

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MORAL REASONING
AND HONESTY AMONG IIUM PRE-SERVICE
TEACHERS

BY

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the degree of Master of Education

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study is to examine the relationship between honesty and moral reasoning. Meanwhile, the target of this study is the students of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), whereby the research sample consisted of 294 students, of which 222 females and 72 males. The researcher used questionnaires as a tool to examine the moral reasoning and honesty. The objectives of this study are; i) to examine the IIUM pre-service teachers' level of moral reasoning, ii) to study the IIUM pre-service teachers' level of honesty, iii) to investigate the relationship between moral reasoning and honesty among IIUM pre-service teachers and, iv) to identify predictors of IIUM pre-service teachers' level of moral reasoning. The results of the current study revealed that there is no significant relationship between moral reasoning and honesty ($r = .073$, $p > 0.01$). The moral reasoning of question 6 ($\mu = 3.70$) showed higher mean score compared to question 3 ($\mu = 3.61$). While for honesty, question 10 ($\mu = 4.13$) has a higher value than question 9 ($\mu = 4.03$). Honesty, year of study, and gender predicted moral reasoning significantly when all three factors were taken together ($SE = .845$). However, the results showed that only gender is significant in this study ($sig = .045$). In conclusion, the level of moral reasoning for the pre-service teachers is at the conventional level and according to Kohlberg, the practice is impacted by the acceptance of society and exercising the laws.



خلاصة البحث

المهدف من هذه الدراسة هو دراسة العلاقة بين الأمانة و الأخلاق العقلانية. حيث كان المستهدفين، من هذه الدراسة هم طلاب الجامعة الإسلامية الدولية في ماليزيا (IIUM). حيث كانت عينة الدراسة تتكون من 294 منها 222 إناث و 72 طالبة. استخدمت الباحثه الاستبيانات لدراسة الأخلاق العقلانية ومستوى الأمانة. إن أهداف هذه الدراسة هي ؛ (1) تحديد مستوى الأخلاق العقلانية لمعلمي ما قبل الخدمة في (IIUM) ، (2) ودراسة مستوى الأمانة لمعلمي ما قبل الخدمة في (IIUM)، (3) لاستقصاء العلاقة بين الأخلاق العقلانية والامانة بين معلمي ما قبل الخدمة في (IIUM) و (4) تحديد المتغيرات التنبؤية لمتغير الأخلاق العقلانية المعلمين قبل الخدمة في (IIUM). حيث كشفت نتيجة الدراسة الحالية أنه لا توجد علاقة كبيرة بين التفكير الأخلاقي والامانه ($r = 0.073, p > 0.01$). وأظهرت أسئلة الأخلاق العقلانية 6 ($\mu = 3.70$) درجة أعلى من المتوسط من السؤال 3 ($\mu = 3.61$). بينما بالنسبة للأمانة ، يكون السؤال 10 ($\mu = 4.13$) أعلى من السؤال 9 ($\mu = 4.03$). حيث أن مستوى الأمانة ، والمستوى الدراسي بالإضافة إلى الجنس تنبأت بالأخلاق العقلانية بشكل كبير عندما تكون العوامل الثلاثة مجتمعة ($SE = 0.845$). على خلاف ذلك، أظهرت النتيجة انه بين افراد الجنس فقط توجد أهمية في الدراسة ($sig = 0.045$). في الختام ، فإن مستوى الأخلاق العقلانية لمعلم ما قبل الخدمة هو المستوى الطبيعي. وفقاً لكولبرج ، الممارسة تؤثر على القبول من قبل المجتمع وعلى استخدام القوانين.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion; it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Education.

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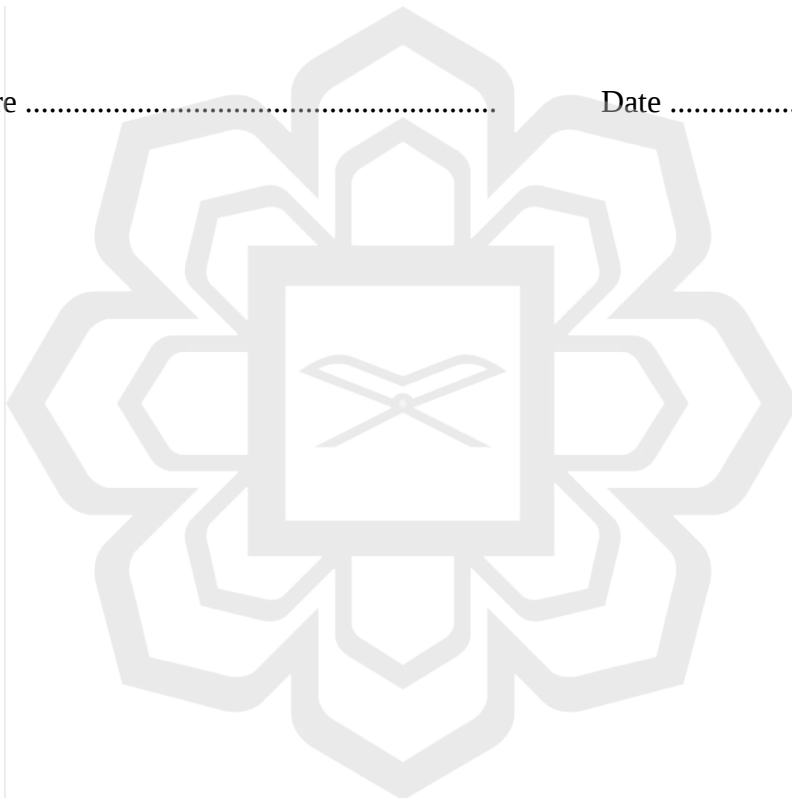
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Khadijah Maisarah Binti Mohd Nadzri

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I humbly dedicate this dissertation to my beloved family and friends.

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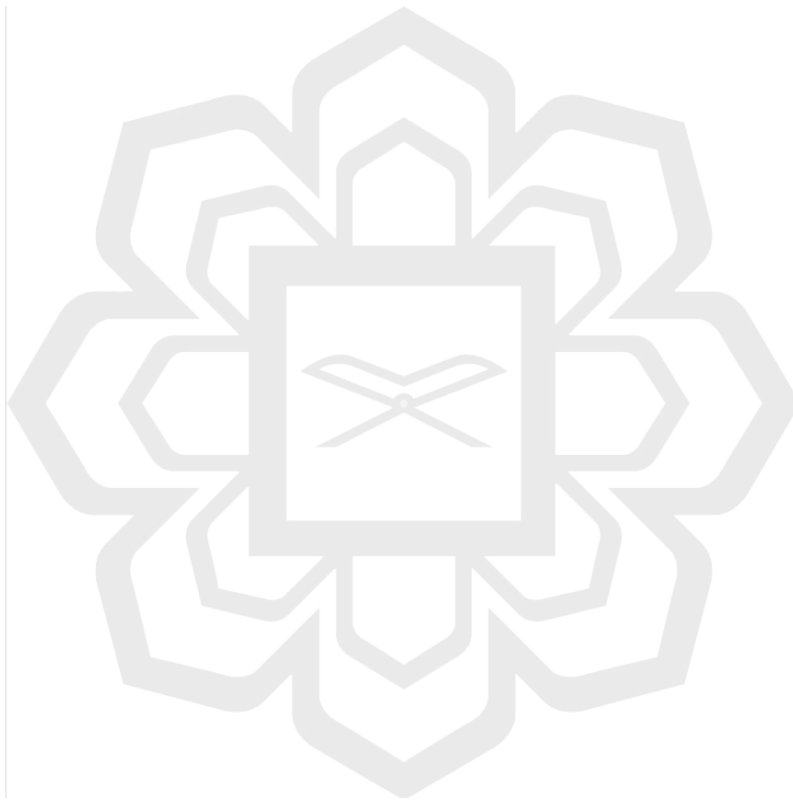
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IIUM	International Islamic Universiti Malaysia
MOE	Ministry of Education
NHMS	National Morbidity Health Survey
PBUH	Peace Be Upon Him
WHO	World Health Organization



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Philosophers and theologians were the first to discuss morality. However, psychologists began to reveal their interests merely at the beginning of the twentieth century. Behaviourists focused on behaviour, psychoanalysts on the internalization of social norms, and cognitive psychologists studied moral reasoning, that is, the processes involved in making decisions in morally doubtful situations (Ana Proroković etc. 2017). “Action speaks louder than words” is commonly heard in general. Our behaviour is our action. Whatever we do, it shows who we are. Human beings cannot run away from making decisions in life.

Moral reasoning is defined as a process in which an individual tries to determine the difference between what is right and what is wrong in a particular circumstance by using logic. It is a crucial matter and often used on a daily basis in an attempt to do the right thing. For instance, in everyday life, people are facing dilemmas that sometimes leave them to choose between lying and telling the truth. People make decisions by reasoning based on the morality of the action and appropriate weighting against its consequences.

Honesty is one part of moral. Honesty is a significant characteristic in Islam, and it is one of the foundations of the religion. Honesty is when you act and speak the truth. One of the meanings of honesty is devotion in worshipping the Almighty Allah, being honest in the faith and never to abandon this faith as a sincere and faithful Muslim. It is also a great obligation borne by mankind, while the heavens, the earth, and the mountains refused to bury it because of its weightiness and greatness. Allah

says in the Qur'an: "Surely We presented (Literally: set before) the Trust (i.e., Trust of devotion) to the heavens and the earth and mountains. Yet they refused to carry it and felt timorous about it, and man carried it. Surely he has been constantly unjust, constantly ignorant." (Al-Ahzab: 72).

What is honesty? Many people think honesty means not telling lies, and that's true because it's part of being honest. Nevertheless, honesty means more than not lying. A more comprehensive definition of honesty shows that an honest person does not do things that are wrong in ethics. You are not honest when you try to hide something that you did or when you violated the law because you will get trouble. Therefore, honesty is about speaking and acting truthfully to others and yourself. However, the justification of being honest for each person is different. Honesty is associated with the preservation of self-concept, which discusses how people sustain or improve their sense of self. It stays when a person reaches adulthood. However, it can change through the experience of a person. To develop one's self-concept at all ages, he or she cannot simply sit and wait but must take action to shape the self-concept.

A case reported in Berita Harian Online by Siti Azila Alias (2017) stated that a student hit his mother for money. The news spread on social media. This incident happened due to a lack of morality, and Islamic understanding since the boy is a Muslim. A lot of issues reported in the press about the immoral behaviour of adolescents. According to Nurul Husna Rosidi (2017), there was a case about 18 adolescents arrested on suspicion of involvement with a secret society called Geng 35. Most of them are Malay and Muslim students.

Furthermore, in 2019, The Ministry of Health statistics revealed that 3, 980 cases, which is 28.80 % of 13, 831 teenagers gave birth out of wedlock at the age

between 10 and 19 years old while the Royal Malaysia Police stated that 432 cases of baby abandonment were recorded from 2011 to June 2015. Rashiqah Ilmi and Siti Azila Alias (2018) reported that the 2017 National Morbidity Health Survey (NHMS) of the Ministry of Health revealed, 11.2 % of the teens in the group had the idea of suicide, 9 % planned to commit suicide, and 10.1 % committed suicide. The 2017 statistics showed crimes concerning schoolboys including 18 homicides, 220 of rape cases, 189 involving injuries, 277 theft cases, 14 car theft cases, 498 motorcycle theft cases, 4 cases of snatch and burglaries of 136 cases. (Sinar Harian Reporter, 2018).

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Moral reasoning was introduced by Western countries. Therefore, numerous studies on moral reasoning were conducted by Western researchers. Emily McDermott (2014) focused on the moral reasoning abilities of men and women with intellectual disabilities who have a history of criminal offending behaviour. Her research was oriented on the differences of gender with a criminal history and focused on adolescents in particular. The current study is designed to address the relationship between honesty and moral reasoning.

In addition, a lot of previous researches are about moral reasoning, but they are not related to honesty (Appendix 1). As a comparison, researchers from Western countries conducted this kind of research more than the Islamic countries. This current research focuses on a person whether he decides something with honesty or otherwise. According to Rohani Mohd (2015), a finding on values of honesty revealed that Muslim businessmen or women are honest, loyal, disciplined, and hard-working. Loyalty and honesty are unequivocally correlated to proactive orientation, while discipline and hard-work are certainly related to innovative orientation. These studies

are not related to honesty and moral reasoning, but only focused on honesty in the discipline as employees. The researcher presented information using a systematic analysis to make it clear.

A teacher is a role model for students. Lack of appreciation for ethics and understanding of ethics among pre-service teachers has led to a lack of ethics in many situations (Lew Moi Mooi et al 2014). There exist cases where pre-service teachers were not honest with themselves, they committed plagiarism in assignments and cheated in examinations. They did not take the moral and ethical classes seriously, while the courses were emphasised by their lecturer. Verrinder (2007) stated that pre-service teachers are unable to discuss and debate about ethical without preparation. More than half of pre-service teachers lack strategies in addressing ethics-related dilemmas in the classroom. Therefore, the current study aims to identify the IIUM pre-service teachers' moral reasoning and honesty. According to Mohamad Khairi and Asmawati (2010) teachers are more influential to students than others in the society where the students receive knowledge formally and systematically.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The selection of the research topic was driven by four main reasons.

1. To examine the undergraduate's moral reasoning levels
2. To examine the undergraduate's honesty levels
3. To investigate the relationship between the undergraduates moral reasoning and their honesty level
4. To examine predictors of undergraduate's moral reasoning level

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION:

The research questions below lead the study:

1. What is the IIUM pre-service teachers' level of moral reasoning?
2. What is the IIUM pre-service teachers' level of honesty?
3. Is there any significant relationship between the IIUM pre-service teachers' moral reasoning and honesty?
4. Which of the following constructs predicts the pre-service teacher moral reasoning:
 - i. Gender
 - ii. Year of study (Year 2, 3 and 4)
 - iii. Honesty score

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The first education commences at home. Parents are the first educators for children to learn something. Parents are the closest people to teach their children to do good or bad. Consequently, the behaviour of parents affects their children as they emulated their parents in multiple ways as parents are their immediate role-models. This study alerts parents on the effects of honesty on children's decision-making process. Parents must be honest when they talk and act with their children. If a child is consistently being lied to, he or she sees cheating as an acceptable way of life. Children will emulate after their parents blindly. However, society must also play roles to create a conducive environment that incited positive moral development. Parents, teachers, and peers are also part of society. Negative mind-set and misleading reasoning can be prevented if society are able to provide good cooperation.

Furthermore, the current study will benefit the IIUM authority concerned as regard to reviewing and refining their co-curriculum programs for the benefits of the students. The findings too shall reveal the appropriate functioning level of the pre-service teachers moral reasoning and honesty. The IIUM students will know whether the knowledge they have learnt affects them or not. Teachers are examples for students. Therefore, their future actions as teachers have an impact on the future of their students. Similarly, with the administration staff, from the result of this current study, they will realize whether the syllabuses impact the cognitive and behaviour of the students. Honesty is essential in making any decision. Ultimately, decisions made without honesty will affect both oneself and others.

According to Mohamed Nadzri Fadzly (2010), the more guidance a person obtains, the better the justification and reasoning ability will be. The environment (nurture) contributes significantly to the development of human's honesty and moral reasoning. In psychology, 'environment' is categorized into three aspects, which are external or physical environment, internal environment, and social environment (Zaizul Ab. Rahman, 2012). The social environment consists of everyone or other human beings that influence us. If society teaches the right thing and how to differentiate between good and bad, people will know how to make the right decisions. But if people are taught about bad things, it will lead to poor decision making. This study enables students to realize if honesty is required or not in decision making.

Many factors are involved in making decisions, but when we have honesty in our personality attributes, our decisions may lead us to make the right decisions with guidance. Personal values are defined by McShane (2009) as "Perceptions are about what is good or bad, right or wrong, that serve as a moral compass that directs ones'

motivation and potentially, ones' decisions and actions". It defines several aspects of belief and necessity that guide behaviours. It also explains the concept of values that serves as a guide to making decisions and actions that are important.

Schools or academic institutions in Malaysia are built to increase the level of cognitive and behavioural knowledge (Mohamad Khairi Othman and Asmawati Suhid, 2010). The Ministry of Education (MOE) will benefit from this current study in the discovery of whether moral reasoning can be influenced by the student's honesty. Whether the curriculum that was provided by the ministry impacted the students' cognitive and behaviour or not. Does the curriculum given by the Ministry of Education benefit the moral reasoning and behaviour of the students? If the moral reasoning and honesty produced by the students shows a positive result, it means the provided curriculum is successful, but if the moral reasoning and honesty produced negative results, the MOE must review the curriculum system. Schools are established to develop students' positive cognitive and behavioural skills.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

In Malaysia, many issues involving ethics has occurred. There is a strong acceptance among scholars that moral reasoning is linked to ethical behaviour (Abderrahmane Benlahcene et al. 2018). A teacher is the closest entity to students in formal education. A teacher's behaviour, actions or ethics is a concern to students as it sets an example to them. This current study aims to identify the moral reasoning and honesty among pre-service teachers. There have been no previous studies on moral reasoning and honesty in Malaysia. This study aims to ensure that pre-service teachers are aware of and identify their level of moral reasoning and honesty.

There was a study on moral reasoning and characteristics of at-risk students in Melaka by Nurulhuda Binti Md Hassan from IIUM. She did a qualitative study. Her study focused on the students' moral reasoning and not the teacher's, which is different from this current study. Teachers' morals and ethics in their actions and decisions can influence students. Children listen to our actions more than our words (Asia Mape, 2017).

1.7 LIMITATION AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The sampling framework identified seven Kulliyah at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). This present study only focused on the Kulliyah of Education because the target of this study is the pre-service teachers. In Kulliyah of education, there are four programmes for undergraduate students such as Islamic Education, Guide and Counselling, Teaching Arabic as Second Language, and Teaching English as Second Language.

The total number of students in the Kulliyah of Education is 756. However, this research only focused on the 2nd year, the 3rd year, and the 4th year students and the total number of these students are 461. The Raosoft calculator was used, of which the margin of error is 5%, the confidence level is 95%, and the response distribution is 50%. As depicted in Chapter 3, to obtain the result from the Kulliyah of Education at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), the sample required is 146 students from 233 students of 2nd year. The sample required for 3rd year students is 109 out of 150 students. Meanwhile, the sample required for the 4th year students is 65 out of 78 students. The total sample of students is 320.

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Moral reasoning

This present study determines the process of decision making called moral reasoning. The decisions people made depend on their own judgment. The decisions made by people differ due to differences in thoughts, emotions, and environment. This study uses Kohlberg's theory as the theoretical framework. There are six stages of moral development as outlined by Kohlberg and divided by three levels. Level one is named as pre-conventional, which is then divided into two stages. Stage one is about punishment-obedience orientation. Stage two is based on personal reward orientation. Level two is known as conventional and divided into two stages. The stages continue to stage three, which is the good boy-nice girl orientation. Stage four is the law and order orientation. Level three is the post-conventional and divided into stages five and six. Stage five is the social contract orientation, and stage six is the universal-ethical-principle orientation (Lawrence Kohlberg, 1958), as shown in Table 1.1.

Stage one is the obedience to black and white rules, (James D. Rose, 2012) for instance, children obey because adults tell them to obey. People base their moral decisions on fear of punishment. The stage two obedience is from an individual's perspective, where individuals pursue their own interests as well as allowing others to do the same. Stage three is living up to expectations of closest individuals who value trust, caring, and loyalty to others as a basis of moral judgement. Stage four is to fulfil the expectations of society, in which moral judgement is based on the understanding of the social order, law, justice, and duty. Then, stage five is doing what is best for society from a democratic standpoint, where individuals believe that values, rights, and principles undergird or transcend the law. Lastly, stage six is doing everything possible for the society for the sake of justice in all standpoints, regardless of