

Reconceptualizing *Ummatic* Personality and Faculty Effort: A Case Study of Faculty of Islamic Sciences, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus

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Abstract

The concept of *Ummatic* personality has previously been viewed from the perspective of religion and psycho-spiritual framework and its concept was examined based on documentary study. Surprisingly, little attention has been directed towards its conceptualization by considering its applicability to contemporary life and viewing the concept by examining integrated sources of both documents and field survey data. Thus, the inclusiveness of its concept remained questionable. A review and reconceptualization of the issue become inevitable. Correspondingly, this qualitative descriptive study aims 1) to reconceptualize *Ummatic* personality and explore its components, and 2) to examine the efforts made by the Faculty of Islamic Sciences in the process of actualization of *Ummatic* personality among students. The study employs a qualitative research method in which the data was gathered from documents, interviews, and focus group discussions. Key informants from the Faculty of Islamic Sciences were purposively selected consisting of four academic staff, a deputy dean of student development and alumni relations, a staff in charge of student activities, and a student club president. The collected data were transcribed and analyzed through content analysis by a research team. This study reconceptualizes *Ummatic* personality as a set of characteristics exhibited in a person's responsibility towards religion, self, others, environments, and a person's manifestation of contemporary skills. Eleven components of *Ummatic* personality are proposed, namely, religious beliefs, religious practices, good morality, interaction skills, preservation of environment, enjoining good and prohibiting evil, adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah*, integration capacity, logical thinking, physical health, and technology skills. The effort towards actualizing *Ummatic* personality was predominantly made through *Halaqah* (a group study) activities which emphasize the development of *Ummatic* personality in respect of interaction skill, good morality, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah*. This study provides a useful implication in a way that it makes a good contribution to the body of knowledge as it offers an extended and all-encompassing concept of



Ummatic personality. The study also offers a novel framework for developing a well-rounded *Ummatic* personality and the theoretical framework of *Ummatic* personality drawn from this study can be used to help develop its measurement in future studies.

Keywords: Reconceptualization, *Ummatic* Personality, Faculty Effort



Introduction

How people put effort to actualize and measure *Ummatic* personality is very much influenced by the explanation and interpretation they make to its concept. In another word, the conceptualization of *Ummatic* personality has an influence on the effort process to realize its concept and the development of its measure. Conceptualization is the process through which the researcher attempts to arrive at a common agreement on the meaning of the key concept under study and it helps to identify the focus of the study and to measure the concept (Rao & Reddy, 2013). Based on the literature review, numerous authors have offered a variety of conceptualizations of “*Ummatic* personality” and they differ in scope of definitions and constructs. For example, Othman (2011) expounds on the concept of *Ummatic* personality within a framework of psycho-spiritual personality characteristics, which consists of *Ibadah* (worship), *Amanah* (trust), and *Ilm* (knowledge). Ismail & Abu Zahrin (2018) conceptualize *Ummatic* personality or *Ummah* personality based on the connection with oneself and with human beings consisting of attitude (*akhlak*) towards self, attitude (*akhlak*) towards family, attitude (*akhlak*) towards friends, and attitude (*akhlak*) towards society; and the connection with Allah consisting of *akidah* (creed) and *Ibadah* (worship). al-Ghazali (1995) proposed that human personality in Islam is composed of four psycho-spiritual structures: *qalb* (heart), *roh* (spirit), *nafs* (psyche), and *a’ql* (intellect) and he viewed that these structures are dynamically interrelated which leads to determine the psycho-spiritual well-being of the individual. al-Hashimiy (2002) described Muslim personality based on al-Qur’an and al-Hadith as the responsibility of a person towards God, self, and other human beings (i.e., parents, wife, children, relatives, neighbors, brothers and friends, and society). al-Zubaidiy (2016) proposed two components of excellent Islamic personality based on the Qur’anic perspective: intellectual component indicated by *Iman* and behavioral component indicated by good conduct.

Scrutinizing the above conceptualizations of *Ummatic* personality, they revealed that a great deal of concept is put under a specific framework and the components of its concept may not be inclusive enough to cover the whole aspect of a Muslim’s life congruent with Islam as a universal and complete religion. To develop a perfect man (*Insan Kamil*) in students, *Ummatic* personality should be reconceptualized to make it more inclusive and responsive to Islam as a complete way of life (*ad-deen*) consisting of a system of beliefs and practices revealed by Allah (*Subhanahu Wata’al*). And the concept of *Ummatic* personality must also be applicable to contemporary life in which the attributes for success in a changing world should be included as an important component of its concept. Thus, attributes drawn from examining religion and contemporary life domains from documentary and field research data are worth considering to reconceptualize *Ummatic* personality. Moreover, the balanced development of *Ummatic* personality can only be possibly realized, when the inclusiveness of its concept is first to be made. So, reconceptualization which involves the process of redefining *Ummatic* personality by working out what this key term will mean in the framework of perfect Muslim personality in contemporary



life is a crucial part of this research process. The practical aspect of the study concept is highlighted by identifying some efforts made by the Faculty of Islamic Sciences to develop *Ummatic* personality attributes in students.

Efforts toward developing virtues, quality attributes, and good personality are encouraged by Islam as Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'ala*), the Exalted revealed; “verily in the messenger of Allah you have a good example for him who looks unto Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much” (verse 21 of Surah al-Azhab-translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali). This verse of al-Qur’an indicated that the milestone of success of human beings in the next word is those who practice a good morality based on the role model shown by the Prophet (Peace be upon him). The Prophet (Peace be upon him) says “the best among you are those who have the best manners and character” (Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 56, Hadith 759). In the context of Thailand education, the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), the Amendments (Second National Education Act) B.E. 2545 (2002), the Amendment (Third National Education Act) B.E. 2553 (2010), section 6 states that education shall aim at the full development of the Thai people in all aspects: physical and mental health; intellect; knowledge; morality; and desirable way of life to be able to live happily with other people and section 24 (4), in organizing the learning process, educational institutions and agencies concerned shall achieve, in all subjects, a balanced integration of subject matter, integrity, values, and desirable attributes. The National Education Plan 2017-2036 sets the third goal on education quality by stating two important indicators, namely, 1) educational institutions shall organize teaching and learning/activities to strengthen citizenship and 2) increasing students’ moral and ethical behavior. The above primary sources of Islam, the National Education Act, and the National Education Plan are all concerned with moral construction and good personality-building of man. To actualize this concern under the scope of this study, higher educational institutions shall create environment and teaching-learning activities that are conducive for fostering student development, not only in the knowledge and skill domain, but the most important one is morality. Thus, educational institutions shall support the organization of various learning activities for fostering morals, values, and ethics in students’ minds and developing necessary skills and attributes for success in today’s fast-changing world. Correspondingly, co-curriculum and extra-curriculum should be simultaneously organized to provide a supplement to the regular curriculum.

Objectives of the Study

The effort towards fostering virtues and developing *Ummatic* personality is a critical component in serving to fulfill religious practice and the goals of the national education policy. Although previous studies have exposed the concept of *Ummatic*/Islamic personality, but little is known about to what extent the scope of its concept should be proposed to make it relevant to contemporary life and in what efforts are made to actualize this concept. To further our understanding, we propose two objectives for this study as below;



- 1) to reconceptualize *Ummatic* personality and explore its components
- 2) to examine the efforts made by the Faculty of Islamic Sciences in the process of actualization of *Ummatic* personality among students.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research method. The data obtained for this study is divided into primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions with key informants, who were purposively selected based on the samples listed and recommended by the Faculty of Islamic Sciences, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus, Thailand. The samples consist of four academic staff, a deputy dean of student development and alumni relations, a staff in charge of student activities, and a student club president. Secondary data was obtained by analyzing the related documents, such as books, researches, and articles. The data obtained from documents were analyzed using qualitative data analysis involved with the process of classifying, summarizing, and tabulating the data according to issues of interest (content analysis). While the field survey data was first transcribed and it was then analyzed using content analysis. Data triangulation was also considered to confirm the results of the study.

Concept of *Ummatic* Personality

The definition of *Ummatic* personality will be firstly separately defined into each single word, namely “*Ummatic*” and “personality” and It is then followed by the definition of “*Ummatic* personality”. The details of each definition as below;

The word “*Ummatics*” is derived from the Arabic word “*Ummah*”. Linguistically, *Ummah* comes from the word “*Ammu*” which means *al-Qashd* (intension) and *al-Gayah* (purpose) (Matondang, 2016). The word “*Ummah*” is referred to four meanings, namely, source (*asl*), reference (*marji'*), group (*jama'ah*) and religion (*deen*). Other meanings of “*Ummah*” given by linguists such as possession (*mulk*), leadership (*imamah*), group of scholars, and a person who is resolute and steadfast in religion (Abu al-Husain, 1972). In the context of the Qur'anic and Hadith expression, the word “*Ummah*” conveys six different meanings, namely, religion, group of scholars, a period, leader/the best exemplary person, steadfast person with religion, and colleague/group (al-Misriy, 1997). So, the word “*Ummah*” conveys different meanings depending on what context it is used. As this word is connected to the word “personality”, so the word “personality” is worth mentioning.

The leading authors conducting a study on personality, such as Freud (1938), Jung (1939), Allport (1961), Adler (1964), Bandura (1977), and Roger (1980) have not been able to come to any consensus on the definitions of personality. Mischel, Shoda & Ayduk (2007) stated that the term has many definitions, but no single meaning is accepted universally. Feist, Feist & Robert (2013: 4) maintain that there is “no single definition is acceptable to all personality theorists”. This implies



that each author has his or her understanding of the term “personality”. However, Uher (2015) finds the common scientific definitions of personality as individual characteristics or unique peculiarities, but this definition is vague. She further noticed that that most definitions of personality are defined from the particular viewpoint of psychology that are dissected into narrow phenomena rather than from the different kinds of phenomena and the professional perspectives of different disciplines. A well-known definition of personality originated by Allport (1961) who defined it as the dynamic organization within the person of the psychophysical systems that determine the unique adjustments to one’s environment. Uher (2017: 2) defined personality as “a person’s characteristic pattern of behaviors in the broad sense which includes thoughts, feelings, and motivation”. Ro (2010) states that our personality plays a vital role in explaining why we function in a certain manner throughout life. Personality refers to a set of characteristic dispositions that determine emotion, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational styles (McCrae & John, 1992). According to Weinberg & Gould (1999), personality is the characteristics or blend characteristics that make a person unique. Gibb (2008) conceived personality as a function of social situation, this means that there can be no personality in isolation, thus it is defined as a socially revealed hierarchic integration of the innate dispositions and habit reaction tendencies of the individual. And such integration is itself dependent upon the continued interaction of the individual and society. Thus, personality can be briefly summarized as the characteristic that makes an individual unique from other people and this characteristic includes all of the patterns of thought and emotions that cause him or her to behave and say things in particular ways that can be observed in his/her relations to the environment and the social group. In this study, the word “personality” (a noun) which comes after the word “*Ummatic*” functioned as an adjective to serve as a modifier of a noun to denote a characteristic of personality that distinct from other types of personality. Understanding of characteristics of Islamic *Ummah* is crucial for conceptualizing *Ummatic* personality.

Scholars exploring the concept of Islamic *Ummah* such as al-Nahwiy (1997), al-Bagha (1997), al-Jalil (2004), al-Qardawiy (2008), al-Lawh & al-Zamiliy (2008), Abu Zahrah (2011), and ‘Amurah (2015) have a collective view on the attributes of this *Ummah* which are composed of three common unique attributes: *Khairu Ummah* (the best community), *Ummah Wahidah* (one community), and *Ummah Wasatiyyah* (the justly balanced community). Islamic *Ummah* emphasizes the equality of man (Hassan, 2014). Based on this concept, members (Muslims) of the Islamic community (*Ummah*) should transcend socioeconomic, geographical, cultural, tribal, and ethnic boundaries and Muslims’ faith is regarded as the most important criteria that can bridge these boundaries. All believers in the community are equal and they need to support, assist and protect each other. The criteria that make them different is the magnitude of their belief and practice of Islam represented as the sole indicator of the success in this world and the hereafter. Concerning Islamic *Ummah*, al-Nahwiy (1997) proposed three major missions of *Khairu Ummah*: i) enjoining the good/right, ii) forbidding the evil/wrong, and iii) believing in Allah. Allah (*Subhanahu*



Wataa'la) says “Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah” (verse 110 of Surah al-i-Imran-translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali). Islamic *Ummah* emphasizes on the holistic aspects of development which include spiritual, intellectual, social, and emotional. A guide used for this development must come from the same source, the revelation from Allah (*Wahyu*) so that to prevent divisions and chaos among believers (‘Amurah, 2015). Based on this explanation, Islamic *Ummah* is regarded as *Ummah Wahidah* which means the community built on the unity of faith (*Aqidah*), Islamic law (*Shari’ah*), and morality (*Akhlaq*) and because of their upholding to the same religion principle, members of the community can be united as the one community, a community built on firm faith and practice of religion (al-Bagha, 1997; al-Nahwi, 1997; Japakiya, 2017). Allah (*Subhanahu Wataa'la*) says “Verily this community of yours is a single community, and I am your Lord; so worship Me” (verse 92 of Surah al-Anbiya-translated by Maududi).

Another unique attribute of Islamic *Ummah* is the *Ummah* which is built on the *Wasatiyyah* (moderation) approach. *Wasatiyyah* is the assumption of a middle position in between two forbidden extremes: excessiveness (*ifrat*) and laxity (*tafrit*) (Hasan, 2014). According to Prof. Hassan, *Wasatiyyah* must be grounded on Islam’s two primary sources: the Qur’an and the Sunnah (the Prophet’s tradition) and it encompasses three key pillars: excellence and goodness, justice, and balance/moderation, and these pillars are accompanied with three key values of Islam: *iman* (belief), *ilm* (knowledge), and *taqwa* (compliance to divine guidance), accordingly (Hasan, 2013). The meaning of *Ummah Wasatiyyah* according to the Qur’an in which Allah says “thus, have We made of you an *Ummah* justly balanced, that ye might be witness over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves” (verse 143 of Surah al-Baqarah-translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali). The characteristics of *Ummah Wasatiyyah* is the community that stands on moderation, which is a core point in belief, legislation, worship, and judgment. *Ummah Wasatiyyah* are people who lead life in moderation which means that they are committed to the balance in all dimensions of life, such as, the balance in earning money and spending it; the balance in the demands and desire of the soul; the balance of responsibilities between individuals and the whole community; the balance between physical and spiritual sides; and the balance between easiness and difficulty as well as between hope and fear (Salameh, 2016). al-Jalil (2004) asserted that *Ummah Wasatiyyah* is the community that adheres to the Islamic faith grounded in neither extreme in the spiritual aspect nor negligent of material interest, the teachings of this *Ummah* (Islam) are harmonious with the human nature (*fitrah*), and no religion burden is greater than it can bear. It is the *Ummah* that encourages the use of analytical thinking to find a correct understanding and achieve satisfactory results. The interest of *Ummah Wasatiyyah* is to establish justice and wisdom which are necessary for the preservation of social order and the creation of interaction between individuals, groups, and nations (al-Jalil, 2004). The concepts of personality and *Ummah* discussed earlier are important information that supports our further discussion of the concepts of *Ummatic* personality.



From a review of the related literatures, the *Ummatic* personality of Muslim is classified into 4 personalities: 1) personality towards God (Allah), 2) personality towards self, 3) personality towards society and 4) personality towards environment (al-Aazamiy, 2000; al-Hashimiy, 2002; al-Nabahaniy, 2003; al-Zubaidiy, 2016). Personality towards God is the responsibility that a person has towards Allah (*Subhanahu Wataa'la*) which is expressed through his/her firm belief in the existence and oneness of Allah, a total submission to Allah, belief in the six articles of faith, and obedience to the commands of Allah (*Subhanahu Wata'a la*) and avoidance of His prohibitions. Personality towards self includes the responsibility of a person in taking good care of physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health. Personality towards society involves a responsibility towards others which includes family members and fellow human beings. Responsibility towards family members (parents, siblings, wife, husband, children, grandchildren, and all relatives) can be referred to the act of exhibiting good behaviors to them by being disciplined, courteous, honest, forgivable, patient, empathetic, respectful to them and sacrificing for their well beings. Responsibility towards fellow human beings involves the practice of good behavior in social interaction in which each member of society needs to create a sense of awareness of his/her social responsibility such as sacrificing for the common good and being capable to build a good relationship with others to live together in society with peace. To achieve this goal, three principles of social interaction considered necessary, they are the adherence to the principle of moderation (*Wasatiyyah*) which means to create a balance in all dimensions of life, the act of calling others to enjoin good and forbid evil, the human interaction skill in multi-cultural society (al-Hashimiy, 2002). Personality towards environment refers to the responsibility towards protecting and preserving living components of the environment such as plants, animals, and micro-organisms as well as non-living components of the environment such as rocks, water, soil, etc. In Islam, one of the goals of creating man is to be God's vicegerent (*Khalifah*) on earth in which man is entrusted to safeguard the environment and to have guardianship of the planet and he/she will be held accountable for his/her guardianship on the Day of Judgement. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) says: "there is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it but is regarded as a charitable gift for him" (Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 3, Book 39, Hadith 531). Therefore, Muslims should treat the environment with respect, as it is not ours to abuse. And it is not a type of *Ummatic* personality who abuses the environment and neglects to preserve natural resources.

Reconceptualization of *Ummatic* Personality and Exploration of Its components

The absence of an inclusive definition of what "*Ummatic* personality" is and what its components are responsive to the context of present life in which technology fluency, logical thinking, and integration capacity become necessary skills compounded the need for reconceptualization of its concept. As stated earlier, a concept based on a mere psycho-spiritual



framework might not be sufficient to cover the whole concept of *Ummatic* personality. As a result, the effort towards a reconceptualization of *Ummatic* personality to make its concept all-encompassing deemed necessary. Our concept of *Ummatic* personality departs from past research in two ways. First, a dynamic aspect of *Ummatic* personality is added to make its concept more relevant to contemporary life skills and responsive to change. Second, its concept is built based on diverse sources: literature reviews and field interview data.

Building upon documentary study as above-mentioned, *Ummatic* personality can be conceptualized as a set of characteristics that reflects the following behaviors: 1) responsibility towards religion which includes a firm belief in the articles of faith (*Iman*), the practice of the principles of Islam (*Islam*) and paying a complete attention towards Allah (*Ihsan*), 2) responsibility towards self which involves the preservation of physical, spiritual, emotional and mental health, 3) responsibility towards fellow human being in which a person required to adhere to *Wassatiyyah* principles, to be equipped with all necessary related social interaction skills, especially, skill in living together in a multi-cultural society with peace, and to act of inviting others to enjoin good and forbid evil, 4) responsibility towards environment involving the preservation of living and non-living components of the environment. This mentioned concept of *Ummatic* personality was purely based on documentary data. However, supplementary information obtained from interview data suggested that the concept of *Ummatic* personality needs to be further extended to make it more receptive in today's fast-changing world. The respondents' view about the concept of *Ummatic* personality is presented in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1

To my personal view, a good *Ummah* are persons who exhibit a set of characteristics that can make them become perfect Muslims. This means that attainment of a well-being of head, heart, hands, and health is of the utmost importance when it comes to determining whether a person is perfect or not. I believe that *Ummatic* personality must encompass three following aspects: 1) intellectual development in which individual required to have creative and integrative thinking, and to be able to keep abreast of modern-day knowledge, 2) spiritual health involves the belief and practice of religion accompanied by a sense of integrity, and 3) acquiring modern skills such as information literacy, collaboration and communication skills, and the ability to utilize modern technology.



Excerpt 2

To me, *Ummatic* personality is an individual's unique peculiarity exhibited by two fundamental principles of Islam: 1) belief in *Tawhid* (Oneness of Allah) which includes *Tawhid-ul-rububiyah* (Oneness of Allah' Lordship), *Tawhid-ul-Uluhiyyah* (Oneness of Worship), and *Tawhid-ul-Asma' wal-Sifat* (Oneness of Allah's Names and Attributes), and 2) worshipping Allah by way of practicing the five principles of Islam. Moreover, a person who claims to have an *Ummatic* personality must show a behavioral pattern of adhering to the principle of *Wassatiyyah* by being committed to moderation in all dimensions of life; to be neither excessive and negligent, develop good interpersonal skills, and an act of calling others to enjoin good and prohibit evil.

Excerpt 3

To my understanding, developing an *Ummatic* personality means working towards developing an understanding of Islamic teachings and bringing them into practice. As *Ummah* signifies *Jama'ah* (group), thus characteristics expressed by willingness and submitting oneself for others are crucial attributes of *Ummatic* personality. Members of *Ummah* must work for others or serve the society, enjoin what is good and prohibit what is bad, and prioritize collective benefits over individual ones.

Excerpt 4

Being a person in charge of student development and alumni relations in the Faculty of Islamic Sciences whose name bears the word "Islam", I have had a heavy responsibility to establish a unique Islamic characteristic among students. The thing that always comes to my mind is how to ensure that students' Islamic personality shines in all activities they participated in. I considered that the faculty fails to accomplish its mission if students fail to actualize Islamic or *Ummatic* personality. To me, demonstration of ethical leadership, public mind behavior, and adherence to the principle of *Wasatiyyah* by upholding a middle position in between excessiveness and laxity signify the main attributes of *Ummatic* personality.

Excerpt 5

Ummatic personality in my view is a type of Islamic manner that is accepted by a society. Being responsible for *Halaqah* (a group study) activities of students, I pay great attention to make sure that the activities are structured in a way that helps build Islamic morality in students manifested in their good moral character, *Ibadah* (worship), and good interpersonal relationship. I view this morality as the main component of *Ummatic* personality. To me, another important aspect of Islamic morality is to put self in a way that is approved by



others, especially, students who are the backbone of their community. Thus, there is a greater need for students to train themselves through *Halaqah* activities to be persons who lead an exemplary life.

Excerpt 6

As the president of a student club, I am responsible for ensuring the club works effectively. And this goal cannot be attained if members of the club or students do not communicate and work together. Therefore, showing self-confidence, daring to express themselves, proposing ideas during meetings, or participating in students' activities are necessary attributes, which I view as essential components of *Ummatic* personality. Moreover, a good spiritual and physical condition is part and parcel of what *Ummatic* personality is.

Ummatic personality extracted from documentary review and field interview is composed of following common attributes: 1) spiritual, physical, and intellectual health; 2) people skills which include a good interpersonal relation, leadership, and enjoining good and prohibiting evil; 3) adhering to the principle *Wasatiyyah*, and 4) understanding and practicing religion (*Ibadah*). However, the above excerpts from the field interview suggested that some attributes of *Ummatic* personality need to be added, apart from documentary review. These newly discovered attributes are related to the personal development of contemporary skills, which include skills in integration, logical thinking, and technology. Based on the integrated sources of information derived from a literature review and interview data, *Ummatic* personality is reconceptualized as blend characteristics, patterns of thought, and emotions that cause a person to manifest behaviors in particular ways. These behaviors include a firm belief in the six articles of faith (*Iman*); a practice of the five pillars of Islam (*Islam*); paying complete attention towards Allah (*Ihsan*); taking a good care of physical health; having people skills which require skill in interpersonal relations, leadership, inviting people to enjoin good and prohibit evil; having personal skills which include skill in technology, integration, adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah*; and preserving the environments.

Base on the above reconceptualization, we proposed eleven components of *Ummatic* personality as follows; 1) religious beliefs: belief in the six articles of faith (*Iman*), stressing in *tawhid* (belief in oneness of Allah) without associating partners with Allah, awareness of the Supremacy of Allah, and practice of religious self-examination (*Muhasabah*); 2) religious practices: performing obligatory, required and sunnah (voluntary) prayers according to the Prophet' guidance; 3) good morality: showing various good behaviors consistent with the teachings of Islam; 4) interaction skills: displaying communication competency, conducting oneself appropriately, and keeping positive attitudes when interacting with others; 5) preservation of environments: caring for living and non-living components of environment in a well-balanced manner; 6) enjoining good and prohibiting evil: persuading oneself and others to do good and prohibit evil; 7) adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah*: living in harmony with the teachings of Islam by sticking fast to the



principles of *Wasatiyyah* described by following distinctive qualities: balance, moderation, tolerance, justice, excellence and perfection; 8) integration capacity: living according to the Islamic worldview in which a well-balanced integration between the affairs of this world (*dunya*) and the next world (*akhirah*) must be realized; 9) logical thinking: thinking logically and sequentially through reflection and connection that lead to good decision making and problem solving, 10) physical health: taking care of physical health and being free from disease by creating good eating habits such as choosing foods and beverages that are beneficial, taking enough rest and sleep, doing regular exercise, and maintaining fitness; and 11) technology skills: competencies in analyzing information, producing and using educational technology effectively in accordance with the prescribed ethical framework. The mentioned components of *Ummatic* personality can be briefly summarized as follows: personality towards religion, personality towards self, personality towards others, personality towards environments, and personality towards contemporary skills.

The Efforts Made by Faculty of Islamic Sciences in the process of actualization of *Ummatic* Personality Among Students

The issue of transforming concepts into practice has been the major concern of all people who want to see change happen. A concept is just an abstract idea and if it is not actualized, it will remain as abstract knowledge without having an impact on the specific situation (Staempfli, Kunz & Tov, 2012). Thus, organizing or managing experience based on the concept proposed can create a bridge between theory and practice. In the context of higher education in which this study is conducted, all educational activities are regularly planned, implemented, and evaluated to identify their capacity of enhancing desirable attributes of people involved. Efforts toward actualizing the concept are the responsibility of all concerned with teaching and training. In the context of effort towards actualizing the concept of *Ummatic* personality, persons in charge of students' activities need to evaluate the purposes of organizing the activities in light of this concept and make decisions about what interventions best respond to the development of this type of personality. Linking concept and practice in such a way is quintessentially an actualizing process in the context of developing *Ummatic* personality. In this part of the paper, we will address the following questions: What type of activities are organized at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences and how can these activities be supported in the development of students' *Ummatic* personality.

To answer the above questions, we interviewed the research samples to explore their views and perceptions regarding types, processes, and outcomes of activities conducted in light of developing *Ummatic* personality at the Faculty of Islamic sciences. Their responses were reported in the following excerpts:



Excerpt 1

To my knowledge, student development activities are organized in various forms such as lecturing, training, field working, camping, and *Halaqah* (a group study), just to name a few. These activities are introduced to enhance students' development on two levels: 1) basic level includes the development of student's personality in respect of *Ibadah* (worship) such as fasting and *Qiyamullail* (night prayers), interpersonal skills, and good morality and 2) advance level emphasizes the development following skills and attributes: teamwork skills, good leadership and followership, service for society, and 21st-century skills.

Excerpt 2

I see that organization of activities has such an Islamic aura consistent with the faculty context which bears the name of "Islam". The dominant activity conducted at the faculty is *Halaqah* (a group study) activity which is designed based on care networking for all levels concerned. The mentors take responsibility for their mentees, lecturers give advice and guide students, and peers support peers. I believe that *Halaqah* activity can lead students to develop all dimensions of Islamic personality which include mental, spiritual, physical, emotional, and social. Why it is so, to me, this is because the *Halaqah* activity involved with activity organized outside the classroom and the nature of the activity is more oriented towards fieldwork experience, practice, and training.

Excerpt 3

Being in charge of student development activities in which I have to give supervision to students before, during, and after activities hours, it offers me a direct experience with them and a chance to mingle with them. And through this process, I can directly observe their personality. I have to say that *Halaqah* (a group study) activity conducted at the faculty has made a far-reaching impact on developing students' character to which I have been so much impressed by their behavior modification and development. Desirable attributes built as a result of participating in the activity are ethical leadership, public mind behavior, and adherence to the principle of *Wasatiyyah*. Regarding the question about the design of the activity.....I can say that the *Halaqah* activity involves a consultation meeting every month between mentors and mentees outside the classroom. I see that students are happy, they feel free to share their problems and consult with their mentors. As a result, their relationships are strengthened and they gain trust



in one another. The strength of *Halaqah* is students feel comfortable sharing their own personal or academic problems, and thus, every problem was uncovered and it was attentively and collectively resolved by mentors and mentees.

Excerpt 4

As a supporting staff who is responsible for students' activities, I can say that most of the students' activities are organized in the form of *Halaqah* activity. Each *Halaqah* comprises 10 students with 2-3 mentors. They are to meet once a week to discuss knowledge sheets entitled "the meaning of being Muslim" and "until the realization of Muslim youths". *Halaqah* activity has no fixed place but it is a mobile activity by which 3rd-year students are responsible for 1st-year students and 4th-year students are responsible for 2nd-year students. After conducting *Halaqah* activity, reports of its outcomes must be submitted. Regarding the question about the outcomes of *Halaqah* activity, I can speak to you that after their involvement in *Halaqah* activity, I find a positive change in their behavior in the following respects: 1) they have a better understanding of the social setting in light of Islamic values; 2) getting to know other people, society, and community; 3) leadership and the state of being international gradually emerge. Moreover, there are activities conducted to provide career guidance to prepare students for job applications after graduation.

Excerpt 5

In my responsibility as an *Amir* (the president of a student club), I can tell you that student activities are divided into two types: 1) activities organized in the form of *Halaqah* by the faculty emphasizing the cultivation of Islamic virtues and good morality, and 2) activities organized by the student club stressing the development of life skills such as skills in living in a multicultural society and with people of different religions. The *halaqah* activity is more oriented towards mentors and mentees relationship in which senior students are responsible to take care of junior students. While activity organized by student club is managed to apply the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle aimed to foster social interaction skills.

The above excerpts signify that *Halaqah* is the predominant activity conducted to develop *Ummatic* personality which is regularly organized in the form of mobile activity outside the university campus. Other types of activities such as lecturing, training, field working, and camping are also organized. These activities are designed to develop students' *Ummatic* personality



primarily in respect of responsibility towards religion, responsibility towards self, and responsibility towards social work-related skills. To articulate different spaces of activities organized by the Faculty of Islamic Sciences, we further conducted a focus group discussion with staff who are in charge of student activities to discuss in detail about types of projects or activities, focused issues, process, and key outcomes. The information obtained from the focus group discussion is analyzed and synthesized in tabular format as table 1 below;

Table 1: Student Activities Organized by The Faculty of Islamic Sciences

| Projects/ Activities | Focused Issues | Process | Key Outcomes |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Project for promoting learning and developing personality through group study (<i>Halaqah</i> activity) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to develop Islamic personality in students - to cultivate brotherhood and sisterhood, acquaintance, and to help one another | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizing <i>Halaqah</i> activities once a week - Organizing orientation and monthly meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students create a group to advise each other on virtues and warn each other of misbehavior - Students are nurtured with discipline and responsibility towards participating in <i>Halaqah</i> activities - Cultivating brotherhood and sisterhood among students - Students' Islamic personality emerges - Leadership attribute is fostered in students |
| 2. Project for fostering student understanding of <i>Wasatiyyah</i> principle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to help students understanding the <i>Wasatiyyah</i> principle and its application in multicultural society | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecturing - Brainstorming - Organizing field project by which students are to engage with multicultural community area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students understand the <i>Wasatiyyah</i> principle and its application - The activity helps to reduce the extreme behavior of students - Students create a good balance between study and activity. |



| 3. Project on one <i>Halaqah</i> one goodness | - Fostering leadership, creating volunteer students to work for organization and society | - Students are entrusted to organize field project in the community | - Students are equipped with leadership attributes and teamwork related skills - Students exhibit public mind behavior |
|---|---|--|--|
| Projects/ Activities | Focused Issues | Process | Key Outcomes |
| 4. Project on road for cooperation towards producing visionary activists (12 th project) | - Creating leadership among members of a student club - Generating collaboration network between student organizations in the university | - Organizing student leadership development camp for 8 days | - Students can create a collaboration network with corporate leaders of all student organizations of the university - Students understand the work system of all student organizations - Students learn to work collaboratively with different student organizations |
| 5. Student leadership development program | - creating student leaders and mentors of <i>Halaqah</i> who can serve activities of student organizations | - Organizing mentoring <i>Halaqah</i> camp for students - Conducting monthly mentors meeting to follow <i>Halaqah</i> activity progress | - Students understand the <i>Halaqah</i> system - creating a close network supervision among students |
| 6. Students volunteer project for | Cultivating public spirit to students | Organizing community development | - Practicing working with the community - Producing |



| community development | | camp activities such as school painting, garbage collection, students' field program in the community | volunteer students for community development - Students build a community network |
|--|--|--|--|
| 7. International student relationships project | - Establishing relationships between international students and Thai students | Organize a field trip to learn about the community | Thai students dare to communicate with foreign students |
| Projects/ Activities | Focused Issues | Process | Key Outcomes |
| 8. Activities organized by the department and student self-organizing activities | - To allow students to organize activities based on their interests and needs - to let students experience working in a team, especially, those students who have no opportunity to participate in activities organized by university or student club | The activity pattern is not fixed but rather flexible depending on the creativity of students and their proposed activity pattern. | - students are to be more open to experience with organizing activity that serve their interests and needs - Students have a wide-scale opportunity to develop leadership attributes - Students have their platform of organizing activities and thus, they become more creative |

Table 1.1 signifies that the majority of projects organized at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences focus on student development in *Ummatic* personality relating to interaction skills indicated by their teamwork-related skills, collaboration network, and communication with others. Other projects such as a project for promoting learning and developing personality through *Halaqah* (a group study) activity and project on one *Halaqah* one goodness facilitate in the development of



Ummatic personality in respect of good morality of students reflected in their responsibility towards participating in *Halaqah* activity and exhibition of public mind behavior. And the development of other components of *Ummatic* personality such as enjoining good and prohibiting evil, adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah*, and logical thinking were strengthened by these following projects: project for promoting learning and developing personality through *Halaqah* activity, project for fostering student understanding of *Wasatiyyah* principle, and activities organized by the department and student self-organizing activities, respectively.

Conclusions

A review of literature on *Ummatic* personality revealed that most authors focus on religious aspects and use a psycho-spiritual framework when conceptualizing *Ummatic* personality. Based on literature review, *Ummatic* personality was conceptualized as a set of characteristic disposition exhibited by religious beliefs and practices, physical and intellectual wellness, good morality, interaction skills, preservation of environment, enjoining good and prohibiting evil, and adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah* (al-Ghazali, 1995; al-Aazamiy, 2000; al-Hashimiy, 2002; al-Nabahaniy, 2003; Othman, 2011; al-Zubaidiy, 2016; Ismail & Abu Zahrin, 2018). This conceptualization of *Ummatic* personality seemed to be less likely responsive to change due to its absence of modern skills necessary to be effective and to succeed in contemporary life. Hence, reconceptualization of *Ummatic* personality deemed necessary to expand its scope and make its concept all-embracing. To reconceptualizing *Ummatic* personality, interview data were further collected to use as supplementary data to the documentary one. Based on interview data analysis, *Ummatic* personality should be reconceptualized to include additional contemporary skills which consist of integration capacity, logical thinking, and technology skills. Thus, *Ummatic* personality in this study was reconceptualized as a set of characteristics exhibited through a person's responsibility towards religion, self, others, environments, and a person's manifestation of contemporary skills.

Projects or activities organized to develop *Ummatic* personality is regarded as an effort process to actualize its concept. This study examines the effort made by the Faculty of Islamic Sciences by conducting interviews and focus group discussions with persons in charge of students' activities. The data obtained revealed that most projects organized at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences are in the form of *Halaqah* (group study) such as a project for promoting learning and developing personality through group study, project for fostering student understanding of *Wasatiyyah* principle, project on one *Halaqah* one goodness, etc. These projects focus on the development of students' *Ummatic* personality relating to these aspects: 1) interaction skills exhibited by teamwork skills, collaboration network, and communication, 2) good morality indicated by students' responsibility towards activities and their public mind behavior, 3) enjoining good and forbidding evil demonstrated by the behavior of advising each other to virtues and warning each other of misbehavior, 4) adhering to the principle of *Wasatiyyah* displayed by



students' ability to create a good balance between study and activity, and 5) logical thinking exposed by students' creativity in designing and organizing activities that can best serve their interest and needs.

Implication

Considering the limited scope of the definition of *Ummatic* personality and the absence of its components that are responsive to contemporary life, this study will be a good contribution to the body of knowledge by way of expanding the scope of our understanding of *Ummatic* personality and making its concept more reflective of Islam as a way of life (*ad-deen*). The reconceptualization of *Ummatic* personality aims to create a good integration between religion and contemporary life domain as a way to produce all-encompassing personality compounded of a multi-layered onion with a vertical relationship with God (*Allah Subhanahu Wataa'ala*) obliging religious understandings and practices; and horizontal relationships with human beings and environments demanding social interaction skills and contemporary skills. The new components of *Ummatic* personality derived from this study offer extensive and novel information to Muslim individuals, groups, and organizations that they can use this concept as a framework in their efforts to ameliorate the personality crisis of the Muslim *Ummah* or to build a well-rounded Muslim personality. It is suggested that the results of this study can be used as a theoretical framework in constructing components and developing measurements of *Ummatic* personality in the future study.



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