

Intellectual Discourse

Volume 31

Number 1

2023



International Islamic University Malaysia
<https://journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/id>

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Volume 31

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Intellectual Discourse is a highly respected, academic refereed journal of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). It is published twice a year by the IIUM Press, IIUM, and contains reflections, articles, research notes and review articles representing the disciplines, methods and viewpoints of the Muslim world.

Intellectual Discourse is abstracted in *SCOPUS*, *ProQuest*, *International Political Science Abstracts*, *Peace Research Abstracts Journal*, *Muslim World Book Review*, *Bibliography of Asian Studies*, *Index Islamicus*, *Religious and Theological Abstracts*, *ATLA Religion Database*, *MyCite*, *ISC* and *EBSCO*.

ISSN 0128-4878 (Print); ISSN 2289-5639 (Online)

<https://journals.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/id>

Email: intdiscourse@iium.edu.my; intdiscourse@yahoo.com

Published by:

IIUM Press, International Islamic University Malaysia
P.O. Box 10, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Phone (+603) 6196-5014, Fax: (+603) 6196-6298
Website: <http://iiumpress.iium.edu.my/bookshop>

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Transliteration Table: Consonants

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	th		ع	‘
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	’
ض	ḍ		ي	y

Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
اَ	a		اَ، اِيَّ	an
اُ	u		اُو	un
اِ	i		اِي	in
اَ، اِ، اِيَّ	ā		اَو	aw
اُو	ū		اَي	ay
اِي	ī		اُو	uww, ū (in final position)
			اَي	iyy, ī (in final position)

Source: ROTAS Transliteration Kit: <http://rotas.iium.edu.my>

Validation of a *Sejahtera* Living Index Using the Rasch Model

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Abstract: The *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* is a framework of divine values and beliefs that govern the life of a Muslim. It contains clear guidelines on how to live the good life the way the religion sees it and on what constitutes quality of life, happiness, and wellbeing for the Muslim. In more precise terms, the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* guides Muslim in regard to how they can achieve a *sejahtera* life. Although *sejahtera* living is a fundamental and a highly important concept, it is not widely researched or addressed in the current body of empirical literature. One can see that there is a paucity of empirical data on *sejahtera* living. To address this research gap, this study first developed a scale to measure *sejahtera* living and subsequently examined its validity. It also estimated the index scores of *sejahtera* living among students and employees of a public university in Malaysia. This article reports on the findings of this validation exercise which involved a sample 1,057 lecturers, non-academic staff, and postgraduate and

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undergraduate students. Data were collected using a content validated 34-item questionnaire created based on the dimensions of the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The results of the Rasch measurement analysis provided evidence for the validity of the *sejahtera* living construct in terms of the good fit of the items, reliability and separation indexes, response category functioning, dimensionality, and construct validity. The extracted logit interval scores were used to construct linear measures of the baseline *sejahtera* living index. The findings support the need for instructional interventions and training to sustain and improve the quality of *sejahtera* living among Muslims.

Keywords: *Sejahtera* living, Muslim well-being, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, Rasch analysis, validation study

Abstrak: Inti pati *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* mencakupi pegangan, kepercayaan dan nilai-nilai suci Islam. Ia ditanggapi sebagai kerangka yang membimbing penganut Islam ke arah menjalani dan mengecapi makna dan amalan hidup yang berkualiti, bahagia dan selamat. Lebih tepat lagi, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* menjadi panduan menuju kesejahteraan hidup. Namun begitu, sehingga kini, pemahaman dan amalan hidup *sejahtera* dalam konteks *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* kurang diperkatakan. Jelas wujudnya lompong ilmu yang berteraskan maklumat empiris. Kajian ini dilaksanakan, pertamanya, dengan tujuan membina instrumen yang tentu sah bagi mengukur makna dan amalan kesejahteraan hidup. Kedua, kajian ini menganggarkan tahap, atau indeks, kesejahteraan hidup dalam kalangan warga sebuah universiti awam di Malaysia. Instrumen yang digunakan mengandungi 34 item mengikut dimensi-dimensi *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* dan telah diuji daripada segi tentu sah kandungan. Sampel kajian terdiri daripada 1,057 pensyarah, kakitangan bukan akademik dan para pelajar di universiti tersebut. Keputusan analisis yang menggunakan model pengukuran Rasch menghasilkan pelbagai bukti tentu sah instrumen tersebut. Analisis ini seterusnya menerbitkan skor logit yang diguna pakai untuk menentukan indeks garis dasar kesejahteraan hidup dalam kalangan sampel. Penemuan-penemuan kajian ini turut mencadangkan tindakan-tindakan susulan, termasuk program pendidikan dan latihan bagi memungkinkan kesejahteraan hidup pelajar dan pekerja institusi pengajian tinggi tersebut ditambah baik.

Kata kunci: kesejahteraan hidup, aman tenteram, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, analisis Rasch, kajian pengesahan.

INTRODUCTION

The literature is replete with conceptual and empirical studies related to *sejahtera* living and with varied terms associated with the concept of *sejahtera-ness*, such as “happiness,” “social-emotional wellbeing,” “life satisfaction,” “quality of life,” “meaning in life,” and “spiritual intelligence” (e.g., Genç, 2021; Hassan, 2020; Sarifuddin et al., 2021; Schuur et al., 2020; Skrzypińska, 2021; Stammler & Toivanen, 2022). Mohd Kamal Hassan (2020, p. 2) explained that *sejahtera* living is “a state of holistic and integrated wellbeing consisting of success, happiness, security and balance in this world and in the hereafter,” and it demands “an alternative paradigm of holistic and sustainable development from the worldview of Islamic monotheism.”

Despite its importance in the life of Muslims, there is a paucity of empirical data on *sejahtera* living. Since a robust scale for measuring *sejahtera* living can hardly be found in the current research literature, we are thus lacking an understanding of what a *sejahtera* life is to Muslims, as well as how and whether they are living one. It is only recently that an effort to validate a five-factor measurement model on the “*Maqāsid al-Sharī’ah* Quality of Life” (MSPQoL) was documented (Mohamad et al., 2016). The researchers tested the quality of the instrument using data from 248 drug abuse inmates. The results of testing a third order MSPQoL questionnaire supported the reliability of the data and the validity of the construct in terms of its convergent and discriminant validity. In addition, Nordin et al. (2022) examined the psychometric properties of a locally developed *sejahtera* living questionnaire. Using the conventional classical test theory, these validation studies effectively established the adequacy of the *maqāsid al-sharī’ah* instrument. However, they did not use the instrument to assess and compare the extent of *sejahtera* living among their samples.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted with a two-fold objective, the first was to address the prevailing gap in current research by examining a locally developed questionnaire that aimed to measure *sejahtera* living among Muslims. It tested the validity of the questionnaire, which was completed by the students and staff of a public university in Malaysia. Rasch models are currently the only available tools for constructing additive scales and diagnosing the extent to which our data fit the fundamental conception

of measurement. In this study, the validity of the items is acceptable if there is a sufficient number of people at an ability level comparable to the items' difficulty so that the item's difficulty, commonly referred to as the measurement attribute, can be more accurately estimated. Thus, Rasch analyses provide a useful methodological structure for assessing many of the evidential aspects of the validity of the *sejahtera* living measure.

The study's second objective was to estimate the index scores of *sejahtera* living reported by the students and employees of the public university who participated in the survey. The index score was used as an indicator of *sejahtera* living among the respondents. Additionally, the use of index scores would facilitate the comparisons of *sejahtera* living reports across groups and across time.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Many people—at least 25% of the world's population—have some sort of belief that man's existence in the temporal world (*al-dunya*) is neither accidental nor a natural adaptation of organisms. Many around the globe—not just those of the Muslim faith—reject Darwinian thinking that human beings evolved or descended from a small number of original or progenitor species that included apes. Instead, Muslims are encouraged to accept the Creator's *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and worship Him by advancing good and fending against evil and harm in all facets of life and faith.

It is not befitting of God to leave mankind aimless and directionless after creating him. In fact, mankind is explicitly taught how to worship God through the Qur'an and the Prophet's (PBUH) sayings and practises. On top of that, they are given feedback about how they should perform the acts of worship in a manner that is pleasing to God. They are told about the importance of purity and sincerity in worship. They are informed about the hereafter (*ākhirah*) and where their intentions (*nīyyah*) and good deeds (*'amal*) will take them in the hereafter. The Qur'an gives mankind feedforward (i.e., advanced tips) about how to set their intentions and deeds straight so that they end up in the right place (i.e., God's paradise). In this context, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* serves as a structure of divine values and beliefs pertaining to Islamic law, business and financial practises, political and governance thoughts and

systems, social and emotional interactions, and the way of life among Muslims.

The term “*maqāṣid al-sharī’ah*” refers to the framework of understanding the purposes of the *sharī’ah*, as prescribed by Islam. Ibn Ashur pointed out that the idea spreads the maintenance of order, the achievement of benefit and inhibition of harm, the establishment of equality among people, and the capacity for the law’s respect, obedience, and effectiveness (2006). By doing this, it gives the believer the ability to grow in strength, respect, and self-assurance. According to Saladin, Azmil, and Mariam (2020), the goal of *maqāṣid al-sharī’ah* is to uphold and advance the quality and wellbeing of human existence both here on Earth and in the Hereafter. It encompasses five facets of existence: riches and resources, life, mind, dignity and lineage, and preservation of religion.

Preservation of Religion: The definition of religious preservation in this study is “one’s awareness and commitment in the Islamic Worldview.” The ultimate monotheism (*tawhīd*) paradigm, which is supported by the Islamic creed (*‘aqīdah*), is included in one’s beliefs, knowledge, and practises. In addition to performing numerous forms of *‘ibādah*, defending the Islamic religion can be accomplished in a number of ways, including writing, speaking, and other practical ways (Afridi, 2016). For instance, a happy Muslim should agree that “God has a significant impact upon [him/her]” and “realise that [his/her] daily activities are parts of *‘ibādah*.”

Preservation of Life: Respondents who have lived in *sejahtera* are aware of and actively involved in safeguarding their bodily and emotional well-being, safety, and lives. They protect their environment and keep dangers at bay. An individual who answers in this way is more likely to “[be] responsible to protect life,” “avoid harmful food or drink,” and “make sure that [his/her] surroundings are safe.” He or she would be protected from unexpected life-threatening situations by taking precautions. “It is important to note that generally speaking, saving one’s life is required,” writes Afridi (2016). It should not be done, though, at the expense of other people’s lives (p. 281).

Preservation of Intellect: Those who unwaveringly select, carry out, and develop in their progress and defence of the intellect (*qalb*) abound in high degrees of *sejahtera* existence. The term “intellect” in this study

encompasses the Islamically infused cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. The responses one has to statements like “made myself prepared in all my courses/work,” “happy with my personal relationships,” and “satisfied with the Islamic environment” reveal how intelligent they are in day-to-day living. In this respect, Afridi (2016) argues that,

Allah s.w.t. has ordered that everyone should protect this precious gift by utilising the mental faculty for the benefit of all and not for any kind of evil or anything that might lead to destruction. To achieve this goal, Islam has given the freedom to its followers to express their views and tolerated the differences in views and opinions. However, the expression of views and differences of opinion must conform to the moral and ethical values provided by Qur’an and Sunnah. (p. 282)

Preservation of Dignity and Lineage: Protecting one’s dignity entails respecting one’s right to privacy, refraining from revealing others’ flaws, acting responsibly in men’s and women’s relationships, and reaching fair conclusions when it comes to issues involving one’s family, marriage, and divorce (Afridi, 2016; Mohamed Sidik, Ishak, Saper, & Mohd Daud, 2019). All of these are in line with the Islamic tenet that emphasises the right of every individual to be treated with dignity, nobility, and respect (Husna, Ab Manan, Rafeah, Amiratul, & Mohd Hafiz, 2021). *Sejahtera* living is logically proven by one’s affirmation that he or she is always “comfortable talking to/working with people of opposite gender,” “good/prepared to be a good parent to my children,” and “have the positive attributes to lead my family.” These are examples of *sejahtera* lifestyle that relate to dignity that were evaluated in this study.

Preservation of Wealth and Resources: This aspect of maqāsid al-sharī’ah deals with how one goes about gathering, using, safeguarding, dispersing, and purifying his or her natural self-resources, such as potentials, riches, and time, in a fair and beneficial way (Zailani, Mohd Satar, & Zakaria, 2022). A Muslim who conserves wealth and resources is very likely to prevent waste in any way, give *sadaqah*, pay *zakat*, and respect their time. This wealth dimension is consistent with the idea that, according to Islam, wealth and resources are intended to help each individual meet their basic needs, which should then improve *sejahtera*

life by encouraging civic engagement (Abdullah, Has-Yun Hashim, & Yusri, 2020).

Conceptually, the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* reveals a crystal-clear structure, meaning, purpose, principle, objective, intent, and goal of living (Afridi, 2016; Abdullah et al., 2020; Saladin et al., 2020). It recognises *sejahtera* living as a way of life among Muslims. Abdullah et al. (2020) emphasised that the,

...discussion of worldly purposes is then divided into five types of purposes or objectives, which are the preservation of faith (*al-Dīn*), preservation of life (*al-Nafs*), preservation of intellect (*al-'Aql*), preservation of property (*al-Māl*) and preservation of progeny (*al-Nasl*). All five purposes are classified into *darūriyyāt* (necessity), *hājiiyyāt* (need) and *taḥsīniyyāt* (embellishment). *Darūriyyāt* means it is a must and basis for the establishment of welfare in this world and the hereafter in the sense that if it is ignored, then coherence and order cannot be established. This is followed by the *hājiiyyāt* (need), which is to facilitate life and removing hardship. The last category is *taḥsīniyyāt* (embellishment), which refers to the purpose to beautify life, and to establish ease and facility. (p. 121)

The structure proposes a taxonomy of *sejahtera* life indicators. Based on the widely recognised application of the Rasch measurement model, the items or indicators are to be hierarchically hypothesised into “difficulty” levels, which according to the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* experts are *darūriyyāt* (necessity), *hājiiyyāt* (need), and *taḥsīniyyāt* (embellishment). This hierarchical structure represents the expected ordering of item difficulty (Afridi, 2016; Baghaei, 2008; Messick, 1996). For example, the following *darūriyyāt* item—“I make sure my surroundings are safe”—should be an easy statement to endorse, while the *taḥsīniyyāt* item, “I strive to perform supererogatory rituals even when I am busy,” may be harder for many Muslims to endorse.

Islam is unlike other religions. The Islamic creed differs from other monotheistic religions in its most fundamental concept of *tawhīd*, i.e., belief in the Oneness of God. It is a distinct characteristic of Islam that everything that a Muslim says, thinks, intends, and does must be made for the sake and pleasure of Allah (SWT), the One and Only Creator. A true Muslim understands and accepts that all that he/she does is for

Allah (SWT), even his/her life and death. This is what he/she pledges in the five daily prayers:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

“Say, surely my prayer, my worship, my life, and my death are all for Allah—Lord of all worlds” (6:162).

In essence, to worship Allah (SWT) with the purest and sincerest of intentions is the ultimate purpose of human existence and sustainability (Oladapo & Rahman, 2016; Yaakob & Abdullah, 2020). And for those who do so, they have been promised a great reward by Allah (SWT) in the hereafter—and in this life, they will attain souls that are completely at ease and in peace (*nafs al-muṭma’innah*):

يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّفْسُ الْمَطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ أَرْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَةً ﴿٢٨﴾
فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَأَدْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

“Allah will say to the righteous, “O tranquil soul! Return to your Lord, well pleased with Him and well pleasing to Him. So join My servants and enter My Paradise.” (89:27-30).

The verses cited above highlight the idea of well-being and *sejahtera* living that Islam propounds. It should be emphasised that the degree to which a Muslim accomplishes *sejahtera* living is contingent upon how much he/she is able and willing to submit to the will of God and commit to ‘*amr bi’l-ma’rūf wa nahī ‘ani-’l-munkar*’ (i.e., enjoining good and righteousness and forbidding evil and destruction). Thus, to the Muslim, his/her sustainable existence and holistic development (spiritually, physically, emotionally, and psychologically) is a function of his/her compliance to the *maqāṣid al-sharī’ah* framework and guidelines.

METHOD

A total of 1,057 students and employees at a public university in Malaysia participated in the study. The sample size was deemed sufficient for the application of an objective measurement procedure like the Rasch analysis. The sample comprised undergraduate students

(45.9%), postgraduate students (10.5%), administrative and support staff (14.8%), and faculty members (28.9%). Most of the students were aged between 20 and 25 years (86.2%), while the employees between 31 and 50 (roughly 65%).

To account for the variability in the respondents' learning and living experiences, the research team conducted a series of focus group discussions. The analysis of the qualitative data yielded results which were then calibrated against the university's mission to humanise education, which it based on the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as the founding component (International Islamic University Malaysia, 2021). The study then solicited expert judgment to establish the relevance and importance of the questionnaire items.

A panel of nine experts was formed to examine and evaluate the operationalised variables, namely *sejahtera* living. The content panel experts comprised locally and internationally recognised experts in *sejahtera* living. The panel members included institutional leaders in the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* who were the Directors of the Centre for Islamisation (CENTRIS), Strategy and Institutional Change (OSIC), and *Sejahtera* Centre for Sustainability and Humanity. Each expert worked independently to review and rate three specific aspects, i.e., (1) the adequacy of how each *sejahtera* living dimension was defined based on the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* framework, (2) item-definition alignment, and (3) the sampling of items. Using a simplified content validity procedure, the study set the threshold of critical level of agreement (CVA) for a panel of nine experts at .778 (Ayre & Scally, 2014) and retained only those items with CVA values larger than the threshold. A self-reported *Sejahtera Living* questionnaire was then created and administered online. It contained a total of 50 content-validated *sejahtera* living items covering the five facets of the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Each facet was represented by ten positively worded statements, which the respondents had to rate on a 5-point frequency scale ranging from "Never" to "Always," with "Sometimes" being used as the mid-point.

Data Analysis Procedure

To address the first research objective, the study applied the Rasch Rating Scale analysis. The Rasch model applies both the respondents' ability to reply to the questions and the item's level of difficulty. The investigation of item appropriateness (item fit) determines whether the

instrument's items can accurately measure the validity of *sejahtera* living outcome. The strength of the Rasch analysis lies in its ability to produce the evidence needed to establish the validity and reliability of an instrument and a set of data.

In the present work, the Rasch model was deemed the most robust technique for determining the psychometric properties of the instrument that aimed to scale the levels of *sejahtera* living and learning among the respondents. The analytics generated linear interval scores (logit scores), which allowed for arithmetic operations like addition and subtraction. Thus, the model enabled the use of parametric summary statistics to estimate the index score (Boone et al., 2014; Pallant & Tennant, 2007; Wright, 1992).

To address the objectives of the study—(i) the validity, and (ii) estimate the index scores of *Sejahtera* living reported by respondents, the Rasch model analysis was used to determine the psychometric properties of the *Sejahtera* living data, reliability of the collected data, response category functioning, dimensionality of the 34-item questionnaire, and construct validity of the measurement were also examined.

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Results of the Preliminary Data Analysis

An initial Rasch analysis was conducted on the whole data set of fifty items. Of the initial 50 items, the results revealed that 34 of the items satisfied the levels of fit deemed critical in the Rasch theory. This study used the widely used rule-of-thumb to determine the acceptable values of the mean-square; $0.5 > \text{MnSq} > 1.5$ (Linacre, 2002). A misfitted item is diagnosed when the Infit and Outfit statistics are smaller than 0.5 or larger than 1.5. Based on this criterion, the remaining 16 items did not reach the standards.

Misfitting items manifest “construct-irrelevant variance and gaps along the unidimensional continuum” (Baghaei, 2008, p. 1146). These are problematic items that should not be used in the measurement and should, therefore, be removed from the scale. A number of them contained elements of social desirability, for example, the following items: “I think of myself as a Muslim in my decision making and actions” and “I avoid gossiping about others.”

Furthermore, the results showed that a substantial proportion of the sample did not fit the measurement model. The respondents had unexpectedly responded to the questionnaire items inconsistently. This means to say that low ability respondents in the sample had positively endorsed the difficult-to-endorse items. Nonetheless, misfit occurred when high ability respondents failed to endorse the easy items.

Results of Goodness of Fit of the Measured Items and Persons

Considering the results of the preliminary analysis, a second Rasch analysis was performed on the data with 34 good-fit items, involving a sample of 1,057 respondents. The final 34-item *sejahtera* living with the 4-point agreement scale format met the requirements of Rasch measurement.

The Rasch analysis works by producing fit statistics that can be used to assess the psychometric properties of a given questionnaire. It functions by offering two statistics to evaluate the efficacy of the data derived from the questionnaire, namely (1) infit statistics, and (2) outfit statistics. The infit statistic, which is inlier-pattern-sensitive, is receptive to unexpected patterns of responses by persons on items. The outfit statistic, on the other hand, is an outlier-sensitive fit, and is responsive to unexpected observations by persons on items which are very easy or hard to be endorsed (Wright, 1992).

Table 1: Item Fit

ENTRY NUMBER	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL COUNT	TOTAL MEASURE	MODEL S.E.	INFIT MNSQ	ZSTD	OUTFIT MNSQ	ZSTD	PTMEASUR-CORR.	AL-EXP.	EXACT OBS%	MATCH EXP%	ITEM
5	3673	1251	1.43	.05	1.30	6.68	1.42	8.53	.63	.71	51.0	56.4	RCR2
14	3852	1251	1.05	.05	1.06	1.48	1.16	3.20	.65	.69	58.2	57.9	SAR3
24	3927	1251	.89	.05	1.13	2.92	1.18	3.45	.63	.68	57.0	58.7	DYR4
18	3931	1251	.88	.05	1.06	1.47	1.05	1.11	.67	.68	61.0	58.9	SAR8
33	3976	1251	.78	.05	.94	-1.47	.88	-2.42	.68	.67	62.4	59.3	PSR9
27	3993	1251	.74	.05	1.08	1.85	1.17	3.25	.65	.67	61.3	59.8	HER4
13	4004	1251	.71	.05	.99	-.32	1.08	1.54	.65	.67	61.7	59.9	SAR2
19	4032	1251	.65	.05	.80	-4.93	.76	-5.08	.71	.66	66.2	60.1	SRA9
34	4052	1251	.60	.05	.98	-.37	.95	-1.05	.66	.66	63.1	60.6	PSR10
28	4067	1251	.56	.05	1.02	.54	1.04	.83	.65	.65	61.9	60.8	PSR1
20	4075	1251	.54	.05	.77	-5.86	.77	-4.59	.70	.65	68.8	60.8	SAR10
22	4076	1251	.54	.05	1.11	2.40	1.18	3.24	.61	.65	59.6	60.8	DYR2
16	4134	1251	.40	.05	.91	-2.21	.85	-2.78	.68	.64	66.2	62.0	SAR5
17	4197	1251	.24	.05	1.17	3.63	1.09	1.56	.62	.63	64.2	63.1	SAR6
30	4199	1251	.23	.05	.98	-.53	.98	-.31	.62	.63	65.3	63.1	PSR6
31	4200	1251	.23	.05	1.15	3.29	1.11	1.85	.61	.63	64.4	63.1	PSR7
32	4222	1251	.17	.05	.91	-2.12	.79	-3.68	.65	.62	69.1	63.7	PSR8
15	4282	1251	.01	.05	.88	-2.79	.81	-3.14	.64	.61	69.5	65.0	SAR4
23	4290	1251	-.01	.05	.82	-4.31	.82	-2.93	.65	.61	70.2	65.1	DYR3
25	4293	1251	-.02	.05	1.00	.06	.95	-.77	.62	.61	67.8	65.1	DYR5
29	4337	1251	-.15	.05	.85	-3.55	.81	-2.91	.63	.60	72.2	66.1	PSR2
26	4340	1251	-.16	.05	1.18	3.82	1.26	3.51	.56	.59	64.7	66.2	HER2
11	4377	1251	-.27	.06	.83	-3.81	.73	-4.04	.63	.59	72.3	67.3	PLR9
21	4408	1251	-.36	.06	.96	-.84	.86	-1.94	.60	.58	70.8	68.1	DYR1
10	4434	1251	-.45	.06	.87	-2.93	.82	-2.40	.61	.57	72.9	68.8	PLR8
1	4456	1251	-.52	.06	1.15	3.03	1.18	2.10	.55	.56	71.3	69.5	IWR2
4	4487	1251	-.62	.06	1.10	2.03	1.16	1.77	.54	.55	71.2	70.3	RCR1
12	4594	1251	-1.02	.06	.85	-2.99	.63	-4.08	.58	.51	79.9	73.9	PLR10
7	4599	1251	-1.04	.06	1.22	4.00	1.18	1.68	.47	.51	73.4	74.3	PLR2
2	4600	1251	-1.04	.06	1.06	1.08	1.07	.71	.51	.51	77.5	74.3	IWR3
3	4626	1251	-1.15	.07	1.11	1.97	1.05	.46	.50	.50	79.2	75.3	IWR4
8	4628	1251	-1.16	.07	1.01	.27	.84	-1.54	.51	.50	75.9	75.5	PLR3
6	4646	1251	-1.24	.07	1.17	3.08	1.22	1.83	.48	.49	79.7	76.4	RCR3
9	4688	1251	-1.43	.07	1.06	1.01	.87	-1.03	.47	.47	77.6	78.4	PLR4
MEAN	4255.7	1251.0	.00	.05	1.01	.2	.99	-.1			67.9	65.6	
P.S.D	259.6	.0	.75	.01	.13	2.9	.18	3.0			6.9	6.1	

Table 1 displays the distributions of infit MnSq and outfit MnSq which are the indicators of fitting/misfitting items. All items were free from misfitting infit MnSq and outfit MnSq values. The values of infit MnSq ranged from 0.77 (item SAR10) to 1.30 (item RCR2); the estimated outfit MnSq values were between 0.63 (item PLR10) and 1.42 (item RCR2). The results suggested that the 34 items were reasonably productive. This means to say that there were no serious threats of mismatch between respondent ability and item difficulty (i.e., a threat to validity) and unjustifiable responses by low ability respondents. Additionally, all items showed positive correlations as measured by the point measure correlation (PTMEA CORR). The PTMEA CORR ranged between .47 (item PLR2; PLR4) and .71 (item SRA9). The

retained items were aligned in the same direction on the *sejahtera* living construct.

Reliability and Separation of the Data

To further diagnose the model-data fit, the study evaluated the reliability and separation of person and items. In terms of reliability, the Rasch model produces two types of indexes, i.e., person reliability and item reliability. Person reliability is comparable to the traditional internal consistency reliability, i.e., the Cronbach’s alpha. It is based on the locations of the respondents along the measurement scale. Item reliability, on the other hand, refers to the adequacy of the number of items included in the analysis. In the present study, the reliability threshold was set at .75 (McCreary et al., 2013).

Person separation is the chance to replicate the person-ability classification using responses from the same sample of people to a different set of items measuring a similar construct. Low item separation (< 3) normally means that the sample is not large enough to confirm the difficulty hierarchy of the items. Meanwhile, low person separation (< 2) implies that the instrument may not be sensitive enough to differentiate between respondents of high and low abilities; hence, additional items are required to address the issue.

Table 2: Results of Person and Item Reliability and Separation Index

PERSON									
	TOTAL	INPUT	COUNT	1251 MEASURE	REALSE	INFIT		OUTFIT	
MEAN	115.7	34.0		2.57	.50	1.02	-.1	.99	-.2
P.SD	16.7	.0		1.95	.42	.49	1.8	.57	1.8
REAL RMSE	.65	TRUE SD		1.84	SEPARATION	2.82	PERSON RELIABILITY		.89
ITEM									
	TOTAL	INPUT	COUNT	34 MEASURE	REALSE	INFIT		OUTFIT	
MEAN	4255.7	1251.0		.00	.06	1.01	.2	.99	-.1
P.SD	259.6	.0		.75	.01	.13	2.9	.18	3.0
REAL RMSE	.06	TRUE SD		.74	SEPARATION	13.23	ITEM RELIABILITY		.99

The results of the Rasch analysis showed that the person reliability index, which represents the reproducibility of person order, was at .89. It means that similar ordering of the respondent ability is reproducible if they were to answer another questionnaire which measures a similar construct. The person separation index was 2.8, which exceeded the cutscore of 2.0. The questionnaire could effectively discriminate respondents with different levels of ability to endorse.

The item reliability index, which represents the replicability of the hierarchy of item location, was .99. This statistic suggests an almost perfect reproduction of item difficulty hierarchy could be observed if the *sejahtera* living questionnaire is answered by another group of people. At 13.2, the item separation index was relatively large. The questionnaire was clearly able to discriminate the difficulty levels among items.

Category Functioning

All items in the *sejahtera* living questionnaire used ordinal categories of responses. Thus, it is necessary to examine how well the response options were used by the sample, the results of which would indicate whether the four-point Likert-scale was suitable. To evaluate the functioning of the 4-point response category, we assessed the following: (1) the frequency of observation in each category (i.e., ≥ 10 shows regularity of the response distributions), (2) the progression of average logit score in a linear manner, (3) the mean square residual of outfit statistics (< 2.0), and (4) the thresholds between every response category and its subsequent category, which should be ordered in increasing value.

The *sejahtera* living questionnaire adopted four response options, ranging from category “1” (Never/Rarely) to category “4” (Always) to be checked by the respondents. To examine the reasonableness of using the 4-point Likert-scale data, the study examined the functioning of the response category. Table 3 summarises the results of the response category functioning.

Table 3: Summary Statistics of Category Functioning

CATEGORY LABEL	SCORE	OBSERVED COUNT	OBSVD %	SAMPLE AVRGE	INFIT EXPECT	OUTFIT MNSQ	ANDRICH MNSQ	CATEGORY THRESHOLD	CATEGORY MEASURE
1	1	987	2	-.62	-.85	1.20	1.33	NONE	(-2.94)
2	2	4273	10	.37	.35	1.06	1.24	-1.69	-1.02
3	3	13934	33	1.47	1.54	.90	.80	-.26	.92
4	4	23340	55	3.26	3.23	.99	.99	1.95	(3.13)

The results showed that the number of observations for category “1” was 987, and it increased to more than 23,340 observations in category “4.” The average measures increased with the category scale, suggesting that the rating scale behaved appropriately. The outfit

MnSq of the five categories ranged from 0.99 to 1.33, meaning that the thresholds between the categories were ordered properly. The Rasch-Andrich thresholds matched the ordering of the response categories as they increased monotonically from -2.94 (category 1) to 3.13 (Category 4).

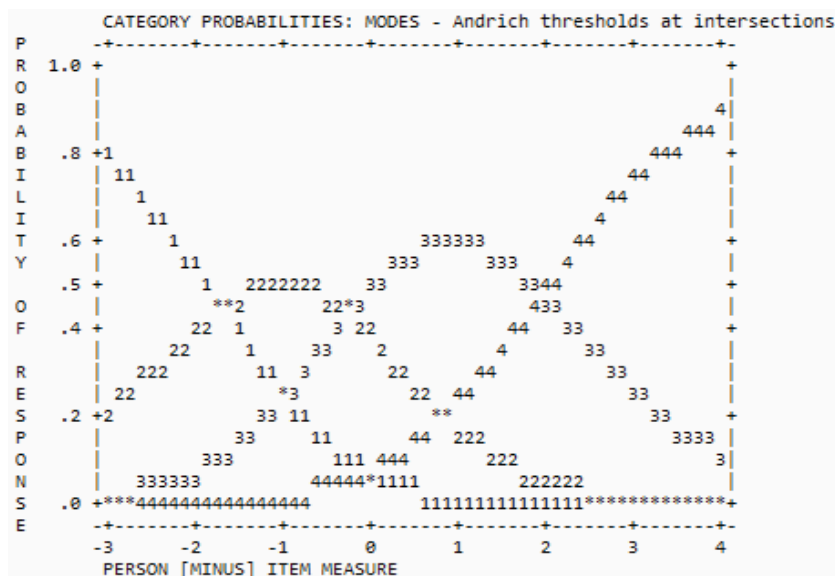


Figure 1: Rasch Model Category Probability Curves of *Sejahtera* Living Data

Figure 1 displays the Rasch Category Probability Curves extracted from the data analysis which supported the usefulness of the 4-point rating scale. There was no significant issue of overlapping categories or categories which are too far apart from each other. The 4-point *Sejahtera* Living rating scale allowed enough information for the respondents to discriminate among response categories. The response categories also captured a sufficient range of the *sejahtera* living concept.

Dimensionality

Rasch analysis rests on the assumption that there is only one underlying construct measured by the set of items in the questionnaire. In short, it assumes that the questionnaire measures only one factor—which, in this context, was the idea of *sejahtera* living—accounting for the variability of responses across items. To evaluate the tenability of the unidimensional assumption, the study examined Principal Component

Analysis (PCA) of the residuals. The PCA of the standardised residuals determined if subdimensions existed among the items. To support the tenability of a unidimensional measure, the variance explained by the PCA should be at least 40% (Linacre, 2017). On the other hand, the variance explained by the first principal component of the residuals should not be more than 15%.

The PCA residuals showed that the Rasch dimension explained 47.9% of the variance in the data, which exceeded the 40% benchmark (Linacre, 2017). The largest secondary dimension, “the first contrast in the residuals” with an eigenvalue of 3.1 explained merely 4.8% of the variance. The PCA of the residuals was checked against the widely used benchmarks and supported the unidimensional assumption of the instrument.

The variance explained by the items (i.e., 19.8%) was about four times the variance explained by the first contrast. The eigenvalue of the first contrast was 3.1, with a strength of about 3 items. Figure 2 displays the results of the un-rotated principal component analysis of the standardised residuals. The letters “A, B, C, ...” and “a, b, c,” refer to items with the most opposed loadings.

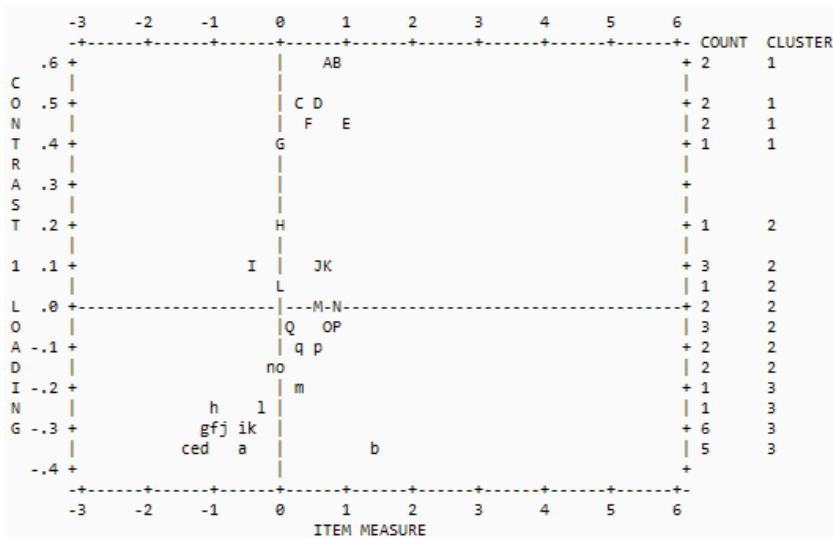


Figure 2: Plot of the Standardised Residual Contrast 1

The results (Figure 2) indicated the likelihood of a secondary component with three *sejahtera* living items. However, these items (i.e., A, B, and C) represent preservation of intellect, one of the five strands of the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The three opposing items (a, b, and c), on the other hand, were related to the preservation of religion and life, which happened to be another essential aspect of the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. These items were also part of the “*sejahtera* living” construct. Also, the values of the infit MnSq and outfit MnSq statistics of these items were within the range of fitting unidimensional items. Therefore, the study decided not to consider the presence of another dimension.

The assessment of item dependency found no serious violations of the LID (local item dependency) assumption. The highest positive residual correlation was .57, indicating the absence of local item dependency (LID) between pairs of items. The 34 items shared less than one half of their “random” variance, suggesting that all the items were important for the unidimensional measure.

Construct Validity of the *Sejahtera* Living Inventory

Thus far, the evidence for the construct validity of the *sejahtera* living concept was amply demonstrated. Specifically, all point measure correlations were positive with the minimum value of .49. The estimated item reliability was .99, while the item separation index was 13.2. With this, the results supported the reasonableness of the unidimensional assumption and the assumption that the items were independent.

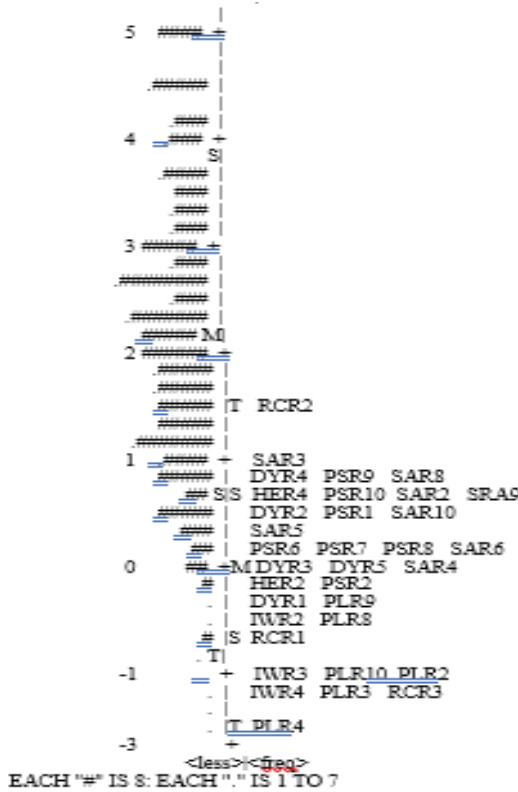


Figure 3: Person-Item Map of Sejahtera Living Data

In addition, the Rasch analysis generated a map (i.e., the Wright map) to facilitate an efficient assessment of construct validity. The Wright map (Figure 3) displays the estimates of item difficulties and respondent ability to endorse the items along a common continuum. The continuum scales a gradual change in the items’ degree of difficulty and the ability of the respondents to endorse them. It expedites visual comparisons of the Rasch’s predicted ordering of item difficulty against the actual order of item difficulty in a data set. It also discloses the alignment between the Rasch model and the observed data alignment, hence providing evidence of construct validity (Boone et al., 2014).

Figure 3 depicts the hypothetical unidimensional *sejahtera* living measure that the scale aimed to measure with its 34 items. The item at the top of the line (i.e., item RCR2 which was phrased as “I strive to

perform supererogatory rituals even when I am busy”) was expected to be the least endorsable to the sample. As expected, it was a difficult-to-endorse item. Down the line, the items became easier for the respondents to endorse, with the easiest item being “I make sure my surroundings are safe” (PLR4). The inspection of the Wright map suggested that the hierarchy of the estimated item difficulty matched its theoretical ordering, the summary of the difficulty of the items are similarly summarised in Table 1. Moreover, the map showed the absence of huge gaps between the items, indicating that the construct was not underrepresented. The results, thereby, offer additional evidence supporting the construct validity of *sejahtera* living.

It is of our interest to note that eight items were located at and beyond +2 SD from the mean. These are the items which were difficult to endorse. Of these, 50% of the items were associated with the meaning of preservation of intellect, namely “I examine newly learned ideas from the perspective of Islam” (SAR2); “I am satisfied with my achievement in my studies/work” (SAR3); “I do the right things in my life” (SAR9); and “I am able to satisfy my spiritual needs” (SAR10). The results suggested the sample performed poorly in those matters related to the preservation of intellect. On the other hand, seven items were located beyond -2 SD. These are the easy-to-endorse items, which included four statements on the preservation of *sejahtera* life. The items were, “I avoid harmful food or drink” (PLR2); “I adhere to safety procedures” (PLR3); “I make sure that my surroundings are safe” (PLR4); and “I dedicate my life to worldly success and the hereafter” (PLR10).

Estimates of Index Scores

The Rasch analysis estimated the respondents’ logits score, which exhibited additive properties. Chien et al. (2008) argue that Rasch modeling “transforms ordinal scores into the logit scale ...” (p.418) that justifies the construction of linear measures. The results of data from the sample of 1,057 respondents in this study yielded logit interval scores ranging from -2.80 to 6.97, with a mean logit score of 2.7 and a standard deviation of 1.95. The scores were then extrapolated to be positively distributed to ease their interpretations. Our eyeball inspection found that the person scores were normally distributed, and skewness and kurtosis statistics were estimated at |1.0| (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

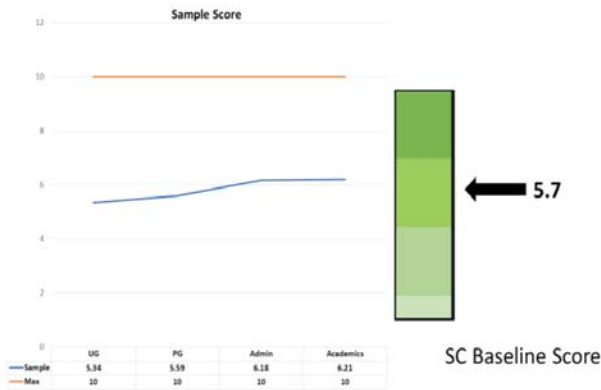


Figure 4: Sejahtera Living Index Scores

Figure 4 illustrates the *sejahtera* living index score of the sample. The *sejahtera* living index may yield a score that ranges from a low of 0 to a high of 10. The distributional analysis showed that the mean score of IIUM students and staff was 5.7, with a standard deviation of 1.95. This may be taken to mean that the level of *sejahtera* living among the sample was slightly above average. The analysis also revealed that *sejahtera* living was systematically associated with sample type, where lecturers were found to be more inclined toward positively endorsing items suggesting higher levels of *sejahtera* living (Index Score = 6.21, SD = 1.89), while the administrative personnel, postgraduate students, and undergraduate students reported lower *sejahtera* living scores, at 6.18 (SD = 1.94), 5.59 (SD = 1.84), and 5.34 (1.93), respectively.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study's major purpose was to examine the validity of the developed questionnaire, that is whether IIUM students and staff's responses to a locally developed questionnaire on *sejahtera* living constituted a meaningful and interpretable measure of the construct. The results of the Rasch analysis supported the validity of the *sejahtera* living construct. The findings of the study showed that the psychometric properties of the questionnaire, reliability of the collected data, response category functioning, dimensionality of the data, and construct validity of the measurement supported the validity of the measurement. Thus, the 34-item *Sejahtera* Living Questionnaire (SLQ) is defensible and reasonably adequate to measure the "holistic and integrated wellbeing of Muslims"

(Hassan, 2020, p. 2). As expected, the validated unidimensional *sejahtera* living data manifested the five dimensions of the *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*, which are purported to comprise the preservations of faith, life, intellect, property, and progeny (Abdullah et al., 2020). This finding is consistent with the meaning of *sejahtera* living among Muslims (Mohamad et al., 2016).

The second purpose of the study was to measure and document the baseline index score of *sejahtera* living among the study's participants. Since the Rasch model requirement of unidimensional assumption was supported, the extracted logit interval scores were used to construct linear measures from the counts of ordinal data (Chien et al., 2008) to compute the index score of *sejahtera* living. The baseline index score of the construct was found to be 5.7. In lieu of the commonly used summated scores, the *sejahtera* living index is based on the unique properties of Rasch measurement, namely specific objectivity, invariance, and sample independence (Chien et al., 2008).

Additionally, the scores were useful to compare differences in the levels of *sejahtera* living across groups of people and to track changes of *sejahtera* living across groups of Muslims that occur over time. The results of group comparisons suggested that the academic staff outperformed the non-academic staff and students in *sejahtera* living. On the other hand, the undergraduate students had the lowest index on the *sejahtera* living continuum/measure. It should be noted that the study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, at which time most students, unlike the staff, were lock-downed on campus. This could be one reason underlying the differential effect of sample type on the *sejahtera* living reports discovered in the study.

The Rasch analysis also revealed a performance disparity across the *sejahtera* living items. Such a finding can be used to galvanise intervention programs to sustain and improve the well-being and "*sejahteranness*" of university staff and students. For example, of the 34 indicators of *sejahtera* living, four conceptually related items were difficult for the sample to endorse. The relatively more difficult items were the cognitive-attitudinal items that belong to the preservation and promotion of intellect strand of the *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*. It was discovered that the respondents were not doing well in the preservation of intellect. Therefore, this aspect of the *maqāsid al-sharī'ah* should be

improved through training, curriculum implementation, co-curricular activities, and faculty's instructional practices.

Despite its contributions, the study was not without limitations. The results of the Rasch model, in particular the Wright map, have triggered some red flags. Evidently, the targeting between the items and sample (i.e., the degree to which the item difficulty range matched the sample ability range) was far from perfect. A large number of the respondents were able to endorse most of the items, which were located within the *darūriyyāt* category, that is, the lowest level in the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* hierarchy. Hence, future studies should address this concern by including more items on preservation of life which are expected to perform at the *hājīyyāt* dan *taḥsīniyyāt* level.

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ISSN 0128-4878 (Print)

ISSN 2289-5639 (Online)

