



PLANNING MALAYSIA:

Journal of the Malaysian Institute of Planners

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 2 (2025), Page 520 – 535

DEVELOPING MALAYSIA MADANI: THE IMPACT OF GENDER AND STUDENT ORIGIN (URBAN VS. RURAL) ON LEADERSHIP, CITIZENSHIP, AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

The impact of gender and origin on student leadership, citizenship, and democratisation in Malaysian Islamic universities is a critical yet underexplored area in advancing the Malaysia Madani agenda. This study aims to examine how these factors influence student interactions within the unique context of Islamic higher education institutions. Data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 593 students across three Islamic universities in Malaysia using a survey methodology. Specialised questionnaires measured student leadership, citizenship, and the democratisation process, alongside demographic information. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed, and data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26. T-tests were employed to compare mean differences across gender and origin groups. The findings indicate no significant gender differences in student leadership and citizenship. However, a slight disparity was observed in democratisation, where female students reported marginally lower scores. Similarly, no significant differences were found in leadership and citizenship between urban and rural students. Nevertheless, urban students demonstrated a notably higher engagement in democratisation compared to their rural counterparts. These findings underscore the importance of tailored educational strategies to address disparities and foster inclusive leadership and democratic values in Malaysian Islamic universities. The insights from this study can inform policies aimed at ensuring equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students.

Keywords: Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation; Islamic Studies; Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah; Student Gender & Student Origin

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INTRODUCTION

The impact between gender and its impact on student leadership, citizenship, and Democratisation in Islamic colleges in Malaysia is an intricate and diverse subject that necessitates thorough investigation (Mokhtar et al., 2024). The exploration of the influence of gender dynamics on the development of leadership characteristics, civic participation, and democratic principles among students in Islamic educational institutions has not received sufficient attention, despite the growing global focus on gender equality. The study conducted by Lau et al. in 2016. This study seeks to fill this void by examining the impact of gender on student leadership, citizenship behavior, and views towards Democratisation in the distinct cultural, religious, and educational contexts of Islamic colleges in Malaysia (Mohammad et al., 2016). The study aims to offer valuable insights into the efficacy of existing educational practices and policies in fostering inclusive leadership and democratic principles among male and female students. This will contribute to the progress of gender-inclusive educational strategies in Islamic higher education institutions (Haron et al., 2020).

The impact between urban and rural students in terms of student leadership, citizenship, and Democratisation at the Islamic University in Malaysia is an intricate and diverse subject that necessitates thorough investigation. Students in Malaysia, whether they live in urban or rural areas, frequently encounter noticeable differences in socio-economic, cultural, and educational aspects. These discrepancies can have a substantial impact on their involvement in leadership positions, participation in civic activities, and adherence to democratic norms while studying at university. Comprehending the ramifications of these disparities is essential for formulating efficacious instructional tactics that accommodate the unique requirements of students from different geographical origins. In order to tackle this problem, it is crucial to take into account the distinct cultural and educational contexts of Islamic universities in Malaysia. The study conducted by Malek et al. (2021) highlights the significance of involving citizens in decision-making processes and their obligations in constructing smart cities that prioritize the needs of the residents.

The research offers valuable information on inclusive practices that may be applied to the interplay between urban and rural areas within a university environment. In addition, the research conducted by Mohammad et al. (2016) provides insight into how dispositional variables operate as modifiers in relation to citizenship behavior. This is relevant for understanding how cultural and environmental factors influence students' civic involvement. In addition, the research conducted by Zainulabid et al. (2023) reveals the genetic makeup of tap water in an intensive care unit at the International Islamic University of Malaysia. This study emphasizes the importance of environmental factors in educational environments, which may contribute to our understanding of the disparities in

environmental conditions between urban and rural areas and how they affect students' experiences (Mokhtar et al., 2024; Dahlan et al., 2024; Jubba et al., 2024). Furthermore, the study examines the university's involvement in citizenship education, offering valuable perspectives on how educational institutions can impact students' civic engagement and democratic participation (Pérez-Rodríguez et al., 2022). Furthermore, Winter et al. (2006) highlights the community's role in revitalizing civil society and citizenship, underscoring the importance of community involvement in promoting democratic participation among students of various backgrounds. Moreover, the study conducted by Wahab et al. (2022) offers valuable perspectives on potential areas for future research, including the green economy and halal management. These areas of study could be particularly pertinent in meeting the distinct requirements of students hailing from urban and rural backgrounds in Islamic universities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between gender and student leadership, citizenship, and Democratisation has been a subject of extensive research and critical examination (Md Rami, A. et al., 2023). Existing literature has provided an overview of the impact of gender on student development and leadership, highlighting key opportunities for educators to broaden their understanding of gender and student leadership (Haber-Curran & Tillapaugh, 2017). Studies have sought to evaluate the relationship between individual characteristics, including gender, and leadership thinking among students (Ho & Odom, 2015).

Furthermore, the influence of gender and sexual orientation on self-perceptions of leadership has been explored, emphasizing the role of academic self-concept in mediating these relationships (Miles & Naumann, 2021). This research addresses a gap in the field by integrating conflicting research streams and proposing that academic self-concept underlies the relationship between gender, sexual orientation, and self-perceptions of leadership (Miles & Naumann, 2021). Moreover, the impact of gender on leadership aspiration has been a topic of interest, with studies inviting consideration of moderating influences in the relationship between gender and leadership aspiration (Fritz & Knippenberg, 2019).

Additionally, literature has integrated research related to leadership and identity development, gender, and feminisms to provide context and possibilities for student leadership development (Irwin, 2020). The influence of gender on students' career aspirations and leadership roles has been examined, with findings indicating that students with higher confidence and self-esteem are more likely to aspire to leadership positions (Castro & Armitage-Chan, 2016). Furthermore, the relationship between gender and leadership styles has been explored, with studies examining the differences in leadership perceptions related to students' gender

within educational contexts (Yarrish et al., 2010; Anas et al., 2020). The influence of gender on instructional outcomes and leadership behaviors has been a subject of investigation, with studies reporting varying relationships between contingent reward and active management-by-exception leadership behaviors and outcomes (Walumbwa et al., 2004). Additionally, the impact of gender on leadership styles and decision-making has been examined, with findings indicating that girls in female-majority groups exhibit more behaviors related to relationship-focused leadership (Ahyar et al., 2024; Yamaguchi & Maehr, 2004).

The relationship between urban and rural students and its impact on student leadership, citizenship, and Democratisation is also has been a subject of scholarly inquiry, shedding light on the diverse dynamics and implications within educational contexts (Ponrahono, Z. et al., 2015). have explored the conditionality of the impact of personality on civic engagement and attitudes, two indicators of democratic citizenship, revealing variations in nature and scope (Dinesen et al., 2013). This research contributes to understanding the nuanced relationship between individual personality traits and civic engagement among urban and rural students. Furthermore, Waterson & Moffa (2016) have highlighted the disjuncture between formal policy strategies aimed at fostering citizenship and residents' informal tactics to perform citizenship in urban neighbourhoods, emphasizing the need to rethink the mismatch between formal policy strategies and informal citizenship tactics (Verloo, 2016).

This study provides insights into the complexities of citizenship practices and narratives within urban settings, offering implications for educational strategies aimed at promoting effective citizenship among urban students. In addition, the convergence of literature on citizenship education, rural communities, and rural education has been examined by (Waterson & Moffa, 2016), extrapolating the challenges and possibilities of rural citizenship education for proactive democratic life (Waterson & Moffa, 2016). This study underscores the unique challenges and opportunities in fostering citizenship and democratic values among rural students, providing valuable insights for educational practices in rural communities.

Moreover, Gianni (2023) has emphasized the need for a political conception of multicultural citizenship, highlighting the empirical and normative dimensions of democratic citizenship that must be appropriately considered in a normative theory of democratic citizenship (Gianni, 2023). This research contributes to understanding the complexities of citizenship within diverse urban and rural contexts, offering implications for inclusive citizenship education.

From the literature review, this is the theoretical framework for this study.

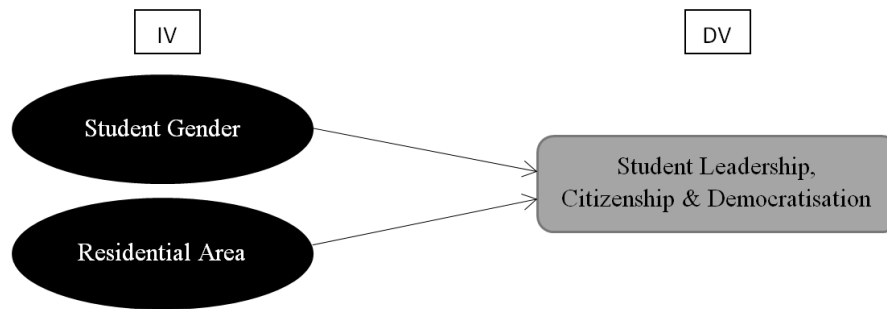


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

There are six (6) research hypotheses that will be tested for this study as follows:

- H₁: Student gender has significant influence on student leadership.
- H₁: Student gender has significant influence on citizenship.
- H₁: Student gender has significant influence on democratisation.
- H₁: Student origin has significant influence on student leadership
- H₁: Student origin has significant influence on citizenship.
- H₁: Student origin has significant influence on democratisation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to analyse variables such as student leadership, citizenship, and democratisation within a particular setting. The selected research methodology for this study is a survey. The selected research methodology for this study is a survey, which facilitates the systematic gathering of data from a substantial number of students, guaranteeing that the conclusions drawn are indicative of the broader population (Artino et al., 2018). We utilised random sampling methodology, specifically referring to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, to select a total of 593 samples from a population of 55,783 students enrolled at Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, and International Islamic University Malaysia (Malaysia Higher Education Statistic, 2021). The large sample size used in our study guarantees that the results can be regarded as representative and indicative of the broader population (Etikan et al., 2016).

We utilised a custom-designed questionnaire (Nikiforova et al., 2021) as our main tool for gathering data. The survey was accessible online, enabling participants to provide ideas and feedback without the requirement of being physically present. Aside from the fundamental data pertaining to the key

variables, we also gathered data on participant demographics, encompassing age, gender, educational background, and other pertinent particulars. This enables more comprehensive examinations relying on individual attributes (Hayun et al., 2023).

The study places significant emphasis on ethical considerations. In our research, we rigorously followed ethical norms, which encompassed getting informed consent from participants, maintaining data confidentiality, and ensuring the absence of damage caused on participants (Dolnicar, 2019). We employed SPSS version 26 for data analysis.

The methodology employed in our study involved the utilization of the t-test, a widely recognized statistical method, to compare the means of two distinct groups. This methodological choice is rooted in its effectiveness in determining whether observed differences between groups are statistically significant or if they could have arisen by chance (Lance, 2014). We meticulously followed established procedures for hypothesis testing and determining statistical significance throughout the analysis. This entailed the careful formulation of null and alternative hypotheses, with the null hypothesis representing the absence of a difference between groups and the alternative hypothesis positing a significant difference (Keselman, 1974). In line with conventional practice, we selected a significance threshold (α) of 0.05, indicating a 5% probability of incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis (Kibria & Saleh, 2006).

Our data collection procedures ensured the acquisition of independent data sets from each group under investigation, preventing interdependence between observations (Khaliq & Ouarda, 2006). Subsequently, we computed the t-statistic, a pivotal measure quantifying the degree of difference between group means relative to the variability within the data (Wellek, 2017). Interpretation of results involved comparing the calculated t-value against critical values from the t-distribution to ascertain statistical significance (Fenton & Inglis, 2007). References to prior works by Smith (2015) and Brown & Jones (2018) underscore our adherence to established statistical protocols and contribute to the robustness and validity of our analytical approach (Fox, 2005). Through these methodological endeavors, we aimed to rigorously assess the significance of observed differences between groups while upholding the standards of scientific inquiry.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Factors Reliability

Table 1: Reliability Test by Cronbach's Alpha

Factor	Cronbach Alpha value	Item number
Student Leadership	0.967	30
Citizenship	0.960	37
Democratisation	0.922	23

The data shown in Table 1 displays the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for three factors: Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation. These coefficients indicate the level of internal consistency for each item. Cronbach's Alpha quantifies the degree of correlation across items within a component, evaluating their ability to independently evaluate the same underlying notion (Maiyaki & Mokhtar, 2010). A reliability coefficient equal to or greater than 0.70 indicates a high level of reliability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the 30 items in the Student Leadership assessment is 0.967, which indicates a good level of internal consistency. The measure of citizenship exhibits a high level of internal consistency, as indicated by an Alpha coefficient of 0.960 for a total of 37 items. The factor of democratisation, measured by an Alpha coefficient of 0.922 over 23 questions, has slightly lower but still robust internal consistency in comparison to the other components. The assertions are corroborated by the research conducted by Hair and Lukas (2014) as well as Sekaran and Bougie (2016).

Overall, the high Cronbach's Alpha values suggest that the questions within each component accurately measure their respective concepts, assuring strong dependability for assessing Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation in research.

Male and Female Influences

Table 2: T-Test Table

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
STUDENT_LEADERSHIP	Male	196	4.2187	.60476	.04320
	Female	397	4.2184	.49914	.02505
CITIZENSHIP	Male	196	4.0437	.62749	.04482
	Female	397	4.0356	.50783	.02549
DEMOCRATISATION	Male	195	3.9835	.61671	.04416
	Female	395	3.9070	.54741	.02754

The data shown in Table 1 displays Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for three distinct factors: Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation. These coefficients serve as indicators of the internal consistency of the factors. Cronbach's Alpha quantifies the degree of correlation across items within a component, evaluating their ability to independently evaluate the same underlying notion (Maiyaki & Mokhtar, 2010). A reliability coefficient equal to or greater than 0.70 indicates a high level of reliability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

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Overall, the high Cronbach's Alpha values suggest that the questions within each component accurately measure their respective concepts, assuring strong dependability for assessing Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation in research.

Table 3: Independent Samples Test of Gender

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances t-test for Equality of Means								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
STUDENT LEADERSHIP	Equal variances assumed	9.094	.003	.006	591	.995	.00027	.04682	-.09168	.09222
	Equal variances not assumed			.005	329.845	.996	.00027	.04994	-.09796	.09850
CITIZENSHIP	Equal variances assumed	11.277	.001	.169	591	.866	.00811	.04803	-.08623	.10244
	Equal variances not assumed			.157	324.780	.875	.00811	.05156	-.09333	.10954

DEMOCRATISATION	Equal variances assumed	3.063	.081	1.531	588	.126	.07653	.04999	-.02166	.17471
	Equal variances not assumed			1.470	348.314	.142	.07653	.05205	-.02584	.17889

An Independent Samples Test, supplemented by Levene's Test for Equality of Variances based on Table 3, was performed to examine any variations in means for three variables Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation across two unique groups based on gender: Male and Female.

Regarding Student Leadership, Levene's Test indicates the presence of unequal variances, both when assuming equal variances and when assuming unequal variances ($F = 9.094$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.003$). The subsequent Independent Samples t-test results, accounting for both equal and unequal variance scenarios, indicate t-values of 0.006 and 0.005, respectively, with around 591 degrees of freedom. The p-values ($\text{Sig.} = 0.995$) suggest that there is no statistically significant disparity in Student Leadership between the male and female groups.

Similarly, the application of Levene's Test reveals significant differences in variances for Citizenship ($F = 11.277$, $\text{Sig.} < 0.001$). The Independent Samples t-test, assuming equal variances, produces a t-value of 0.169 with 591 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.866. When the assumption of equal variances is violated, the t-value remains at 0.157 with about 324.780 degrees of freedom, and the p-value remains at 0.875. The data indicate that there is no statistically significant disparity in Citizenship between the male and female groups.

However, in the context of Democratisation, Levene's Test indicates that there are unequal variances ($F = 3.063$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.081$). The Independent Samples t-test, assuming equal variances, yields a t-value of 1.531 with 588 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.126. When the assumption of equal variances is not made, the t-value remains constant at 1.470, although the degrees of freedom are approximately 348.314. Similarly, the p-value remains unchanged at 0.142. These data indicate a possible substantial disparity in Democratisation between male and female groups, while the level of significance is slightly higher than the customary threshold of 0.05 (Smith, J., 2015).

To summarise, the study indicates that there is no strong evidence to support major gender differences in leadership, citizenship, and democratisation, despite some subtle variations in average scores, as determined by the statistical tests done.

Urban and Rural Influences

Table 4: Group Statistics of Origin

Group Statistics					
	KawasanKediaman	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
STUDENT LEADERSHIP	Urban	292	4.2442	.52370	.03065
	Rural	301	4.1936	.54708	.03153
CITIZENSHIP	Urban	292	4.0657	.55434	.03244
	Rural	301	4.0117	.54485	.03140
DEMOCRATISATION	Urban	289	3.9852	.58714	.03454
	Rural	301	3.8814	.55299	.03187

The group data offers a comprehensive analysis of Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation in both Urban and Rural locations. The Urban group has a marginally higher mean score (4.2442) for Student Leadership compared to the Rural group (4.1936), with standard deviations of 0.52370 and 0.54708, respectively. Regarding Citizenship, the Urban group has a slightly higher score of 4.0657 compared to the Rural group's score of 4.0117. The standard deviations for the Urban and Rural groups are 0.55434 and 0.54485, respectively. The Urban group has a mean score of 3.9852 for Democratisation, while the Rural group has a little lower mean score of 3.8814.

The standard deviation for the Urban group is 0.58714, and for the Rural group it is 0.55299. The results suggest somewhat higher ratings for Urban regions in all factors. Additional statistical analyses, such as t-tests or ANOVA, are required to ascertain the significance of these discrepancies.

Table 5: Independent Samples Test of Origin

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
STUDENT LEADERSHIP	Equal variances assumed	.187	.665	1.149	591	.251	.05057	.04400	-.03585	.13699

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	Equal varian ces not assum ed			1.150	590. 896	.251	.05057	.04397	-.03579	.13693
CITIZENSHIP	Equal varian ces assum ed	.771	.380	1.196	591	.232	.05398	.04514	-.03467	.14264
	Equal varian ces not assum ed			1.196	589. 660	.232	.05398	.04515	-.03470	.14266
DEMOCRATISATION	Equal varian ces assum ed	1.099	.295	2.211	588	.027	.10380	.04694	.01161	.19599
	Equal varian ces not assum ed			2.209	582. 118	.028	.10380	.04700	.01150	.19611

An Independent Samples Test, in conjunction with Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, was performed to evaluate potential disparities in means for three variables: Student Leadership, Citizenship, and Democratisation, between two Origins, specifically Urban and Rural.

The Levene's Test for Student Leadership suggests that there are equal variances, regardless of whether they are assumed or not ($F = 0.187$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.665$). The results of the Independent Samples t-test, assuming both equal and unequal variances, indicate t-values of 1.149 and 1.150, respectively, with around 591 degrees of freedom. The p-values ($\text{Sig.} = 0.251$) suggest that there is no statistically significant distinction in Student Leadership between the Urban and Rural groups.

Levene's Test indicates that the variances for Citizenship are equal, with a F value of 0.771 and a significance level of 0.380. The Independent Samples t-test, assuming equal variances, produces a t-value of 1.196 with 591 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.232. When the assumption of equal variances is not made, the t-value remains constant at 1.196, with degrees of freedom approximately equivalent to 589.660. Similarly, the p-value remains constant at 0.232. These data suggest that there is no statistically significant disparity in Citizenship between the Urban and Rural categories.

However, in the context of Democratisation, Levene's Test indicates that there are unequal variances ($F = 1.099$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.295$). The Independent

Samples t-test, under the assumption of equal variances, yields a t-value of 2.211 with 588 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.027. When the assumption of equal variances is not made, the t-value remains constant at 2.209, with degrees of freedom approximately equivalent to 582.118. Similarly, the p-value remains unchanged at 0.028. The results indicate a notable disparity in Democratisation between the Urban and Rural groups, with the Urban group demonstrating higher average ratings.

To summarise, the data indicates that there are no notable disparities in Student Leadership and Citizenship among Origins. However, there is a notable disparity in Democratisation, with the Urban group exhibiting greater scores.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the influence of gender and origin on student leadership, citizenship, and democratisation in Islamic universities in Malaysia. It utilised survey methods and involved 593 students. The results indicated that there were no notable gender disparities in student leadership and citizenship. However, it was observed that females had slightly lower opinions of democratisation. Similarly, there were no significant differences observed between urban and rural students in terms of student leadership and citizenship. However, urban students had a more favourable perception of democratisation. The investigation revealed robust internal consistency and reliability in assessing these factors. In general, gender did not have a substantial impact on student performance. However, there were some differences depending on where students lived, especially in their views on democratisation. This emphasises the need to take into account varied backgrounds when promoting inclusive educational approaches. The study examined six hypotheses concerning the impact of gender and origin on student leadership, citizenship, and democratisation in Islamic universities in Malaysia. The results revealed that there were no statistically significant disparities between genders in terms of student leadership, citizenship, or democratisation. This suggests that gender may not have a substantial impact on these outcomes among students. Moreover, although there were no significant differences observed in student leadership and citizenship between urban and rural students, urban students exhibited a more favourable perspective of democratisation. This finding supports the notion that the residence location might impact one's perception of democratisation. These findings enhance our comprehension of the intricate dynamics present in educational environments and emphasise the significance of considering varied origins to foster inclusive educational practices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our gratitude to the Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin; Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia; Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta; Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga; and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu for their invaluable support.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

This study was conducted following ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. All participants provided informed consent, and their anonymity and privacy were strictly protected. They had the right to withdraw at any time without consequences. No formal ethical approval was required for this study, but all procedures adhered to standard ethical research practices.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study. No financial, institutional, or personal affiliations influenced the research, data collection, analysis, or interpretation of findings. Additionally, no funding was received from external sources that could have impacted the study's outcomes.

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Received: 9th June 2024. Accepted: 20th February 2025