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### THE FORMATION OF CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS BASED ON THE DETERMINANTS OF PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, SPIRITUAL AND INTELLECTUAL

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#### ABSTRACT

*Leadership is a key pillar of the successful 21<sup>st</sup> century organizations and it is very crucial to ensure that its governance is always of the highest standard and remain relevant. Leadership without integrity is a risk to an organization and will disrupts the organization's efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, the process of developing a good leader is vital for university students who will be future leaders with a holistic and balanced spiritual and physical aspect of their life. This study was conducted to analyze the four concepts of P.E.S.I. namely Physical, Emotional, Spiritual and Intellectual that influence the preservation of leadership among students in a Malaysian institution of higher learning. The quantitative method was used in this study where self-administered questionnaires were employed as a research instrument. The sample (n=342) was collected from students of a public university in Malaysia. The results found that there were significant relationships between the four concepts of P.E.S.I. and the formation of charismatic leadership among students of a public university in Malaysia. This study is expected to be an important source of reference for public universities in Malaysia to develop exemplary leaders.*

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#### Introduction

Leadership is very crucial in the organizational administration (Yukl, 2013). An organization will not succeed if the leadership aspect is not taken care of by the management (Danim, 2012). There exist various leadership styles practiced by the organizations, each tailored to their goals (Azman et al., 2010). Charismatic leadership is one of many leadership styles often practiced by top managements. It has proven to have an effective impact (Shamir et al., 1993; Antonio et al., 2017) on subordinates and has a balanced and holistic positive impact on the whole organization (Biviano, 2000; Mohd Hamran et al., 2014; 2015; Yang & Zhu, 2016). The charismatic term is derived from the Greek word meaning "divine gift", the ability to perform miracles in which it was introduced by Weber in 1947 (Cabbuag, 2016). Through the study, Weber had explained the influence of leaders who practice this leadership style not from formal authority, but from the perceptions of followers who consider their leaders being endowed with exceptional qualities. According to Mittal (2015), charismatic leadership refers to leadership style related to individualistic and loose societies. The charismatic leader is able to make radical changes in the organization by acting in

innovative and effective ways and is judged by members towards achieving tremendous success (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1998; Huang et al., 2010).

Therefore, the development of a charismatic leader should be emphasized to ensure that an organization, especially institutions of higher learning, is able to produce excellent, holistic and balanced students or human resources from physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual (P.E.S.I.) aspects (Mohd Juraimy et al., 2016; Sternberg, 2011). The balance of these four aspects has been recorded in the National Education Philosophy in Malaysia for a long time which needs to be prioritized and practiced consistently (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1988). This philosophy was formed through deep discussions with various reports and acts such as Penyata Razak, Laporan Rahman Talib, Education Act 1961 and Cabinet Committee Report 1979 which was agreed to be recorded as follows:

*"Education in Malaysia is a continuous effort towards expanding the potential of individuals in a comprehensive and integrated way to create a balanced and harmonious human being in terms of intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical well-being based on trust and obedience to God. This effort is to produce Malaysians who are knowledgeable, well-mannered, responsible and capable of achieving their well-being and contributing to the harmony and prosperity of society and the nation"* (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1988).

The above philosophy emphasises that the real objective of education is to ensure the potential of citizens to be properly focused in order to produce good, quality and holistic human capital (Mohd Fathi et al., 2010) based on trust, confidence and obedience to God (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1988). The formation of a holistic human being from the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual (P.E.S.I.) aspects consequently empowers citizens to be a potential charismatic Malaysian leader in the future. In this regard, the importance of realizing the aspirations of this National Education Philosophy should be emphasized. This is because according to Abdul Rahman (2005), the implementation of this noble philosophy has not been fully embraced by every Malaysian citizen in contrast to the implementation of Education Philosophy in Indonesia. Therefore, an in-depth research should be conducted in both schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) to see whether these four aspects (P.E.S.I.) have an impact on students.

## Literature Review

Previous studies have been conducted on investigating the four aspects of physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and leadership. For example, Dunphy and Stace (1990, 1994) found that charismatic leaders are able to significantly influence the attitudes, personalities, behaviors, emotions and intellectuals of organizational staff towards a more positive level (Judge et al., 2002; Bryan, 2014). Elbers (2007), Gujral (2016), and Tareq et al. (2017) found that spiritual and emotional intelligence have a significant relationship with effective and charismatic leadership. Shukeri et al. (2012) investigated the secrets of Islamic leadership and the success of the country according to the Qur'anic description. The study attempted to elaborate on the success of past leaderships practicing the secrets of the Qur'an that had succeeded in forging a glorious history as shown in the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the *Khulafa' al-Rasyidin*. However, the Qur'anic leadership has been ignored by the Muslim rulers in recent times, causing the country's leadership much lame. Shukeri et al. (2012) emphasized mostly on the spiritual aspect of leadership.

Furthermore, Ahmad Zabidi (2005) explained that Islamic leadership puts hope in Allah SWT solely where actions reflect their faith. He added that every leader must know that strength of faith is the basic motivation that influences people's behaviours. People perform their duties and responsibilities as creatures of Allah SWT. Besides that, good thoughts, feelings and spirits are also important and can influence people's behaviours. The importance of these values has also been acknowledged by Siddiq (1992) in his study. Siddiq (1992) proposed that the excellence of leadership in Islam is to seek Allah's pleasure of *mardhatillah*. With the pleasure of Allah SWT, the charity of worship and the work of a Muslim will be accepted by Allah SWT, besides the work ethics which has been set by the employer. The emphasis on physical aspects such as on good deeds and noble character are the characteristics of effective leadership. Leaders should stay away from being involved in matters that may affect the leader's character because leaders need to have a noble character and it is very effective in building a harmonious life. Some of the moral obligations that have been practiced by Islamic leaders include fulfilling the promise, working sincerely, remembering Allah SWT in every work done, willing to help people in welfare and *taqwa*, and ready to give advice (Ahmad Redzuwan, 2003).

There is also a study on the importance of spiritual and physical strength in bringing leadership effectiveness through the leadership example that has been brought and implemented by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH reflected attributes such as *Siddiq, Amanah, Tabligh* and *Fatonah* (Sakdiah, 2016). The qualities demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH provide guidance for all leaders in the organizations. Through these attributes, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH managed to resolve disputes and problems faced by the people during his time and eventually they were able to accept his leadership and decisions made by him. As such, the study of leadership effectiveness through physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual aspects is a significant study with current circumstances that require balanced leadership in the face of new era leadership challenges. In addition, studies from western scholars also explain the meaning of this charismatic leadership:

*"The situation or talent is linked to the extraordinary ability in terms of one's leadership to arouse the sense of the greatness of society towards himself or the nature of leadership that is based on the quality of individual individuality".*

There are also studies conducted by Biviano (2000) who find that charismatic leadership is capable of balancing the specific physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions of individuals in an organization. The authors also find the studies conducted by Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010) as well as Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2013) focusing on the study of charismatic leadership amongst selected university students. However, a more focused study on the influence of charismatic leadership style on the formation of disciplined individuals in the field of defense and security, particularly among university students has not been conducted in-depth. Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

- (i) To examine the relationship between physical factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.
- (ii) To examine the relationship between emotional factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.
- (iii) To examine the relationship between spiritual factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.
- (iv) To examine the relationship between intellectual and charismatic leadership among students in a public university in Malaysia.

The conceptual framework of this study is as shown in Fig. 1.

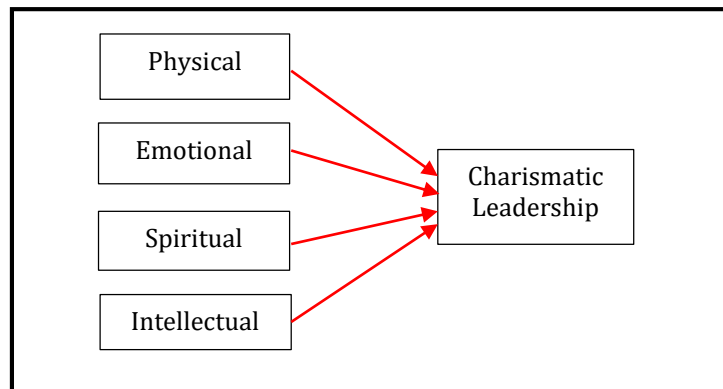


Fig.1: Conceptual Framework

The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between physical factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.
- H2: There is a positive and significant relationship between emotional factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.
- H3: There is a positive and significant relationship between spiritual factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.
- H4: There is a positive and significant relationship between intellectual factor and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia.

## Methodology

This study is a descriptive study because it describes the relationships between the P.E.S.I. factors and charismatic leadership among students at a public university in Malaysia. This study used a structured questionnaire survey and a semi-structured interview method. Survey method is best suited with this study because respondents' data and information can be obtained in the latest and clear form that is relevant to the issues and scenarios during this study (Zamalia, 2009). The respondents were randomly selected using the Minimum Determination Table for respondents suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The selected sample consists of final year students from three different faculties at a public university in Malaysia. The testing of the reliability and validity of the study is also feasible to ensure that the two levels of testing are high and reliable. According to Hair et al. (2018), the aspect of validation should be carried out which involves the face validity and content validity. The validity of the content and face validity of this study were done through the professional approval of each item in the questionnaire. Each item on the instrument is measured logically and precisely so that what is meant in measurement can be clearly understood (Zikmund et al., 2013). Pilot study was conducted on thirty respondents with the results that all Cronbach's alpha values for each variable item exceeded 0.6 and above. This high value illustrates that all questionnaire items can be used for actual research and free from item deletion. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), if the Cronbach's alpha value exceeds 0.6, it means that the items have a good internal consistency level.

The analysis of the data was carried out on 372 respondents comprising students at a public university in Malaysia, which eventually consisted of 342 who completed their questionnaire forms (92% response rate). This high value meets the level suggested by the scholar Zikmund et al. (2013) which is allowed to conduct further research. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software, version 20. AMOS 20 software was used for factor validation analysis, correlation and regression based on structural equation model (SEM) method.

## Findings

Based on the demographic profile analysis, the results showed that 71% of respondents are males and 29% are females. Meanwhile, most respondents, 38%, are final year cadet officers from the Faculty of Defense Science and Technology. It was found that 75% of respondents are those who obtain CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) between 2.70 - 4.00. While CGPA is less than 2.70 is only 25%. Body Mass Index (BMI) tests indicate that the majority (88%) of the respondents are at the normal level (ideal) as shown in Table 1 below. Generally, this BMI analysis represents a solid and stable respondent's physical level that supports the ability to practice charismatic leadership qualities. Looking at the high percentage of these both variables and compared with the results of literature highlights, conceptual theories and qualitative methods using theme development methods and categories manually, the researchers found that two physical and intellectual factors have proven its effect on the effectiveness of charismatic leadership among university students. Therefore, this study supports hypotheses 1 and 4.

Table 1: Body Mass Index (BMI) For Individual at Age 19-24 Years (Ghazali et al., 2014)

BMI	CATEGORY
Less than 18.5	Thin/ Less weight
18.5 - 24.9	Normal/ Ideal
25 - 29.9	Fat/ Exceeded body weight
More than 30	Extremely fat @ Obes

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was carried out using AMOS to prove the validity of the constructs used in this study i.e., by determining the value of the pecking factor for each item when the structure similarity model reaches the fit model. Construct validity is proven when no item with loading value is below than 0.50 as illustrated in Fig. 1 below.

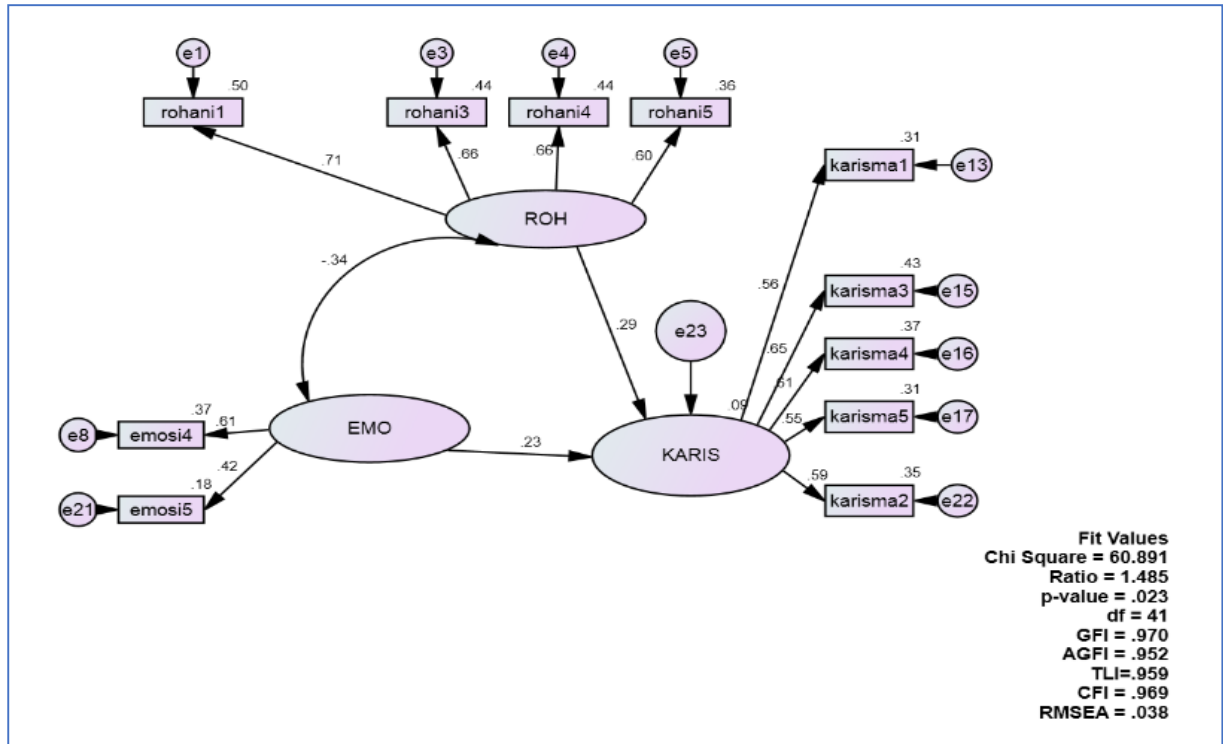


Fig. 1: Hypothesized SEM Model

This acceptable model (model fit) is achieved through the selection of items that coincide in the construct of emotional, spiritual and charismatic leadership. The items retained herein refer to the value of the contribution to the error at the low level in AMOS output modification indices table. This fit model is achieved as shown in Fig. 1 (Hypothesized Structure Equation Model) above which shows the value of RMSEA 0.031 which is less than 0.080 and GFI, AGFI, TLI and CFI values are 0.90 (Hair et al., 2018). In addition, the reliability test results on actual studies based on the value of Alpha Cronbach show the value of charismatic, emotional and spiritual leadership equal to 0.80. This shows that these constructs have internal consistency that is adopted from the patents of the answers given by the respondents in the questionnaire. The SEM AMOS regression test results based on the model in Fig. 1 above shows emotional and spiritual factors have positive relationships and have a significant impact on the formation of charismatic leadership with Beta values of 0.29 and 0.23 at significant levels  $p < 0.001$ . The 100% change in this exogenous factor affects changes such as R square value of only 9.3% in the endogenous construct. This study has shown that the hypotheses 2 and 3 are accepted.

Table 2: Measurement of the  $R^2$  estimator

MODEL	ESTIMATE
KARIS	.093
karisma2	.348
emosi5	.176
karisma5	.307
karisma4	.375
karisma3	.429
karisma1	.311
emosi4	.371
rohani5	.364
rohani4	.440
rohani3	.436
rohani1	.498

## Discussion

This study has the goal of obtaining empirical evidence from the context of university student leadership by studying physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual effects in building charismatic leadership amongst them. In fact, the results of the study confirmed the high number of students with a normal or ideal BMI able to support towards the formation of charismatic leadership among themselves. Individual who has a normal or ideal BMI indicates that he or she has stable health condition and fit to undertake any charismatic leadership-based tasks. Individual who physically fit and strong will be easily getting respectness and trustfulness by others. Basically, a good health and physical conditions make individual easily to cooperate and help others compared to those who have health and physical problems.

The study also found that there was a significant and positive influence of student's emotional and spiritual factors on the formation of charismatic leadership. Emotional stability is very important in supervising, influencing and attracting subordinate (Goleman, 1995; Nurul Hudani et al., 2013), thus it supports the existence of charismatic characteristic on individual leader. Meanwhile, spiritual factor makes individual to maturely consider whether something learned and implemented is good or bad based on the religion principles. Impact of having strong spiritual influence, individuals is able to disclose valued attributes such as patience, kindness and helpfulness as needed by the religion in practicing their daily life. This finally will lead to the creation of charismatic characteristics such as cooperation in sharing knowledge and skills, mutual understanding and respectness as well as sincerity among them. Therefore, these results can be understood that the students are aware and understand about good physical care, emotional stability, sharp spiritual value and high intellectual ability to become the basis in which they prepare to become a charismatic credible leader. Additionally, students will be highly motivated to stand out the charismatic leadership style when they believe in the robust physical and spiritual care procedures and policies organized by the university as well as the intellectual development approaches applied to the university. The continued acceptance and practice of physical care and spiritual value enhancement, emotional escort at a good level of stability and their intellectual enhancement practices can become a catalyst for the building of charismatic leadership. The results of this study are similar to supporting the previous studies conducted by Hicks (2002), Spector and Fox (2002), Zulkifli and Abdul Hafiz (2013), Ghazali et al. (2014), Gujral (2016) and Sharma (2016) even though they are doing research on different contexts and arrangements.

## Conclusion

The results of this study show that the physical level of university students, are largely at a normal BMI level as well as a good level of academic performance (intellectual factor) that are essential to the formation of charismatic leadership amongst them. Additionally, the emotional and spiritual aspects also play an important role and have positive significant relationships with the charismatic leadership in this study. Hence, the management of the institution should care about these four elements primarily in designing the curriculum of study and training in order to produce students with a value of Leaders of Character (LoFC) which has charismatic elements as determined by the university. The findings also support the findings from previous studies and hopefully further studies can be continued in different contexts and adopt larger study models through the use of new independent variables relevant to the formation of charismatic leadership.

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