc analyses were also carried out to investigate the sources of significant differences in the mean scores amongst the races. The results of the analysis revealed significant differences in each of the possible pair-wise comparisons. This means the scores of the Indian youths, in the perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life, were significantly higher than the others, while the scores of the Malay youths were significantly the lowest.

Influences on Religious Personality on the Perceived Behaviour towards the Inter-ethnic Everyday Life

The relationship between each factor of religious personality and the students' perceived inter-ethnic

behaviour was examined using the correlation analysis. Table 5 records the strength and the significance of the mentioned relationship.

From Table 5, it is observed that the pro-social behaviour, ritual behaviour and anti-social behaviour were all significantly related to the students' perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic life (all p-values < 0.001). Both the pro-social and ritual behaviour had positive relationships with the perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic life. The relationship between the pro-social behaviour was moderately strong (correlation coefficient, r being less than 0.60), while the relationship involving students' ritual behaviour was rather low (r < 0.4). Anti-social, on the other hand, was significantly negative in terms of the perceived behaviour in the inter-ethnic life. The strength of this negative relationship could be categorized as low (correlation coefficient less than 0.3).

A multiple regression model was fitted to the sampled data and tested to analyze the contribution of the religious personality on the youth' perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life. A significant regression model consisting of all variables of religious personality was obtained (p-value in ANOVA for regression model < 0.001). Pro-social was found to be a significant positive predictor of the youths' perceived behaviour towards their inter-ethnic everyday life, while both ritual and anti-social behaviour were significant at 0.10 level. As expected, the influence of ritual on the perceived behaviour towards the inter-ethnic everyday life was positive, and that of anti-social

TABLE 4
Mean comparisons of perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life among races

Perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	p-value
Malay	-0.431	0.061	74.220	0.000**
Chinese	-0.116	0.065		
Indian	0.674	0.070		

**Significant at 0.01 level

TABLE 5
Correlation between Religious Personality and IETB

	Pro-Social	Ritual	Anti-Social
IETB	0.511**	0.342**	-0.255**
Pro-Social	-	0.542**	-0.373**
Ritual	-	-	-0.276**

**Significant at 0.01 level

was negative. The R-squared value was found to be 0.271, indicating that the variance of the perceived behaviour, towards the inter-ethnic everyday life being explained by the religious personality behaviour, was 27.1%. Table 6 presents the results gathered from the regression analysis.

preferred to be more seclusive and secretive in terms of their behaviour representation. This is supported by the finding of another study, whereby it was found that the Chinese students were less open than the other races (Mastor *et al.*, 2008).

TABLE 6
The Multiple Regression Analysis of the perceived behaviour towards the inter-ethnic everyday life

Independent Variables	Coefficient	Std. Dev.	<i>t</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Pro-Social Behaviour	0.354	0.036	9.550	0.000***
Ritual Behaviour	0.073	0.037	1.954	0.051*
Anti-Social Behaviour	-0.138	0.075	-1.735	0.083*

Dependent Var = perceived behaviour towards inter-ethnic everyday life
R2 = 0.271

**Significant at 0.10 level, **Significant at 0.001 level*

DISCUSSIONS

In the present study, the researchers found that the level of religious personality and practices differed among Malays, Chinese and Indians. In specific, the Indian youths scored highly on the pro-social behaviours of religious personality. The Malay youths scored highest on the ritual behaviours such as those taught by their religion and the Malay traditions (*adat resam*). The Chinese, on the other hand, scored higher on the anti-social type of religious personality.

The findings of the mean score comparisons showed that the religious personality among the Malaysian samples were heterogeneous, in term of their intensity and focus. In particular, the Malays were found to emphasize more on the ritual behaviours as compared to the others. Performing prayer, for example, is a daily religious ritual that is common to all Muslims. However, even common daily routine like eating or drinking has its own ethics, driven from the religious texts and the prophetic hadiths (the sayings of the prophet Muhamad S.A.W.). Thus, various forms of religious representation in their diverse daily life activities had an implicit impact on the personality of the Muslims. On the other hand, Indians were concerned more about their pro-social behaviour – implying that their religious personality is more pronounced and experienced within and among the individuals and groups in the society. The Chinese youths were more of the anti-social type of religious personality, suggesting that they

One interesting finding was that the Chinese, on the contrary, scored higher on the anti-social type of religious personality. The Malay youths scored lower than the other groups on the pro-social behaviours, despite the Islamic teachings which placed considerable emphasis on this aspect of religion. Being self-conscious could be the attributed trait which had caused one to hinder the Muslim samples from being more pro-social. In addition, some limitations in the cross-gender relationship might have also contributed to the lower score of their pro-social behaviour. Thus, this is consistent to Glock and Stark who noted that “being religious on one dimension does not necessarily imply religiosity on other dimensions” (1965:22). In their study, they suggested that those who scored high on ritual observance and biblical literacy tended to score low on the religious belief and religious feeling, and vice versa (Glock and Stark, 1965). Malays who were consistent observers of prayer, for example, might not necessarily have good relationships with others. The results gathered for the Malay youths in the current study mirrored this statement. As the Muslim sample scored highest on ritual observances, it also indicated they scored lowest on the pro-social behaviour sub-scale. On the other hand, this lowest score might be due to some measurement bias or lower self-representation among the Muslims.

Besides ethnic, gender was another variable which had an effect on the youths’ religious

personality behaviour. The female youths were seen to be more positive in their thoughts and deeds regarding these inter-ethnic issues. They, unlike the male youths, were found to be more likely to have behaviours of religious personality, which included pro-social, and less likely to have anti-social behaviour. The findings reflected the existing gender differences in many social settings (Gilligan, 1982; Moore, 1991), and for this, the females in the present study were significantly more likely than their male counterparts to be more concerned with the inter-racial attitudes.

The pro-social behaviour, as a domain in the religious personality, could positively enhance the middle youths' perceived behaviour towards the inter-ethnic everyday life due to its significant positive effects on the youths' perceptions towards these issues. The female samples seemed to be more sensitive to this particular issue.

LIMITATIONS

The researchers realized that the present study had some limitations. First, the samples comprised of only high school students in one of the states in the country. Future studies should employ non-student samples such as the people in the society and with larger samples. Another limitation is the few antecedent variables used in the present study – which focused on only the individual difference levels. More exogenous variables should be employed. Further research is therefore needed to explore the contextual factors which play a role in the formation of the Malaysian students' attitudes towards their inter-racial attitudes. In this context, future research should examine the impact of the family structure, social-economic factors, political background of the parents, school background and social factors which might have some significant impacts on the racial inter-ethnic attitudes. These variables should be included in any future research due to the fact that the people, with different status variables such as family structure, socioeconomic status (Hunt, 1980) and political affiliation, may be associated with different value systems (Converse, 1964), hence exhibit different views on the inter-ethnic issues.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, religious personality which encompasses good moral and values, such as fulfilling promises, respecting the elders, responsible, regularly exercising good deeds, and

the like, should be inculcated and enhanced in the multi-ethnic, multi-culture and multi-religious Malaysian youths. These praiseworthy behaviours are actually the common good teachings shared by all religions. Inevitably, it is hoped that by having religious personality, these youths will be able to understand, tolerate, respect each other and behave appropriately in order to live everyday life in the inter-ethnic environment in harmony.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A : Religious Personality Scale Item Changes and Deletions

The following table includes the original MRPI Religious Personality Scale items and the adapted items. The original items are listed in the first row, with the adapted items – where applicable – are provided underneath. Items which were removed upon adaptation are also indicated. This list is prior to the removal of items due to factor analysis.

Items

1. I get enthusiastic about doing good deeds when people praise me
 2. I am willing to help old people when they need it
 3. I make effort to deepen my understanding of the Islamic law
I make effort to deepen my understanding of law/rules/teaching/precepts of my religion
 4. I feel at peace when I hear the Qur'an recited
I refer to Al Qur'an/my Holy book/Scriptures to obtain tranquillity (peace)
 5. I love my brothers and sisters in Islam as I love myself
I love my brothers and sisters in my religion as I love myself
 6. I use the lessons from the Qur'an and Hadith in my conversations
I use the lessons from the Qur'an/Holy book/Scriptures in my conversations
 7. I incline towards taking a side when my friends quarrel
 8. I try to understand the meaning of Qur'anic words/verses
I try to understand the teachings of my religion in the Holy book/Qur'an
 9. I establish good relations with my neighbours
 10. I find ways to recycle anything that can still be of use
 11. **I feel sad when Ramadhan ends – removed**
 12. I invite others to perform obligatory prayer (solat)
I invite others to perform solat/prayer/religious service
 13. I avoid something if I am unsure about its legal status
I avoid something if I am unsure about its religious implication
 14. I make effort to remember death often
I make effort to remember death and afterlife often
 15. I do not pay alms (zakat)
I try to avoid myself from giving donations
 16. I find time to recite the Qur'an even if I am busy
I find time to recite the Qur'an/Holy book/Scriptures even if I am busy
 17. I immediately apologize if I wrong someone
 18. I thank Allah S.W.T when beggars come to my house
I feel happy when beggars come to my house
 19. I make effort to always follow the Islamic code of dress
I always follow the latest fashion code of dress even though it is against my religion
 20. If I borrow money from someone, I will make a contract with them
 21. I create commotion in public
 22. I do all jobs assigned to me to the best of my ability
 23. I am the first to give salam when meeting another Muslim
I am the first to greet when meeting another person
 24. I will ridicule someone in return when they ridicule me, even during Ramadhan
I will ridicule someone in return when they ridicule me
 25. I continue to perform good deeds even if others might ridicule me for it
 26. I am particular about doing good deeds consistently even though they may be small
 27. I easily forgive my siblings when they hurt me
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Cont. Appendix A

28. I always obtain the facts before passing judgment
 29. I tend to rely on others when faced with difficulty
I will seek for God's help first then to others when faced with difficulty
 30. I like to help the needy
 31. I do not expose the shortcomings of others
 32. I make effort not to display my personal good deeds
 33. I like to help my relatives
 34. I frequently discuss religious issues with my friends
I frequently share my religious values with my friends
 35. I make sure all my family members are following the teachings (sunnah) of Rasulullah
I make sure all my family members are following the teachings of my religion
 36. I seek sympathy from others when I experience misfortune
 37. I avoid offending in any way when joking around with others
 38. I make an ongoing effort to increase the frequency of my non-obligatory (nafil) prayers
I make an ongoing effort to increase the frequency of my good deeds
 39. I would give true information in court against someone even if he/she is my relative
 40. I would remove an obstacle that I see on the road, even if it is small
 41. I worry if I cannot pay debt on time
 42. I am involved in da'wah work
I am involved in religious work
 43. I care about my good relations with my siblings
 44. I admonish my friends when they do wrong
I criticize my friends when they do wrong
 45. I perform my work duties enthusiastically because it is a form worship (ibadat)
I perform my work duties enthusiastically because of my religion/God
 46. I fulfil all my promises
 47. **I am not sensitive to the teachings (sunnah) of Rasulullah in my daily activities – removed**
 48. I make effort to obey Allah S.W.T.'s rules in every situation
I make effort to obey rules/advice of my religion (God) in my daily life
 49. I assume that people talk about me because they are concerned about my well-being
 50. I always thank a person when they do something nice for me
 51. I assume that nobody is perfect
 52. I get jealous when my colleague/friend is more successful than me
 53. I make effort to have ablution (wudhu') at all times
I make effort to be clean at all times
 54. I try to smile as much as possible
 55. I do not get angry when I am being scolded
 56. I tend to remain silent when someone degrades Islam in front of me
I tend to remain silent when someone degrades my religion in front of me
 57. I speak politely to my parents
 58. **I do non-obligatory prayers (solat sunnat) wherever I am - removed**
 59. I forgive others who do wrong doings to me before they ask for my forgiveness
 60. I expect others to finish my work for me
 61. I get upset when I hear about the suffering of Muslims in other parts of the world
I get upset when I hear about the suffering of people of all races in other parts of the world
 62. I will keep a person's identity hidden when I talk about them and they are not present
 63. I like to join in when I hear people gossiping
 64. I do not neglect my friends' dignity
 65. I refer to the people who know when I feel uncertain about Islamic rulings
I refer to the people who know when I feel uncertain about the rulings/teachings of my religion
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Cont. Appendix A

66. I like to help the poor without anyone knowing
 67. I make effort to internalize the Prophet's ethical conduct in my daily life
I make effort to internalize the ethical conduct of my religion in my daily life
 68. I throw rubbish in the trash bin when I see it lying around
 69. I feel worried when I hurt my parents
 70. I do not feel worried when I send negative e-mails/SMS messages/information to people
 71. I use public buses, walkways, etc. with care/respect
 72. I cannot tolerate people who disagree with me
 73. I am careful to follow Islamic social norms during all activities I am involved in
I am careful to follow my religious social norms during all activities I am involved in
 74. I participate in recreational activities without neglecting religious norms
 75. I perceive all non-Muslims that I see as potential Muslims
I perceive those who are not the same religion as mine as potential believers of my religion
 76. I respect all opinions
 77. I feel happy when someone says something good about one of my friends
 78. I am very conscious about my health
 79. I openly display my anger if somebody meddles with my belongings
 80. I tend to let setbacks in life distract me from my responsibilities and religious practice
 81. I am very comfortable admitting my mistakes
 82. I make a serious effort to fulfil wedding invitations
 83. I have started saving money for hajj since my early days
I have started saving money for religious donations since my early days
 84. I prefer to do any form of labour than to beg
 85. I gossip about others
 86. I make sure that when I read the Qur'an, I understand its demands
I make sure that I understand the demands/obligations/teachings of my religion
 87. I use other peoples' belongings without their permission
 88. I speak rudely to my parents when I am angry at them
 89. My siblings and I compete in serving our parents
 90. I enjoy working in a team
 91. I pay more attention to my friends than my parents
 92. I offer my guests the best of what I have when I am hosting them in my home
 93. I like to take advantage of opportunities to understand Islam with my family
I like to take advantages of opportunities to understand my religion with my family
 94. I look for opportunities to give charity
 95. I share my opinion when I think that it will improve a situation
 96. I do not enter a person's house until I am invited
 97. I follow the advice of my parents even though it may not be what I want
I follow the advice of my parents even though it may contradict my religious conviction
 98. I make effort to make my guests feel as comfortable as possible
 99. I set aside money every year for charity
I set aside money every year for religious purposes
 100. I work hard to achieve my goals in the specified time
 101. I pray the 5 compulsory (fard) prayers (solat) everyday
I practice solat/religious prayers as taught in my religion
 102. I follow the advice of my parents even though it may not be what I want
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Appendix B : Adapted MRPI Religious Personality Scale Factor Loadings

Item Statements	Factor 1 – Pro-Social Behaviours	Factor 2 – Ritual Behaviours	Factor 3 – Anti-Social Behaviours
I fulfil all my promises	.644	-.187	-.053
I make effort to make my guests feel as comfortable as possible	.641	.023	-.023
I am very comfortable admitting my mistakes	.619	-.082	-.123
I share my opinion when I think that it will improve a situation	.585	.113	-.137
I always thank a person when they do something nice for me	.578	-.065	.070
I speak politely to my parents	.577	-.080	.143
I offer my guests the best of what I have when I am hosting them in my home	.567	.025	.045
	.551	.011	.010
I like to help my relatives	.545	-.024	.109
I care about my good relations with my siblings	.544	-.035	-.134
I feel happy when someone says something good about one of my friends	.535	-.041	-.246
I make a serious effort to fulfil wedding invitations	.518	-.121	-.081
I am very conscious about my health	.513	.009	-.006
I do all jobs assigned to me to the best of my ability	.502	.031	.015
I respect all opinions	.495	.086	.102
I like to help the needy	.490	-.036	.162
I use public buses, walkways, etc. with care/respect	.488	-.076	.126
I immediately apologize if I wrong someone	.487	.064	.008
I work hard to achieve my goals in the specified time	.478	.008	-.146
I enjoy working in a team	.474	-.115	.072
I forgive others who wrong me before they ask for my forgiveness	.470	.098	.195
My siblings and I compete in serving our parents	.465	-.031	.096
I follow the advice of my parents even though it may not be what I want	.462	-.101	.114
I easily forgive my siblings when they hurt me	.460	-.020	.095
I always obtain the facts before passing judgment	.446	-.429	-.099
I follow the advice of my parents even though it may contradict my religious conviction	.441	.111	.060
I am willing to help old people when they need it	.439	.091	.047
I feel worried when I hurt my parents	.436	.063	-.016
I try to smile as much as possible	.418	.201	.001

Cont. Appendix B

I continue to perform good deeds even if others might ridicule me for it	.402	.132	-.174
I like to help the poor without anyone knowing	.399	-.042	-.264
I do not neglect my friends' dignity	.390	.015	-.124
I would remove an obstacle that I see on the road, even if it is small	.373	.250	.041
I make effort to be clean at all times	.368	-.098	.244
I throw rubbish in the trash bin when I see it lying around	.366	.193	-.162
I am particular about doing good deeds consistently even though they may be small	.355	-.084	-.218
If I borrow money from someone, I will make a contract with them	.352	.144	-.013
I would give true information in court against someone even if he/she is my relative	.346	.155	.104
I will ridicule someone in return when they ridicule me	.344	.003	-.054
I avoid offending in any way when joking around with others	.343	.051	-.181
I worry if I cannot pay debt on time	.324	.222	.021
I get upset when I hear about the suffering of people of all races in other parts of the world	.310	.110	.139
I am careful to follow my religious social norms during all activities I am involved in	-.138	.773	-.145
I refer to Al Qur'an/my Holy book/Scriptures to obtain tranquillity (peace)	-.034	.757	.017
I make sure that I understand the demands/obligations/teachings of my religion	-.204	.737	-.014
I find time to recite the Qur'an/Holy book/Scriptures even if I am busy	.032	.706	.064
I make effort to deepen my understanding of the law/rules/teaching/precepts of my religion	-.001	.704	0.49
I practice solat/religious prayers as taught in my religion	-.001	.702	.071
I try to understand the teachings of my religion in the Holy book/Qur'an	-.041	.694	-.051
I invite others to perform solat/prayer/religious service	-.191	.671	-.107
I use the lessons from the Qur'an/Holy book/Scriptures in my conversations	.018	.662	.036
I will seek for God's help first then to others when faced with difficulty	.122	.640	.004

Cont. Appendix B

I make an ongoing effort to increase the frequency of my good deeds	.056	.633	.104
I make sure that all my family members are following the teachings of my religion	.073	.632	-.067
I refer to the people whom I know when I feel uncertain about the rulings/teachings of my religion	.116 .173	.622 .584	.014 .042
I perform my work duties enthusiastically because of my religion/God			
I like to take advantages of opportunities to understand my religion with my family	.129 .141	.578 .542	.113 -.043
I make effort to obey rules/advice of my religion (God) in my daily life	-.048	.535	-.146
I am involved in religious work	-.151	.532	.042
I make effort to remember death and afterlife often	.181	.461	-.031
I avoid something if I am unsure about its religious implication	.317	.386	.110
I frequently share my religious values with my friends	.277	.369	.003
I make effort to internalize the ethical conduct of my religion in my daily life	.069	.365	-.212
I love my brothers and sisters in my religion as I love myself	-.070	.033	.564
I set aside money every year for religious purposes	-.026	.060	.561
I look for opportunities to give charity	.105	-.044	.546
I will ridicule someone in return when they ridicule me	.065	-.001	.535
I expect others to finish my work for me	.149	-.114	.533
I use other peoples' belongings without their permission	-.061	.090	.521
I gossip about others	-.245	-.008	.509
I create commotion in public	-.001	-.072	.502
I pay more attention to my friends than my parents	.205	-.018	.488
I criticize my friends when they do wrong	-.203	-.042	.474
I like to join in when I hear people gossiping	.064	-.217	.438
I speak rudely to my parents when I am angry at them	.054	-.178	.424
I openly display my anger if somebody meddles with my belongings	.096	.047	.417
I incline toward taking a side when my friends quarrel	-.003	-.004	.410
I get jealous when my colleague/friend is more successful than me			

Cont. Appendix B

I try to avoid myself from giving donations	-.051	.211	-.408
I do not feel worried when I send negative e-mails/ SMS messages/ information to people	-.172	.172	.378
I perceive those who are not the same religion as mine as potential believers of my religion	-.250	.186	.375
I always follow the latest fashion code of dress even though it is against my religion	-.258	.132	.317
I tend to let setback in life distract me from my responsibilities and religious practice			
I seek sympathy from others when I experience misfortune			
