

DIMENSIONS OF THE MALAYNESS CONSTRUCT: SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to develop a scale – the Malayness Scale – to measure ethnic orientation among Malays in Malaysia. Measurement of ethnic subculture must be rooted in a construct that could capture the multi-dimensionality of ethnic orientation since past research points to the weaknesses in using a dichotomous measure of ethnic identity. The dimensions that capture Malayness included in developing the scale are values that are specific to the Malay culture, language, social interactions, and self-identification. Data were collected from adult respondents in Peninsular Malaysia. A stratified quota sampling method was used to ensure a diverse sample of Malays in respect to socio-economic background, gender, and age. This study follows the standard procedures for scale development. Each dimension included in this study for measuring the Malayness construct was tested for its psychometric properties and found to be valid and reliable measures. Implications of the study, limitations and directions for future research are discussed and suggested.

Keywords: Ethnic Orientation; Malayness; Culture; Identif; Malayness Scale Development

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past decades, the concept of ethnicity and its influences on consumer behaviour has received the attention of researchers (e.g. Kamaruddin and Kamaruddin 2009; Donthu and Cherian 1994; Ellis, Mc Cullough, Wallendorf and Tan 1985; Hirschman 1983; Lee, Fairhurst and Dillard 2002; Ong 1993; Sekhon 2007). In consumer research, ethnic groups can be conceptualised as consumer subcultures in which a group sharing some traits in common with

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the surrounding culture, may possess certain characteristics that make them differentiable (Hirschman 1983). Adopting this view points to the weakness in using the simplistic dichotomous measure of ethnicity (e.g. whether one is Black or White) which typically fails to identify the dimensions that give meaning to one's ethnicity (Ellis et al. 1985). Therefore in order to understand differences in ethnic subcultures and their influence on consumer behaviour, the measurement of ethnic subcultures must be rooted in a construct that could capture the multidimensionality of the concept of ethnic identity shared by a particular ethnic group (Laroche, Kim and Tomiuk, 1998; Ogden, Ogden and Schen, 2004).

Past research show that measures of ethnic orientations have largely encompassed dimensions related to cultural values and the adherence to these values (e.g. Ellis et al. 1985; Isajiw 1974; Phinney 1990, 1996; Villareal and Peterson 2009). Since culture is pervasive, aspects of culture that are applied in the measure of ethnic identity include behaviour such as speaking the language, food habits, group behaviour (Felix-Ortiz, Newcomb, and Myers 1994; Garcia and Lega 1979), customs, family and community relationships (Masuda, Matsumoto and Meredith 1970), social interactions and knowledge on culture (Garcia and Lega 1979), and religious affiliation (Hirschman 1981; Laroche et al. 1998). Masuda, Matsumoto and Meredith (1970) measured the level of Japaneseness or Japanese ethnic identity based on the retention of Japanese customs, family relationship and community social relationship. Hirschman (1981) examined the strength of ethnic identification and religious affiliation in determining the level of Jewishness. Tan and McCullough (1985) developed a scale known as the Chineseness scale to measure the level of adherence to Chinese values. Ong (1993) replicated and adapted the scale in examining Chineseness among Chinese in Malaysia. Laroche et al. (1998) measured the level of Italianness via social interaction, usage of Italian language and level of Catholicism. In the study of Garcia and Lega (1979), the measure of Cubaness is based on Cuban friendship networks, social interactions, usage of ethnic services, knowledge on culture and the usage of Spanish language. Since cultural values are unique to a particular culture (versus acculturation), the distinctiveness of an ethnic group would require a different measurement scale that could capture the essence of the particular culture and its relevance to the group.

In Malaysia, the Malays are the majority representing about 63% (Department of Statistics, 2014) of total population in Peninsular Malaysia. The distinctiveness of the Malays as seen in its ethnic sub-culture however has not been well-researched. Since it is an important subculture in Malaysia, and rooted in the Malay culture is a distinctive lifestyle that affects consumption decisions with strong marketing implications (Kamaruddin and Kamaruddin 2009), the main purpose of this paper is to develop a construct and a scale for measuring the Malay ethnic identity, termed Malayness. In constructing the Malayness scale, we follow closely the procedures for scale development by Churchill (1979) and DeVellis (1991) as well as the suggestions by Bhugra, Bhui, Mallett, Desai, Singh and Leff (1999) in testing the face validity for studies on cultural identity. The implications for research and in particular, for consumer behaviour and marketing will also be discussed.

2. DEVELOPING THE MALAYNESS CONSTRUCT

2.1. *Malay Value as a Dimension of Malayness*

(a) *Budi*

A key concept in identifying the Malay values is the concept of '*Budi*'. According to Lim (2003), conceptually, *budiranks supreme* as it incorporates various entities, such as emotion, rationality, good character and practicality. The word '*budi*' originated from the Sanskrit word 'Buddhi' which means wisdom, understanding or intellect (Lim 2003). According to Abdullah (1992) the structure of '*budi*' would generally compose of virtuous qualities such as generosity, respect, sincerity, righteousness, discretion, shame, reciprocity and face.

The three trilogy of '*budi*' are '*budibahasa*', '*budipekerti*' and '*budibicara*' relates to being courteous and polite, well behaved and well-mannered and also fair-minded as well as of appropriate judgment (Razak 2005). The absence of any of the three will be regarded as uncouth or uncultured. For the Malay, the '*budi*' concept points to knowing not simply as cerebral and intellectual but, it also entails '*rasa*' or feeling as in '*budibicara*' or '*discretion*'. Closely related to '*budi*' is '*adab*'. Abdullah (1992) defines it as a normative reality expected of an individual in his/her relationship with others. This is usually demonstrated or seen when an individual interact with others in a '*sopansantun*' or well-mannered and '*berbudibahasa*' or well cultured way. According to Ahmad (2001), *budi* forms the core identity of being Malay. Value orientations that are embedded in the Malay culture are discussed below.

(b) *Value Orientations*

i. *Community Orientation*

Community orientation is highly valued by the Malays and the family is the most important unit (Kling 1995). Closely related to the concept of communal living is the tenet of the Malay community regarding the social emotion of '*malu*' or shame propriety. The Malays regard a sense of '*malu*' as an element basic to maintenance of good interpersonal relationships in society. According to Swift (1965), a cultural concept fundamental to Malay interaction is the social emotion propriety. The Malays are greatly concerned about what other people think about them. '*Malu*' is equated with hypersensitiveness to people's opinion about oneself (Swift 1965). The desire to avoid '*malu*' has been identified as the primary force for social cohesion in the Malay community. Essentially '*malu*' is a negative reaction to the idea that other people could think of something or anything bad about oneself or one's family, a prospect which is highly unpleasant to Malay sensitivity. Thus to act in cohesion with the community and to act accordingly is important to the Malays so as to avoid '*malu*'.

ii. *Relationship Orientation*

Since the Malays uphold communal living and avoid 'shame' (*malu*), they are usually portrayed as being polite and self-effacing, avoiding conflict whenever possible (Crouch 1996; Goddard

1997). Lim (1998) argued that the Malays are more oriented toward relationship building, prefer stability and honour traditions. Wilson (1967) observed that in social relationships, the Malays will always show consideration and concern, anticipating in advance the appropriateness of behaviour and are always sensitive to the feelings of others. As explained under the concept of *budi*, reciprocity and face are important in the maintenance of social relationships. For instance, because of the reciprocal nature of '*budi*', someone who has been rendered an act of '*budi*' regards himself, and is regarded by others, as being indebted of '*budi*' (*kebudian, terhutang budi*). The failure to repay such debt when the opportunity arises is considered a disdainful disregard for the kindness rendered and this constitutes a serious social offence (Ali, 1979). The qualities embodied in *budi*, generosity, respect, sincerity, righteousness, discretion, shame reciprocity and face embraced by the Malays form the social pillar for relationships that gives the identity to the Malays (Ahmad 2001).

iii. *Harmony*

Maintaining harmony and reaching consensus are of the utmost importance to the Malays (Abdullah 1992). To be reserved is seen as a socially commendable trait while suffering in silence and exercising self-restraint are indicative of one's strength and character (Maeda 1975). Further, Maeda (1975) noted that Malays would rather disregard grievances or dissatisfaction than disturb their peace of mind. Friction and incompatibility are regarded not only as unpleasant but unhealthy. Goddard (1997) found that the Malays are concerned about feeling for others. They do not speak their disagreement openly that will result in confrontation. According to Sardar (2000), direct confrontation is never the Malay way.

According to Jamilah (c.f. Ahmad 2007), the Malay race is unique in that it is the Malay attitude not to demean a persons' honour and not to make life difficult. The Malay values of patience, respect, and morality can be achieved through peoples' tactful actions in social interactions in everyday life, but more importantly, they are also achieved through linguistic indirectness. By avoiding disagreements, criticisms, complaints and any other face threatening acts or even white lies to avoid conflicts, one shows forbearance, achieves harmony and demonstrates morality (Abdullah 1992).

iv. *Conforming to Malay Customs*

According to Tham (1985), the Malays uphold the values of loyalty to one's culture and way of life. '*Adat*' or custom plays an important role in the social community system of the Malays. '*Adat*' which consists of the value systems, norms, behaviour and thinking is an indicator of being Malay (Selat 2001). Plainly put, a Malay is expected to conform to expected social behaviour. In general, the Malay ways or '*Adat*' manifests itself mainly through '*Adat Resam Berumah tangga*' (the code of conduct for family members), '*Adat Resam Berkampung Halaman*' (the code of conduct between fellow villagers), and '*Adat Teradat*' (subtle cultural nuances embedded in everyday interactions). The values advocated in these social norms of behaviour include '*sabar*' or patience and forbearance among family members to promote family unity, '*hormat*' or respect shown to others or oneself in a way that is appropriate to their respective social standing to maintain a good social order, and '*budi*' or morality that centres

on the notions of harmony and consensus. For many Malays, 'Adat' is equated to laws, and just as you should not break the law, you should not breach the rules of 'Adat', and not observing the rules of 'Adat' is regarded as not knowing the Malay culture. Furthermore, observing the customs is expected of the Malays within the Malay society.

In summary, in line with extant literature and expert opinion on ethnic identity, the values in the Malay culture, a measure of the degree or strength of ethnic identity, represent a major dimension in constructing the Malayness scale. These values guided by the central value of *budi* are community orientation, relationship orientation, harmony, and *adat*.

2.2. *The Malay language as a dimension of Malayness*

Language is a critical factor in the construction of ethnicity construct as well as for the maintenance of ethnic identity (e.g. Anderson 1983; Tzu 1984; Valencia 1985; Bergier 1986, Penaloza 1989; Webster 1990, Laroche et al. 1998; Laroche, Pons and Richard 2009; Phinney and Ong 2007; Walker, Deng and Dieser 2005). Extant literature points towards language usage as one of the most frequently used measures of ethnic identity.

Language refers to spoken language, media usage and the manners of nonverbal communication. According to Anderson (1983), it is not merely the use of the language per se but the unifying effects of print and other media that are significant in the creation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries. Language is commonly divided into different measures such as first language used, language spoken with children, language spoken with co-workers and language spoken with parents (Valencia 1985). Other usage include language spoken at home, language spoken at work, written language, language used while speaking and language used in the media (Felix-Ortiz, Newcomb, and Myers 1994; Laroche, Kim, Tomiuk and Belisle, 2005). Furthermore, language is considered as a behavioural construct (Berry 1980) in that a person using the language projects his/her identity and the more one uses the language the more the person identifies with his/her ethnic group.

The usage of the Malay language as an identification of identity can be best illustrated by Raffles in 1818; "I cannot but consider the *Melayu* nation as one people, speaking one language, though spread over so wide a space, preserving their character and customs, in all the maritime states lying between the Sulu Seas and the Southern Ocean" (c.f. Reid 2001: 119). The Malay Language is the language used by the Malays and is central to the Malay culture. Numerous Malay intellectuals such as Omar (1986), Shamsul (1997), Noor and Wahab (2000), and Yatim (2005) believed that the Malay language is the core essence of ethnic identification. The importance of speech (*bahasa*) is a reflection of proper conduct as attested by the word '*bahasa*' which carries a secondary meaning of courtesy or manners (Ahmad 2007). In other words, it is not just what is said that matters, but how it is said (Salleh 2005). Besides the proper use of language, the Malays are often indirect in expressing their views and opinions which are embedded in the non-verbal behaviour as an attempt to promote a close relationship in the community (Salleh 2005). To be blunt, direct and forthright in one's use of language is considered rude and not desirable in the Malay polite system (Dahlan 1991). Thus one should think before one speaks. Worded differently in daily conversation the Malays cooperate in

safeguarding each other's '*maruah*' or dignity and to steer away from the possibility of incurring or inducing '*malu*' or shame. For the Malays, it is important to adhere to the concept of '*halus*' or being refined and to show mutual respect through the use of language in preserving one's face (Sendut 1991).

2.3. Social Interactions as a Dimension of Malay Ethnic Identity

The importance of social interaction as a measure of ethnic identity is emphasised by Garcia (1982) and Lu (2001), where the number of friends in the same ethnic group was considered paramount in maintaining ethnic identity. Social interactions in measuring Malayness refers to contacts with Malay friends, links to Malay neighbours, as well as membership in Malay associations and institutions. Social interactions such as neighbourliness or living together in a society through knowing each other, interacting with each other, respecting each other, being friendly, helping each other to safeguard the harmony of the community are essence of life to the Malays. The communal living practices created a strong community spirit.

The Malay rituals such as visiting each other, giving gifts, working together in the spirit of '*gotong royong*' or community cooperation, having small religious feast or '*kenduri*' are important events because they serve to bind respect and loyalties which strengthen group identity. '*Kenduri*' is a communal feast given for an event that an individual or a family wishes to celebrate or sanctify. This simple ritual is a symbolic expression of the values of co-cooperativeness, harmony and stability associated with *adat* (Malay customs) world view and sanctioned by the Islamic religion and shared by Malays who are all Muslims. This ritual, as such, helps draw the whole community into a festival circuit which enhances social relationships and help maintain ethnic identity in the Malay society.

2.4. Self-identification as a Dimension of Ethnic Identity and Malayness

Cohen (1978) believed that self-identification represents the beliefs of an individual and hence it reflects the saliency and reality of the ethnic affiliation that individuals experience. A review of literature shows that the degree of ethnic identity is reflected in the level of self-identification (e.g. Deshpande, Hoyer and Donthu 1986; Donthu and Cherian 1994, Phinney 1992, Phinney and Ong 2007). Self-identification is the predisposition of individuals in defining themselves in terms of group identity (Sears et al. 2003). The strength of self-identification towards a particular ethnic group is reflective of the psychological attachment with the group (Hui, Laroche and Kim 1998). Therefore, ethnic self-identification which measures the intensity of identification is perhaps the most widely recognized dimension of ethnic identity (Laroche et al. 2005; Villareal and Peterson 2009).

Theoretically, a strong sense of belonging to a group is assumed to include feeling comfortable with one's ethnic identity and having positive feelings about one's group membership (Tajfel and Turner 1986). Therefore, in this study self-identification refers to the degree or level of identification and belonging an individual identifies himself/herself as a Malay. A person having a strong degree of self-identification as being Malay would be comfortable being Malay and

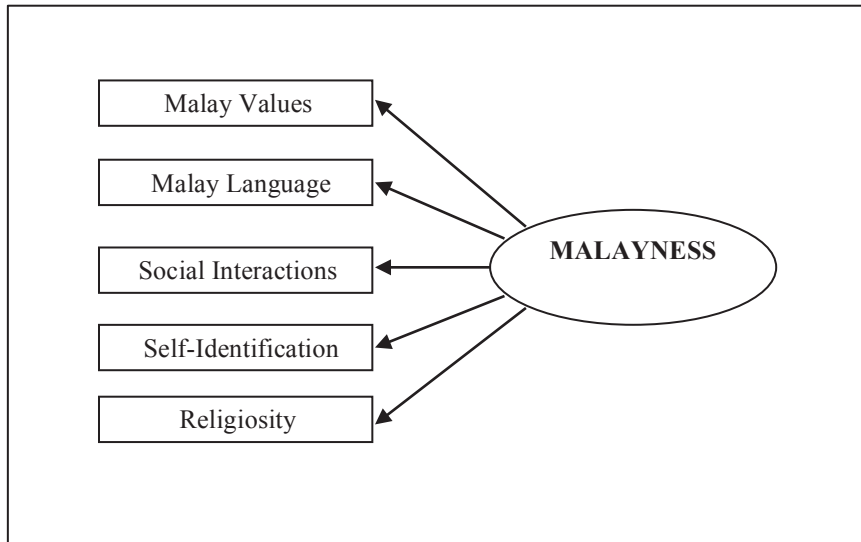
would have positive feelings about being a member of the Malay ethnic group. Additionally this sense of identification is reflected in the commitment and emotional attachment to the Malay ethnic group. Since the Malays consist of different multiple sub-groups (Nagata 1986), self-identification is considered an appropriate measure of Malayness. Based on the discussions above and the recommendations from experts in the area of Malay studies, self-identification was included as one of the dimensions for the construct of Malayness.

2.5. Religiosity as a Dimension of Ethnic Identity and Malayness

Religiosity as part of the measurement of ethnic identity has been used by Hirschman (1981) in measuring Jewish ethnic identity, Laroche et al. (1998) as a dimension of Italian ethnic identity and Alkhazraji, Gardner, Martin, and Paolillo (1997) for measuring ethnic identity of Muslim employees. However, there are also evidence indicating that the application of religiosity as a measurement of ethnic identity has not been widely applied due to the difficulty in measuring religiosity itself (e.g. Muhammad and Ghani 2006). For the purpose of this study, religiosity with reference to the Malays refers to their Islamic Identity. Islam is the basis of Malay identity (Hassan 1997; Kortteinen 2008). Within the Malay population, there are cultural differences from state to state but the overall Malay culture is overshadowed by a strong influence of religion (Haque and Masuan 2002). When one is born Malay he or she is born into a culture and a religion simultaneously. In the realm of value, the Malays rely heavily on religious sources. In the Islamic teaching, the divine law is immutable and absolute, it is very rare to see Malays oppose the absoluteness of values written in the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (Mastor et al. 2000). The Islamic religion provides a coherent set of symbols and meanings for the everyday life of the Malays. Undoubtedly, Islamic religion, is a prerequisite for Malayness. Islam cannot be separated from the Malay identity. Based on expert opinions, religiosity was included as a dimension of Malayness.

3. METHODOLOGY AND SCALE DEVELOPMENT

For developing the Malayness construct and to capture the four dimensions of Malay ethnic identity, we followed closely the procedures described by Churchill (1979) and DeVellis (1991). We also adopted the suggestion by Bhugra, Bhui, Mallett, Desai, Singh and Leff (1999) in testing the face validity for studies on cultural identity. According to Bhugra and associates face validity must be confirmed by discussing with members of the same cultural group and checked with reported behavioural patterns. Discussions were carried out with a panel of experts in the area of Malay studies on the dimensions important in measuring Malayness. The experts comprised of three professors of universities in Malaysia and a PhD holder in Anthropology with publications in culture and cross-cultural issues facing Malaysia. For checking the behavioural patterns of the Malay community, content analysis of newspapers, magazines and books in the Malay language was carried out. Based on the review of relevant literature, expert opinions and content analysis of published materials, the theoretical framework for the four dimensions measuring Malayness was developed and subsequently shown to the panel of experts who concurred on the dimensions measuring Malayness. The resultant theoretical framework is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Malayness Construct

3.1. Sample

In order to assess the dimensionality of the Malayness construct, data were collected from adult samples in Peninsular Malaysia. A stratified quota sampling method was used to ensure a diverse sample of Malays in terms of socio-economic background, gender, and age was captured for the study. An initial distribution of 610 sets of questionnaire with a total of 537 sets of responses returned, resulting in 88% response rate. This high response rate could be attributed to the interest among those who participated in the survey. The respondents were almost evenly distributed in terms of gender with 54.2 percent female as compared to 45.8 percent males. In terms of age, the distribution was relatively evenly distributed with the majority in the age group of 26-30 years old. Slightly more than 60 per cent of the respondents had university education with two third of the respondents working in the private sector. With reference to individual income, 58.8 percent of the respondents had an income level within the range of RM1500 to RM3500 (or USD428 to USD1129).

3.2. Assessing the Psychometric Properties of the Malayness Construct

Face or content validity was first determined for all dimensions measuring the Malayness construct. The items measuring each dimension of Malayness were purified through the following procedures. An item to item correlation, item to total correlations and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were applied to all the items measuring the dimensions of Malayness. Following this confirmatory factor analysis was performed. Construct validity was then examined for each dimension measuring Malayness. Construct validity of each dimension measuring Malayness is determined by examining the factor loading and variance extracted.

Evidence of construct validity provides confidence that item measures taken from a sample represent the actual true score that exist in the population (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black 2006). According to Hair et al. (2006) items that are indicators of a specific construct should converge or share a high proportion of variance, known as convergent validity. A variance extracted was proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) as a measure of the shared or common variance in a latent variable. The variance extracted is the amount of variance that is captured by the latent variable in relation to the amount of variance due to its measurement error (Dillon and Goldstein 1984). Convergent validity was measured through the average variance extracted for each dimension measuring Malayness. The Cronbach's alpha reliability score was then calculated for the remaining items after data purification.

(a) *Values Dimension*

Inter-item correlations for the 38 items measuring the Malay value dimension were examined in order to tap only those items that measured the intended value dimension (DeVellis 2003). After dropping items that did not correlate strongly, the remaining items measuring the dimension of Malay Values were examined on the strength of its item to total correlation. Only items that had an item to total correlation score greater than 0.5 were selected. This was done because each individual item measuring a particular construct should correlate substantially with the collection of remaining items to arrive at a set of highly inter-correlated items (DeVellis 2003). Result showed that only 10 items had an item-to-total correlation of 0.5 or greater. Subsequent analysis involved exploratory factor analysis using the Varimax Rotation method. Default eigen value of 1 was applied. This procedure produced two factors. The two factor solution explained 58.62 percent of the variance. Table 1 shows the factor loading on the Malay Values dimension.

Table 1: Factor Loadings on Malay Values Dimension

	Factor	
	1	2
Discretions will always be used by me whenever possible (discretion)	.585	.308
I will be sensitive to how others might feel when communicating (sensitive in communication)	.721	.164
I am modest and do not show off my talent (modest)	.746	.186
I will always compromise 'give and take' whenever possible (give and take)	.727	.300
My family members help each other (assist)	.680	.168
I am flexible and accommodating (accommodative)	.795	.219
Working together in a community is important to me (working together)	.154	.831
To be socially accepted is important to me (accepted by society)	.143	.851
I am always courteous and humble (courteous)	.332	.619
I believe in fostering and maintaining relationship (relationship)	.395	.624

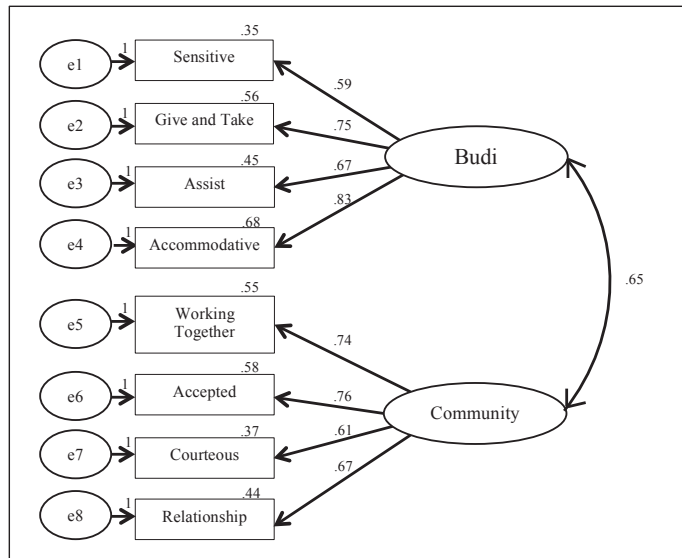
Note: Component eigen value: 5.86, Total Variance Explained 58.62%

Items loaded on Factor 1 reflect the essence of the Malay values. The basic value of the Malays is to be considerate and protective of other peoples’ feelings. It is in effect a reflection of the concept of ‘*budi*’. Statements such as ‘discretions will always be used by me whenever possible’ and ‘I will be sensitive to how others might feel when communicating’ reflect the core identity of the Malay community, in line with the concept of ‘*budi*’ that encompasses the virtuous qualities such as generosity, respect, sincerity, righteousness, discretion, shame, reciprocity and face (Abdullah 1992; Ahmad 2001, July). Factor 1 is named *budi*.

Factor 2, reflects the importance of communal orientation and relationship maintenance. Statements such as ‘To be socially accepted is important to me’ and ‘I believe in fostering and maintaining relationship’ emphasize the importance given to community acceptance. In order to be accepted, the Malays place importance in working together and to be courteous and humble in maintaining social relationships. This is reflected by the statements ‘Working together in a community is important to me’ and ‘I am always courteous and humble’. The results support the extant literature. For example according to Lim (1998) and Abdullah (1992), the Malays are oriented toward relationship building, prefer stability and honour traditions. Goddard (1997) stated that the Malays strife to get along with people without friction and prefer to avoid interpersonal conflict. Consequently, Factor 2 is named and identified as the ‘Community’ factor. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability test for these two factors were 0.84 and 0.79, respectively, for Factor 1 “*budi*” and Factor 2 “community”.

Following Gerbing and Anderson's (1988) recommendation for unidimensional scale development, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed on the ten items extracted in EFA. The AMOS 5 software was used for the purpose. All the items showed a significant positive relationship. The model fit is adequate based on the fit measures (Chi square <0.01, RMSEA 0.09, TLI 0.89, GFI 0.93, AGFI 0.89, CFI 0.91, NFI 0.90) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Malay Values



The modification index and standardized residual index suggested that the item 'modest' and 'discretion' to be dropped to obtain a better fit. The items were subsequently dropped based on statistical justification since there were still adequate items for measuring the Malay Values dimension. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed using the eight remaining items. All the eight items showed a significant positive relationship. The model fit results improved slightly indicating a better fit after dropping these two items (Chi square <0.01, RMSEA 0.09, TLI 0.91, GFI 0.95, AGFI 0.90, CFI 0.90, NFI 0.93).

3.3. *The Language Dimension*

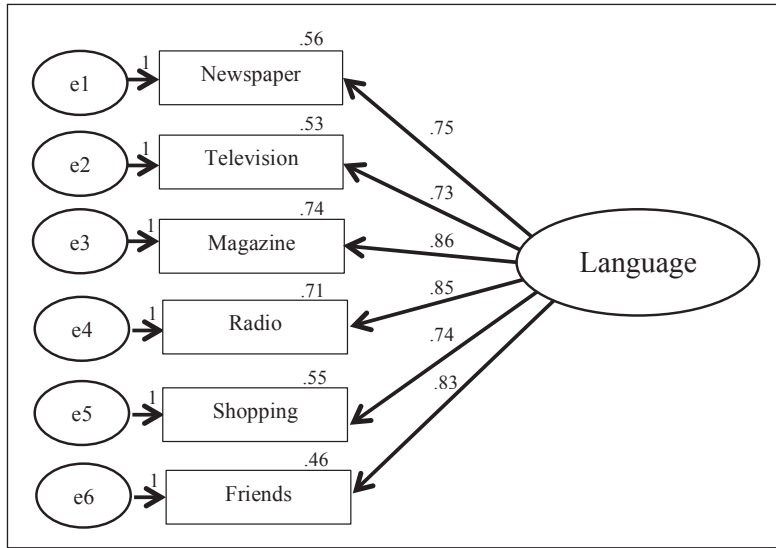
The Language dimension was measured using nine items. All nine items correlated strongly with each other and had a strong item to total correlation. An exploratory factor analysis using Varimax Rotation method with default eigen values of 1 resulted in a single factor consisting of nine items. The total variance explained was 61.2 percent. The Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.92 indicating that the nine items had high internal consistency. The factor loading score for the Language dimension is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Factor Loadings on Language Dimension

	Component 1
I often choose to read the Malay newspapers (Newspaper)	.771
I often choose to watch the Malay programs in television (Television)	.712
I often choose to read Malay magazines or books (Magazines)	.837
I often choose to listen to the Malay programs when listening to the radio (Radio)	.827
I often speak in Malay with my relatives (Relatives)	.730
I often speak in Malay when shopping (Shopping)	.794
I often speak in Malay with my close friends (Friends)	.803
I often speak in Malay with my family (Family)	.777
I often speak in Malay at the workplace (Workplace)	.785

Confirmatory Factor Analysis when applied showed a significant positive relationship. The model fit however was not very good (Chi square 0.00, RMSEA 0.14, TLI 0.85, GFI 0.85, AGFI 0.75, CFI 0.89, NFI 0.88). The modification index and standardized residual index suggested three items to be dropped: relatives, family, and workplace, to ensure a better fit for the model. Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed using the six remaining items (Figure 3). All the six items showed a significant positive relationship with the overall construct. The model fit results improved (Chi square 0.00, RMSEA 0.09, TLI 0.96, GFI 0.97, AGFI 0.94, CFI 0.9, NFI 0.97).

Figure 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Language



3.4. The Social Interaction Dimension

The Social Interaction dimension was measured using 11 items. Items that did not have strong inter-item correlation and item to total correlation was dropped resulting in only six items for exploratory factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis resulted in a single factor consisting of six items. The total variance explained was 48.89 percent. The Cronbach’s Alpha value for the six items measuring the Social Interaction dimension was 0.78 indicating that the six items had internal consistency and are therefore reliable measure. The factor loading score is shown in Table 3.

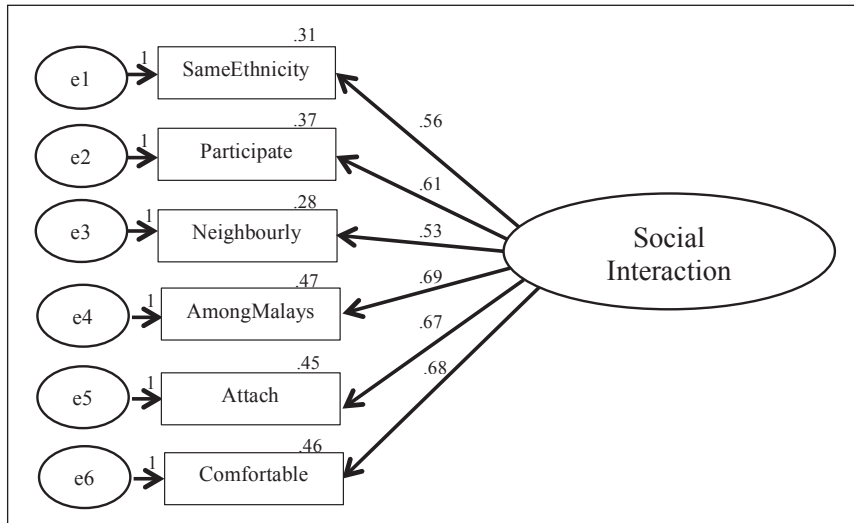
Table 3: Factor Loadings on Social Interaction Dimension

	Component
	1
Most of my friends are from my own ethnic group (Same ethnicity)	.643
I often participate in the activities of the Malay community (Participate)	.691
I enjoy meeting and talking to my neighbours everyday (Neighbourly)	.617
I like to go to places where I can be with Malays (Among Malays)	.760
I am strongly attached to all aspects of the Malay culture (Attach)	.733
I am very comfortable dealing with Malays (Comfortable)	.738

Note: Component eigen value: 2.93, Total Variance Explained 48.89%

Confirmatory Factor Analysis applied to the six items showed a significant positive relationship (Figure 4). (Chi square 0.00, RMSEA 0.06, TLI 0.95, GFI 0.98, AGFI 0.95, CFI 0.97, NFI 0.96). The items measuring the Social Interaction dimension had a loading ranging from 0.52 to 0.71. The construct reliability scores for the items measuring the Social Interaction dimension was 0.86 indicating good reliability.

Figure 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Social Interaction



3.5. The Self-Identification Dimension

All five items measuring the Self-Identification dimension correlated strongly with each other. Additionally, all five items had a strong item to total correlation. Exploratory factor analysis resulted in a single factor consisting of five items. The total variance explained was 56.05 percent. Factor loadings are shown in Table 4.

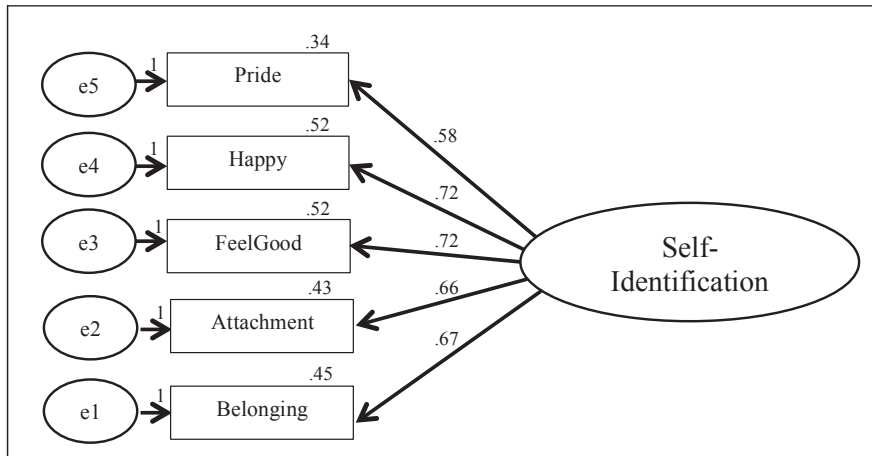
Table 4: Factor Loadings on Self-Identification Dimension

	Component
	1
I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group (Pride)	.684
I am happy to be a Malay (Happy)	.780
I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background (Fell Good)	.784
I feel a strong sense of attachment to my ethnic group (Attachment)	.742
I have a strong sense of belonging to my ethnic group (Belonging)	.749

Note: Component eigen value: 2.80, Total Variance Explained 56.05%

Confirmatory Factor Analysis showed a significant positive relationship (Chi square 0.02, RMSEA 0.05, TLI 0.97, GFI 0.99, AGFI 0.97, CFI 0.99, NFI 0.98) (Figure 5). The items measuring the Self-Identification dimension had a loading ranging from 0.58 to 0.72 demonstrating that the Self-Identification dimension had convergent validity. The construct reliability scores for the items measuring the dimension Self-Identification was 0.79 indicating good reliability.

Figure 5: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Self-Identification



3.6. The Religiosity Dimension

The dimension Religiosity was adapted from the religiosity scale of Wilkes et al. (1986). There were low inter-item correlations and item to total correlations of the four items measuring the Religiosity dimension. An exploratory factor analysis conducted on the four items resulted in a single factor consisting of four items. The total variance explained was 40.55 percent. The Cronbach's alpha value for the four-item scale was 0.51 indicating that the four items have low internal consistency reliability.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis when applied to the four items measuring the Religiosity dimension resulted in a poor fit although all the items showed a significantly positive relationship (Chi square 0.00, RMSEA 0.12, TLI 0.62, GFI 0.98, AGFI 0.92, CFI 0.88, NFI 0.86). The score for the average variance extracted and construct reliability were 0.21 and 0.49 respectively indicating that the religiosity dimension was low on converging reliability and construct reliability. The religiosity scale did not meet the statistical requirements to be considered as a valid measurement scale. As a result of the poor psychometric properties, the Religiosity dimension as a measure of Malayness was dropped from further analysis.

3.7. *The dimensions measuring Malayness – A summary*

Table 5 summarizes the results of the analysis on the dimensions of Malayness. The Chi-square scores for all the items used in measuring each dimension of Malayness was however significant having a value lesser than 0.05. Obtaining a Chi-square value that is significant is a common occurrence with models of large sample size (Joreskog 1993; Hair et al. 2006).

The four dimensions of Malayness were found to be reliable and valid, except Religiosity which was dropped from further analyses. All multi item scales used to measure each dimension of Malayness which consisted of Malay Values, Language, Social Interaction and Self-Identification were reduced to individual variables representing each dimension measuring the Malayness construct by summation of all the items measuring each dimension and calculating the average score for each dimension. This procedure is based on the justifications and suggestions of past research (Carver 1989; Tian, Bearden and Hunter 2001; Richins and Dawson 1992). Moreover, the use of the summed construct measure instead of the individual subscale is preferred (Carver 1989). Tian, Bearden and Hunter (2001) also shared similar observation. In addition, according to Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998), there are two specific benefits of using summated scales: (1) it reduces measurement error by using multiple variables, and (2) it represents the multiple aspects of a concept in a single measure. The use of summation of the components could best be described by Richins and Dawson (1992) who opined that on average the summed multidimensional index relates to the diverse constructs in the hypothesis better than does any one component dimension. The same procedure was applied in similar studies that measure ethnic identity (Laroche, Joy, Hui and Kim, 1991; Hui, Kim, Laroche and Joy, 1997). In the present study, the summated score suggested for the Malayness construct fulfilled the requirements for construct development as well as deriving benefits from summed construct measure.

4. THE MALAYNESS CONSTRUCT

Based on the results obtained for each of the dimensions measuring the Malayness construct, the inter-item correlations of the items measuring the Malayness construct show that all items measuring the Malayness construct correlated strongly with each other. The item to total correlation show strong item to total correlation (Refer Appendix). An exploratory factor analysis resulted in a single factor consisting of five items. The total variance explained was 58.80%. The Cronbach's Alpha value for the items measuring the Malayness construct was 0.82 indicating that the five items had high internal consistency reliability.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was applied to the five items measuring the Malayness construct. All the items showed a significant positive relationship. The model fit however failed to meet the requirements of fit (Chi square 0.00, RMSEA 0.24, TLI 0.70, GFI 0.88, AGFI 0.63, CFI 0.85, NFI 0.85). Modification indices suggested freeing the parameters between the errors for social interaction and error for language. Laroche et al. (1991) argued conceptually that this is possible since the language indicator refers to the language usage among respondents in various types of social interactions such as at work and with friends. Moreover, according to Bentler (2001) it probably would be foolhardy not to expect minor sources of co variation due to reasons of common item wordings, item sequences, and unanticipated minor factors.

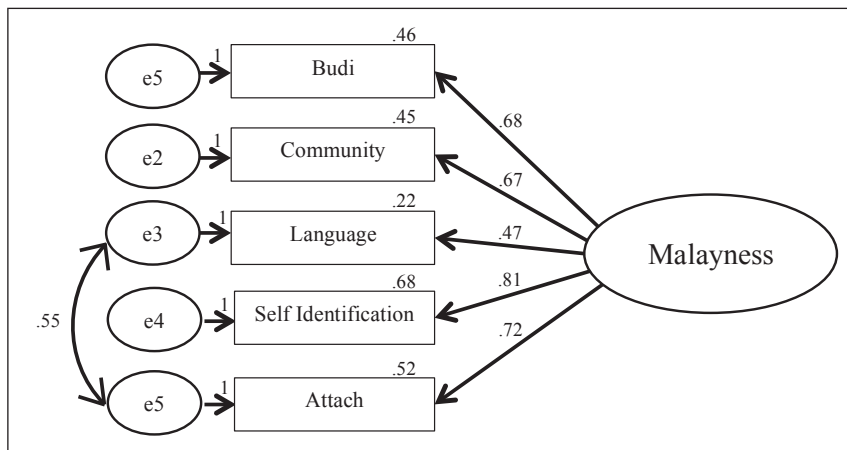
Table 5: Summary of scores on the dimensions of Malayness

Malayness Dimension	Inter-item correlation	Item to total correlation	Cronbach's Alpha Score	Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis	RMSEA	TLI	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	Factor loadings	Average Variance Extracted	Construct Reliability
Malay Values (8 items)	√	√	0.79	Two factors: 1. <i>Budi</i> 2. Community	0.09	0.91	0.95	0.95	0.9	0.93	0.59 to 0.83	0.49 and 0.51	0.83* and 0.84**
Language (6 items)	√	√	0.89	One factor	0.09	0.96	0.97	0.94	0.9	0.97	0.68 to 0.86	0.59	0.78
Social Interactions (6 items)	√	√	0.79	One factor	0.06	0.95	0.98	0.95	0.97	0.96	0.52 to 0.71	0.40	0.86
Self-Identification (5 items)	√	√	0.80	One factor	0.05	0.97	0.99	0.97	0.99	0.98	0.58 to 0.72	0.45	0.79
Religiosity (4 items)	×	×	0.51	One factor	0.12	0.62	0.98	0.92	0.88	0.86	0.35 to 0.63	0.21	0.49

Note: √ indicating high correlation, X indicating low correlation, n* = value for Budi; ** = value for Community.

Of critical importance in post hoc model fitting is that all parameters added to the model must be substantively meaningful in support of their specification. For this study, the modification indices suggested freeing the parameters between e3 and e5, language and social interactions (see Figure 6). Theoretically, the researchers believe that whenever the Malays are socially interacting, the language used is the Malay language which is also the national language. Thus the likelihood that the Malay language is used in social interactions is very high especially in social interactions that involve the Malay community. In addition, the justifications for freeing the parameters are: a) the findings were consistent with Laroche et al.'s study (1991) on English Canadian ethnic identity and b) Bentler and Chou's (1987) admonition that model specification which forces such error terms to be uncorrelated is rarely appropriate with real data. Test of model fit improved with the freeing of e3 and e5 with all the items showing a significant positive relationship (Chi square 0.00, RMSEA 0.10, TLI 0.95, GFI 0.98, AGFI 0.92, CFI 0.98, NFI 0.97). The construct reliability scores for the items measuring the dimension of the Malayness construct was 0.83 indicating good reliability. The Cronbach's alpha score for internal consistency was 0.82 indicating good internal consistency. Figure 6 shows the measurement model for the Malayness construct.

Figure 6: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Malayness construct



5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

The purpose of the present study is to develop a Malayness scale to measure Malay ethnic identification. Since ethnic identity influences behaviour, it is imperative to understand their ethnic orientation that distinguishes them. The results of this study support extant literature that suggests the multidimensional nature of ethnic identity. For the Malayness construct, dimensions of *Budi* and Community, Language, Social Interaction and Self-Identification depict ethnic orientations of the Malays. Each dimension measuring the Malayness construct was tested for its psychometric properties and found to be valid and reliable. The dimensions showed significant positive relationships and are related to each other (Lee and Yoo 2004). In terms of contribution to the development of knowledge, this study has developed a scale

in ethnic identity known as the Malayness scale, which has value for research in various disciplines.

Results of the present study is useful for research in social psychology, sociology, consumer behaviour, marketing, human resource and other fields of study within the management disciplines. It is also applicable for marketers targeting the Malay segment since a sound understanding of their ethnic orientations will be useful for more targeted marketing communications and marketing strategies. For example, knowing that they are community oriented, advertising strategies could depict group and community living.

While globalisation suggests a common consumer culture across nations and cultural groups, the findings of this study is useful for marketers who are interested in marketing products and services that are sensitive to ethnic influences. When marketing products and services such as food products or financial services products, it is imperative to take into consideration the ethnic orientations and the dimensions that influence such orientations. For example, using the community approval could further enhance the communication theme that emphasises ethnic orientation.

5.1. Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

As with any research studies, this study has several limitations. The study was cross sectional in nature and therefore the measurement scale measuring each dimension of Malayness and the Malayness construct need to be tested further on its validity and reliability, using different time frames. Religiosity, although important in ethnic identification, was not a significant dimension in the Malayness construct in this study. This could be due to response artifacts or it could simply be due to the fact that being Malay and Muslim is so intertwined that it becomes difficult to distinguish religion and ethnicity. Moreover, there is the possibility of obtaining measurement results that show zero variances in the items that measure this construct.

The sample for this study tends to concentrate in Peninsular Malaysia. The Malayness scale could be replicated in other studies by using a more diverse sample that includes Malays from the rural areas as well as from East Malaysia. Future research could also employ larger samples to enhance the applicability and psychometric validity of the scale. The Malayness scale could be tested on Malays residing in other regions of the world such as those found in the neighbouring countries including Indonesia, Brunei, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam and reaching as far as South Africa, Sri Lanka and Australia.

Notwithstanding the results of this study, it is suggested that future studies should attempt to include religiosity measure, by using other religiosity scale. However, caution is to be made with regards to the inclusion of religiosity since all Malays are Muslims and the effect of social desirability may lead to agreeableness in the response that would prevent researchers from uncovering the impact of religiosity on ethnic orientation.

Finally, future research might employ the Malayness scale to test other theoretical propositions that are related to consumer behaviour, consumer decision-making, as well as managerial decision making in which Malayness might exert an influence.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Inter-item correlation for the Malay Values dimension

	Working together	Accepted by society	Courteous	Relationship	Discretions	Sensitive in communication	Modest	Give and take	Assist	Accommodative
Working together	1									
Accepted by society	0.642	1								
Courteous	0.392	0.464	1							
Relationship	0.467	0.458	0.445	1						
Discretions	0.317	0.282	0.362	0.432	1					
Sensitive in communication	0.25	0.326	0.299	0.356	0.389	1				
Modest	0.302	0.289	0.405	0.336	0.393	0.598	1			
Give and take	0.37	0.358	0.41	0.416	0.446	0.497	0.521	1		
Assist	0.301	0.263	0.268	0.362	0.36	0.34	0.395	0.449	1	
Accommodative	0.324	0.311	0.362	0.456	0.452	0.471	0.501	0.608	0.61	1

APPENDICES

Appendix 2: Item to total correlations for the Malay Values dimension

	Item-Total Correlation
Working together in a community is important to me (working together)	.547
To be socially accepted is important to me (accepted by society)	.546
I am always courteous and humble (courteous)	.551
I believe in fostering and maintaining relationship (relationship)	.607
Discretions will always be used by me whenever possible (discretions)	.552
I will be sensitive to how others might feel when communicating (sensitive in communication)	.573
I am modest and do not show off my talent (modest)	.609
I will always compromise ‘give and take’ whenever possible (give and take)	.669
My family members help each other (assist)	.534
I am flexible and accommodating (accommodative)	.674

Appendix 3: Inter-item correlation for the Language Dimension

	Newspaper	Television	Magazines	Radio	Relatives	Shopping	Friends	Family	Work
Newspaper	1								
Television	.562	1							
Magazines	.678	.627	1						
Radio	.614	.629	.724	1					
Relatives	.411	.331	.488	.520	1				
Shopping	.520	.545	.609	.645	.541	1			
Friends	.488	.427	.586	.567	.723	.593	1		
Family	.588	.447	.540	.544	.617	.549	.619	1	
Workplace	.566	.474	.612	.551	.529	.579	.640	.571	1

Appendix 4: Item to total correlations for the Language dimension

	Item-Total Correlation
Newspaper	.710
Television	.644
Magazines	.787
Radio	.772
Relatives	.650
Shopping	.730
Friends	.732
Family	.706
Workplace	.718

APPENDICES

Appendix 5: Inter-item correlation for the Social Interaction Dimension

	Same ethnicity	Participate	Neighbourly	To be with Malays	Attach	Comfortable
Same ethnicity	1					
Participate	.301	1				
Neighbourly	.237	.408	1			
Among Malays	.456	.409	.328	1		
Attach	.325	.412	.370	.464	1	
Comfortable	.413	.377	.322	.475	.466	1

Appendix 6: Item to total correlations for the Social Interaction Dimension

	Item-Total Correlation
Same ethnicity	.483
Participate	.532
Neighbourly	.454
Among Malays	.610
Attach	.575
Comfortable	.583

Appendix 7: Inter-item correlation for Self-Identification Dimension

	Pride	Happy	Feel Good	Attachment	Belonging
Pride	1				
Happy	.414	1			
Feel Good	.428	.529	1		
Attachment	.401	.427	.501	1	
Belonging	.370	.525	.450	.450	1

Appendix 8: Item to total correlations for the Self-Identification dimension

	Item-Total Correlation
Pride	.516
Happy	.619
Feel Good	.627
Attachment	.580
Belonging	.578