

The Six Days of Voluntary Fasting in Syawal and Its Significance to the Personality of Muslims

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ABSTRACT

The six days fasting in the month of Syawal is a voluntary fasting after the 30 days of obligatory fasting in the month of Ramadan. The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of six-day fasting in the month of Syawal on the changes of personality among Muslims. A total of 111 participants comprised of students from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) took part in this study. All participants were Muslims, consisting 91 women and 20 men with age range of 20 years to 53 years old. The analysis method used was multilevel modeling using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) version 7.0. The LHM was used to test all the hypotheses of the study. The objective of the study was to identify the impact of the Syawal voluntary fasting on the personality change. The findings of this study showed that the quality of Syawal voluntary fasting gives effect to the change of personality which bring significant relationship with both positive and negative personalities. Hence, it can be concluded that the six days voluntary fasting in the month of Syawal contributed to the changes of personality among Muslims.

Keywords: Fasting six days in syawal; personality; family; hierarchical linear modeling; muslim

INTRODUCTION

Fasting can be defined as restraining oneself from eating and drinking and from all actions that can break the fast from dawn to sunset. Fasting can be divided into two categories namely obligatory fasting and voluntary fasting. From Jabir RA, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*The fasting is a shield used by a servant to defend himself from the torture of hell*" (HR Ahmad Sohih Muslim Bisyarhi an-Nawawi, vol. 8, pg. 41). Fasting that Muslims must oblige include fasting in the month of Ramadan, qada' for Ramadan fasting, *kifarah* fasting and *nazar* fasting. Allah SWT has mandated fasting for Muslims in His word which means, "*O you who believe, it is obligatory for you all to fast as fast as it is obligatory upon those who before you all, may all of you be human beings who are devoted*". (al-Baqarah: 183). Meanwhile sunnah fasting which is not mandatory consists of fasting in the month of Syaaban, fasting six days in month of Syawal, fasting on Arafah day (9 Zulhijjah), the day of Tasu'a and Asyura (9 & 10 Muharram), every Monday and Thursday, three days of every month (13, 14 & 15th based on *Hijrah* calendar), fasting on alternate day (fasting of the Prophet Daud AS), eight days from month of Zulhijjah before the day of Arafah for pilgrims and fasting during the months of *haram* (Zulkaedah, Zulhijjah, Muharam and Rejab). Hence, this study focuses on the six-days voluntary fasting in the month of Syawal as this worship is done after Ramadan fasting, where the quality of Syawal fasting plays an important role in determining the change in the personality of a Muslim.

Fasting six days in Syawal is very special as it completes the fast in Ramadan and educates Muslim individuals to have high self-discipline and perseverance (*istiqamah*). More precisely,

Muslims who perform six days of fasting in the Syawal month will be loved by Allah SWT as we are following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him).

Voluntary (Sunnah) Fast of Syawal

The implementation of the voluntary six-days fasting during Syawal was challenging and it was believed that it can be performed by people who have faith on Allah SWT and truly love Him. Fasting six days in the month Syawal was one of *sunnah* deeds that was performed by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It is challenging as Muslims have to fast during lively celebration of Hari Raya Idul Fitri while others are joyfully and happily eating and accepting invitations of open houses during the month of Syawal. Even though the six-days fasting in the month of Syawal is a *sunnah*, it is a demanded act of *sunnah* (al-Suqair 2012). The level of knowledge practiced, internal strength factor, the family's educational background, and the environmental surroundings are some of the main factors that are related to the obedience of implementing the *sunnah* worship to achieve the love of Allah SWT.

Hadith Qudsi Narrated by Imam Bukhari, Abu Hurairah r.a. mentioned that Rasulullah SAW said:

Which means: "Verily, Allah SWT says: "Whosoever is hostile to my guardian, then I declare a war against him. No one comes closer to me by doing something I love more than what I have done to him. And not one of the slaves always approach Me by doing sunnah, unless I will love him. If I had loved him, I was his hearing that he had heard with him, his vision which he saw with him, his hands that he took action with him, and his feet that he walked with. If he begs something from Me, I will give it. If he asks for my protection, then I will protect him. "

(Narrated by Bukhari)

Personality

Personality is the nature of an individual which distinguishes a person from other people in terms of thinking, feeling and acting. In this study, two types of personality were measured, namely the positive and negative personality. All the positive and negative personality traits selected in this study were based on the modifications of the Big Five Model as it illustrates the personality structure of a human being (McCrae & Costa 1987; 1997). Personality assessment of five factors does not result in a dominant single trait but shows how strong a trait is in a person (Pervin, Cervone & John 2005).

Positive Personality

In this study, six types of human personality were selected for positive personality. Six positive personalities measured includes caring, patient, kind, diligent, intelligent and friendly. As the study focused on the personality of Muslims in the month of Ramadan, the Big Five Model was modified based on the needs of this study.

Caring personality was selected based on inheritance character in sub-domains of *Openness (Feeling)*. In the *Feeling* sub-domain, an individual tends to be concerned and willing to understand other people's feelings. Patience personality, was selected from the sub-domain *Conscientiousness* which is *Dutifulness*. Inheritance character in this sub-domain explains that an individual with a strong principle in life, will obey rules, follow instructions and work hard to achieve his goal in life. The characteristic in *Conscientiousness* sub-domain explains that an

individual will be patient and faithful to Allah in performing the religious worship of fasting. Kind personality was selected in the sub-domain *Agreeableness* in the domain of *Tender-mindedness*. This sub-domain explains that an individual with this trait has a tendency to take care of others and is a sympathetic person. This is a positive thought that motivates an individual to do good to others. For instance, in the month of Ramadan, it is encouraged to do good deeds because every good deed or action will be granted with double rewards or *pahala* in return.

In addition, *Activity* was selected under the sub-domain of *Extraversion*. This sub-domain describes an individual with high energy, enthusiastic, and often engages in various activities every day. These characteristics describe a diligent person. For instance, in the month of Ramadan, individuals will be eager to perform *sunnah* worships such as *terawih* prayers, recite al-Quran, and alms (*sadaqah*) to orphans. While Intelligent personality which is *Values* is derived from *Openness* sub-domain. This sub-domain carries the nature of readiness to test or reconsider the value, philosophy and principles in life. Individuals who carry this attribute are said to be a wise person as when the holy month of Ramadan is near, they will make efforts to change their attitude and inner soul to be a better person. The last positive personality measured was friendly personality. It was taken and modified from *Extraversion* sub-domain, which is *Warmth*. *Warmth* sub-domain describes an individual that is friendly, easy going and approachable. An individual with these friendly attributes tend to interact and communicate with other people easily and thus encourage the building of new relationships with other people.

Negative Personality

This study also measures negative personalities that are related to six-days of voluntary Syawal fasting. Nine negative personality measurements selected in this study were arrogant, prejudice, fierce, obscene, lazy, suspicious, rude, irritable and envy. All of these negative personality traits were also selected and modified based on Model 5 Factors (Big Five Model).

The arrogant personality was chosen as negative personality in this study based on the sub-domain in *Agreeableness* domain, which was *Modesty*. This sub-domain carries a good character, while the selection of arrogance is the opposite character in *Modesty* domain. This sub-domain describes a simple and humble individual, while the opposite character is arrogant. Those who are arrogant will tend to show off everything they have. Prejudice personality was chosen based on the domain *Agreeableness* and its sub-domain *Trust*. This sub-domain carries good character, while the selection of prejudice portrays the opposite trait. The sub-domain *Trust* describes an individual's trust in others, while prejudice is the opposite trait. Subsequently, the fierce nature was chosen based on the *Angry* sub-domain of *Neuroticism* domain. This sub-domain carries the nature of inclination to anger, disappointment and hate. Individuals with this sub-domain are described as fierce.

Meanwhile, behaviours that are obscene, lewd, and talking about sexual matter comes from the sub-domain *Impulsiveness* in the *Neuroticism* domain. This sub-domain carries the personality of inability to control extreme and strong desire to do something. Individuals with this behavior are said to be unable to control their will and desire causing them to think negatively and tend to utter obscene words. Similarly, the behavior of lazy is taken from the *Depression* sub-domain in the *Neuroticism* domain. This sub-domain carries the tendency to feel stress, depression, sadness, loneliness and live in despair. Individuals with this behavior easily feel discouraged and depressed. These behaviors lead to laziness. Suspicious personality was taken from the sub-domain *Anxiety* in the *Neuroticism* domain. Individuals with this sub-domain have a high tendency to be nervous, tense and live in fear.

Vulnerability is a sub-domain *Neuroticism*. This sub-domain describes the inability to face stress, rely on others, feeling frustrated, easily feel guilty and panics easily. An individual with this personality is not able to deal with stress and difficulty in a situation. Subsequently, the offensive nature is from the Self-consciousness sub-domain of Neuroticism. This sub-domain illustrates shy individuals, who are uncomfortable in the crowd, overly sensitive with an inferiority complex. Individuals in this category really care about the perception of others. They are sensitive to certain things and other people. While the nature of envy refers to the sub-domain Impulsiveness in the Neuroticism domain. This sub-domain carries the inability to control extreme desire and strong impulses in doing something. Individuals with this nature are unable to control their will and desires.

Fasting of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and the Companions

The fasting of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH was followed by the companions and then followed by the believers of Islam. The Messenger of Allah and the companions not only restrained hunger, thirst, sexual relations during the day, but they also guarded their tongue, eyes, ears, nose and other body parts from all acts of immorality and futility. Here are the practices of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his companions during fasting:

Careful with One's Words

One who is fasting kept his tongue from telling lies, saying filthy, abusive words that could hurt the other person, guarding his tongue from *ghibah*, complaining and defaming others, but only saying good words, truth or kept on silent. The fasting person should refrain from saying something bad. Those who fast in the real sense do not fight, protest, censure or to spread the slander (Ali Budak 2005). The Prophet Muhammad said, "If anyone invites him to quarrel or abusive, then he should say: 'I am fasting.'" (Sahih Bukhari No. 1798). Staying away from lies and uttering rude words clarify that blessings are exclusively for those who are fasting. Besides avoiding food and drink, they also abstain from sexual desires and avoid any dirty and unpleasant behavior (Mohammad Zakir Hossain 2012).

Keep Eyes Safe-Guarded

The Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his companions were so careful with their eyes from seeing all those which were forbidden by the *Shari'ah*, such as naked women or men who were not *muhrim*. It is also applicable for Muslims to safe-guard their eyesight either directly or indirectly while watching pictures, photos, television and so on. They should be aware that the eyes are the devil's archer, so if it is left unprotected, humans will tend to follow it towards bad deeds. True Muslims should hold their eyes especially when fasting from seeing things that are prohibited because the eyes could bring in poisonous debris that can seep into the heart and the soul (Ali Budak, 2005).

Safe-Guard One's Hearing

Safeguard one's hearing is important when he or she is fasting. The ears need to be protected from hearing something that leads to vices, such as vain discussions and listening to songs that

neglect the remembrance of Allah SWT. In the month of Ramadan, the Prophet and his companions closed their ears from all voices that could disturb them from thoughts of Allah SWT. Instead, they open their ears to listen to the holy verses of the Qur'an and religious advices or sermons. Being engrossed in doing good deeds by itself will reduce one from hearing something worthless that can lessen the rewards of fasting.

Relationships Between Voluntary Fasting Six-Days During Syawal with The Change of Personality

There are several features related to those are who fasting the voluntary six-days during Syawal and the change of personality:

Thrifty

Fasting is a worship that can encourage and train people to save money (Ali Budak 2005). It is because their desires and lusts can be controlled when fasting. Fasting can save pocket money as it will ultimately cut down the expenses on food and unnecessary enjoyment. Thus, by fasting it helps people to stabilize their financial status and encourage people to save money in daily life (Mohammad Zakir Hossain 2012).

Calm versus Anger

Calm is the personality of a heavenly person. While a constantly angry man can cause many problems that can lead him to hell. To control anger, fasting can provide inner strength as it restricts lust from being wild. The Word of Allah SWT in surah Ali-Imran verse 134 which means, "Those who donate their wealth in times of ease and sadness, and those who hold back anger, and those who forgive the wrongdoers. And Allah loves Those who do good things. The power of control makes the individual calmer and less angry. Fasting will passive desires include feelings of anguish (Ali Budak 2005).

Trust versus Betrayal of Promises or Trust

Fasting makes a Muslim trustworthy and does not betray the promise or trust he was entrusted with. This is because, fasting is an agreement between the servant and his Lord (Ali Budak 2005). One promises to perform fasting from the beginning of the morning until sunset, and this educates the individual to endure and hold on to the promise of fulfilling the fasting.

Seeking Rewards and Avoiding Sins

Fasting is an activity to seek rewards and avoid sins. According to al-Ghazali (2009), fasting makes one have a strong will of power to resist lust and perform good deeds. He is able to control the mind and body to do good and keep himself from sin or misguided from the right path. Fasting acts as a shield that prevents a person from obeying his desires (Ali Budak 2005). For example, a person who is not able to marry is advised to fast to control his lust. Hence, fasting can refrain one from engaging with out-of-wedlock sexual relationships. In addition,

people who fast are promised the reward of drinking water from *Kawthar* wells where he will never feel thirsty forever. There is also a gate of heaven devoted to those who love fasting. Hence, for this paper, two hypotheses have been constructed:

Hypothesis 1: Voluntary Fasting in Syawal predicts positively and significantly with positive personality changes.

Hypothesis 2: Voluntary Fasting in Syawal predicts negatively and significantly with the change of negative personality.

METHODOLOGY

The research design is longitudinal, because this method can be analyzed through experience (Elizabeth 1978). Longitudinal means longitudinal data with long-term analysis, which can measure the difference or change in variables from one period to another. The purpose of using this method is to determine the pattern of change over a period of time and can be used to find the causes of a social phenomenon (Menard 1991).

Since this study is a longitudinal study, the data collected for each change is in two or more specific periods. The subject being analyzed is the same, and involves the same analysis of comparative data in a given period (Ruspini 2000). This statistical gain can be used to understand diversity in populations and determine changes in individual rankings (Hedeker & Gibbons 2006). Furthermore, when conducting a diary-shaped study, there are several ways to collect data (Green et al. 2006) and in this study, diary data collection methods or experiential sampling was chosen.

Instruments

The study used a questionnaire in the form of a diary or a booklet. The questionnaire used a Likert Scale with a scale of 1-5 for all parts except Part A (demographics). The size of the scale is 1 (not at all/very weak), up to 5 (very much/very good). The diary consists of four sections: Part A (Demography), Part B (Positive Personality), Part C (Negative Personality) Part D (Quality of Fasting).

Part B: Positive Personality

This section was to measure personality throughout the month of Ramadan.

This section was divided into two parts namely positive personality and negative personality. The scale 1-5 were used in this section, ie 1 (Not at all) and 5 (Very much). The items measured in this section were;

- I care about others.
- I am patient with others.
- I am good with others.
- I am diligent in work today.
- I am wise today.
- I am friendly with others.

Part C: Negative personality

The scale 1-5 were used in this section, ie 1 (not at all) and 5 (Very much). The items measured in this section were;

- I am arrogant with others.
- I am prejudiced badly toward others.
- I am fierce with others.
- I speak obscene to others.
- I'm lazy to do something.
- I feel suspicious towards someone.
- I am rude to other people.
- I feel offended today.
- I feel envious towards others.

Part D: The Quality of Fasting

This part questions the quality of respondents' fasting on a daily basis. The items were measured using the scale 1 to 5 asking on the quality of prayers, the quality of remembrance for Allah (zikr) and the quality of fasting itself.

Participants

Total of 111 participants were total number of questionnaires distributed over 400 diaries. The number of successful diaries collected decreased considerably over the volume of circulation due to the consent of the respondents to remain in the study as it requires strong commitment. Hence, the number decreased at the end of the study, while the study also issued an incomplete respondent's diary for the purpose of accuracy of the study results. All 111 selected respondents were from 9 faculties in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). The 111 participants were Muslims. The table below presents the details of the participants.

Gender	Male	Female	Not Stated	Total
Number	18	91	2	111
Percent	16.2%	82.0 %	0.8%	100%

The age range of participants in this study were between 20 years old to 53 years old. Most of participants aged between 20 to 30 years with 103 participants (92.8%), followed by 31 to 40 years old with 6 participants (5.4%). Meanwhile, those over the age of 41 and above were 2 participants (1.8%).

Procedure

The procedure for this study was designed during the month of Syaaban, before the month of Ramadan and before the semester break for university students. The procedure of this study started with a short briefing to the participants, followed by distribution of diaries to participants who were interested to participate in the study. All participants were then informed that they will be reminded every day through the 'WhatsApp Group' to fill in the diary. Finally, all the diary was collected after the month of Syawal at Pusat Citra, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

The data was analyzed using the Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) software. In order to meet the needs of the Multilevel Modeling analysis, several preliminary steps need to be

considered, namely test of intra-class coefficients (ICC), inter-rater reliability testing ($r(wg)$) and FIII testing. All three tests were conducted to ensure that the quality of Syawal fasting can be aggregated between individuals (level 2).

ICC value (1) is the value of variability among individuals and it is used when measurements are made on units within a group. It also refers to the strength of units in the same group and is interconnected with each other (Koch 1982). This test has been verified using a null model in hierarchical linear modeling (HLM). ICC values (1) need to be between 0.05 to 0.20 (Peugh 2010) or greater than 0.15 (Mathieu et al. 2012). The results showed that the value of ICC (1) for the quality of Syawal fasting was 0.78, according to Mathieu et al., (2012). The ICC value (1) shows that 78% variants in the Syawal fasting quality variables are caused by individual factors.

The min test ($r(wg)$) is to assess the homogeneity among the predicted individuals. It also refers to the consistent and relative consensus made by various assessors from various targets (Bliese 2000; LeBreton et al. 2003). The mean value ($r(wg)$) must reach value of 0.70 and above, indicating that the value is sufficient for the consent of the individual (Mathieu et al. 2007). The results of the test ($r(wg)$) found that the value of the quality of fasting was 0.76 (standard deviation (SD) = 0.04), indicating that there was a uniformity of 76% among individuals in the Syawal fasting quality variant (James et al. 1984).

The decision to test FIII needs to be significant. The FIII test is a one-way random effects analysis of the variance (ANOVA) among the individuals studied. It refers to the variance of variance between the individuals being studied. In this study, the FIII test shows that each individual has a uniqueness on each of the variables studied. The test results found that the FIII value for the quality of the fasting is 23.13 ($p < .001$).

FINDINGS

This set of questionnaires has been tested on the validity and reliability of the items. The results show that all variables in this questionnaire have an acceptable Alpha Cronbach (α) value of the Syawal fasting quality variable ($\alpha = 0.874$) representing 18 items and positive personality ($\alpha = 0.974$) representing 36 items, and negative personality ($\alpha = 0.969$) representing 54 items. All of these items represent the number of repeating questions for 6 days in the month of Syawal. Table 1 showed the value of mean, standard deviation and correlation between the individual and individual variables at each individual level, the value of FIII and ICC (1).

TABLE 1. Min, standard deviation and correlation between variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	F _{III}	ICC(1)
1. Quality of Syawal voluntary fasting	2.10	.90	1	.39**	-.24**	23.13***	.78
2. Positive Personality	3.43	.75	.34**	1	-.43**	17.45***	.73
3. Negative Personality	1.47	.52	-.23**	-.42**	1	15.14***	.71

Note: *Top corner*, aggregate; *Lower corner*, individual. ($N = 111$ individual, 9 faculty).

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

The findings for Hypothesis 1 show that the quality of Syawal voluntary fasting was positively and significantly correlated with positive personality with the value of 0.34 ($p < 0.01$). While the finding for Hypothesis 2 shows that the quality of Syawal fasting is negatively and significantly correlated with negative personality with value -0.23 ($p < 0.01$). The findings stated in Table 2 below indicated that there are relationships between the quality of fasting in Syawal with the positive personality and the negative personality respectively. Hierarchical

Linear Modeling (HLM) software were used to analyze this data. The results of the HLM test are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 below:

TABLE 2. The randomized multilevel model of the Fasting Qualities at Level 2 predicts Level 1 (between varian group)

	Positive Personality			Negative Personality		
	Γ	S.E	T	Γ	S.E	T
Quality of Syawal fasting	.34	.08	4.30***	-.23	.07	-3.23**

Note: N = 111 individual 9 faculty, * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed)
 γ = estimated parameter, S.E. = Standard Error, t-ratio.

TABLE 3. Results of the HLM analysis of the cross-effects of the Fasting Quality of Syawal to the lower level

Model	Positive Personality	Negative Personality
	1	2
Cross-impact effect		
Fasting Quality of Syawal	0.34 (0.08)***	-0.23 (0.07)**

Note: N = 111 individual, 9 faculty, * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed)

The first value is the estimated parameter, and the value in the bracket is the standard error

As a result of the HLM test, the study found that the hypothesis 1 shows the quality of voluntary fasting in Syawal has a positive and significant relationship with positive personality. The findings of the Hypothesis 1 were ($\gamma = 0.34$, SE = 0.08, $t = 4.30$, $p < 0.001$; Table 2 and Table 3, Model 1). Hence, this hypothesis was accepted. While HLM test result for hypothesis 2 shows that the quality of fasting in Syawal has a negative and significant relationship with negative personality. The findings of the Hypothesis 2 were ($\gamma = -0.23$, SE = 0.07, $t = -3.23$, $p < 0.002$; Table 2 and Table 3, Model 2). Hence, this hypothesis 2 was also accepted. These findings suggest that when the respondents performed the six days voluntary fasting in the month of Syawal, they tend to have more positive personality and lesser negative personality. The final model is illustrated here:

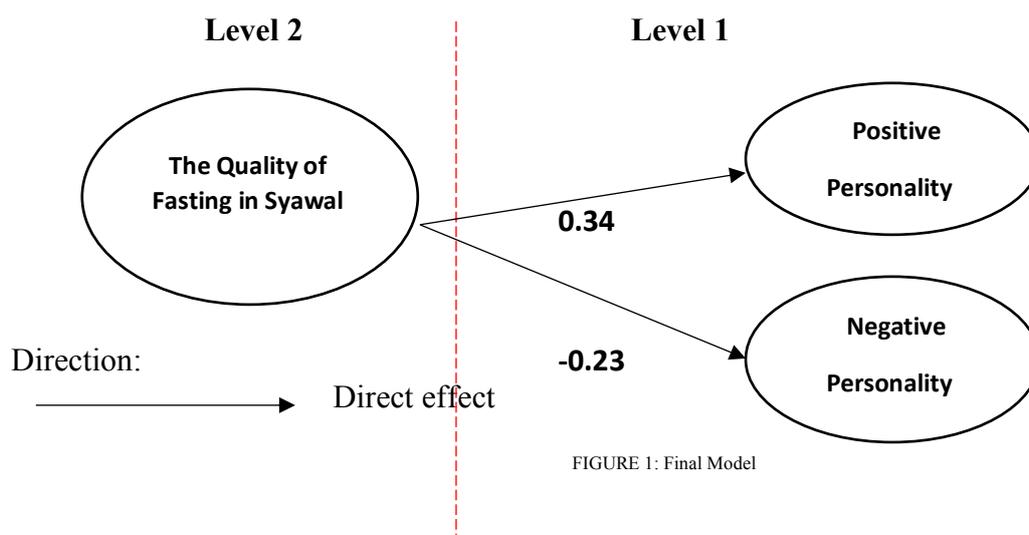


FIGURE 1: Final Model

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of this study, there is evidence that after the completion of fasting a month in Ramadan and continued with the six-days voluntary fasting in the month of Syawal

could have an impact on the positive personality and a decline in negative personality. Based on analysis result, it is shown that changes for positive personality show a positive and significant relationship (0.34 ***). While for positive personality changes also showed a negative and significant relationship (-0.23 **). This result showed it is in line with all the predictions in this study which is *sunnah* fasting in the month of Syawal can improve the positive personality and reduce negative personality. The increase and decrease of these personality figures show that the fasting in Syawal's *sunnah* gives positive effects.

Establish Good Morals

According to this study, voluntary six-days fasting in the month of Syawal proves that it could establish good morals among the respondents. Among the good morals are caring about others, patience, doing good, diligent and efficient in work, wise and friendliness. Besides that, through fasting, it encouraged them to become more grateful, able to control and refrain themselves from doing acts forbidden by Allah SWT. Other than that, fasting also can encourage us to gain confidence and understand the meaning of performing fasting as it can develop us to strive with *istiqamah* and consistency. Fasting also teaches us to seek for forgiveness and realize that Allah is The Al-mighty thus human will fast with sincere and pure heart because Allah SWT (Yusuf 2000).

Similarly, fasting is a worship that can be seen as a *jihad* as fasting is a battle with ourselves known as *jihad al-akbar* that is a *jihad* between desire and lust (Laleh Bahktiar, 1995). In addition, fasting can develop our inner souls as thru fasting we can reflect ourselves as fasting really reaches the inner depths of the human being, which supports the development of noble personality (Zakiah Daradjat 1990). Hence, by performing the six-day fasting in the month of Syawal it can teach us to do good deeds, thereby reducing bad practices and personality.

Patience

The practice of fasting six-days in Syawal should be acknowledged as they also teach ourselves to become more patient according Prophet Muhammad. It is because patience is one of human attitude that Allah SWT test. Fasting can also help to obtain patience and determination. Allah SWT has mentioned the keyword of patience more than seventy times in the Quran as when someone is fasting, they will automatically not take any food and drinks and spouses will not have sex during fasting are considered to be learning to become patient (Mohammad Zakir Hossain, 2012). The beneficial effect on fasting is great because it requires a lot of patience in a person. Narrated by Tirmidzi and Ibn Majah, the Prophet said, "Fasting is half patience." (Imam al-Ghazali, 2009). As patience itself is developed, it will encourage a person to do good deeds.

More Efficient

Thru fasting, it has a great effect on the process of autophagy in which cells regenerate so that it can function the best it can as our stomach and intestine is in rest state. Islam encourages people to fast as it can increase the fitness of our body thus become healthier as the digestion process is slowed down. Fasting can also help your body fight off common sickness and improve your health as it accumulates energy. It is because when the digestion process in the stomach works for a year, through fasting it can rest during the day thus store energy in the

body (Mohammad Zakir Hossain 2012). In addition, fasting also helps a person to lose weight (Jasem Ramadan Alkandari et al. 2012).

When the stomach is empty, a person will easily able to control his mind, heart and lust. Thus, fasting can discipline one morally; an exercise to teach people to be patient and endure difficult trials during fasting, and improve self-reliance (Mohammad Zakir Hossain 2012). This is proven in this study where the respondents were able to lessen the negative personality of prejudice, saying obscene words, laziness, suspicion, rude, offensive and envious towards others, after performing the voluntary six-days fasting in the month of Syawal.

CONCLUSION

Fasting in Ramadan is a duty, while the voluntary fasting in Syawal is a manifestation of one's love to Allah SWT. This study provides evidence that voluntary fasting in the month of Syawal increases positive personality and decreases the negative personality among the research respondents. The practice of fasting in Syawal forms a Muslim personality who loves Allah SWT and the Messenger of Allah as well as committed to the perfection of the Ramadan fasting by educating the soul not to delay in fulfilling the rights of Allah SWT. For the believers, they are encouraged to pay Ramadan's fasting debt (*qada'* due to menstruation or sickness) in advance before commencing the voluntary six-days fasting in Syawal. The habit of 'paying' the fasting debt earlier makes the Muslims become more steadfast, timely and responsible. This final statement is for other researchers to conduct more studies related to fasting in the future.

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