Nominal Group Technique Application Towards the Formation of *A Orang Asli Tok Batin* Muslim Spiritual Leadership Model

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Abstract

This article discusses the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) as an alternative strategy for developing a list of elements for the spiritual leadership model of Tok Batin Muslim. This serves as an alternative to address the shortcomings and enhance the leadership structure of the current indigenous people. The technique has been applied by researchers to construct a list of key elements in the spiritual leadership model of Tok Batin Muslim during the development phase through expert consensus in identifying and accepting the content elements of the model. The study finding shows the total scores for the leadership philosophy component obtained from respondents' views through the survey questionnaire, which is 72 with a percentage value of 93.5%. The total score for the general principles component is 70 with a percentage of 90.9%. The total score for the leadership dimension of *al-Qalb* is 72 with a percentage of 93.5%. The total score for the leadership dimension of *al-aql* is 71 with a percentage of 92.2%. The total score for the leadership dimension of *nafs* is 71 with a percentage of 92.2%, while the total score for the leadership dimension of external behavior is 71 with a percentage of 92.2%. Furthermore, the research findings indicate that the NGT technique has assisted researchers in quickly and easily validating elements because these elements were developed through literature review, subsequent discussions, and expert consensus. The application of the NGT technique also adds diversity to research methods in Malaysia, particularly in the field of indigenous studies.

Keywords: Nominal Group Technique, Tok Batin Orang Asli Muslim, Spiritual Leadership Model.

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas Teknik Kelompok Nominal (NGT) sebagai strategi alternatif untuk mengembangkan daftar elemen untuk model kepemimpinan spiritual Tok Batin Muslim. Ini berfungsi sebagai alternatif untuk mengatasi kekurangan dan meningkatkan struktur kepemimpinan masyarakat adat saat ini. Teknik ini telah diterapkan oleh para peneliti untuk menyusun daftar elemen kunci dalam model kepemimpinan spiritual Tok Batin Orang Asli Muslim selama fase pengembangan melalui konsensus pakar dalam mengidentifikasi dan menerima elemen-elemen kontennya. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan skor total untuk komponen filsafat kepemimpinan yang diperoleh dari pandangan responden melalui kuesioner survei adalah 72 dengan nilai persentase sebesar 93,5%. Skor total untuk komponen prinsip-prinsip umum adalah 70 dengan persentase sebesar 90,9%. Skor total untuk dimensi kepemimpinan al-Qalb adalah 72 dengan persentase sebesar 93,5%. Skor total untuk dimensi kepemimpinan al-aql adalah 71 dengan persentase sebesar 92,2%. Skor total untuk dimensi kepemimpinan nafs adalah 71 dengan persentase sebesar 92,2%, sementara skor total untuk dimensi kepemimpinan perilaku eksternal adalah 71 dengan persentase sebesar 92,2%. Selain itu, temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa teknik NGT telah membantu para peneliti dengan cepat dan mudah memvalidasi elemen-elemen karena elemen-elemen ini dikembangkan melalui tinjauan literatur, diskusi selanjutnya, dan konsensus pakar. Penerapan teknik NGT juga menambah keragaman dalam metode penelitian di Malaysia, khususnya dalam bidang studi pribumi.

Kata Kunci: *Nominal Group Technique, Model Kepimpinan Kerohanian, Tok Batin Orang Asli Muslim*

Background

Spiritual leadership of a tok batin refers to the role of a tok batin in a community or indigenous society that adheres to traditional beliefs or religions. A tok batin is a spiritual or religious leader who is responsible for overseeing spiritual matters, rituals, and beliefs within the Indigenous community.

In most Indigenous communities, traditionally, there is no formal leadership structure in any form. Most Indigenous communities are egalitarian,

which means that generally, there are no individuals in the community who have power or influence greater than others. They state that Indigenous leaders lack exposure and education in the field of modern administration and leadership.

Leadership in the spiritual realm within Indigenous communities is a highly significant and complex role. It involves the role of the Indigenous tok batin who bears the responsibility for key aspects of spiritual and cultural life within their community. However, there are several issues related to Indigenous spiritual leadership, such as the preservation of traditions, the influence of external religions, and differences in knowledge.

In this regard, this study is related to the usability assessment of the spiritual leadership model of Muslim Orang Asli tok batin in Selangor. This paper represents the third phase of the study, which is the usability assessment phase. Through the Design and Development Research (DDR) approach used, there are three phases employed in the study, namely, needs analysis, model development, and usability assessment.

The initial phase, which involved needs analysis using interview method, was conducted with 6 informants comprising 3 tok batin and 3 representatives of the Orang Asli Community (PMOA) in 3 Orang Asli villages. The study results indicated a significant need for the development of this model. There were several deficiencies and issues, especially within the Indigenous leadership structure. Some of the problems identified included the preservation of traditions, the influence of external religions, and differences in knowledge. Therefore, this clearly demonstrates a strong need to develop the spiritual leadership model for Muslim Orang Asli tok batin with the goal of ensuring continuous leadership quality and positive impact on the Indigenous Community's leadership structure.

In the second phase of this research, Literature Review Analysis and the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM) was used to develop the model. However, FDM requires consensus agreement on the ideas and issues presented by a group of experts in the field. Therefore, the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) method was used to discuss the issues and validate the elements selected before the implementation of the FDM process. Additionally, the priority order of elements for each main component in the model was also determined for analysis using FDM in the model development process. After the model was formed, the next step was usability assessment in the third phase. For this purpose, the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) method was used to assess the views of practitioners on the model that had been developed. The following Fig. 1 is a flowchart related to the method used in this study.

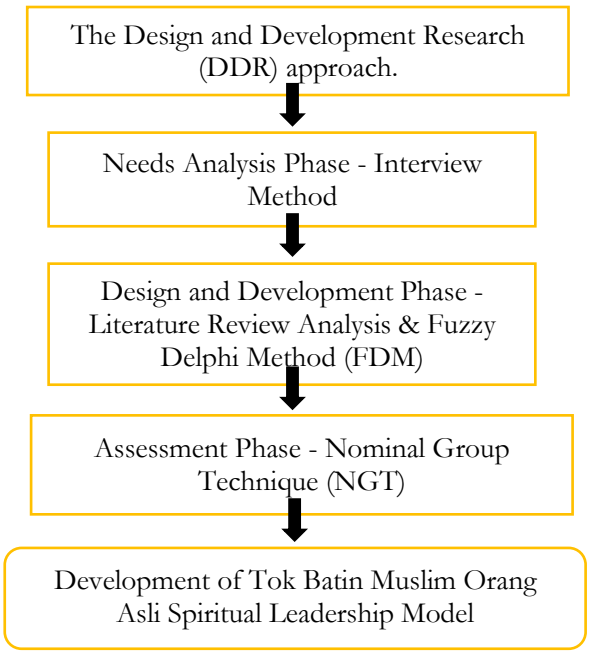

Figure 1: Research Flowchart

Nominal Group Technique

The Nominal Group Technique is a collaborative process used for idea generation within a small (Dang, 2015), face-to-face group (Horton, 1980), aiming to make decisions and establish priorities in a structured manner (McMillan et al., 2016). It is employed to address complex issues that involve a degree of quantification while maintaining a qualitative aspect. This technique begins with a qualitative brainstorming session and then proceeds to quantitatively sequence ideas based on their priority.

The method provides both a percentage-based representation and an assessment of experts'

acceptance levels for each element, thereby determining their relative importance. Consequently, the Nominal Group Technique promotes idea generation by all group members, encourages active participation, prevents any single individual from dominating discussions, and minimizes the influence of individual opinions on other group members.

Development of Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) has evolved and been employed by numerous researchers as a tool to achieve specific goals in the research world. Many researchers have adapted and customized the NGT process to suit the studies they were conducting. However, the fundamental principles that underpin the NGT process have remained intact, consisting of two main stages: (1) problem identification through discussion and (2) voting to reach quick decisions (A Muqsith Ahmad et al., 2017).

Furthermore, Harvey and Holmes (2012) describe that NGT necessitates direct participant involvement, either face-to-face or in workshops, where participants are given an equal opportunity to voice their opinions, and all questions related to the issue at hand carry equal validity. In other words, it is a means to achieve consensus in decision-making (Harvey & Holmes, 2012).

Additionally, to gather ideas on the raised issues, this occurs in a silent environment, without discussion with other participants or seeking clarification from the researcher. This allows participants to generate their own thoughts and ideas without interference or pressure from others, reducing dependence on fellow members who may be unwilling to assist and could potentially disrupt the overall process[1].

Study Sample

There are various opinions regarding the appropriate sample size for using the NGT method. However, most of them suggest a sample size that is not too large, typically not exceeding hundreds of participants. If NGT is conducted with a large group, it can be divided into smaller groups to facilitate more effective communication. This is crucial to achieve the research objectives more efficiently (Lomax & McLeman, 1984). Table 1 below illustrates the sample sizes recommended by previous researchers.

Table 1. Sample size of past researcher's NGT

Researcher	Sample Size
Van de Ven & Delbecq (1971)	5 – 9 participants & 9 – 200 participants
Horton (1980)	7 – 10 individuals
Steward (2001)	5 – 8 participants
Allen et al (2004), Odu & Okereke (2012)	9 – 12 participants
Harvey & Holmes (2012)	6 – 12 participants
Carney et al (1996)	Min. 6 participants
Dang (2015)	6 participants
Kuo-Hung et al. (2006)	13 participants
Mohd Ridhuan (2016)	21 participants
Abdullah & Islam (2011)	7 – 10 participants
Habibah et al. (2016)	7 – 14 participants
Abdul Muqsith (2017)	8 participants
Norhayati (2020)	13 participants
Syahrizan (2020)	8 participants

In addition, several criteria should be met in the selection of participants based on the recommendations of Abdullah and Islam (2011), where participants involved should be individuals with extensive knowledge in the field under study, coming from diverse backgrounds (Muhammad Madi & Rafikul Islam, 2011). This allows participants to share perspectives on issues from different angles and provide varied viewpoints. Individuals who tend to criticize and judge the ideas of others during meetings are not recommended to participate in discussion sessions (Thor, 1987).

Furthermore, for participants who are experts in the field, the following are criteria that can also be applied, as suggested by Siti Farhah and Saedah (2015), to determine participant criteria involved in group discussions: (i) individuals with extensive knowledge and background or experience in the

[1] McMurray, A.R. (1994). Three Decision–making Aids: Brainstorming, Nominal Group and Delphi Technique. *Journal for Nurses in Staff Development*, 10(2), 62-65.

relevant field of study; (ii) willingness and availability to participate; (iii) effective communication skills; (iv) more than 5 years of experience (Siti Farhah & Saedah, 2015).

Nominal Group Technique (NGT) workshop preparation

The selection of the venue for the NGT session is crucial to facilitate the generation of quality ideas. Ensure that the chosen location is comfortable and conducive. Tables should be arranged in a 'U' shape to facilitate discussions. Participants should also be provided with workshop materials such as pencils, pens, paper, relevant notes, and any necessary accessories.

There are several key aspects of the introductory session that should be the responsibility of the selected moderator. (1) Delivering welcoming remarks to all participants; (2) stating the workshop's objectives or its significance; (3) introducing each participant involved along with their expertise; (4) the moderator explaining guidelines regarding the NGT process to ensure all participants understand; (5) explaining how the discussion outcomes will be utilized.

Nominal Group Technique (NGT) process

For this study, the selected experts were brought together in a workshop to facilitate the research. The workshop was conducted with a moderator to streamline the communication process. The NGT process began with the researcher initially listing a set of suitable activity elements for the application of Islamic leadership philosophy in the spiritual leadership of Muslim Tok Batin among the Orang Asli in Selangor, Malaysia. This initial list was generated through a combination of literature review and expert discussions and served as a starting point for the workshop session. This approach allowed the discussion time to be condensed. However, the experts could provide feedback on whether they agreed or disagreed with the initial list of activity elements presented. Only activities that achieved unanimous agreement were included in the developed model. Experts were also allowed to suggest additional ideas they deemed necessary for the model.

There are several basic steps in conducting NGT as outlined in Table 2, as recommended by Mohd Ridhuan (2016), Mohd Paris (2016), and Dang (2015):

Table 2. NGT Process

Phase	Activity
1.Explanatory Phase	After selecting the discussion venue, th facilitator should explain the role of eacl group member, the NGT implementation procedures, and clarif how the discussion outcomes will b used. Each participant is then provide with a sheet of paper containin questions specifically designed for th discussion session. These questions ca be given in advance and should b expressed in clear and simple language focusing on the topic of discussion. Thi introductory stage takes approximatel 15 minutes. The large group is the divided into smaller groups of aroun five to six members each. Each smal group should ideally sit at a separat table.
2.Silent Phase (Idea Generation Phase)	Each member is then asked to individually generate ideas about the proposed problem's solution and record them. Participants are not allowed to interact with each other to avoid the tendency to reach consensus within the group. This stage takes approximately 10 minutes. However, the study conducted by Perry and Linsley (2006) allocated only five minutes for this stage (Perry & Linsley, 2006).
3.Round Robin Phase (Idea Presentation Phase)	The third stage of NGT involves sharing ideas among all group members. All ideas generated by group members are recorded on a whiteboard or Flipchart and presented to all group members. Ideas and suggestions put forward should use short phrases or brief sentences without elaboration. There is no discussion at this stage to ensure that group members are given an equal opportunity to add or suggest ideas without being influenced by anyone. One idea is written by each member at a time in turn, and this step is repeated

	until all the ideas of the group members have been recorded. The suggestions and ideas put forward are considered as the group's collective output. This stage takes approximately 25 to 30 minutes.
4.Explanation Phase	The facilitator will read each item, and each item will be briefly explained. This process takes five to 10 minutes. Group members can provide explanations or comments on any item, but the facilitator must ensure that any comments or criticisms given are not in the form of judgments. If there is an overlap between the ideas of group members, those ideas can be merged with the consensus of the majority, as items that overlap with each other can only be removed at the discretion of the group members. This process takes 20 to 30 minutes.
5.Voting Phase	In the voting phase, each group member will evaluate all items and individually vote or select their preferred ideas. Blank cards will be distributed to each group member, and they need to write down five ideas they consider most important. The best idea is given five marks, followed by four marks, and so on. The cards will be collected, and the total scores for each item will be calculated based on the priority rankings provided by the group members. This is one of the strengths of the NGT technique because it encourages participants to assess the importance of all listed items. In other words, only ideas or items that are truly relevant will be voted on. This process actually reinforces the consideration of each group member in a controlled and democratic manner. The suggested time for this stage is approximately two minutes per item.

Meanwhile, Islam (2003) and Odu (2017) have stated that to make the NGT session successful, the following aspects should be emphasized: no criticism of any idea during the session; extraordinary and original ideas are preferable; in idea generation, the quality of ideas is prioritized; exploration, modification, and a mix of ideas are required; idea anonymity; deep discussion suspension until all ideas are presented (Islam, 2004) [2].

Advantages and Disadvantages of Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

In any introduced technique, there are certainly advantages and disadvantages in its application. Table 3 shows here are the advantages and disadvantages of the NGT method (Dang, 2015; Odu, 2017; Delbecq et al, 1975; Abdullah and Islam, 2011):

Table 3. Advantages & Disadvantages of NGT

Advantages	Disadvantages
The NGT method is more structured compared to traditional approaches.	Topics discussed through NGT are limited to one issue at a time.
All participants are given equal opportunities in the discussion	NGT takes a long time (90 minutes) to reach a consensus.
NGT can be used in both small and large groups.	NGT requires an experienced moderator to facilitate the discussion session.
Usually, the quality of ideas selected in the final session is very high. In fact, many studies have shown that the quality of NGT ideas is better than other decision-making techniques.	
Participants do not appear foolish in front of others. This clearly demonstrates that NGT maintains transparency by not naming the participants involved.	
NGT helps any group that is unable to reach a consensus on an issue. In addition, NGT requires a meeting room equipped with the proper seating arrangement and other materials.	

[2] Odu, O.G., and Okereke, N. (2012). The Application of Nominal Group Technique as a Decision Making tool. *Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences*, vol. 4, Pg. 61-66.

Research Findings & Discussion

The researcher applied the NGT method during the usability assessment phase of the Spiritual Leadership Model of Tok Batin Muslim Orang Asli. The main components of the model include the aspects of leadership philosophy, general principles, leadership components in the dimension of *al-Qalb*, leadership components in the dimension of *al-aql'*, leadership components in the dimension of *Nafs*, and leadership components in external behavior, as shown in Table 4. According to Williams et. al, (2006) in this phase, the existing NGT technique was modified because, in addition to saving time, it was also effective in determining the views or perceptions of individuals related to specific topics (Williams et al., 2006) .

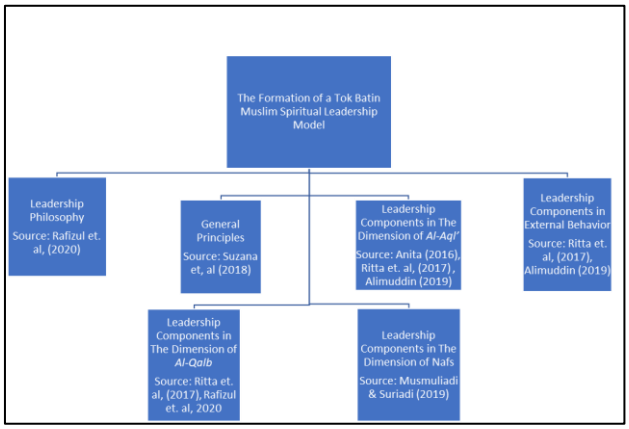

Figure 1. Main Components in the Spiritual Leadership Model of Tok Batin Muslim Orang Asli.

The main components of the model in Table 4, including leadership philosophy, general principles, leadership components in the dimension of *al-Qalb*, leadership components in the dimension of *al-aql'*, leadership components in the dimension of *Nafs*, and leadership components in external behavior, were developed based on the consensus of Fuzzy Delphi experts appointed during the model development phase. This phase was carried out before the usability assessment phase using the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM). FDM was applied to obtain consensus among the experts, who were separately appointed as respondents, to create a suitable and more quantitatively characterized instrument. The validity and reliability of the NGT technique (modified NGT) data are based on the consensus of Fuzzy Delphi experts in generating the main components of the Spiritual Leadership Model of Muslim Orang Asli Tok Batin. While the Delphi technique assesses expert consensus on a narratively constructed research instrument (qualitative) and is measured through the level of expert agreement on items, the FDM technique demonstrates expert consensus through the Threshold (d) values in quantitative form.

In the usability workshop conducted, the researchers obtained information about the assessment of the main components of the Islamic education teacher model by distributing a Likert scale questionnaire to the respondents. The presentation of the main components of the model, as shown in Table 4, was conducted first before distributing the questionnaire. Study participants were then asked to provide their views, which were translated into the provided usability questionnaire. Some of the questions included in the questionnaire are as shown in table 4.

Table 4. Usability Questions to Measure the Usability of the Main Components in the Spiritual Leadership of Tok Batin Muslim Orang Asli Model

Based on your experience, please provide feedback by marking each item according to the following scale:

Highly Inappropriate	Highly Inappropriate	Inappropriate	Moderately Appropriate	Approriate	Highly Appropriate	Highly Appropriate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Do you agree with the MAIN COMPONENTS listed below to be components of the SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP OF TOK BATIN MUSLIM in managing the leadership of the Orang Asli MODEL?

	MAIN COMPONENT	SCALE						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Leadership Philosophy							
2.	General Principles							
3.	Leadership Components in The Dimension of *Al-Qalb*							
4.	Leadership Components in The Dimension of *Al-Aql'*							
5.	Leadership Components in The Dimension of *Nafs*							
6	Leadership Components in External Behavior							

Based on table 4, the agreement and suitability values in the questionnaire marked by the study participants will provide a score for each evaluated component. These scores will be converted into percentages to interpret whether each main component evaluated is suitable and usable or otherwise. The acceptance of usability and suitability of the main components of the spiritual leadership of Tok Batin Orang Asli Muslim model will be assessed based on the percentage score values. Table 6 shows the data findings for the

usability assessment of the main components of the model.

Table 6. Findings of the Usability Assessment of Main Components in the Spiritual Leadership of Tok Batin Muslim Orang Asli Model

Num.	Main Component	Total Score	(%)	Evaluation Status
1	Leadership Philosophy	72	93.5	Suitable
2	General Principles	70	90.9	Suitable
3	Leadership Components in The Dimension of Al-Qalb	72	93.5	Suitable
4	Leadership Components in The Dimension of Al-Aql'	71	92.2	Suitable
5	Leadership Components in The Dimension of Nafs	71	92.2	Suitable
6	Leadership Components in External Behavior	71	92.2	Suitable

*Percentage of usability ≥ 70.0%

Table 6 shows the total scores for the leadership philosophy component obtained from respondents' views through the survey questionnaire, which is 72 with a percentage value of 93.5%. The total score for the general principles component is 70 with a percentage of 90.9%. The total score for the leadership dimension of *al-Qalb* is 72 with a percentage of 93.5%. The total score for the leadership dimension of *al-aql* is 71 with a percentage of 92.2%. The total score for the leadership dimension of *nafs* is 71 with a percentage of 92.2%, while the total score for the leadership dimension of external behavior is 71 with a percentage of 92.2%.

In summary, the brief findings of this study indicate that all the percentage scores for the assessed elements are at a suitable level for use. This is because the percentage values have exceeded 70%, as required based on studies by (Deslandes et al., 2010) and (Dobbie et al., 2004) [34]. This demonstrates that the main components of the model are usable since all study participants agree that the main components of the Spiritual Leadership of Tok Batin Orang Asli Muslim model are understood and have reached a suitable status for use. Therefore, the conclusion and summary that can be drawn by the researcher are that all study participants agree that all the main components in the developed model are acceptable and usable. Unlike the Delphi method, the modified NGT technique allows researchers to obtain information quickly because it does not involve rounds of expert assessments.

Conclusion

The NGT technique has proven to be successful in obtaining respondents' views on the usability of a model that is presented easily yet systematically. It not only saves time but also helps researchers obtain accurate and precise views because respondents express their opinions through a survey that is not influenced by any party. This clearly demonstrates the application of the NGT technique in research, adding to the diversity of methods for addressing research questions in the field of Indigenous research.

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