Measuring Islamic Spiritual Intelligence

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to develop a reliable and valid scale for measuring Islamic spiritual intelligence (ISI) quotient. This paper embarks with an overview on the concept of Islamic leader’s characteristics or nature. It discusses on the four characteristics of an Islamic leader should have. The contemporary spiritual intelligence measure the cores of critical existential thinking, personal meaning production, transcendental awareness and conscious state expansion. This core spiritual intelligence however does not represent the Islamic perspective in general. Therefore, this study will include the characteristic of Siddiq (truthfulness), Amanah (responsible), Tabligh (deliver), and Fatanah (Wisdom) to shape the Islamic spiritual intelligence. As an attempt to develop a reliable and valid measures, a few reliability and validity tests will be conducted. As a result, Siddiq, Tabligh and Fatanah are acceptable constructs to measure the ISI. This study showed that Islamic spiritual intelligence can lead us to appreciate more the greatness of Allah and help us to fulfill our role as the khalifah (vicegerent of Allah).

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Keywords: Spiritual Intelligence, Islamic Spiritual Intelligence

1. Spiritual Intelligence

Zohar and Marshall (2000) introduce the concept of spiritual intelligence (SI) as a form of intelligence that is based on a person’s deepest meanings and needs to fulfill a higher existential purpose. They also claimed that SI cannot be quantified like an IQ which is “linear, logical and rational”. Since then, various researchers have come up with different measures and theories to define and measure SI. Although an SI is not linear as Zohar and Marshall has claimed, it could be defined into certain values or standards. Emmons (2000a) argued that SI could be

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Peer-review under responsibility of Universiti Teknologi MARA Johor
doi:10.1016/S2212-5671(15)01140-5
constructed into five components of (a) the capacity for transcendence; (b) the ability to enter into heightened spiritual states of consciousness; (c) the ability to invest everyday activities, events and relationships with a sense of the sacred; (d) the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems in living; and (e) the capacity to engage in virtuous behavior. However, Emmon’s SI components were not substantial enough to identify the cognitive aspects of intelligence that would provide as a source of valuation (Mayer, 2000; Emmons, 2000a).

Other ardent spiritual intelligence researchers such as King & DeCicco (2009), Amram (2007) and Nasel (2004) have attempted to study SI intensively. King & DeCicco (2009) developed SI model based on four attributes of (a) critical existential thinking, (b) personal meaning production, (c) transcendental awareness, and (d) conscious state expansion. Critical existential thinking incorporates a person’s need to understand the meaning and purpose of his or her life and work. Each attributes represent different characteristics. Personal meaning production is to find a sense of purpose and fulfillment in one’s daily physical and mental experiences. Transcendental awareness describes “the capacity to identify transcendent dimensions of the self, of others, and of the physical world during 5 normal, waking states of consciousness”. The conscious state expansion, discusses the individual’s ability to enter into and exit from, at will, higher states of consciousness through deep contemplation, meditation or prayer (King, 2008).

Nasel (2004) created a similar measurement instrument for SI based on two attributes of awareness of divine presence and existential questioning. Nasel’s attribute of awareness of divine presence is similar to King’s transcendental awareness and his existential questioning is similar to critical existential thinking (King, 2008; Nasel, 2004). Amram’s (2007) study to various religious beliefs respondents, fragmented SI into seven dimensions of consciousness; grace, meaning, transcendence, truth, peaceful surrender to Self, and inner-directedness.

The many researches on SI had shown how the study in this area has grown every year. SI is seen as the base needed for individuals to act as guidelines in life. Augustin (2001) relates SI with relationship to God or religion. And it is agreed by Tischler, Biberman and Mckaege (2002), who claimed that SI refers to one’s personal experience interpersonally about God and something extraordinary or about something that is pure. SI’s focus is a direct experience about something which differ from daily physical and emotional reality.

Therefore, spiritual intelligence is more than just focusing on individual’s mental ability and or psychological development; it is also related to individual’s heart and soul (Wolman, 2001) suggest that spiritual intelligence is expressed as wisdom and love as it connect the physical, mind and inspires the soul.

2. Islamic Spiritual Intelligence

In Islam, spiritual intelligence is coherent with the individual’s internal strength of having a pure heart. A person with pure heart has the strong aspiration to act in such a way that it will be beneficial for them now and hereafter. The importance of the heart has been mentioned by Bukhari and Muslim as been stated by Rasullullah PBUH:

“whereby in Adam’s body contained a piece of meat in physical form that in fact refers to the pure heart. If the heart is good, the whole body will be good and if the heart is bad, the whole body will be bad as well”.

Allah has created us and therefore it is reasonable for us to approach Him and put our upmost devotion to Him. This means that by having a high spiritual intelligence, one could control his or her emotions well and later influence good thinking towards certain individuals, works and situations.

The established development of the spiritual intelligence especially by the mentioned researcher was developed generally focusing on the innate human need to connect with something larger than oneself. Spiritual intelligence focused on the ability for a deep understanding of existential questions and insight into multiple levels of consciousness (Vaughan, 2002), as well as to answer the questions of why we are created and what really matters. It goes beyond being connected to transcendental ground of being, or commitment to a faith or form of practice, or devotion and relations to God, it is also to shape the full possibilities of being human (Anastoos, 1998).

Baharuddin & Ramli, (2014) claimed that spiritual intelligence is especially looking at the context of amar ma’aruf nahi munkar or the ability to maintain good relationship with Allah (swt) and the relationship with other human being.

Having a good and pure soul enable one to control them from doing things that are forbidden by laws and religion. The development of individual Islamic spiritual intelligence builds up when the individual have patience, gratefulness, engrossment, good perceptions, honesty, good relationship, depends on god, sincerity and pietism (Muhamad Mahyudin Nafis, 2007). He added human who works hard to get and maintain within the nine attitudes
that have been taught in Islam since Prophet Muhammad’s PBUH time, manage their spiritual intelligence well.

To become an excellent employee or to be a success individual, one has to focus on the teaching of Islam. To be specific, the qualities of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, which are the Siddiq (truthful), Amanah (trustful), Tabligh (spreading faith/advocacy) and Fatanah (wisdom), can become the foundation to have a balanced emotional and spiritual intelligence.

Siddiq or truthfulness means being true to yourself, be honest to others and honest to God. The indicators for siddiq are such as the feeling of responsibility towards Allah as well as to work and to seek truthfulness on both at individual level and the social level. Do not lie; be true in thought, words and actions. As Allah has mentioned in the Quran “Be with the truthful” (At-Tawbah 9:119). Siddiq is also the belief that one has to fulfill the obligation in order to achieve success now and hereafter. While looking to become a successful person, one has to be obedient to Allah and His terms and rules.

Amanah or trustful is the sense of responsibility, honorable, courtesy, showing optimal result and respectful to others. Allah mentioned in the Quran “Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing” (An-Nisa 4:58) It is the believe that as a leader, one has to be just and fair. Being Amanah is when you judge between people, judge with justice.

Tabligh is the ability to communicate, being accountable and transparent, able to face pressure and the ability to cooperate and work in harmony. In today’s context, Tabligh is not to deliver any wahyu (words from God), but to deliver the teaching of Islam through Quran and Sunnah. The duty to deliver wahyu, was completed with Prophet Muhammad PBUH as the last messenger. As the Prophet Muhammad’s PBUH follower, it is our duty to remind each one of the Muslims to adhere with Islam teaching and practices. ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr bin Al-‘As (may Allah be pleased upon them) reported, Rasulullah PBUH has said, “Convey from me even an ayah of the Quran...” (Hadith Al-Bukhari)

Fatanah or wisdom includes intelligence in attitude and knowledge, disciplined, proactive attitude and the ability to make the best decision. Allah mentioned in the Quran, “Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well Acquainted with what you do” (Al-Mujadalah 58:11) Muslims have been taught certain manners or social behaviour in life. Allah knows the difficulties and sorrows that we have to endure. And, when making decisions, be aware that Allah knows well about your entire situations.

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects and data collection procedures

Data were collected using convenience sampling from full-time, undergraduate students at University Teknologi Mara Segamat. 50 questionnaires were distributed and were completed and returned. Females comprised of 68 per cent of this sample and 32 per cent were male. The age of the participants range from 22 to 23 years old.

3.2 Measures

A pool of 24 items was generated for the purposes of scale construction. Some of these items were modified versions of those used in other scales to be coherent with the concept of Islam and others were written by the authors. Each item was written in accordance with the conceptualizations of the four of the Prophet behaviors and values described earlier.

Below is the proposed antecedents for Siddiq, Amanah, Tabligh Fatanah. The order of antecedents on the questionnaire was random. Responses to all items were made on five-point scales (‘not at all’ to ‘completely true’).

Table 1: Proposed antecedents for Siddiq, Amanah, Tabligh Fatanah

| Siddiq                                      | Amanah                                      |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1. I often contemplate about the relationship between men and Allah. | 1. I take accountable to my decision making |
| 2. I believe that work is a religious obligation. | 2. I treat employees problems fairly        |
| 3. I attend sermons and prayers to enhance my knowledge about Islam. | 3. I treat each employee’s problems as confidential as possible |
|                                             | 4. I am fair when giving assessment          |
4. Results & Discussion

4.1 Scale development

Selection of items for inclusion on the final scales was based on a series of decision rules concerning item endorsement proportions, item—total correlations (with both keyed and non-keyed scales), direction of keying and content redundancy. Specifically, items were eliminated if correlated less with its keyed scale than with one or both of the other scales, and if the content of the item was redundant with respect to other items on the scale.

An attempt was made to select both positively and negatively keyed items. Finally, the number of items selected for each scale was set equal to that for the scale with the minimum number of items surviving the aforementioned exclusion criteria. Although it was not of primary concern, equality of scale length was considered desirable when it became apparent that few items would be lost as a result. Following the application of these rules, 13 items were selected for inclusion in each of the Siddiq scale, Tabligh scale and Fatanah scale. Amanah’s items were discarded from this because of it become cross loading with other scales (Costello & Osborne, 2005). There is a possibility that the respondents misunderstood the questions between all four where the main focus is to do what Allah has ordered you to do and what not to do.

Shown in Table 2 are the means and standard deviations for 13-items of three new Islamic Spiritual Intelligence Scales. In all cases, the items showed a mean between 4.1 to 4.5 with a standard deviation of less than 1. The standard deviation was calculated as to identify the items consensus. Lower standard deviations showed that the items are highly consensus (Korek, Felfe, & Zaepnerick-Rothe, 2010)

| ITEMS | Mean | Std. Dev | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|------|----------|---|---|---|
| S1 I often contemplate about the relationship between men and Allah. | 4.76 | .517 | .512 |
| S2 I believe that work is a religious obligation. | 4.46 | .706 | .657 |
| S3 I attend sermons and prayers to enhance my | 4.58 | .673 | .581 |
knowledge about Islam.

| Item                                                                 | Mean | Std. Error | Cronbach’s Alpha |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------|------------------|
| S4 I am able to emphasize Islamic values and ethics in my daily routine | 4.46 | .613       | .716             |
| S9 I believe that fulfilling Islamic obligation as a priority than making money | 4.44 | .611       | .745             |
| T1 I make time for my subordinates to consult with me at any time.     | 4.14 | .808       | .675             |
| T2 I encourage employees to voice out their opinions to me             | 4.34 | .658       | .705             |
| T3 I have no problems to tell my subordinates what is right and wrong according to Islam | 4.26 | .694       | .732             |
| T6 I am totally forthright delivering message to my subordinates to adhere with Islamic values | 4.14 | .606       | .750             |
| F2 I can anticipate problems before it arise                           | 4.20 | .756       | .641             |
| F3 I turn to Allah when I cannot solve any problems                    | 4.36 | .827       | .680             |
| F5 I always try to find new ways or methods to run the organization better | 4.32 | .683       | .807             |
| F6 I consider myself as someone who is dynamic in thinking and making decision | 4.34 | .745       | .771             |

Table 3 showed the reliability of these items. The Cronbach’s alpha for ISI-13 items is .759. Cronbach’s alpha of >.70 indicates an acceptable and good reliability (Gregory, 2000). The reliability for each scale (Cronbach’s Alpha) was as follows: Siddiq .693, Tabligh .704, and Fatanah .725. The closer Cronbach’s alpha is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale (George & Mallery, 2003). The 13 items comprising these scales were subjected to a factor analysis (principal factor method). Three factors, accounting for 54.97, 37.25 and 18.78 per cent of the total variance, respectively, were extracted and rotated to a varimax criterion. Each of the items in the variables showed results of 0.50 and above where it meets the rules of 0.40 for the minimum factor loading score for the items to be acceptable (Hair, Tatham, & Black, 2006). The items and their factor loadings are reported in Table 1. In all cases, the items loaded highest on the factor representing the appropriate construct.

5. Conclusion & Recommendation

The purpose of this study is to produce and introduce the concept of Prophet Muhammad’s PBUH behaviors/virtues/attitudes that made up the Islamic Spiritual Intelligence (ISI). This concept was developed in respond to the earliest researcher who claimed that spiritual intelligence is not only about a capacity for a deep understanding of existential question (Vaughn, 2002) or to questions a person’s innermost meanings and existential purpose (Zohar & Marshall, 2000). ISI is also about finding meaning in your life and your relationship with God or religion (Augustian, 2001; Tischler et al., 2002). This paper takes the idea of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH virtues, attitudes and behaviors of Siddiq, Amanah, Tabligh, and Fatanah when developing the construct. Similar to
the domain of spiritual intelligence explained by Muhammad D. (2004), Spiritual Intelligence recounts sincerity (ikhlas), tauhid, ibadah, and behavior/values (akhlaq) of Rasulullah PBUH. It is important to recognize and realize Allah’s presence, as well as following the behavior of the prophet (akhlaq) such as siddiq, amanah, tabligh, istiqamah, ikhlas, fatanah; be grateful to Allah (s.w.t.), be ashamed of doing any sin, and serious in fulfilling the religious obligation (al-Dzaki, 2005).

There is a need to develop different items for Amanah’s dimension if we are looking at the ISI with four dimensions of Rasulullah’s PBUH behaviors. The scope for this study covers the area of the four main behaviors of the prophet. There is a need to involve other behaviors such as sincerity (ikhlas), diligent (istiqamah) and surrender (redha). Besides that, this study could be done to different group of samples and to see if it could produce repeatable results and to measure what they are intended to measure.

In conclusion, spiritual intelligence is related to religion, in this context Islam. ISI existed in the context of Rasulullah’s PBUH behaviors, attitudes or values (Akhlak). The main behaviors that contributed to this measurement came from the value of Siddiq, Tabligh, and Fatanah. Muslims who practices the behaviors projected and taught by the prophet will not derailed from the ultimate goal in life. And the ultimate goal in life is to be the khalifah (leader) and the rewards of Jannah (heaven) in afterlife. As Allah has mentioned in the Quran “You shall not follow anyone blindly in those matters of which you have no knowledge, surely the use of your ears and the eyes and the heart - all of these, shall be questioned on the Day of Judgement” (Al-Israq 17:36).

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