

*The Influence of Gender, Ethnicity and Academic Performance
On Islamic Business Course*

(Pengaruh Jantina, Etnik dan Prestasi Akademik Terhadap Kursus Perniagaan Islam)

MOHD HIZAM-HANAFIAH, MUHAMMAD NASRI-HUSSAIN
& AHMAD AZMAN MOKHTAR

ABSTRACT

Previous studies show that students' background is found to affect teaching methods, working goals, business simulation performance and value system. A new study was conducted to evaluate the influence of students' background on their perception of the importance of the main modules in Islamic Business course at university level. A total of 221 undergraduate students in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) responded to the questionnaire distributed. Results showed that gender, ethnicity and academic performance influenced students' perception on the main modules in Islamic Business courses. Furthermore, some further discussions and research implications were also discussed.

Keywords: Islamic business, students' background, academic performance, gender, ethnicity.

ABSTRAK

Kajian lepas menunjukkan latarbelakang pelajar mempengaruhi kaedah pengajaran, matlamat kerja, prestasi simulasi perniagaan dan system nilai. Kajian ini dijalankan unntuk menilai pengaruh latarbelakang pelajar terhadap persepsi mereka mengenai kepentingan modul-modul utama dalam kursus Perniagaan Islam di peringkat universiti. Seramai 221 pelajar prasiswazah di Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) dan Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) menjawab soal-selidik yang diedarkan. Keputusan analisis menunjukkan jantina, etnik dan prestasi akademik mempengaruhi persepsi pelajar terhadap modul-modul utama dalam kursus Perniagaan Islam. Beberapa perbincangan dan implikasi kajian turut dibincangkan.

Kata kunci: Perniagaan islam, latar belakang pelajar, prestasi akademik, jantina, etnik.

INTRODUCTION

Offering business education nowadays is very challenging. Many criticisms have been made by society and business sector, especially on universities that offer management education and business management on the issues of meeting the syllabus content with the community needs and organizations, offering a flexible and consistent quality (Fennell 1991), helping to maintain high moral business practices (Godfrey 1999), over exposing students to the concept of capitalism (Akbari 2009; Jennings 1999) and how to educate managers to be responsible for decisions affecting ecosystem and community (Stead & Stead 2010).

There is a view that students should be exposed to theories, perspectives and current business practices besides encouraging them to criticize and talk about the theories (Delbecq 1999; Vince 2010). This may be the reasons why some people regard business education as being too theoretical (Anthony 1986; Mintzberg 1992; Zhu 2009) and what is taught in universities is different from life and reality that occur in real organizations (Zhu 2009). To make matter worse, some people also assume that academic approach in teaching business concept is irrelevant to practice, does not provide students with problem-solving skills (Vince 2010; Wilmott 1997), unable to produce global managers (Kedia & Englis 2011). Further, some believe the present business course content is more western centric (Case & Selvester 2000) where the manager should not be purely aiming the economic values (Akbari 2009).

In addressing the issue of business education which is seen as being too theoretical, several changes have been made in current curriculum. The case analysis method applied currently, (Hanafiah & Abdullah 2004) and the integration of business simulations in teaching methods has proven to be effective in developing knowledge and skills in decision making and making the course more interesting and challenging (Borrajao et al. 2010; Hanafiah & Ismail 2006; Jaeger & Adair 2010; Pasin & Giroux 2011; Salas et al. 2009). Such a phenomenon indirectly creates great opportunities to offer an alternative business education from the perspective of Islam (Hanafiah 2003).

Due to the above issues, the Faculty of Economics and Management UKM has made it compulsory for the economics, business and accounting undergraduates to take courses in Business from Islamic Perspective in its current program structure. Similarly, UUM students in the business administration program are required to take Introduction to Islamic Business as their core subject. Such a move could integrate the theoretical and practical aspects of the courses

so that they do not sound too theoretical (Anthony 1986; Mintzberg 1992) and take advantage of the development and practice of Islam in Malaysia which have created various opportunities and appropriate venues in offering alternative business education from the perspective of Islamic study (Hanafiah 2003).

Although Business from Islamic Perspective course has been offered in the Faculty of Economics and Management UKM since early 1990s, and UUM in 2004, no study has been conducted to obtain the students' feedbacks about the course especially its main modules. Nevertheless, under the Malaysian Qualification Framework (MQF), students' opinion should be taken into consideration in improving the course. In fact, previous studies by Hanafiah & Abdullah (2004), Hanafiah & Ismail (2006), Ismail & Hanafiah (2004), Ismail & Hanafiah (2007a), Ismail & Hanafiah (2007b) show that students' background does influence teaching method, students' learning and the effectiveness of the course. There is a need to seek the students' views on the existing modules, especially for courses that use the same syllabus at different universities. The general objective of this paper is to examine the influence of students' background on the importance of the modules in Islamic Business courses in UKM and UUM.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender

Previous studies show there are many differences between male and female students. Jackson et al. (2011) concluded that gender affects academic performance. Tyagi & Bansal (2010) also discover a clear personality difference between males and females for the program on campus where female students score higher in negative emotions, openness to experience, the ability to consent and awareness. Ghazvini & Khajehpour's finding (2011) exhibit that females possess internal locus of control, attitude, motivation, time management, anxiety, and better grades in literature while males are more focused, process information differently, and obtain better grade in mathematics.

A study among medical students concluded that non-cognitive factors influence the academic performance of female students in a medical field, but not for male students (Spiegel et al., 1986). Cleland et al.

(2005) find that female medical students have a higher positive attitude and lower negative attitude scores than male students. In terms of perception towards life, a study by Ongen (2006) in Turkey shows that female students have more liberal views on vocational education, intellectual behavior, freedom, beverages, clothing and marital relations. Grebennikov & Skaines' study (2009) of university students in Australia shows that female students rate university services as more important than the males. In addition, Ford & Kent (2010) who study business administration program find female college students to have less interest and awareness of the financial market than male students. This difference persists when leaving the university as the males and females choose different approaches in order to be self-employed (Leoni & Falk 2010).

In UKM itself, the study of Hanafiah and Abdullah (2004) involving 309 students to evaluate the effectiveness of the case analysis method shows no different opinion between males and females. A further study also at UKM by Hanafiah & Ismail (2006) to determine the influence of students' background on the effectiveness of business simulation reveals that male students have a better perception on the effectiveness of business simulation than female students. Generally, previous studies find more differences exist between males and females in terms of their academic performances (Furnham & Chamorro-Premuzic 2002; Jackson et al. 2011), personalities (Ghazvini & Khajehpour 2011; Tyagi & Bansal 2010), self-perception (Cleland et al. 2005), life (Ongen 2006), service evaluation (Grebennikov & Skaines 2009), current issues (Ford & Kent 2010) and teaching methods (Hanafiah & Ismail, 2006). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is proposed: *Male and female students have different perceptions on the importance of the modules in Islamic Business courses.*

Ethnicity

There are different values and cultures of various ethnic groups in Malaysia. According to Abdul Razak et al. (2010), clear cultural differences between ethnic groups in Malaysia should not be ignored but should be investigated. In a marketing study for example, there are clear differences between the Malay, Chinese and Indian in the activity of purchasing goods (Ong & Moschis 2009). In the study of entrepreneurship, Idris (2010) finds that Malay female entrepreneurs are more innovative than the Chinese, though the latter have a higher ego orientation index. A

study in other countries also shows the influence of ethnic values in students in relation to academic performance (Jackson et al. 2011) and evaluation of lecturers' teaching performance (Shauki et al. 2009). In Malaysia, Mohd Ghazali and McPherson (2009) find the existence of a different motivation when learning music in the childhood of Muslim Malays, Chinese Buddhism, Chinese Christians, Indian Hindus and Indian Christians. Ismail (2009) finds non-Malay students to have a more positive relationship with mathematics achievement among students in Malaysia. At the university level, the finding of Musa and Kayat (2009) shows that there is a difference between Malay and Chinese students in discussing their experiences in a 'home-stay' program in rural areas.

At the Faculty of Economics and Management UKM, a study done by Hanafiah and Ismail (2004) shows that there is a difference between Malay and Chinese students in terms of values. A further study by Hanafiah and Ismail (2006) finds that Malay students have a better perception of the effectiveness of business simulation compared to the Chinese but Chinese students are found to assess the 'Working as an attractive' as more important than Malay students ($p < 0.05$) (Ismail & Hanafiah 2007a). In general, previous studies show the influence of ethnicity in the activity of purchasing goods (Ong & Moschis 2009), academic performance (Jackson et al. 2011), evaluation of lecturers (Shauki et al. 2009), learning music (Mohd Ghazali & McPherson 2009), and mathematics achievement (Ismail 2009). In particular, there is a difference between Malay and Chinese students in the 'home-stay' experience (Musa & Kayat 2009), value systems (Ismail & Hanafiah 2004; Ismail & Hanafiah 2007a), and the effectiveness of teaching methods (Hanafiah & Ismail 2006). For the sake of this study, similarities and differences between Malay and Chinese students are investigated as they have sufficient numbers of participant compared to other ethnics. Therefore, the second hypothesis is proposed - *Malay and Chinese students have different perceptions on the importance of the modules in Islamic Business course.*

Academic Performance

Many studies zoom in on the relationship between academic performance with other factors such as personality (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham 2003; Conrad 2006; Kappe & Flier 2010), motivation (Ning & Downing 2010), learning strategies (Palos et al. 2011), and information processing styles (Berzonsky & Kuk

2005). One's ability and perception on the university role in career development are also related to academic performance (Bryne & Flood 2008). A study by Abu Bakar et al. (2010) at a university in Malaysia in the fields of science, education, humanities, and engineering shows a positive correlation between students' attitudes to learning and academic achievement.

In the same vein, a study by Hanafiah and Abdullah (2004) also shows more excellent students (higher CGPA) are more appreciative to the case analysis method since it provides significant challenges in undergraduate programs. Ismail and Hanafiah's study (2007b) shows that students who excel in the business simulation have a similar value system to managers in the business world compared to those who are less excel in the business simulation. In addition, those who excel in the business simulation also value high morality and leadership more. Findings from studies in Western countries indicate a correlation between academic performance and personality, motivation, learning strategies, prior knowledge and ability (Berzonsky & Kuk 2005; Bryne & Flod 2008; Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham 2003; Conrad 2006; Kappe & Flier 2010; Ning & Downing, 2010; Palos et al. 2011). Similarly, findings in Malaysia show that the correlation between academic performance and students' interests, perceptions, attitudes, value systems and personality do exist (Abu Bakar et al. 2010; Ismail & Hanafiah 2007b). In short, there are differences between academically excellent students and those who are less excellent in relation to their perception, attitudes, value systems, personality, motivation, ability, and personality. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is presented

-Students with different academic achievements have different perceptions on the importance of the modules in Islamic Business course.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a cross-sectional design study where two or more variables are studied simultaneously (Jackson 2008) and respondents from different backgrounds are examined at the same time. To get accurate information from the right respondents, a 'survey' method is used. This study uses the self-completion questionnaire as it is cheaper to run, easy to administer, has no interviewer's effect, and facilitates the respondents (Bryman 2008). A three-page questionnaire is used. For the purpose of writing this paper, only Part A (Interest Module) and Part E (Students' Background) of the questionnaire are utilised. The significance of the modules is measured by the scale of 1-5 (extremely not important – extremely important). The population covers all students who are taking Islamic Business course in UKM and UUM. Both courses use the same textbook (Wafa et al. 2005) and almost the same syllabus. Questionnaires are distributed after the last lecture and students' participation is voluntary.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

As displayed in Table 1, majority of the students are female (64.71%) and it is in line with the trend in public universities where female students dominate the population. Majority of the students are Malays (69.23%), and has a CGPA between 2.50 - 2.99 (56.56%).

TABLE 1. Students' Profiles

Characteristic	UKM	UUM	Total (Percentage)
Gender			
• Males	15	63	78 (35.29)
• Females	119	24	143 (64.71)
Ethnic			
• Malay	78	75	153 (69.23)
• Chinese	45	12	57 (25.79)
• Indian	9	0	9 (4.07)
• Others	2	0	2 (0.90)
CGPA			
• 3.67 and above	4	0	4 (1.81)
• 3.00 – 3.66	55	17	72 (32.58)
• 2.50 – 2.99	67	58	125 (56.56)
• 2.00 – 2.49	8	12	20 (9.05)
Total (Percentage)	134 (60.63%)	87 (39.37)	221

Gender Influence

T-test is conducted to compare the students' perception on the importance of the modules between males

and females and the results are shown in Table 2 and Hypothesis 1 is supported.

TABLE 2. Differences on the Students' Perception on the Importance of the Modules between Males and Females

Module Titles	Male Mean (N = 78)	Female Mean (N = 143)	T Value	Sig.
Introduction to Islamic Business	4.54	3.99	5.005	.000***
Islamic Sources of Law	4.55	4.06	4.032	.000***
Islamic Economic System	4.28	4.10	1.842	.067*
Principles of Islamic Investment	4.15	4.12	0.331	.741
<i>Riba In Muamalah</i>	4.62	4.30	3.252	.001***
Islamic Business Contracts	4.33	4.17	1.719	.087*
Amanah and Tabaruat Contracts	4.24	4.00	2.146	.033**
Musawamah Contracts	4.37	3.85	4.673	.000***
<i>Zakat</i> in Business	4.49	4.29	1.887	.060*
Ethics in Islamic Muamalat	4.12	4.19	-0.682	.496
Islamic Management	4.36	4.19	1.739	.083*
Islamic Banking	4.36	4.22	1.389	.166
Takaful	4.06	4.15	-0.744	.457
Islamic Pawn broker (Ar-Rahn)	4.13	4.01	1.042	.298

* Significant at 90% level; ** Significant at 95% level; ***Significant at 99% level

The study finds that it is clear that males and females differ and this difference is obvious in the nine items listed in Table 2. Males students regard the nine modules in the Islamic Business course (Introduction to Islamic Business, Islamic Sources of Law, Islamic Economic System, Riba in Muamalah, Islamic Business Contracts, Musawamah Contract, Zakat in Business, and Islamic Management) as more important than the female students. Although there are differences, both genders agree that the modules on 'Riba in Muamalah' and 'Zakat in Business' as one of the most important modules in the course.

the highest mean average of 4.62, Malay students regard the Riba module as the most important but Chinese students, with a mean average of 4.00, put the module as the third most important. Nevertheless, Malay students regard Islamic Sources of Law module as the second most important (mean = 4.57) whereas the Chinese regard it as not important (mean = 3.46). Differences also occur when Malay students evaluate Islamic Investment Principles module as the third least important (mean = 4.18) whereas Chinese students as the fourth most important (mean = 3.98).

Ethnicity Influence

T-test is conducted to compare the students' perception on the importance of the modules between Malay and Chinese students and the results are shown in Table 3 and Hypothesis 2 is supported. As shown in Table 3, there are clear differences between Malay and Chinese students in all the modules except the Takaful module. In general, the results show that Malay students evaluate the course modules in Islamic Business as more important than Chinese students. Although significantly different, both Malay and Chinese students agree that Riba In Muamalah module is important. With

The Influence of Academic Performance

As the students with a CGPA between 3.00 - 3.67 and 2.50 - 2.99 are 89.14 percent from overall respondents, it is more significant to carry a T-test between these two groups. Results can be seen in Table 4 which shows a significant finding and Hypothesis 3 is supported.

TABLE 3. Differences on the students' perception on the importance of the modules between Malay and Chinese students

Module Titles	Malay Student Mean (N=153)	Chinese Student Mean (N=57)	T Value	Sig.
Introduction to Islamic Business	4.36	3.79	4.783	.000***
Islamic Sources of Law	4.57	3.46	9.873	.000***
Islamic Economic System	4.26	3.95	2.913	.004***
Principles of Islamic Investment	4.18	3.98	1.680	.094*
<i>Riba In Muamalah</i>	4.62	4.00	6.331	.000***
Islamic Business Contracts	4.38	3.88	5.345	.000***
Amanah and Tabaruat Contracts	4.33	3.47	7.681	.000***
<i>Musawamah</i> Contracts	4.29	3.39	8.149	.000***
Zakat in Business	4.58	3.91	6.356	.000***
Ethics in Islamic Muamalat	4.31	3.79	4.548	.000***
Islamic Management	4.43	3.79	6.471	.000***
Islamic Banking	4.37	4.05	2.967	.003***
Takaful	4.16	4.05	.853	.395
Islamic Pawn broker (<i>Ar-Rahn</i>)	4.17	3.79	3.214	.002***

* Significant at 90% level; ** Significant at 95% level; ***Significant at 99% level

TABLE 4. Differences on the perception of the importance of the modules between CGPA 3.00-3.66 and CGPA 2.50-2.99

Module Title	Min PNGK 3.00-3.66 (N=72)	Min PNGK 2.50-2.99 (N=125)	Nilai T	Sig.
Introduction to Islamic Business	4.13	4.21	-0.661	.509
Islamic Sources of Law	3.93	4.40	-3.496	.001***
Islamic Economic System	4.22	4.13	0.870	.385
Principles of Islamic Investment	4.33	4.02	2.747	.007***
<i>Riba In Muamalah</i>	4.34	4.49	-1.398	.164
Islamic Business Contracts	4.19	4.28	0.849	.397
Amanah and Tabaruat Contracts	3.88	4.21	-2.710	.007***
<i>Musawamah</i> Contracts	3.79	4.21	-3.389	.001***
Zakat in Business	4.32	4.43	-0.985	.326
Ethics in Islamic Muamalat	4.23	4.11	0.951	.343
Islamic Management	4.17	4.27	-0.990	.323
Islamic Banking	4.39	4.22	1.646	.101
Takaful	4.32	3.98	2.904	.004***
Islamic Pawn Broker (<i>Ar-Rahn</i>)	4.04	4.10	-0.457	.648

***Significant at 99% level

Information in Table 4 shows that there are five differences for the students' perception on the importance of the modules between students obtaining CGPA 3.00-3.66 and 2.50-2.99. The study finds that students with academic excellence (CGPA 3.00-3.66) evaluated Islamic Investment Principles and Takaful modules more important than less performing students (CGPA 2.50-2.99). Similarly, less academically excellent students (CGPA 2.50-2.99) do evaluate

Islamic Sources of Law, Amanah and Tabaruat Contracts, and Musawamah Contracts modules as important compared to more excellent students (CGPA 3.00-3.66). Generally, more academically performed students evaluate practical modules such as Islamic Investment Principles and Takaful as more important than less performed academically students.

DISCUSSION

This study shows significant differences between males and females in assessing the significance of the modules in the Islamic Business course, particularly the nine modules namely Introduction to Islamic Business, Islamic Sources of Law, Islamic Economic System, Riba In Muamalah, Islamic Business Contracts, Musawamah Contracts, Zakat in Business, and Islamic Management. However, both genders still perceive the modules on 'Riba in Muamalah' and 'Zakat in Business' as the most important modules in this course. These findings widen the gap between male and female students in Malaysia but in line with the findings of Hanafiah and Ismail (2006) which states the males have a better perception than the females on the learning aspects.

Differences between Malay and Chinese students are clearer in this study. Findings of this study show that Malay students appreciate the importance of the modules in the Islamic Business course more and it is in line with the findings of Hanafiah and Ismail (2006) where Malay students agree with the effectiveness of the business simulation compared to Chinese students. Clearer differences arise when Malay students regard Islamic Sources of Law module as the second most important (mean = 4.57) whereas Chinese students respond to the module as the second least important (mean = 3.46). This occurs due to the fact that Malay-Muslim students understand the importance of Islamic Sources of Law as the source for business formation while Chinese students who are Buddhists and Christians have less interest in learning about this module. As a result, they might have difficulties understanding the module though it covers merely the basic concepts.

Differences also exist on the Islamic Investment Principles and Takaful modules which are considered more important by Chinese students than Malay students. Chances are Chinese students are more interested to learn modules that focus on the practical aspect and relate to career development as the three modules namely Principles of Islamic Investment, Islamic Banking and Takaful are more likely to portray a true picture of what normally happens in the working world. This is consistent with previous findings in which Chinese students evaluation that 'Working is something interesting' more important than what the Malay students evaluation (Ismail & Hanafiah, 2007a). This is also consistent with the findings of Ismail and Hanafiah (2004) who discover that

Chinese students evaluate the effectiveness and quality of an organisation as more important compared to Malay students. Generally, the above findings reveal more differences that exist between Malay and Chinese students in Malaysia. They not only differ from the career perspective (Ismail & Hanafiah 2007a), values and organization (Ismail & Hanafiah 2004), and the effectiveness of teaching methods (Hanafiah & Ismail 2006), but also in terms of the relationship between what is learned in the lecture halls and the working world.

Furthermore, the study finds that students' academic performance (CGPA) influences their evaluation on the importance of the modules used. It is found that students with a better academic performance assess modules containing practical components such as Islamic Investment Principles and Takaful as more crucial compared to less academically excellent students. This is contrary to the study of Hanafiah and Ismail (2006) in which students' academic achievement (CGPA) does not influence the effectiveness of the business simulations. Nevertheless, the finding in this study is in line with the findings of Hanafiah and Abdullah (2004) in which the students are found to be appreciating more the case-study method as a method for classroom instruction. This evidence is also consistent with the findings of Ismail and Hanafiah (2007b) which show that students who excel in the business simulation to assess high morality and leadership as a more important value and a value system similar to managers in the business world than students who are less excellent in the business simulation. Although academic achievement is not similar to the business simulation achievement, this study helps to reinforce the fact that academically excellent and less excellent students possess different perceptions and value system.

CONCLUSION

These findings have further proven the fact that male and female students have different perceptions towards what is important to learn; it is in line with the findings that they also differ on the idea of what is the appropriate method to learn (Hanafiah & Ismail 2006). In short, although there are similarities between them, their differences are becoming clearer. It is interesting to find out what non-Muslim students think of the so-called 'Islamic-based' courses; the findings of this study reveal a lot. The differences between Malay and Chinese students are evident in this study. This study does further explain that they are also different in

perception of what they are learning and its relationship to the working world.

Moreover, the study finds that students who are outstanding academically assess modules which are career-oriented as more important than the less academically outstanding students. It proves that excellent students are also more oriented to practical aspects and career than less excellent students which is consistent with the findings of Hanafiah and Abdullah (2004) and Hanafiah and Ismail (2006) which find the existence of the influence of academic qualifications in assessing the effectiveness of teaching methods.

In short, the availability of Islamic Business course in UKM and UUM is considered important in the current curriculum. Compared to other courses in the present curriculum that use a lot of textbooks and materials from the Western perspective, this course offers a perspective that is not western centric (Case & Selvester 2000) and is based on the Islamic perspective. This course emphasizes a lot on the moral / ethical aspects and accountability in business, as recommended by Akbari (2009), Godfrey (1999) and Jennings (1999) in addition to educating students in making a decision to the best interest of the society and environment as recommended by Stead and Stead (2010). Although there is some influence of students' background on the importance of the modules in this course, it is believed this course can be further enhanced for the benefit of the students. The differences discovered in this study are actually an interesting finding but further studies are needed to confirm the findings and to relate them to other factors.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Modules such as Riba in Muamalah and Zakat in Business should be improved because they are perceived as important by the students, especially from different genders and ethnicity. Similarly, modules on the Principles of Islamic Investment, Islamic Banking and Takaful System should also be enhanced as academically excellent students and students from different ethnicities rate them as important. In short, the five modules have high practical aspects and are closely related to the real working world than other modules which are more theoretical. In addition, several additional modules that contain practical components and are relevant to the working world such as Human Resource Management from Islamic Perspective, Islamic Tourism, and Marketing from Islamic Perspective can be added to make the course more balanced in terms of theory and

practice.

In the meantime, lecturers involved can enhance the current research on these matters as well as being directly or indirectly involved with institutions and relevant sectors as a consultant, researcher, or as 'temporary staff' through the 'industrial attachment concept'. It is believed that adding new modules and enhancing the existing modules are able to offer students the latest knowledge and latest practices (Delbecq 1999; Vince 2010), bring together students with life and reality in a real organization (Zhu 2009), as well as help addressing criticism that the management education curriculum is too theoretical (Anthony 1986; Mintzberg 1992; Zhu 2009), irrelevant and does not provide students with what they should know and the real issues in the working world (Vince 2010; Wilmott 1997).

This study shows clear differences between ethnic groups, especially between Malay and Chinese students. This may be caused by family and community, the value system of one's life, and religious factors. The differences probably also stem from the national education policy which allows the setting up of vernacular education at primary school level up to pre-university level. Since the findings of previous studies and this study show that Malay students have value systems (Ismail & Hanafiah 2004), career perspectives (Ismail & Hanafiah 2007a) and perceptions of what they are learning and its relationship with their career which is generally 'less oriented to the working world', the study should be done more extensively to confirm this, whether similar phenomenon does exist at the national level or solely just among the respondents in this study. Further research is likely to elaborate and verify the causes of Malay students perceived to be less competitive in the job market than Chinese students for example and to propose strong measures to address this issue.

The findings show that students who excel academically have different value systems and are more career-oriented than less excellent students. This is one of the reasons why excellent students are more successful academically and in the job market later. Given student employability is one of the factors that defines the success of a university, then, the university should intensify its efforts to get excellent students to become its campus citizens. At the same time, the university can organize various personal development programs and activities that can change the students' value systems and present learning approaches, and provide them with the ability to face various challenges in their future career development. In addition, a study comparing excellent Malay and Chinese students

should be explored in more details to identify their similarities and differences.

REFERENCES

- Abd Razak, N., Darmawan, I.G.N., & Keeves, J.P. 2010. The influence of culture on teacher commitment. *SocPsycholEduc.* 13: 185–205.
- Abu Bakar, K., Ahmad Tarmizi, R., Mahyuddin, R., Elias, H., Luan, W.S., & Mohd Ayub, A.F. 2010. Relationships between university students' achievement motivation, attitude and academic performance in Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2(2): 4906-4910.
- Akbari, H. 2009. Book Reviews: *Management education and humanities.* *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 8(2): 299–308.
- Anthony, P. (1986). *The Foundation of management.* London: Tavistock.
- Berzonsky, M.D., & Kuk, L.S. 2005. Identity style, psychosocial maturity, and academic performance. *Personality and Individual Differences* 39(1): 235-247.
- Borrajó, F., Bueno, Y., Pablo, I., Santos, B., Fernández, F., García, J., & Sagredo, I. 2010. SIMBA: A Simulator for business education and research. *Decision Support Systems* 48(3): 498-506.
- Bryman, A. 2008. *Social research methods.* 3rd edition. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Byrne, M., & Flood, B. 2008. Examining the relationships among background variables and academic performance of first year accounting students at an Irish University. *Journal of Accounting Education* 26(4): 202-212.
- Case, P., & Selvester, K. (2000). Close encounters: Ideological invasion and complicity on an 'international management' master programme. *Management Learning* 31(1): 11-23.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Furnham, A. 2003. Personality predicts academic performance: evidence from two longitudinal university samples. *Journal of Research in Personality* 37(4): 319-338.
- Cleland, J., Foster, K. & Moffat, M. 2005. Undergraduate students' attitudes to communication skills learning differ depending on year of study and gender. *Medical Teacher* 27(3): 246–251.
- Conrad, M. A. 2006. Aptitude is not enough: how personality and behaviour predict academic performance. *Journal of Research in Personality* 40(3): 339-346.
- Delbecq, A.L. 1999. Rethinking management education. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 44(2): 439-443.
- Fennell, F. 1991. *Development of assessable standards for national certification.* London: HMSO.
- Ford, M.W. & Kent, D.W. 2010. Gender differences in student financial market attitudes and awareness: An exploratory study. *Journal of Education for Business* 85: 7–12.
- Ghazvini, S.D. & Khajehpour, M. 2011. Gender differences in factors affecting academic performance of high school students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 15: 1040-1045.
- Godfrey, P.C. 1999. Service-Learning and management education: A call to action. *Journal of Management Inquiry* 8(4): 363-378.
- Grebennikov, L. & Skaines, I. 2009. Gender and higher education experience: A case study. *Higher Education Research & Development* 28(1): 71–84.
- Hanafiah, M.H. 2003. Strategi pendidikan perniagaan di alafbaru. *Jurnal Pendidikan* 28: 15-32.
- Hanafiah, M.H. & Ismail, M.D. 2006. Application of business simulation in strategic management course. *Malaysian Journal of Educational Technology* 6(2): 21-31.
- Hanafiah, M.H. & Abdullah, N.L. 2004. The Influence of demographic factors and effectiveness using case analysis method in teaching business course. *Jurnal Pendidikan* 29: 37-30.
- Idris, A. 2010. An inter-ethnic study of gender differentiation and innovativeness among women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. *South African Journal of Business Management* 41(4): 35-46.
- Ismail, M.D. & Hanafiah, M.H. 2004. Value of Malaysian students: A case of Faculty of Economics and Business at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. *Journal of Student Personnel* 8: 69-79.
- Ismail, M.D. & Hanafiah, M.H. 2007a. An examination of business students' work goals. *Journal of Student Personnel* 10: 123-135.
- Ismail, M.D. & Hanafiah, M.H. 2007b. Relationship between personal value and business performance: A student simulation. *UTARA Management Journal* 4: 77-90.
- Ismail, N.A. 2009. Understanding the gap in mathematics achievement of Malaysian Students. *The Journal of Educational Research* 102(5): 289-394.
- Jackson, L.A., Eye, A., Witt, E.A., Zhao, Y., & Fitzgerald, H.E. 2011. A longitudinal study of the effects of internet use and videogame playing on academic performance and the roles of gender, race and income in these relationships. *Computers in Human Behavior* 27(1): 228-239.
- Jackson, S.L. 2008. *Research methods: A modular approach.* California: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Jaeger, M. & Adair, D. 2010. Human factors simulation in construction management education. *European Journal of Engineering Education* 35(3): 299–309.
- Jennings, M.M. 1999. What's happening in Business School?. *Public Interest* 137: 25-32.
- Kappe, R., & Flier, H. 2010. Using multiple and specific criteria to assess the predictive validity of the big five personality factors on academic performance. *Journal of Research in Personality* 44(10): 142-145.
- Kedia, B.L. & Englis, P.D. 2011. Transforming business education to produce global managers. *Business Horizons* 54(4): 325-331.
- Leoni, T. & Falk, M. 2010. Gender and field of study as determinants of self-employment. *Small Business Economics* 34: 167–185.
- Mintzberg, H. 2004. Managers not MBAs: A hard look at the soft practice of managing and management

- development. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Mohd. Ghazali, G. & McPherson, G.E. 2009. Malaysian children's attitudes towards learning music. *Music Education Research* 11(2): 193-219.
- Musa, G. & Kayat, K. 2010. The experiential aspect of rural home-stay among Chinese and Malay students using diary method. *Tourism and Hospitality Research* 10(1): 25-41.
- Ning, H. K. & Downing, K. 2010. The reciprocal relationship between motivation and self-regulation: A longitudinal study on academic performance. *Learning and Individual Differences* 20(6): 682-686.
- Ong, F.S. & Moschis, G.P. 2009. Stress, coping, and well-being: A study of ethnic differences among older adults. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing* 21: 219-229.
- Ongen, D. 2006. Attitudes towards women: A study of gender and academic domain differences in a sample of Turkish university students. *Social Behavior And Personality* 34(5): 467-486.
- Paloş, R., Munteanu, A., Costea, I. & Macsinga, I. 2011. Motivational and cognitive variables with impact on academic performance preliminary study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 15: 138-142.
- Pasin, F. & Giroux, H. 2011. The impact of a simulation game on operations management education. *Computers & Education* 57(1): 1240-1254.
- Salas, E., Wildman, J.L. & Piccolo, R.F. 2009. Using simulation-based training to enhance management education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 8(4): 559-573.
- Shauki, E., Alagiah, R., Fiedler, B. & Sawon, K. 2009. Do learner's gender and ethnicity really matter for academic performance evaluation. *Journal of International Education in Business* 2(2): 28-51.
- Spiegel, D.A., Smolen, R.C. & Jonas, C. K. 1986. An examination of the relationships among interpersonal stress, morale and academic performance in male and female medical students. *Social Science & Medicine* 23(1): 1157-1161.
- Stead, J.G. & Stead, W.E. 2010. Sustainability comes to management education and research: A story of coevolution. *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 9(3): 488-498.
- Tyagi, A. & Bansal, V. 2010. Role of neo five factor model of personality in management education: An empirical study. *The Indian Journal of Industrial Relations* 46(2): 248-258.
- Vince, R. 2010. Anxiety, politics and critical management education. *British Journal of Management* 21: S26-S39.
- Wafa, S.M.G., Hussain, M.N.M. & Hanafiah, M.H. 2005. Pengantar perniagaan Islam. New Edition. Kuala Lumpur: Prentice Hall.
- Wilmott, H. 1997. 'Critical Management Learning'. In J. Burgoyne & M. Regnolds (Eds). *Management Learning* 161-176. London : Sage.
- Zhu, Y. 2009. Philosophical underpinnings for equilibrium of values and implications for management education: A response to Harold Leavitt. *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 8(2): 290-296..
- Mohd Hizam Hanafiah (Prof. Madya Dr.)
Fakulti Ekonomi Dan Pengurusan
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
43600 Ukm Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
E-mel: mhhh@ukm.edu.my
- Muhammad Nasri-Hussain (Prof. Madya Dr.)
Islamic Business School, College of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 UUM Sintok, Kedah D.A., Malaysia
E-mel: mnasri@uum.edu.my
- Ahmad Azman Mokhtar (Dr.)
School of Education and Modern Language
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 UUM Sintok, Kedah D.A., Malaysia
E-mel: a.azman@uum.edu.my