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## Urban Malaysians more Individualistic than Singaporeans

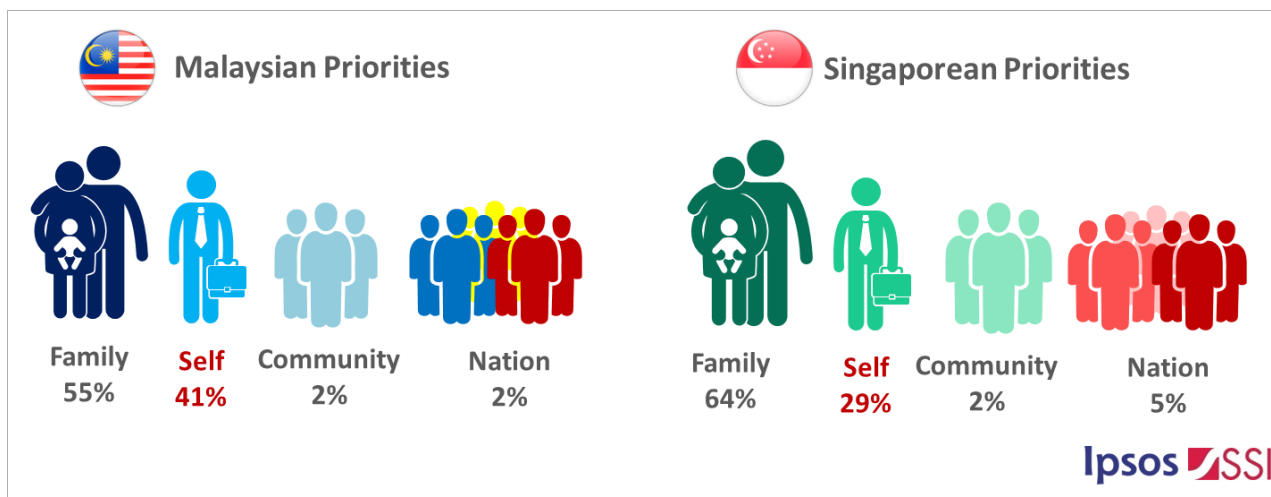
**41% of Malaysians prioritize Self, significantly higher to Singaporeans at just 29%**

**Malaysia & Singapore** – An online Ipsos-SSI study conducted among 1,059 Malaysians and 1,050 Singaporeans found that almost half of Urban Malaysians (41%) prioritize *Self* first, compared to significantly fewer Singaporeans at 29%. This is the first part of a larger study that attempts to understand what truly defines - and what it truly means - to be Malaysian or Singaporean.

Among **Urban Malaysians**, 67% in single households rate *Self* first, with 46% in households of two and 39% in households of four. Women (43%) prioritize *Self* more so than men (39%), and those in household income groups earning less than RM 1,500 a month do so as well (48%). **In Singapore**, students (46%) & young people aged 18-29 prioritize *Self* (41%) significantly higher compared to those aged 30-39 (30%) or 40-49 (24%). In single Singapore households, 53% rate *Self* significantly higher to 34% in households of two and 25% in households of four, and women only marginally prioritize *Self* 30%, more than men (27%)

*“Malaysians being more individualistic than Singaporeans is likely a matter of geography. The growing rate of urbanization means that a lot more people move to the city for work, often leaving their community, parents and sometimes their family behind. This mean, they tend to prioritize Self as they are often the primary providers or caretakers, so to take care of their family requires them to first take care of themselves”* said Katharine Davis, Managing Director for Ipsos in Malaysia.

Said Joseph Chua, Managing Director for Ipsos in Singapore, *“Singaporeans are in close proximity to their family providing opportunities for frequent interactions, and creating a more accessible support system when they need one. Given work-life balance ever a constant struggle for the average Singaporean, prioritizing family then becomes key, meaning they tend to focus on the family unit as a whole first.”*



## Values **Malaysians** & **Singaporeans** most Relate to



**Malaysia**



**Singapore**

<b>62%</b>	Respect	<b>67%</b>
<b>61%</b>	Responsibility	<b>61%</b>
<b>52%</b>	Honesty	<b>53%</b>
<b>51%</b>	Belief in God	<b>30%</b>
<b>42%</b>	Kindness / Generosity	<b>49%</b>
<b>40%</b>	Integrity	<b>51%</b>

**Ipsos SSI**

*"It is interesting to see how the collective cultural heritage shared by Malaysia & Singapore has shaped the larger values each individual relates strongly to; Belief in God, Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Kindness/Generosity, Integrity...all of these being central to both countries. It is only when you look deeper that the differences begin to show; Harmony, Kindness/Generosity and Humility being more important to a Malaysian, compared to Moderation, Hard-work and Ambition for a Singaporean. We often tell our clients how proximity does not indicate similarity, with this being an excellent example of the enormous influence time, history and governance has in creating ethos and moulding people's values."* Said Ajay Bangia, Director of Qualitative Research for Malaysia & Singapore.

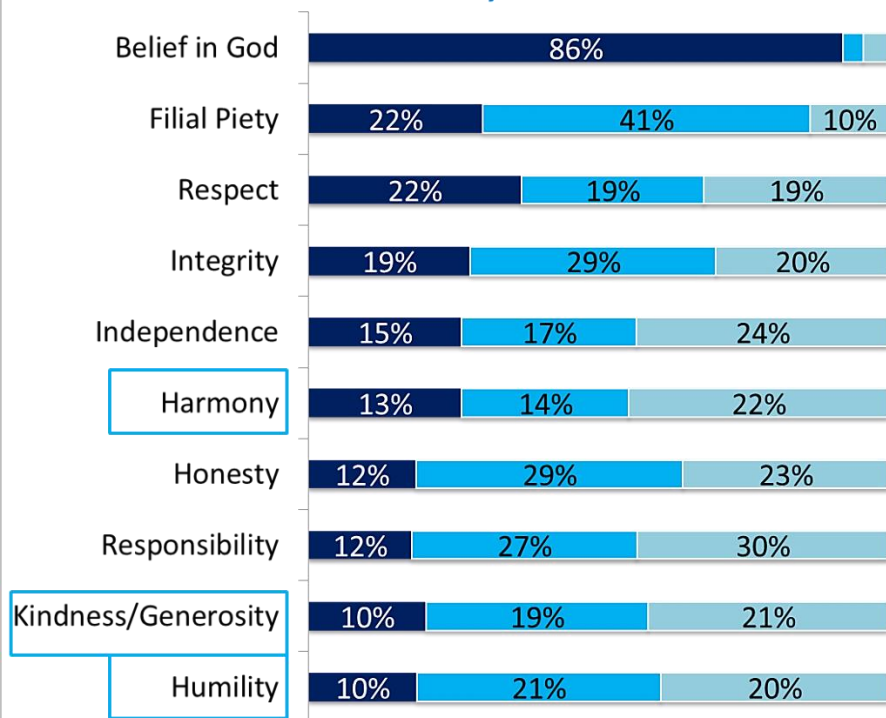
The top values Malaysians & Singaporeans relate to are;

- Respect: 62% in Malaysia & 67% in Singapore
- Responsibility: 61% in Malaysia & 61% in Singapore
- Honesty: 52% in Malaysia & 52% in Singapore
- Belief in God: 51% in Malaysia & significantly lower at 30% in Singapore
- Kindness/Generosity: 42% in Malaysia & 49% in Singapore
- Integrity: 40% in Malaysia & significantly higher at 51% in Singapore

However, while these are the top values Malaysians & Singaporeans relate to, what is important to one group or individual isn't the same to another. For this reason, Ipsos looked deeper at how Malaysians & Singaporeans ranked their top values based on importance to them.



## Values Ranked By Importance to Malaysians as Individuals\*



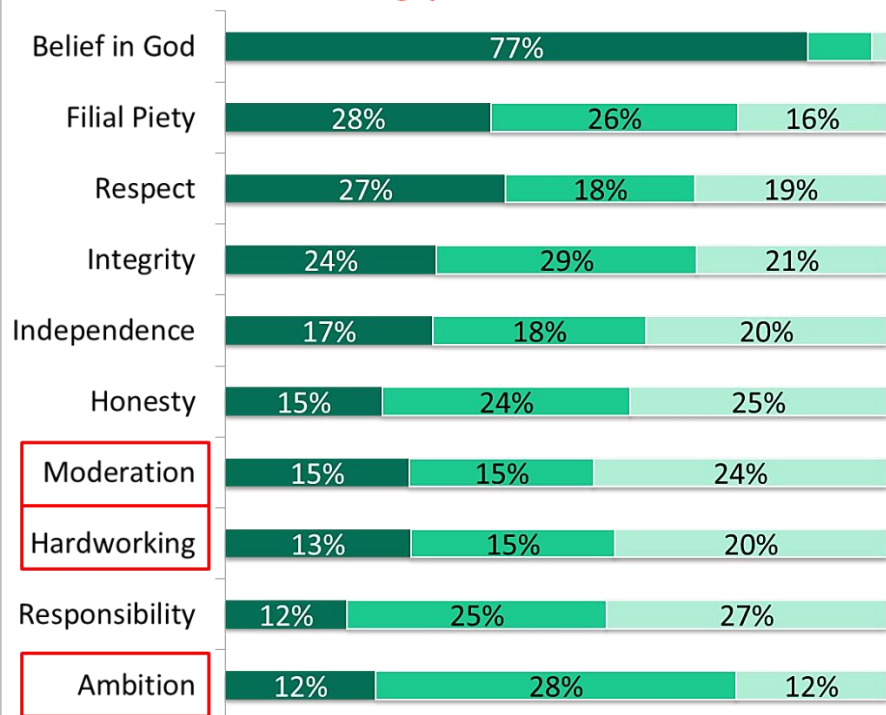
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Rank 1 Rank 2 Rank 3

\*Ranking shown is based on Importance of Top 5 values selected



## Values Ranked by Importance to Singaporeans as Individuals\*



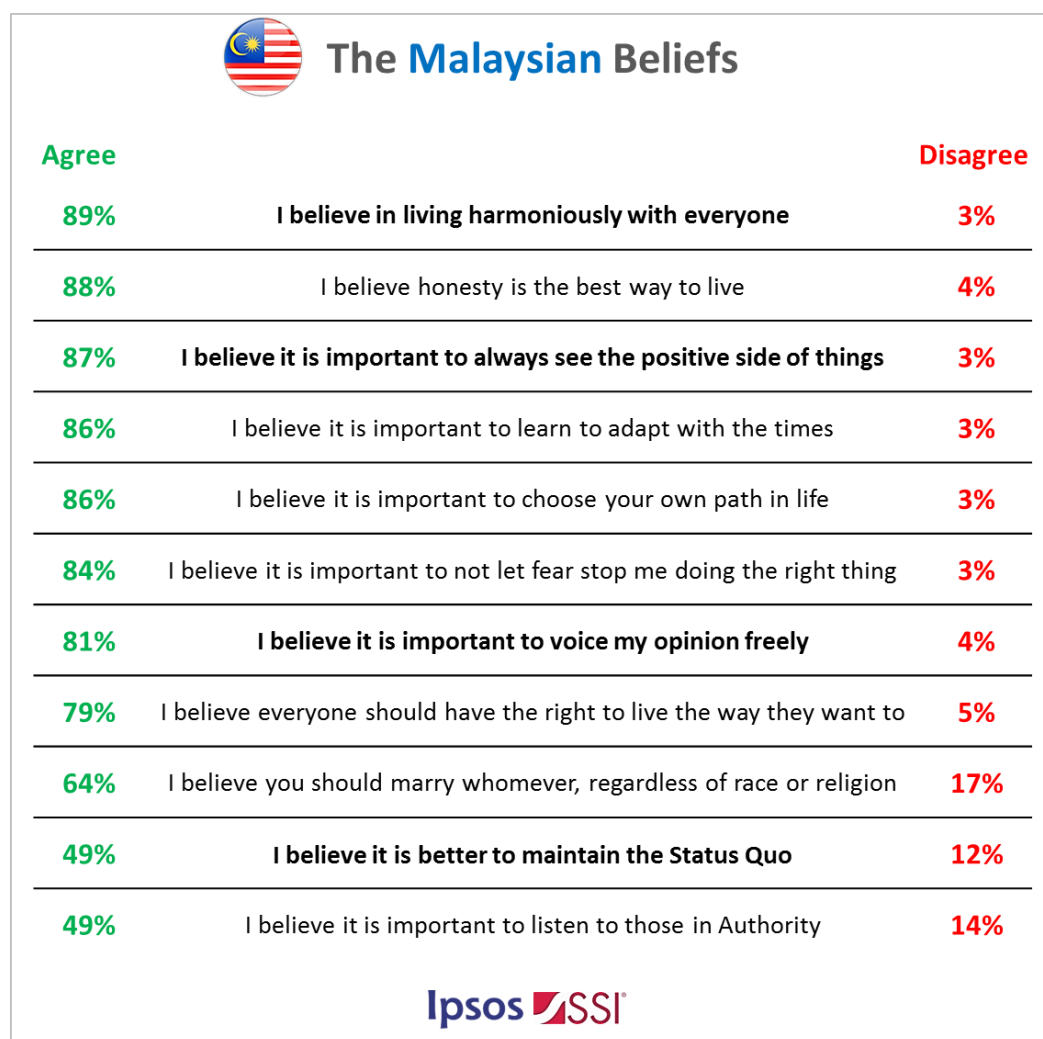
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Rank 1 Rank 2 Rank 3

\*Ranking shown is based on Importance of Top 5 values selected

Of those who ranked the top values by Importance to them, both Malaysians (86%) & Singaporeans (77%) rank Belief in God as the most important to value to them, followed by Filial Piety (63% top 2 rank for Malaysians and 54% for Singaporeans), Respect (41% top 2 rank for Malaysians and 45% for Singaporeans) and Integrity (48% top 2 rank for Malaysians and 53% for Singaporeans). While Malaysians place importance on the values of Harmony (27% top 2 rank), Kindness/Generosity (29% top 2 rank) and Humility (31% top 2 rank), Singaporeans place importance on the values of Moderation (30% top 2 rank), Hardworking (28% top 2 rank) and Ambition (40% top 2 rank).

**For Malaysians**, schooling has an influence with 100% of those attending Islamic religious schools, ranking Belief in God as 1, compared to 87% in public school, 70% in international school and significantly lower (30%) in Chinese schools. **In Singapore**, significant differences are seen among different age groups with those in the 18-29 ranking Belief in God significantly lower (63%), compared to those in older age groups; 72% aged 40-49 and increasing to 87% aged 60-64 years old.





## The Singapore Beliefs

### Agree

### Disagree

85%	I believe in living harmoniously with everyone	3%
84%	I believe honesty is the best way to live	4%
83%	I believe it is important to learn to adapt with the times	4%
82%	I believe it is important to choose your own path in life	3%
81%	I believe it is important to not let fear stop me doing the right thing	3%
81%	I believe it is important to always see the positive side of things	4%
74%	I believe everyone should have the right to live the way they want to	6%
69%	I believe it is important to voice my opinion freely	6%
67%	I believe you should marry whomever, regardless of race or religion	8%
47%	I believe it is important to listen to those in Authority	12%
40%	I believe it is better to maintain the Status Quo	15%



Once again we see similarities as both Malaysians (89%) & Singaporeans (86%) agree with the statement '*I believe in living harmoniously with everyone*' and '*I believe honesty is the best way to live*' (Malaysians at 88% and Singaporeans at 84%). However more Malaysians at 81% believe it is important to voice their opinion freely, compared to significantly fewer Singaporeans at 69%. Malaysians are also less inclined to want change, as almost half (49%) believe it is better to maintain the Status Quo, which is significantly higher than Singaporeans at 40%.

## **About the Study**

*This online study was conducted by Ipsos & SSI in December 2015, surveying 1,059 Malaysians and 1,050 Singaporeans. It covered all demographics; gender, ethnicity, age groups, occupation and household income. **This is the first part of a larger study looking at what it means to be Malaysian & Singaporean.** For more information on the topic, please contact Gaya; [gayathiri.manoharan@ipsos.com](mailto:gayathiri.manoharan@ipsos.com)*

## **About Ipsos** [www.ipsosasiapacific.com](http://www.ipsosasiapacific.com)

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