CHAPTER 38

A STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION STREAM AND RELIGIOSITY ON ETHICAL AWARENESS OF MALAY MUSLIM STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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1. Introduction

The relationship between the cultural environment and ethical perceptions has been widely explored (see for example Hunt and Vitell, 1986; Choi, 2001; Sroka, 2004). Culture, through its components, elements and dimensions, is seen to dictate the organizational structures, the micro-organizational behavior, and the cognitive functioning of individuals, in such a way as to ultimately affect the judgment or decision made (Choi, 2001).

This study investigates the influence of education stream on the level of religious commitment and ethical awareness of the final year students in one of the local universities in Malaysia. In particular, the study examines the relationships between the different streams of education of the students (that is religious stream versus secular stream) and their level of religious commitment as measured by the Muslim Attitudes towards Religiosity Scale (MARS). Further, the study examines the relationship between the religiosity score obtained by these students and their ethical awareness on various businesses conducts. This study highlights the impact of Islamic religion on the perception of Malays as represented by Malay Muslim students and further reinforces the findings from previous research on business ethical judgments in Malaysia (see for example, Goodwin and Goodwin, 1999; Rashid and Ho, 2003).

The paper is organized as follows. The first section discusses the impact of culture, religion, religiosity, the Islamic religion and Islamic ethical philosophy. It further reviews attempts to measure religiosity as drawn from the literature. The second section describes the research framework, followed by a discussion on the research design, data collection and analysis method and the results of the study. The conclusion and recommendations for future research are presented in the final section.


