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THE ANALYSTS OF RELIGIOSITY AND EMOTIONAL  
INTELLIGENCE TOWARDS ATTITUDE IN EDUCATION  
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract:**

The holistic approach to education – that addresses students' learning, social and emotional, and spiritual needs – is crucial, especially in times of crisis. University closures related to the current COVID-19 pandemic mean that students from diverse backgrounds who are more at risk of increased vulnerability are less likely to receive the support and extra services they need, and the gap between students that experience additional barriers and that do not might widen. The current study investigates the influence of religiosity and Emotional Intelligent on the attitude towards leadership in education during pandemic covid-19 in the Malaysian context. Data were collected from undergraduate students who constitute future leaders. Results from the regression analysis particularly the relative weight analysis revealed that leadership practices demonstrated significant incremental variance with attitude towards leadership beyond self-leadership. The implications of the findings for research and practice are discussed.

**Keywords:**

Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS), Emotional Intelligent significantly, Authentic Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire, Covid-19

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health, food systems and the world of work around the world (Who,2020), In the COVID-19 crisis food security, public health, and employment and labour issues and also effects the students . Several countries also allowed some universities and other educational facilities to remain open for students with particular needs, such as students with SEN and students in VET. Regarding the emotional well-being of students, international organisations and NGOs have been dynamic actors, publishing guidelines, videos and organising webinars. Most often, countries shared these resources on official websites and created hotlines for counselling and psychological support. Finally, University leaders and lecturers have been very active in supporting vulnerable students, often physically distributing material to families, creating online resources and organising WhatsApp groups to reach all families Adhering to workplace safety and health practices and ensuring access to decent work and the protection of labour rights in all industries will be crucial in addressing the human dimension of the crisis it is believed this experience, measured by years of teaching, is sufficient to take on the roles and responsibilities of a school leader (Bush, 2018). The educational leadership process attributes to the social effect where a leader or manager facilitates his faculty members by giving direction and aid for the attainment of pre-determined organisational/university objective. (Aurangzeb *etc.*, 2020).

The theory of emotional intelligence emerged in 1995 as introduced by Goleman. Other than conceptualising the emotional intelligence, researchers have started to develop its measurement and the methods of acquiring it. According to Mangal and Mangal (2015), the intelligence research primarily focused on the cognitive aspect; including memory, thinking and problem, until E.L. Thorndike (1914) recognised a non-cognitive aspect the assessment of intelligence behaviour of human being, which was social intelligence. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional intelligence comprises of three categories which are identifying one's emotions, emotional control and using emotions to solve problems. Meanwhile, religious orientation refers to one's ability to achieve a higher meaning of life, values, purpose and motivation (Zohar & Marshall, 2004). The purpose of the current study is to provide insight into the influence of religiosity and Emotional Intelligent on the attitude towards leadership in education.

Religiosity is also defined as an individual's awareness of knowledge, and a willingness to accept the teachings of his beliefs, and that becomes a personal belief, an internal belief, which is manifested in daily activities. Previous study Huber has developed The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) to measure the significance and implication of religious meanings in personality (Huber and Huber, 2012). Many researchers in different fields have used this instrument. Yendell and Huber (2020) conducted a study on Islamophobia in Switzerland and found that CRS was a reliable instrument of measurement in this regard. The study found that the more religious people are, the more likely they tolerate other religions; therefore, they are more likely to have a positive perception of Islam.

## Research Aims and Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is manifold. First, it seeks to investigate the influence of Emotional Intelligence and Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) on the attitudes toward leadership. Second, it examines the incremental validity of leadership practices over the self-leadership in

predicting the attitudes toward leadership. Incremental validity is used to describe the gain in validity resulting from adding a new predictor (religious) to existing predictors (emotional intelligence) in predicting particular dependent variable (attitudes toward leadership in education). This means that in a model including both religious and emotional intelligence as predictors, leadership practices will account for a unique component of variance in attitudes toward leadership in education. Thus, this study is an attempt to understand what unique contribution leadership practices may add in explaining the attitudes toward leadership.

This study is important because may help higher education level to improve the organizational process towards leadership in education at the same upgrading knowledge development, create new policy and practical development as contribution value of educational leadership processes. In addition, it can help to boost up country economy and it would be an advantage to Ministry of Higher Education and other organization to encourage the youngsters to get search job, get hired and generated incomes. May help educational leaders, managers, and planners improve the organizational processes so that their subordinates manifest a positive and committed work attitude. Also, policy formulation, knowledge development, and practical improvement can be made at higher education level as this study highlights the contribution value of educational leadership processes towards positive employee work attitude. This will go a long way in competence building and improving institutional performance as well as productivity

In light of this issue, researching the attitude and leadership of the potential leaders is a strategic initiative to ascertain future effective leaders. This research develops the following hypotheses:

H1: Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) significantly predicts the attitudes toward leadership.

H2: Emotional Intelligent significantly predicts the attitudes toward leadership.

H3: Emotional Intelligent demonstrates evidence of incremental validity over the Authentic Leadership Self-Assessment Questionnaire in predicting the attitudes toward leadership.

### **Literature Review**

The theory of emotional intelligence emerged in 1995 as introduced by Goleman. Other than conceptualising the emotional intelligence, researchers have started to develop its measurement and the methods of acquiring it. According to Mangal and Mangal (2015), the intelligence research primarily focused on the cognitive aspect; including memory, thinking and problem, until E.L. Thorndike (1914) recognised a non-cognitive aspect the assessment of intelligence behaviour of human being, which was social intelligence. Later, David Wechsler, who was recognised as one of IQ testing fathers, proposed the non-intellective abilities; consists of the affective, personal, and social factors, as the essential elements required for a successful life. In 1983, Howard Gardner began to introduce multiple intelligence in his writings. He believed that multiple intelligence consists of interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, and naturalistic intelligence. Inter and intrapersonal intelligence are closely related to emotional intelligence. The development of emotional intelligence continues to develop from then until 1995, and Daniel Goleman has started to popularise emotional intelligence through his writings.

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researchers in different fields have used this instrument. Yendell and Huber (2020) conducted a study on Islamophobia in Switzerland and found that CRS was a reliable instrument of measurement in this regard. The study found that the more religious people are, the more likely they tolerate other religions; therefore, they are more likely to have a positive perception of Islam. Such a significant result derived from this study which has applied CRS as the instrument will help understand the religion and instil understanding and tolerance towards other religions. Researchers from different fields of study use CRS to validate the instrument in different religious traditions or measure religiosity's central importance in psychological construction and individual behaviour. Brightman (2015), in the study of posttraumatic growth among trauma survivors, used CRS to measure the role of spiritual beliefs in the overall process of posttraumatic growth. The result found from the regression analysis showed that the increase in religion's private practice led to an increase in core belief disruption. Two dimensions of religious centrality; public and private practice, were positive predictors of posttraumatic growth, which were related to the process of core belief disruption.

## Method

### *Participants and Procedure*

In total, 114 undergraduate students (n = 114) from a local university participated in this study. The participants completed the related instruments on a voluntary basis. The age of the respondents ranged from 19 to 26 years, with 96.5 % of them were in category 21-25 years old. The respondents consisted of 46.5% male students (n = 53) and 53.5% females (n = 61). In addition, the sample comprised students from various faculties (Engineering, Human Sciences, Economics, Information Technology, Law, and Architecture).

### *Measures*

#### *Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)*

In this instrument, respondents were asked to consider how frequently they engage in each of the agreement statement using a five-point Likert scale, with (a) indicating Never and (e) indicating very often. An example of an item for CRS is "How often do you think about religious issues, Religiosity is described as the level of one's devotion, piety, and dedication, which can be measured by various acts of devotion, piety, and dedication. The term refers to a person's subjective importance of spiritual beliefs in their lives, such as the meaning they give to religion and the extent to which they engage in religious activities such as praying and attending religious services, or the subjective importance of spiritual beliefs in a person's life (Rabinowitz et al., 2010).

The concept of centrality by Huber (Huber 2012) refers to the importance and intensity of religiosity within an individual's personality. Huber's approach is built on the idea of construct systems. In this approach, "the centrality defines the position of the religious construct system within the ensemble of all construct systems in a given personality" (S.118, Huber et al. 2011). The assumption is that a high centrality of the religious construct system has a broad influence on other personal construct systems. As a consequence, it influences a person's behavior and experiences. (Friedrich et al, 2020).

The term "religious centrality" is often used to describe the degree to which a belief is central, important, or salient within an individual's life or identity. Religious and spiritual commitment

is a critical component in developing an understanding of the role that spiritual beliefs play in an individual's life. It is argued in this study that an individual's religion or spirituality can be an integral component in their identity as well as in their approach to shaping their core beliefs. As CRS employs five main theoretical characteristics of religiosity which are public practice, private practice, religious experience, ideology, and the intellectual dimension. These dimensions are seen as possible approaches for developing and implementing individual religious systems. (Zwingmann et al, 2015).

Religiosity is also defined as an individual's awareness of knowledge, and a willingness to accept the teachings of his beliefs, and that becomes a personal belief, an internal belief, which is manifested in daily activities. Previous study Huber has developed The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) to measure the significance and implication of religious meanings in personality (Huber and Huber, 2012). Many researchers in different fields have used this instrument. Yendell and Huber (2020) conducted a study on Islamophobia in Switzerland and found that CRS was a reliable instrument of measurement in this regard. The study found that the more religious people are, the more likely they tolerate other religions; therefore, they are more likely to have a positive perception of Islam.

### ***Emotional Intelligence***

In this instrument, the emotional intelligence also used to examine respondents on how frequently they engage in each of the statement using a five-point Likert scale with (1) indicating Strongly Agree and (5) indicating Strongly Disagree. An example of an item for emotional intelligence is "When I faced with obstacles, i remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them." The theory of emotional intelligence emerged in 1995 as introduced by Goleman. Other than conceptualising the emotional intelligence, researchers have started to develop its measurement and the methods of acquiring it. According to Mangal and Mangal (2015), the intelligence research primarily focused on the cognitive aspect; including memory, thinking and problem, until E.L. Thorndike (1914) recognised a non-cognitive aspect the assessment of intelligence behaviour of human being, which was social intelligence.

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional intelligence comprises of three categories which are identifying one's emotions, emotional control and using emotions to solve problems. Meanwhile, religious orientation refers to one's ability to achieve a higher meaning of life, values, purpose and motivation (Zohar & Marshall, 2004). The purpose of the current study is to provide insight into the influence of religiosity and Emotional Intelligent on the attitude towards leadership in education.

Emotional intelligence refers to "the processes involved in the recognition, use, understanding and management of one's own and others' emotional states to solve emotion-laden problems and to regulate behaviour" (Alam,2019). Emotional intelligence has an impact on educational and professional achievement, as it adds to individual's overall intelligence level. While teaching students in a classroom setup, not only the academic part is significant, but also there is a need to have emphasis on emotional intelligence. A teacher is expected to have all five components of emotional intelligence to have a successful rapport with his or her students.

The term "Emotional Intelligence" was first used in Wayne Payne's Doctoral thesis titled A Study of Emotion: Developing Emotional Intelligence in the year 1985. Daniel Goleman



propagated the theory of Emotional Intelligence with the publication of his best seller of the same title. Various scientific studies have emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence. Earlier the emphasis was only on IQ or Intelligence quotient but when an analysis was done on the life of people with high IQ its astonishing to understand that those who were highly proficient in academics failed miserably in life. (Tissaa, 2019).

Previous studies from (Sembiring, N,2020) shows there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction; organizational justice and job satisfaction; emotional intelligence and officers' performance; organizational justice and officers' performance job satisfaction and officers' performance; caring climate and officers' performance; organizational justice and caring climate; emotional intelligence and caring climate. In general, it has shown that emotional intelligence has a significant direct effect on performance, job satisfaction and caring climate. In addition, emotional intelligence has an indirect effect on performance through job satisfaction and caring climate.

Moreover, previous study indicates the contribution of emotional intelligence and spirituality in understanding creativity and entrepreneurial intention of higher education students shows that personal attitudes towards entrepreneurship and PBC have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention and mediate the effect of emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial intention. Emotional intelligence has a direct positive effect on creativity. The results reveal no or a tenuous influence of spirituality in the various concepts studied (Rodrigues, 2019).

Thus, a quality education system is dependent upon effectiveness of its teachers, as it is the teacher who is directly associated with students and has a significant impact on students' learning and achievement (Anderson, 2004; Birwatkar, 2014). The question to ponder here is the way in which teachers impact learning outcomes of students, as past studies have unfolded numerous avenues in this regard. Classroom instruction methods, teacher commitment, instructional and transformational leadership available to teachers, extra job responsibilities, citizenship behavior, teachers' job satisfaction and job security are some of the many venues which have been researched by scholars from around the globe in this regard.

## **Result and Discussion**

### ***Preliminary Investigation of the Correlations between Predictors and Leadership***

Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) was conducted prior to analysing data to check the normality of the data distribution and to detect outliers as well as multicollinearity (Green & Salkind, 2005). Results indicated that no violation was observed. Further, the correlation between the predictors and attitudes toward leadership was examined to ensure that all of the predictors were significantly related to the outcome variable before including them in the regression model. The correlation analysis found that all of the predictors were significantly correlated to attitudes toward leadership.

### ***Regression and Relative Weight Analysis***

The regression model consisted of two predictors (self-leadership and leadership practices) and one criterion variable (students' attitudes toward leadership). The  $R^2$  changes were examined after entering the predictors into the equation. The predictors were entered in blocks in the following order: Step 1: self-leadership and Step 2: leadership practices. The regression result showed that both predictors were significant predictors to students' attitudes toward leadership

in education. Results also revealed that a significant effect of leadership practices on the attitudes toward leadership was obtained after controlling for self-leadership.

Table 1 summarises the results of hierarchical regression and relative weight analysis.

**Table 1: Regression Analyses Predicting The Students' Attitudes Toward Leadership**

Predictor	R <sup>2</sup>		Change statistics			Coefficient		Relative weight (%)
	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Δ	FΔ	Sig FΔ	β	p	
Step 1								
Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)	.196	.189	.196	27.04	.000	.246**	.046	48.72
Step 2								
Emotional Intelligent	.230	.216	.034	4.92	.029	.270**	.029	51.28

Notes:

\*\*denotes significant at  $p < .05$  level.

In step 1, self-leadership significantly predicted leadership practices (Model 1:  $R = .443$ ,  $R^2 = .196$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .189$ ,  $F\Delta(1, 111) = 27.04$ ,  $p = .000$ ). After entry of leadership practices in step 2, the regression equation result showed that the addition of the leadership practices significantly added an incremental variance to the prediction of students' attitudes toward leadership above and beyond self-leadership (Model 2:  $R = .480$ ,  $R^2 = .196$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .189$ ,  $F\Delta(1, 110) = 4.92$ ,  $p = .029$ ). With the significant  $F\Delta$ , the  $R^2\Delta$  of .034 indicated that leadership practices added a significant incremental variance on students' attitudes toward leadership while controlling the self-leadership.

An examination of the standardised beta coefficients ( $\beta$ ) for the MRA model was further investigated to examine which variables were making a significant contribution in explaining the variance in the attitudes toward leadership across individuals. In the final model, the coefficient output revealed that a significant positive association between self-leadership and attitudes toward leadership ( $\beta = .246$ ,  $p = .046$ ) was obtained. Similarly, the standardized beta coefficient results also indicated that leadership practices significantly predicted attitudes toward leadership ( $\beta = .270$ ,  $p = .029$ ). Thus, both self-leadership and leadership practices were significant predictors to the attitudes toward leadership in education.

In addition to hierarchical regression, relative weight analysis was conducted to investigate the exact amount of unique contribution the leadership practices make to the outcome variable (attitudes toward leadership) in the presence of self-leadership. Relative weight analysis is a recent technique used to examine the relative contribution each predictor uniquely makes in explaining the outcome variable to the total explained variance of a criterion variable (LeBreton, Hargis, Griepentrog, Oswald, & Ployhart, 2007; LeBreton & Tonidandel, 2008). Results of the relative weight analysis revealed that leadership practices was the strongest predictor to attitudes toward leadership as it explained 51.28% of the variance in attitudes toward leadership (See Table 1). This was followed by self-leadership which explained 48.72% of the outcome variable.

## Discussion

Hypothesis 1 hypothesized that emotional intelligent significantly predict attitudes toward leadership. The hierarchical regression result showed that it was a significant predictor to attitudes toward leadership. As a result, hypothesis 1 was confirmed. A considerable positive association between EI and attitude toward leadership was expected based on prior research findings. This analysis elicits several practical observations. To begin, leadership is critical. Students who demonstrate leadership are more effective in the eyes of their constituents than those who do not exhibit important leadership behaviours and activities consistently. Student leaders who perceived themselves to be the most effective in contrast to their peers consistently reported engaging in more of each leadership practise.

The second and third hypotheses proposed that leadership behaviours are a crucial indicator of leadership attitudes. Further, it exhibits incremental validity in predicting attitudes toward leadership over self-leadership. The beta coefficient results suggested that leadership behaviours were a strong predictor of leadership attitudes. Meanwhile, data indicated that when self-leadership was included, transformational leadership strongly impacted views about leadership. As a result, hypotheses 2 and 3 were confirmed.

Second, the conclusions of this study back up prior literature on the CRS robustness in a variety of backgrounds. In this study, a combination of demographic characteristics had no impact on the CRS (e.g., gender, ethnicity, nationality, and educational level). This finding contrasts with a prior study that used different research equipment and found variations in performance based on factors like ethnicity and gender. Future research with a wider range of college student groupings will help us better understand leadership and student development. For example, a larger range of demographics, such as student body officers, officials in professions, athletes, peer educators, and even graduate students, should be investigated. Studies examining a variety of social variables, such as socioeconomic position, sexual orientation, and disability, are also illuminating.

Finally, when contrasted to instruments that focus on more specific criteria of performance, the CRS makes a distinctive contribution to the study of student leadership. Furthermore, studies assessing the efficacy of various leadership development programmes and classes over time would aid in determining how leadership is formed. One study showed that integrating a conceptual leadership framework and providing feedback boosted the effectiveness of a pledge education programme and dramatically enhanced leadership practise scores in a pre- and post-test condition. Finally, leadership educators (and student personnel administrators in general) should be happy, if not proud, that leadership education programmes and webinars are having an effect on learners reported actual leadership behaviours. Students have a better chance. Participating in professional development is intended to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their leadership experiences as well as their own leadership skills. Case studies, shadowing, journaling, engineering professors (role models), and advanced or follow-up experiences can all help.

## Conclusion

During Covid-19 Pandemic, the CRS and EI are gaining greater recognition as critical success factors in higher education, University closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic triggered significant challenges for education systems to respond to the needs vulnerable student groups whose learning and well-being tend to be the most impacted In summary, there are no



unanimous conclusions on the relationship of religion and EI and outcomes. While the larger part of the emotional research in the field seems to point toward positive effects of religion, the identified correlations and effects are diverse. One core methodological issue is the choice of variables for religion. Most studies rely either on membership indicators, frequency of worship attendance, or self-reported intensity of beliefs. Of those mentioned above, only the studies by Arano and Blair (2008) and Guiso et al. (2003) use more comprehensive measures of religiosity. The present study broadens this strand of research using the Centrality of Religiosity Scale, as a multidimensional and interreligious measure of religiosity (Huber et al. 2020; Huber and Huber 2012). The identification of causal to maximise the utility of EI, the study examined the benefits of EI on student attitude in terms of leadership style. It was discovered that CRS with higher EI scores exhibit more open communication and proactive leadership styles than SLPI with lower EI scores. Open communication is critical to student's success because it enables them to perform at their best. Proactivity is critical for resolving issues at their inception. As a result, a CRS with a high EI value can boost students' performance and creativity. Positive connections were identified between leadership behaviours and EI measures. These correlations illustrate the characteristics of EI that contribute to the development of specific leadership behaviours. The study discovered that EI fosters delegation, open communication, and proactive behaviour. These links bolster the EI hypothesis, and when employed effectively, these three leadership behaviours can benefit firms (Goleman 2001, Goleman et al., 2002, Talents clever 2004). Students with high emotional intelligence and religiosity will generate better social attitude and leadership during pandemic covid-19. Students' low social attitude at the same time can be changed at least by two factors, which are emotional intelligence and religiosity. The endeavour which will bring success to the youth's lives. In addition, context causes for any mental disorder can be examined and resolved in early stages by offering consultation services. Also, improving emotional intelligence by religious coping education can improve nurses' social relationships that improving quality of health care.

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