

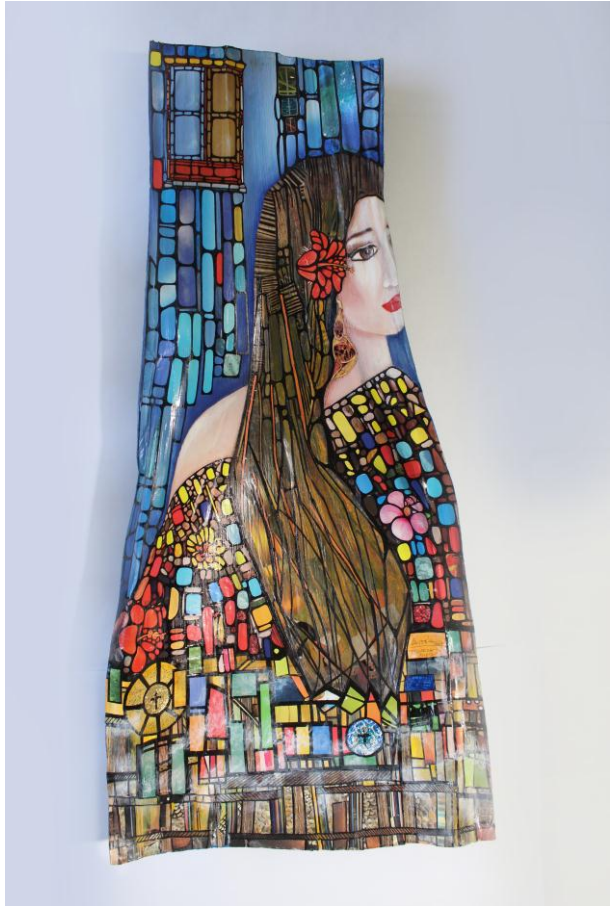
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Filling the gaps in epistemological belief research on Muslims

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Abstract

The paper aims to provide a general view of the model of Islamic epistemological beliefs for Muslims which become the based for the development of constructs, subconstructs and item for Islamic epistemology belief Questionnaires (MEBQs) together with some large gaps in the study of epistemology beliefs for Muslims via comparative qualitative research method. The results showed similarity with Mahfuzah (2016) where the construct of source of knowledge become one of the important construct to determined one's Islamic epistemological belief. In conclusion, this paper presents a basic model of epistemological beliefs derived from Islamic tasawur, where MEBQ was the basis.

Keywords: Islamic, Epistemological Beliefs, Instruments, Validity.

Llenando los vacíos en la investigación de creencias epistemológicas sobre los musulmanes

Resumen

El objetivo del artículo es proporcionar una visión general del modelo de creencias epistemológicas islámicas para los musulmanes, que se basará en el desarrollo de constructos, subconstrucciones y elementos para los cuestionarios de creencias epistemológicas islámicas (MEBQ), junto con algunos vacíos importantes en el estudio de las creencias epistemológicas para los musulmanes a través del método de investigación cualitativa comparativa. Los resultados mostraron una similitud con Mahfuzah (2016) donde la construcción de la fuente de conocimiento se convirtió en una de las construcciones importantes para determinar la creencia epistemológica islámica. En conclusión, este artículo presenta un modelo básico de creencias epistemológicas derivadas del tasawur islámico, donde MEBQ fue la base.

Palabras clave: islámica, creencias epistemológicas, instrumentos, validez.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every individual on this earth has their own philosophy of life. This individual philosophy acts as a foundation and a reference to the life that each individual is living (Wood, 1990). In other words, every movement and individual action depicts life's philosophy which is held and believed (Wood, 1990). Philosophy can be defined as a belief system, faith or principle held by someone (Abdfatah, 2001). Philosophy in Islam refers to the meanings of wisdom which are solid

knowledge and experience (Mohd, 1982). Philosophy is also part of an add-in discussion based on the Quran and Sunnah as the core of human thought processes by emphasizing the element of morality to shape a perfect human being (Abubakar & Ikhsan, 2008). Islam through philosophy emphasizes the truth as the goal to achieve, hence the brilliance of mind, solid knowledge and firm values are the conditions for achieving that goal. The fact is, this philosophy is determined by one of the elements it contained (Mujamil, 2002), where if this element is true according to the Islamic view, it will give meaning to the whole life of the individual in the eyes of Allah and give value to the philosophy held. This element is called epistemology or theory of knowledge according to (Alghazali, 1997). Epistemology is the theoretical knowledge aimed to find the truth. Discussions related to epistemology revolve around the sources of rabbaniah and insanity knowledge that are used in harmony and subsequently germinate other known components such as method, nature, division, validity, and limitations of knowledge. According to Mujamil (2002) epistemology is the most important component of the philosophical discussion. This is because the correct epistemology according to the Islamic view will bring people to discover the real truth i.e. Allah s.w.t. and next to understand the nature of His creation as a servant of Allah and khalifatullah who see the world as a place to prepare for eternal life in the hereafter. This epistemology also helps the human being to discover the right values to practice as the servants of Allah and khalifatullah.

The roles of epistemology are very important in determining one's perceptions and actions. Thus, a set of instruments must be developed to assess the level of one's Islamic epistemological beliefs. Such studies had been conducted by Perry (1970), Schommer (1990) and others. Other studies were conducted using only the instruments developed by (Schommer, 1990). However, these instruments are based on Western epistemology, which is contradicted to the Islamic worldview. Thus, in order to study Muslim's epistemological belief, new items need to be developed to ensure the reliability. Therefore, this study is conducted with the aim to evaluate the reliability and validity of the instrument of Islamic epistemological beliefs which has been developed. This instrument can be used by researchers who interested to study Muslim's epistemological belief

1.1. Research objective

- a) To find the gap of epistemological belief theories and model
- b) To offer the Muslim epistemological belief (MEB) measurement model that suits to epistemological belief research on Muslim
- c) To identify the reliability and validity of the instrument developed based on MEB model

2. Gaps in the literature: epistemological belief theories and models

Epistemological Belief (EB) is based on 7 theories and models that are essentially related to one another. The developmental theory and cognitive theory emphasize the process of knowledge development in individuals. These developments show no significant difference between men and women and this is a constant process which occurs along with age.

This development theory was started by (Perry, 1970). He has conducted a study on a group of college students to measure the changes or developments of students on qualitative knowledge and learning. He has outlined four sections which represent the views of students in terms of knowledge. The four divisions are dualistic that knowledge is based on one truth that is from the influential person in their life. The second is the multiplicity, that knowledge is based on different opinions. Thirdly is relativistic, that view knowledge depends on the current state of affairs and ultimately the knowledge commitment is a decision made based on known information. Perry (1970) argues that the readiness of students to adapt the situation during the process of understanding the new knowledge helps position changes occur from dualistic positions to commitments. Through this theory, Perry also concludes that student views on knowledge have a greater impact on their learning experience than their motivation, learning skills and abilities. Perry's epistemological belief model or

called intellectual pilgrim's progress is illustrated in the diagram below:

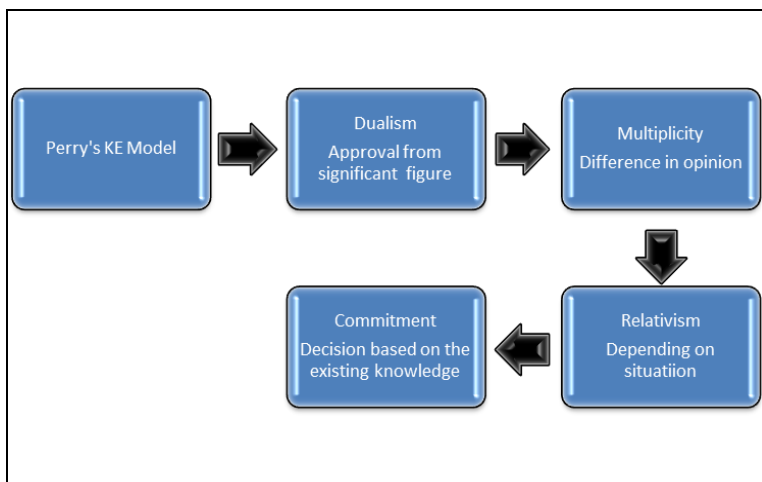


Figure 1. Perry's epistemology belief

Although the multidimensional theory is seen to be slightly different but still takes the developmental theory as one of its sub-components to measure EB. Schommer (1990) combined the theories of epistemology and the theories of intelligence to test the level of epistemological beliefs of an individual. This research utilizes five benchmarks including the structure of knowledge which is measured from isolated to integrate. The second benchmark is the stability of knowledge is measured from certain to involving. Schommer measured the level of stability of sample knowledge based on the development of their knowledge from accepting knowledge in absolute terms to relative terms. The next part is the source of knowledge which

is measured based on acquired knowledge handed down by the authority to deriving them from reasoning. Then, the speed of learning which is measured from quick to gradual, and the ability to learn which is measured from fixed at birth to improved.

The results of this research were divided into two levels of epistemological beliefs which are naïve and sophisticated. Schommer considered individuals with sophisticated viewpoint as those having the following criteria: thinking when acquiring knowledge without being influenced by those with authority, believing that learning is a complex process and not focusing on text memorization only (Schommer et al., 1992), believing that knowledge evolves based on situation rather than remaining static and unchanged, having a speed of learning that is gradual, and that his ability to learn consistently shows improvement. The questionnaire instrument developed by Schommer has been referred to by much more subsequent research. The instruments that have been developed by Schommer have become the basic instrument for many of the subsequent studies. However, the lack of analytical component factor i.e. sources of knowledge has been a concern for many researchers. As a result, Hammer and Elby tried to justify the situation by suggesting that researchers should avoid raising generic questions to measure the role of authority in transferring knowledge. This theory then succeeded in gathering sophisticated knowledge criteria from all theories, which is tentative knowledge, constantly evolving and constructed through social constructs. This latest feature of sophisticated knowledge also attracts Pearrow and Sanchez to see EB based on social constructive theory popularized by

Unger. Furthermore, the EB theory continues to evolve with Hofer's role in building specific components to study EB by specific domains or specific subjects. Hofer measures EB based on two main constructs namely the nature of knowledge and the nature of knowing. The nature of knowledge is categorized as definitive and simple while the nature of knowing is classified to a source of knowledge and knowing justification. The three main Hofers' constructs match the details that Schommer has put forward. The final construct in Hofer's theory is justification of knowing which refers to how the student assesses the knowledge received including the use of evidence, authority, expertise and expert judgment.

Hofer uses Schommer's instrument in his study but directs his respondents to focus on a particular subject when answering the set of questions. The study resulted in four new constructs which are slightly different from Hofer's original constructs which are the nature of knowledge is definitive and easy as the same entity. While the nature of knowing is the justification of knowledge and the accessibility of truth. Although Schommer (1990) have first made a specific domain-based study he only did it based on a general EB component. The researcher is of the opinion that this is the main reason for the research results obtained through these two sets of questions is different. Finally, pursuant to the recommendations proposed by Hofer the merger of the KE theory has begun. The EB development theory shows a positive development. Overall, the researcher sees the wave of theoretical change in the three major stages of Perry's developmental theory, Schommer's multidimensional theory and Hofer's specific

domain model. These three theories can be regarded as the backbone of the production of the other EB theory. Among the three main theories, the Schommer (1990) model became the main reference to most EB studies. However, to study Islamic EB, it requires a new model that takes into account the component of sources of knowledge that does not become the focus on the discussion of the Western epistemological model. This source component should be discussed through two aspects: i.e. the source of the Rabbaniyah (divine source) and the human resource. (Alattas 1990; Aljabiri, 1991; Ibnkhaldun, 2006; Alnasr, 1989).

Toward filling the gap – Muslim epistemological belief questionnaire (mebq)’s measurement model: The items for the construct of Muslim epistemological beliefs (MEBQ) were modified from Schommer's epistemological beliefs questionnaire and Schrew's Epistemological Beliefs Inventory. As the type of epistemological beliefs measured in both sets of questionnaires is based on western epistemology, the researcher modified items based on Islamic epistemological components or we call Muslim Epistemological Belief (MEB) Model proposed by Alghazali (1962), Alnasr (1989), Alattas (1990), Aljabiri (1991), Ibnkhaldun (2006) and others. The components are source of knowledge, method of knowledge, nature of knowledge, division of knowledge, the validity of knowledge and limitation of knowledge. The source component is the main dimension that distinguishes between Islamic epistemology and western epistemology. It is also the basis of the gap between the two epistemologies. Based on the previous discussion on Islamic

epistemology model, the researcher focuses on the resource debate to two parts, the source of the Rabbaniyah and the human resources. The source of Rabbaniyah includes the Quran, the Sunnah and the inspiration. Hence, the human resource is a healthy mind and senses. The explanation of these two sources of knowledge is as follows:

i) Source of Rabbaniyah

The source of Rabbaniyah is derived from the word Rabb as explained by Allah s.w.t in surah al-'Alaq verse 1-5. According to explanation of Sayid Qutb the interpretation of verses 1-5 of this sura, he adds, people know what they know and they have known, human understands every secret of life given to him as well as the secret of himself from ALLAH. So there is no knowledge known except Allah as its source. Thus, through this interpretation, it can be understood that the Rabbaniyyah source is the source that comes from Allah s.w.t. which includes the Quran, the Sunnah and the inspiration. The Quran is a revelation from Allah revealed through the angel Gabriel a.s gradually in Arabic and reading it is worship. It is loaded with the knowledge that is appropriate for all time. Through it, the ultimate truth can be revealed. Allah says in surah al-Hijr:

Truly we who bring down the Koran and We Who will protect it.

According to Al-Sobuni Allah explains in this verse that He is the one who takes care of the Quran and there shall be no reduction or

addition to the book that Allah Himself is the guardian. The promise of Allah recorded in the Quran proves that this book is pure from any addition and changes by irresponsible people thus proving that it is perfect and relevant for the whole life and every bit of truth contained therein is absolutely genuine and not relative in nature. The truth of the Quran is also stated by the Prophet s.a.w in his hadith which means:

I leave you two things, you will not go astray as long as you hold both of them, the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet s.a.w.

Besides the Quran, Rasulullah s.a.w. also emphasizes Sunnah as the second source to be referred to as a source of knowledge. The importance of Sunnah is evidenced by the hadith revealed above and saves us from going astray. Sunnah or hadith means all acts, conversations, confessions and akhlaqiah attributes or khuluqiyah nature derived from the Prophet s.a.w. before the apostolate or after his apostasy. Sunnah is divided into three parts namely sunnah qauliyah which is all the words of the Holy Prophet, sunnah fi'liyah which is the actions of the Holy Prophet, then sunnah taqririyah which is the confession of the Prophet s.a.w., not saying or doing any act that implies that something is right or wrong. Sunnah must be followed because the Prophet s.a.w. has been sent to be an example of all human beings. Evidence suggests that the Sunnah has a special place in Islam presented through the evidence of the Quran, Sunnah, and Ijmak of the sahabah and logic of reason. In the Quran, the call to make the Prophet s.a.w. as an example is stated in Surah an-Nisa' which means:

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and Ulu al-azmi (the authority) between you. Then you differ in opinion about something then return to the Quran and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the hereafter. It is more important and better consequences for you. According to al-Sobuni, this verse explains that obedience to the Prophet s.a.w. is the proof of our obedience to Allah s.w.t. and obey the Prophet s.a.w. is something that is obligatory to Muslims. Next, the Sunnah proof plays a big role in the life of Muslims comes from the hadith of the Prophet s.a.w. as mentioned earlier. The hadith emphasizes that the position of the Sunnah is the same as the Quran because the role of the Sunnah is to describe the contents of the Quran. Hence, holding tightly to both without abandoning one of them is essential to guide the believer's life to the path of truth. Hence the importance of this Sunnah is narrated through the Ijmak of the companions who agree with every command that comes from Allah s.w.t. and his apostle. They are consistent with this opinion from the days when the Prophet s.a.w. was still alive until Rasulullah s.a.w. died.

Abd Khaliq also discusses the evidence that the Sunnah is important in Islamic jurisprudence. He states that, naturally, the human mind will see a close relationship between the Quran and the Sunnah where the Sunnah serves as a clarification of what is not clear in the Quran, specifying in what is general in the Quran, limiting what is broad in the Quran and adds the law that is not discussed in the Quran. The function of the Sunnah against the Quran is explained by Allah in the Holy Quran Surah an-Nahl, which means:

And we have sent down to you al-Zikr (Quran) that thou shouldst explain to men what has been sent down to them. In order for them to think.

All this evidence illustrates the Sunnah's position in Islam. As a religion that is syumul and moves as a system than in the field of knowledge of the Sunnah is a source that needs to be given a major attention.

Inspiration is a source that God has bestowed upon some individuals. According to al-Ghazali (t.t) inspiration is a scarce source because it is closely related to one's heart condition. Hence, he provides a way which can be done to get inspiration through the purification of the hearts through riyadhah and mujahadah techniques. While Alnasr (1989) argued that this inspiration was the result of knowledge sought based on the sources of the Quran and the Sunnah. It comes in the form of a trajectory of the mind or a picture of a particular event in the heart.

ii) Insaniah Resources

Insaniah is the source of the human being ie intellect and senses. As explained in the Quran about the importance of these two sources through surah A Nahl verse 78 which means:

And Allah brought you out of your mother's womb, knowing nothing, and gave you hearing, sight and heart, in order that ye may be grateful.

According to Hamka this verse explains the state of the human being born not knowing nothing except gharizah ie instinct. Then gradually it is given the hearing and vision needed for the development of the heart namely feeling and mind. He further explains, that these three are important to bear the heavy responsibility as caliph and should be carefully used as a sign gratefulness. All Islamic philosophers also agree that these two sources are important but should be backed up to the main source which is the Quran and the Sunnah. These two components are related to each other. The mind has no information, while the senses are incapable of thinking. Hence, the information obtained by the senses allows the mind to think about something. According to al-Ghazali (t.t) understanding the knowledge of religion can only be achieved by the perfection of mind and intelligence. Through the mind, the words of ALLAH to human are acceptable and understandable and with it also the expectation of the servant to the Creator can be conveyed. Through this source of knowledge component, it can be concluded that these two sources are recognized in the religious side and are largely related to one another as explained by Alghazali (1962) in interpreting the earlier An-Nur verses. Islam emphasizes that these two sources should be harmonized by laying the Quran and the Sunnah as the main reference (Aljabiri, 1991; Ibnkhaldun, 2006).

a) Method of acquiring knowledge

The component of the knowledge method in this study is taken directly from the sources of knowledge discussed earlier. As described by al-Jabiri in detail that either by using the technique of analyzing the text ie through the direct understanding of the utterance or the meaning of the verses of the Quran and the Sunnah or by the inspiration derived from the rules of treating and purifying the hearts described in detail by al-Ghazali (t.t) previously or using analytical reason (Aljabiri, 1991). This method is generally dependent on the main source referred to by an individual (Alattas, 1990).

b) Validity of Knowledge

The validity of knowledge component is determined through three main methods: (1) correspondent, i.e to see the authenticity of the text through the process of text transfers, (2) inter-subjective, i.e. based on continuous effort and high discipline to clean the heart and (3) opinions which are consistent with the revelation (Alattas, 1990). The validity of this knowledge is seen in terms of relative legitimacy, which is based on the changing mind to absolute validity based on revelation and does not change. This is closely related to the main source of knowledge referred someone.

c) Limitation of Knowledge

This limitation of knowledge is based on the monotheistic framework set by Allah s.w.t. In accordance with the Islamic religion which has rules that must be obeyed, Allah s.w.t. also clarifies these rules in his book. Clear separation lines between halal and haram determine the extent to which a Muslim can pursue his knowledge seeking by using his mind. In this dimension the limits of knowledge are seen based on the lack of mind for interpreting the ghaibiyat matters. The fact of this matter has been narrated by Allah s.w.t. in surah al-Isra ' which means:

They ask you about the spirit. Say: The Spirit is my Lord's business, and they are not the knowledge except a little.

According to al-Sobuni this verse explains that the matter of ghaybiyat especially related to spirit is the secret of Allah and as a servant of Allah we are not given knowledge except a little and many things are still beyond our limited knowledge. Thus, this verse also directly describes the existence of limitations of the human mind. This will be seen from no limitations of the human mind to the existence of limitations that must be observed.

d) Distribution of Knowledge

The division of knowledge component is based on the division made by Alghazali (1962), namely Fardu Ain and Fardu Kifayah. Knowledge of Fardu Ain is related to religious knowledge while knowledge of Fardu Kifayah is related to worldly knowledge. Both are seen as equally important in Islam and should be viewed as integral by

giving priority to fardu ain and making it the basis and objective of fardu kifayah (Alghazali, 1962). While Mohd (2000) explains that knowledge in fardu ain is a basic necessity for human spiritual and knowledge in Fardu Kifayah is a physical requirement for mankind. He also pointed out that knowledge of Fardu Ain is not only dependent on the basis of Islam such as the pillars of the faith and the pillars of Islam but are very much related to one's condition. As explained by Murtada al-Zabidi the longer a mukallaf lives, the more knowledge of Fardu Ain that he needs to know. In addition, it is also related to the matters that must be implemented or avoided, for example, individuals who want to get married, it is obligatory (Fardu Ain) for him to know the law of engagement, marriage, how to treat his spouse and so on. While Fardu Ain to individuals with an indefinable sense and good senses is to control his eye views, manners in socializing, and so on. Knowledge of Fardu Kifayah is divided into two parts, namely, the shariah knowledge which must be sought as it is an intermediary to the religious affairs of society such as knowledge of grammar, Arabic language and so on. Another part of fardu kifayah is knowledge needed to manage world affairs such as knowledge in economy, medical and so on (Mohd, 2000).

e) Nature of knowledge

For this component, Alghazali (1962) states that the nature of knowledge is divided into two, namely the knowledge which is Rabbani in nature, which comes from Allah revealed to mankind by using the power of the mind. Then knowledge is open and comprehensive in nature i.e knowledge according to Islam is all useful things whether the source

comes from the Quran and the Sunnah or comes from the source of mind. In conclusion, MEB which consists of six components of knowledge-source of knowledge, a method of knowledge, the nature of knowledge, the division of knowledge, the validity of knowledge and the limitation of knowledge is the belief that one has established in their minds about knowledge. This belief can influence individual perceptions of himself as a servant of ALLAH and khalifatullah and individual perception of his life (Alghazali, 1997). Not only that this belief also affects one's actions and practices. The relationship between these three components can be seen in the following diagram:

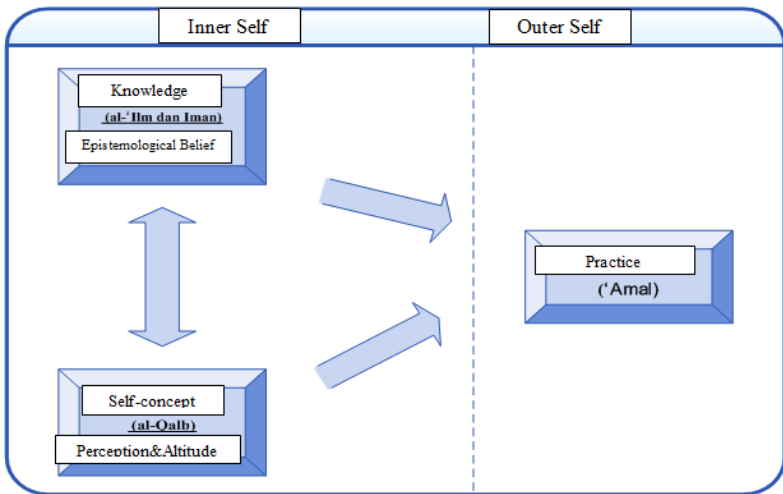


Figure 2. Relationship between Epistemological Belief, Self-concept and Practice/Behaviour

3. CONSTRUCTION OF ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEFS INSTRUMENTS

Based on the Islamic epistemological belief model discussed above (Alnasr, 1989; Ibnkhalidun, 2006), the researcher developed the items. They were divided according to six subconstructs, which are a source of knowledge (1-11), the method of knowledge (12-28), the nature of knowledge (29-35), division of knowledge (36-43), the validity of knowledge (44-53) and limitation of knowledge (54-58). All these items use Likert rating scales i.e. (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) somewhat disagree, (4) agree and (5) strongly agree (Schommer, 1990). There are 9 negative items in this section, i.e. item 34, 35, 36, 37, 42, 53, 54, 56 and 57.

4. THE VALIDITY OF CONSTRUCT ITEMS OF ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY BELIEFS

The validity of the instrument was done on two important parts of the questionnaire namely the validity of the page and the validity of the content. This is because the quality of an instrument depends on its validity (Litwin, 1995). The validity of the instrument is to ensure that what is intended to be measured is accurate and the test score can be accurately and appropriately translated (Gay et al., 2006). As such, the validity of the content is important in order to ensure that the items used are appropriate and represent the measured field. Similar to the page validity, content validity was reviewed so that the language aspects such as spelling, sentence structure and writing style can be updated (Muijs, 2004; Wiersma, 2000). For that purpose, the researcher has prepared a validity form to be submitted to the selected panels. The chosen experts

are composed of well-known scholars in Islamic epistemology, educational philosophy, psychology, education and measurement and evaluation. A total of 10 experts have been approached and consulted to confirm each construct, subconstruct, and item used in this study. In conclusion, all experts agreed to accept all items in the construct of Islamic epistemological beliefs with a little bit of modification to the items.

For the construct of Islamic epistemological beliefs, all the experts were of the opinion that there were items which were presented too long and might cause confusion to respondents. Thus, the researcher has made some changes in terms of presentation of the questions so that they seem more concise i.e. by giving a head sentence for each subconstruct. For example, for the subconstruct of the source of knowledge that begins with I believe that by referring to ... then followed by item B1: The Quran can solve deadlock. This is done according to the recommendations given by the experts after the discussions. In addition, for this construct, experts also suggested revealing the sentence that shows the belief and differentiates it with the sentence showing the action. For example, I refer to the Quran... is converted to I believe in referring to the Quran...

5. RELIABILITY OF ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGICAL BELIEF INSTRUMENT

According to Gay et al. (2006) the reliability of an instrument is obtained when the item can measure what is to be measured consistently. Items that can maintain a high degree of consistency have high reliability and are not doubted, while items that are unable to maintain consistency have low reliability and are doubted (Akbariah, 2009; Mohd, 2000). The reliability of an instrument is observed based on the internal consistency rate of the items that make up the questionnaire. The consistency rate is based on alpha Cronbach values. This value is based on the reliability index of Kirk (1984), and was used by Azhar (2006) as in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Classification of alpha coefficient reliability index

Cronbach Alpha Value Indicator	
Very high	> 0.90
Height	0.70 - 0.89
Medium	0.30 - 0.69
Low	<0.30

Source: Kirk (1984)

The value of the alpha coefficient to determine that an item is reliable and acceptable varies based on many opinions. Among the reasons are due to the type of instrument; for example, if instruments are related to the personality, the Cronbach alpha value is lower compared to the instrument of achievement; then the purpose of the study, whether the study aims to produce an important decision or for the purpose of exploration, and ultimately whether result of the findings influence the individual or group. Therefore, there are various

views and opinions to determine whether the item is acceptable or dropped based on its Cronbach value. According to Cohen et al (2000) and Aiken (2000), acceptable Cronbach alpha values are 0.80. Meanwhile, Muijs (2004) and Crowl (1996) argued that the value of Cronbach alpha 0.70 has been used by many researchers to determine acceptable items, especially for items that measure perceptions, attitudes and personality traits. Mcmillan and Schumacher (2006) were of the opinion that the acceptable alpha Cronbach value is 0.65. Other than that, for Sekaran (1992) and Mohd (2000), the Cronbach alpha value 0.60 is sufficient to maintain an item. After the pilot test data was analysed, the alpha Cronbach value for all items was 0.83. This value shows a very high value (Kirk, 1984). Three items that yielded Cronbach values below 0.60 are items under the subconstruct of knowledge properties (items number 30 and 31) and items under the subconstruct of knowledge validity (item number 48). In conclusion, all items have high reliability values and are acceptable except for three items that have been dropped. The reliability value for each construct and subconstruct are shown in the table below.

Table 2. Reliability values for each item of Islamic epistemological belief

Subconstruct value	No. of Items	Cronbach alpha
1) Source of knowledge	11	0.827
2) Method of knowledge	17	0.873
3) Nature of knowledge	7	0.614
4) Division of knowledge	8	0.812
5) Validity of knowledge	10	0.633
6) Limit of knowledge	5	0.712
Total items	58	0.830

Based on the result obtained, all the constructs are fit to measure Islamic epistemological belief including the source of knowledge. This is in contrast with Schommer Epistemological Belief Questionnaire (SEBQ), where the construct source of knowledge was dropped and deemed as not fit to measure the epistemological belief (Schraw et al., 2002; Nurul, 2015). It is mainly because of the difference in epistemological point of view between Islam and the West. In Islam, source of knowledge is the main thing that determined the epistemological belief of individual (Alghazali, 1962). Usually, when an individual holds the true source of knowledge, then all another component of knowledge will follow through and shape his epistemological belief. In Islam, the source of knowledge is really important, as the Prophet PBUH said: "I leave behind two things, the Quran and my example, the Sunnah; and if you follow these you will never go astray" (Muslim, 2004; Addarimi, 1778: 22). The two main sources are the Quran and Sunnah known as the rabbaniah source of knowledge by the ulama (scholars). Al-Ghazali (t.t) also added on intuition (ilham) as the third source. Other than that, the ulama also pointed out humane sources of knowledge which are the sound mind and senses. Whereas in the west, they are depending on just the humane source of knowledge and put aside the rabbaniah source. That is how the discussion on the source of knowledge in the Islamic epistemological belief is different from the western epistemological belief.

The results showed similarity with Mahfuzah (2016) where the construct of the source of knowledge become one of the important

constructs to determine one's Islamic epistemological belief. On the other hand, SEBQ only highlighted three components of epistemological belief which are the structure of knowledge, stability of knowledge and source of knowledge (Schommer, 1990). Stability of knowledge shared the same point with the validity of knowledge in this questionnaire because Schommer (1990) measured the level of knowledge stability from certain to involving, whereas Hofer highlighted the nature of knowledge. All four components that have been highlighted by prominent researchers in this field have been covered in this instrument and yielded high validity and reliability.

6. CONCLUSION

Epistemological beliefs instruments are being actively developed in the west, in line with the development of research related to them. It shows the importance of this construct in the determination of the perceptions and actions of an individual. Researchers see this study as very important to be carried out so that Muslim individuals who should treat religion as a way of life would have a clearer view of the nature of his life. This can be evaluated as one of the beliefs of Islamic epistemology that he possesses. This study shows that the instrument which has been developed based on the MEB Model has high consistency value and is acknowledged by ten experts who made the assessment. Hence, this instrument can be used to evaluate the Islamic epistemology beliefs and filling in the existing vacuum. However, it is still open to further improvement.

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