

## **Introduction**

Wan Rafaei Abdul Rahman  
International Islamic University Malaysia

To start the volume on research work done by the students the editor writes on the problems involved in cross-cultural research. The article looks at the problems in doing cross-cultural research in a developing country such as Malaysia. The paper highlighted the work of two groups of researchers who focused on the problems involved in the cross-cultural research. Frijda and Jahoda (1966) stressed on the importance of equivalence; equivalence of descriptive categories, phenomena understudy, methods and samples. Brislin, Lonner and Thorndike (1973) discovered seven problems, which are not dissimilar to the problem suggested by Frijda and Jahoda (1966). A notable addition is the possibility of a rival hypothesis explaining the obtained data rather than the preferred hypothesis.

The author gave some examples of the work that have been carried out in Malaysia to illustrate the three approaches in psychology, the mainstream or universal psychology, the indigenous psychology and the cross-cultural psychology. The article concludes with a three steps suggestion to overcome problems in cross-cultural research.

The articles presented by the students are their research work, some are completed and some are in the research proposal stage.

The first paper was presented by Abdoul Aziz Fall who proposed to do Islamic approach to personality assessment. The purpose of the study is to assess Muslim personality from Islamic Perspective. This is because although Islam plays a crucial role in shaping the patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviours of a Muslim, the present Western personality scales have totally ignored its role. Therefore, to assess dimensions of Muslim personality, an indigenous Islamic Personality Inventory will be developed and used in a sample of 1000 Muslim university students that will be

randomly drawn from various Malaysian universities. In order to have a proper item selection of the scales, item analysis that includes inter-item reliability, and item characteristics curve will be computed. The internal consistency of the scales will be assessed using Cronbach alpha and the expected finding is to develop a personality inventory based on Islamic approach. This will help Muslim psychologists in assessing and evaluating Muslim talents and skills that will contribute to Muslim development and progress.

Alex Lui An Lieh presented a paper on the validity of human figure drawings as measures of intellectual maturity in Malaysian children. This study attempted to establish the validity and reliability of human figure drawings as measures of intellectual maturity in Malaysian children. An analysis was conducted on the drawings of 151 children (86 boys and 65 girls) from the first to the fifth standards (grades), aged 6 to 11 years. The sample was a selection of children from the upper classes of each standard (grade). The children were instructed to complete a simple questionnaire to assess their socio-economic status and personality. They then drew pictures of a man, a woman and of themselves before finally taking the *Standard Progressive Matrices* (SPM) test. The human figure drawings test was re-administered after a span of two weeks. Naglieri's *Draw A Person: A Quantitative Scoring System* (DAP) was used to score the drawings. Results show evidence of i) construct validity in terms of age differentiation, ii) concurrent validity in relation to Koppitz's *30 Developmental Items* scoring system, iii) convergent validity in relation to the SPM, and iv) predictive validity in regard to academic performance. Discriminant validity in terms of artistic ability could not be established because the aesthetic quality of the human figure drawings was found to be highly correlated with the DAP scores of intellectual maturity. There is incremental validity when the DAP and the SPM were used as a test battery in predicting academic performance. The DAP test was found to have good internal consistency, high interrater reliability, but poor test-retest reliability. Girls seemed to be more likely to score higher than boys in the DAP test. Race differences could not be ascertained due to lack of representation from the Chinese population in the sample.

The third paper presented by Azizah Othman was on parental overprotection and psychological problems among chronically ill children. Parental overprotection was examined as an influential factor that may exacerbate psychological problems among chronically ill children. Parent ratings of children behavioral and emotional problems as well as self-reported parental attitude toward the children were obtained from 63 parents of children suffering from cancer, epilepsy, and asthma. Findings revealed that children with cancer were more overprotected by their parents compared to epileptic and asthmatic children. Overprotected children showed significantly higher psychological problems compared to less-overprotected children.

Mimi Iznita Mohamed Iqbal studied the role of religion in coping with HIV among HIV-positive patients in Malaysia. This study investigated the role of religion in coping with HIV among HIV-positive patients in Malaysia. Eighty HIV-positive patients completed interviews and a set of questionnaire assessing their religious orientation, their level of depression and their quality of life at that time. 68 male and 12 female participants were chosen randomly from a drug rehabilitation centre in Kuala Lumpur (*Rumah Pengasih*) and also from P1 Clinic (Infectious Diseases Unit) at Kuala Lumpur Hospital. Measurements used included Allport & Ross Religious Orientation Scale (ROS), Siddiqui-Shah Depression Scale (SSDS) and World Health Organization Quality of Life Scale (WHOQOL-Bref). It was hypothesized that patients who used religion as a means of coping with their illness would be low in depression and high in quality of life as compared to those who did not use religion as a coping mechanism. It was found that only intrinsic religiosity affects the depression level in HIV-positive patients. Results showed that patients who were low in intrinsic religiosity had a higher depression score. There was no significant effect between religiosity and quality of life. A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to see whether there are interactions among the variables in this study. Results showed that there is interaction between intrinsic religious orientation, extrinsic religious orientation and depression scores on the SSDS. However, there were no significant interactions between intrinsic religiosity, extrinsic religiosity and quality of life. Therefore, this study

suggests that religion does play a role in coping with HIV; however, it is the orientation of one's religion that would make a difference.

Varapon Sringeun proposed a research on comparative study of intelligence, emotional quotient, stress and mental health in students of Naresuan University, Pitsanulok province, Thailand. The study is guided by the growing awareness that students are national resources for future, and that they face increasing emotional stress and mental health problems. The study aims to compare students with different intelligence, emotional quotient (EQ), stress and mental health. The population of the study are the 1<sup>st</sup> year students enrolled in the General Psychology course in Naresuan University, Thailand. The independent variables are intelligence, emotional quotient (EQ), stress and mental health. The dependent variable is the student's academic achievement. A questionnaire would be used to collect information about the measures of the study. The expected benefits of the study are that the knowledge that accrues would be used as guidelines for the development behaviours and personalities of the students. Knowledge about the EQ and emotional problems of the students can be used to develop students' potentials in quality life conducts.

Mayuree Klubwong proposed a research on social behaviour aspect of mental disorder patients as perceived by caregivers. The main objectives of the research are to study desirable and undesirable social behaviours of mental disorder patients, as perceived by the caregivers with diverse backgrounds; and to study the main elements of these desirable and undesirable social behaviours. The independent variables of the study are bio-social and background characteristics (e.g. age, sex, status, education level, etc.) of the patient's caregivers, relationship with the patients, duration of care giving and acceptance of patient's behaviours. The other independent variables are bio-social and background characteristics of psychiatric patients, and circumstance of psychiatric illness. The dependent variables are the desirable and undesirable social behaviours of mental disorder patients. The population of the research are the male and female caregivers of psychiatric patients of Srithanya hospital and the sample would be selected using the criteria of the caregivers being over 15 years of age, care taking for more than 6 months and being able to

communicate in Thai. An instrument would be developed by the researcher to collect information about the caregivers' background, patients' background, assessment of illness circumstances, and assessment of perception on social behaviours in patients. Data would be analysed using basic statistics, ANOVA and Multiple Regression Analysis.

Bang-On Thepthien did a research on a synthesis on social and behavioural science research related to sexual behaviour in 10 years during 1994-2003 by using meta-analysis. The main aim of the research synthesis was to provide meta-analysis of the social and behavioural science knowledge consolidated over the last 10 years, related to sexual behaviours. The researcher aims to utilize the knowledge thus gained to enhance the body of knowledge concerning AIDS. The main research questions concerned what are the bio-social characteristics, psychological –trait characteristics and environmental contexts affecting sexual behaviours ; and what are the deviations attributed to research work characteristics. Criteria were set for the inclusion of the studies in the meta-analysis and eight methods were determined to identify studies like literature review. Computation and analysis of effect size was done using chi-square, t-test, F-test and Mann-Whitney U statistics. The results indicated that the average effect sizes of affective, cognitive, ability and personality domains on sexual behaviours is .34 overall. The input variables had an overall average effect size of .45 on sexual behaviours; with higher average effect sizes on risk-behaviours of sexual intercourse and preventive behaviours. The expected benefits of this research would be usefulness in determination of various intervention methods.