



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**MODERATING EFFECTS OF RELIGIOSITY ON PREDICTORS OF  
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG OLDER MALAY MUSLIMS**

**YADOLLAH ABOLFATHI MOMTAZ**

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**By**

**YADOLLAH ABOLFATHI MOMTAZ**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**December 2010**



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**December 2010**

**Chair: Nurizan Yahaya, PhD**

**Institute: Institute of Gerontology**

Malaysia, an Islamic country in South East Asia, is experiencing the population aging phenomenon. The existing body of knowledge on the predictors of psychological well being, as one of the most important indicators of aging well, is limited to western cultures and with inconclusive findings. The overall purposes of this thesis were to identify factors contributing to psychological well-being as well as examine moderating effect of religiosity on the psychological well-being of elderly Malays. The sample for this study was a subset of 1415 older Malay Muslims, obtained from a cross-sectional survey entitled “Patterns of Social Relationship and Psychological Well-being among Older Persons in Peninsular Malaysia” which conducted from 2007 to 2009. Data analysis was conducted with “The Statistical Package for Social Sciences” (SPSS 13) and the “ModGraph-2” software program. A multiple regression analysis and two 4-step moderated hierarchical regression analyses were used to test hypotheses. The mean psychological well-being score of the respondents was 62.3 (SD=22.54). Majority of the respondents (66.1%) reported



good psychological well being. Using multiple regression analysis a significant model emerged ( $F_{(11, 1402)} = 23.96, p \leq .001, R^2 = .16$ ), where social support and physical health as well as age, household income, sex, and marital status significantly contributed to the prediction of psychological well being. Next, two 4-step moderated hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to examine the moderating effects of religiosity. The first 4-step moderated hierarchical regression analyses revealed that social religiosity ( $Beta = .07, p \leq .01$ ) and personal religiosity ( $Beta = .06, p \leq .05$ ) significantly moderate relationship between physical health decline and psychological well being. The second 4-step moderated hierarchical regression analyses revealed that only social religiosity ( $Beta = .07, p \leq .01$ ) statistically moderates relationship between social isolation and psychological well being. The results provide both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, findings supported and extended the Social Production Function Theory of psychological well-being by adding religiosity as a moderating factor to attenuate negative effects of age related changes on psychological well-being in later life. From the practical perspective, social and health policy makers should pay special attention and provide opportunities to vulnerable elderly groups to poor psychological well-being including older women, widowed, the poor, socially isolated, chronically ill older persons, and the oldest old. Another important practical implication is that social workers, counselors and other mental health professionals working with older persons should integrate religiosity as an important resource into their therapeutic work for the development and maintenance of psychological well-being of older persons facing age related problems.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**Kesan Moderasi Religiositi ke atas Prediktor Kesejahteraan Psikologi  
dalam kalangan Warga Tua Melayu**

Oleh

**YADOLLAH ABOLFATHI MOMTAZ**

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Malaysia, sebuah negara Islam di Asia Tenggara, sedang mengalami fenomena penuaan penduduk. Kesejahteraan psikologi adalah indikator penting ke arah penuaan sejahtera dan telah mendapat perhatian meluas dalam bidang kajian gerontologi. Namun begitu, kebanyakan kajian dalam bidang ini dijalankan di negara barat dan hasil kajian masih belum dapat merumuskan secara kukuh faktor apakah yang mempengaruhi kesejahteraan warga tua serta mengapakah sebahagian warga tua dapat mengekalkan kesejahteraan mereka walaupun telah lanjut usia. Justeru, objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti faktor yang menyumbang kepada kesejahteraan psikologi dan meneliti kesan moderasi religiositi terhadap kesejahteraan psikologi warga tua Melayu. Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 1415 wargatua Melayu yang terlibat dalam kajian silang lintang peringkat kebangsaan yang bertajuk “Pola Perhubungan Sosial dan Kesejahteraan Psikologi di kalangan Warga Tua di Semenanjung Malaysia” dari tahun 2007 hingga 2009. Data dianalisis menggunakan *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS 13) dan program perisian *Modgraph-2*. Analisis regresi berganda dan dua analisis *4-step moderated*



*hierarchical regression* digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis. Hasil kajian menunjukkan skor purata kesejahteraan psikologi responden adalah 62.3 (SD=22.54). Majoriti responden (66.1%) melaporkan kesejahteraan psikologi yang baik. Dengan menggunakan analisis regresi berganda, model yang signifikan telah terhasil ( $F_{(11, 1402)} = 23.96, p \leq 0.001, R^2 = 0.16$ ). Ini menunjukkan sokongan sosial, kesihatan fizikal, umur, pendapatan isirumah, jantina dan status perkahwinan menyumbang dengan signifikan sebagai prediktor kesejahteraan psikologi. Seterusnya, dua analisis *4-step moderated hierarchical regression* digunakan untuk meneliti kesan moderasi religiositi. Analisis pertama *4-step moderated hierarchical regression* menunjukkan religiositi sosial (Beta=0.07,  $p \leq 0.01$ ) dan religiositi personal (Beta=0.06,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) memoderasi secara signifikan hubungan antara kemerosotan kesihatan fizikal dan kesejahteraan psikologi. Analisis kedua *4-step moderated hierarchical regression* menunjukkan hanya religiositi sosial (Beta= 0.07,  $p \leq 0.01$ ) memoderasi secara signifikan hubungan antara pengasingan sosial dan kesejahteraan psikologi. Hasil kajian memberi implikasi teori dan praktikal. Daripada segi teori, hasil kajian menyokong dan mengukuhkan teori fungsi pengeluaran sosial berkaitan kesejahteraan sosial dengan mengambilkira religiositi sebagai faktor yang menyederhanakan kesan negatif perubahan yang berkait dengan umur pada usia lanjut. Daripada perspektif praktikal, pengubal polisi sosial dan kesihatan perlu memberi perhatian khusus dan memberi peluang kepada golongan lemah termasuk wanita, balu, orang miskin, golongan yang dipinggirkan, sakit dan sangat tua. Implikasi penting yang lain ialah pekerja sosial, kaunselor dan profesional dalam kesihatan mental yang mengendalikan warga tua patut mengintegrasikan aspek religiositi sebagai sumber penting dalam elemen terapi ke arah pembangunan dan pengurusan kesejahteraan wargatua yang menghadapi masalah berkait penuaan.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 6 December 2010 to conduct the final examination of Yadollah Abolfathi Momtaz on his thesis entitled “Moderating Effects of Religiosity on Predictors of Psychological Well-Being among Older Malay Muslims” in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declared that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

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**YADOLLAH ABOLFATHI MOMTAZ**

Date: 6 December 2010



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