

The Relationship Of Prayers Knowledge And Prayers Encouragement Factors Towards Prayers Practice: A Preliminary Survey

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Abstract

This study is a preliminary survey conducted to identify the relationship between prayer knowledge and prayer encouragement factors towards prayer practice among Perak State Community College students. This quantitative study was conducted on randomly selected 302 Perak State Community College students, but only 152 respondents answered. The design of this study is a quantitative study that uses a questionnaire as a research instrument. Data analysis uses SPSS 26.0 software involving descriptive analysis (percentage, mean and standard deviation) and inferential analysis (Pearson Correlation). The study's findings show that students' prayer knowledge is high. However, from the point of view of prayer practice, it is at a medium level. Pearson correlation analysis shows a positive relationship between prayer knowledge and prayer encouragement factors of students towards students' prayer practice. The implications of the study suggest that the Department of Polytechnic Education and Community College, in general, and Islamic Studies lecturers, in particular, can improve the quality of teaching and learning in Islamic Studies to increase prayer knowledge, prayer encouragement factors and prayer practice among students.

Keywords: Prayers Knowledge, Prayers Encouragement Factors, Prayers Practice

1.0 Introduction

Islam is a complete system in all aspects of human life. This means that Islam has provided a clear and guided conceptual framework to practice. This framework is derived from two main sources. Namely, the Quran and the Sunnah are the guidelines for Muslims in living a life based on the Sharia of Allah S.W.T. Therefore, the importance of prayer in Islam is very clear. It is the second pillar in the list of the five pillars of Islam (Abu Muhammad Saifuddin 1998). Prayer is the second pillar of Islam and the foundation of a very important religious pillar that can connect a human being with Allah S.W.T. (Abdullah & Adnan, 2018). The implementation of prayer proves obedience, compliance and remembrance of Allah S.W.T. The fact is that prayer has the role of educating the soul to understand the essence of piety, calmness, patience, *tawakkal* and optimal dependence on Him (Mamat et al., 2009).

Zaharuddin Abd Rahman (2012) mentioned that it is a pillar of religion in which religion cannot be established in a person who is *mukalaf* and country except after paying serious attention to its obligations and perfection. Islam cannot stand firmly and is not perfect (Sayyid Sabiq 2012). In addition, the established prayer is a relationship between the servant and his Creator (Hamdi et al. 2013 & Nor Hayati 2017). Therefore, a person who consistently prays will always be in the crimson of the mercy and love of Allah S.W.T. In the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2015-2025, under the pillar of student aspirations, the government intends to translate the spirit of the National Education Philosophy, which plans balanced education as the basis for achieving students' aspirations (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2015). In line with this, the outlined PPPM 2013-2025 does not ignore the spiritual element in the development of national education. According to Awang & Che Mat (2004), spiritual refers to the human soul or, more precisely, to his heart, which gives awareness of what is right and wrong, sympathy and its associates, as well as maintaining a relationship with Allah S.W.T and mankind. Therefore, the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education emphasises teaching and learning related to prayer. This can be seen with various learning related to prayer, either in the Islamic Studies curriculum or the functional strengthening of prayer by allocating additional time.

However, prayer-related education is not only the sole responsibility of lecturers and institutions. It must be implemented either formally (lecture) or informally (at home). Parents must also take appropriate responsibility to ensure their children can perform the prayer well and perfectly. This is because parents have a great influence in shaping the character and behaviour of their children. With prayer, the parental factor is the factor that most influences a person compared to peers and the influence of the mass media (Mustaffa & Megat Ibrahim, 2014). This is because parents are the closest people in a person's life. In fact, according to Maharudin (2011), some teenagers pray because they are afraid of being scolded by their parents.

Studies conducted by past researchers look at various aspects such as prayer practice, prayer knowledge perception, neglecting factors and also the contribution of prayer to something, whether it is to behaviours, academic achievement or moral considerations. Unfortunately, the level of prayer

practices among students is not satisfactory and is at a worrying level. Therefore, researchers are more interested in determining the level of prayer practice. Researchers involved are such as Aida Samihan (2010), Azhar Ahmad (2006), Dearana Morshidi (2010), Hasna Bidin (2016), Hilmi Ismail (2010), Nur Faridah (2016), Nor Hayati (2017), Syukri Ahmad et al. (2014) and Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020). The results of the study found that the level of prayer practice is less than satisfactory except for one satisfactory finding, which is the study conducted by Jurami and Sham (2013) on the students of Ungku Omar Polytechnic, Ipoh. Apart from that, the level of prayers practised at the primary, secondary or after-school level is less than satisfactory. For example, Hilmi Ismail (2010) found that only 36% consistently pray five times a day and night. Meanwhile, Azhar Ahmad (2006) and Dearana Morshidi (2010) found that almost half of the respondents did not pray.

This unsatisfactory prayer practice does not go hand in hand with the knowledge perception gained due to the learning that follows. Studies that look at the level of perception of knowledge and understanding related to prayer have been done by many researchers, such as Hasna Bidin (2015), Khairiah (2014), Mohd Azrai (2016), Nor Hayati (2017), Awang & Kadir (2009), Sharifah (2012) as well as Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020). Therefore, this study identifies and examines the relationship between prayer knowledge and prayer encouragement factors towards prayer practice among Perak State Community College students.

2.0 Literature Review

This study adapted Al-Ghazali's Theory of Knowledge and Practice (Kitab Ayyuhal Walad 1993) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) (Albert Bandura, 1977) to identify the relationship between the prayers knowledge and prayers encouragement factors towards the prayers practice among Perak State Community College students.

2.1 Al-Ghazali's Theory of Knowledge and Practice

Islamic studies taught to students in schools in Malaysia is not just a transfer of knowledge from a teacher to a student. It aims so that the knowledge conveyed can be practised in life. The theory by Al-Ghazali (1993) clearly shows that related to the knowledge learned, students' prayers practice and knowledge practice must be practised well. Imam al-Ghazali (1993) also adds that knowledge and practice are related to the benefits obtained if used properly. Wan Mohd Nor (1989) and Al-Ghazali (1998) state that in Islam, the search for knowledge is not only possible but is also considered obligatory for all Muslims. The theory of knowledge and practice highlighted by Al-Ghazali (1993) emphasises the unity of knowledge which is a combination of knowledge, practice and faith. According to some of Imam al-Ghazali's works (1993), he clearly stated that useful knowledge could bring you closer to Allah S.W.T. Also mentioned by Sulaiman et al. (2016) that a person's failure to acknowledge the importance and connection between the elements of knowledge, reasoning and religion would lead to deviations in behaviour and practice as well as failure to understand their true role towards religion, nation and country. Referring to this study, the prayer knowledge

learned by students from primary school up to secondary school must be followed by the perfect implementation of prayer.

Therefore, students must know about the importance and compulsions that are an obligation to themselves. In addition, they must also know how to pray well and perfectly, as determined by *syarak*. In short, this theory (Figure 1) emphasises that the concept of knowledge acquired must be translated into practice. Therefore, the separation between knowledge and practice reflects that the learning received is useless and has no value in the eyes of Allah S.W.T.

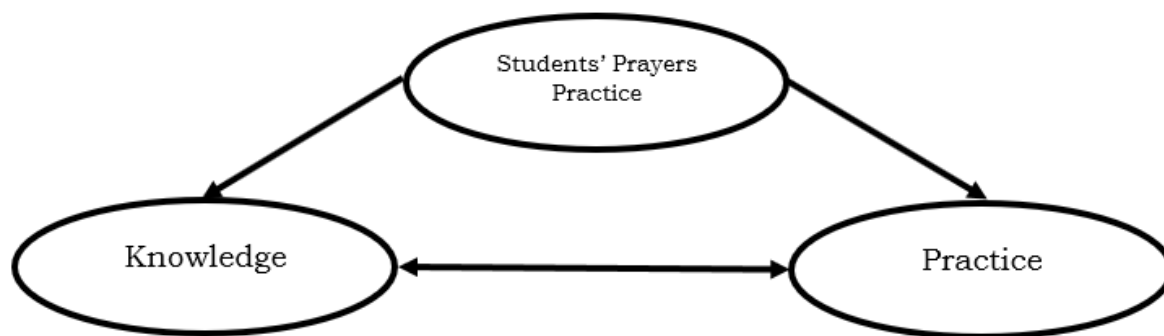


Figure 1: Al-Ghazali's Theory of Knowledge and Practice (Kitab Ayyuhal Walad 1993)

2.2 Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT)

The SLT introduced by Albert Bandura (1977) describes why someone does an action. According to Bandura (1977), SLT means learning occurs by observing others doing something or making someone a behaviour model. This also shows that the environment and people around influence an individual's behaviour. Therefore, Bandura said that action results from the interaction between three factors: humans, the environment and human habits. These three factors are not decisive in selecting a person's behaviour. However, Bandura (1977) thinks that although there is an interaction between these three components, some may be more influential than others at a certain time to produce an action. Therefore, this environment will influence a person in making decisions. Bandura's SLT evolved into social cognitive learning theory (SCLT) in 1999. SCLT is a learning theory released based on the idea that people learn by watching what others do, and the human thought process is important to understand personality (Nabavi 2011). This theory provides a framework for understanding, predicting and changing human behaviour (Green & Peil 2009). Green & Peil (2009) agree that individuals learn cognitive strategy behaviour by observing the behaviour of others, thus being able to change one's behaviour permanently. In addition to personal factors influencing behaviour, SLT by Bandura (1997) also emphasises the environment's role in forming human personality.

Bandura (1997) also thinks children and teenagers learn much through imitation. According to Maarof (2003), Bandura (1977) emphasises that humans learn by observing the behaviour of others. Observational learning, also called modelling, occurs when people or children observe the behaviour of others or their significant others and record the consequences. Laila (2015)

mentions that Bandura's SLT is also an individual's cognitive process. It plays a role in learning, whereas learning occurs because of the influence of the social environment, whether the family or the environment. Referring to Figure 2, apart from the knowledge possessed, other influences, such as self, family and the environment, need to be studied that determine whether it encourages students to practice prayer.

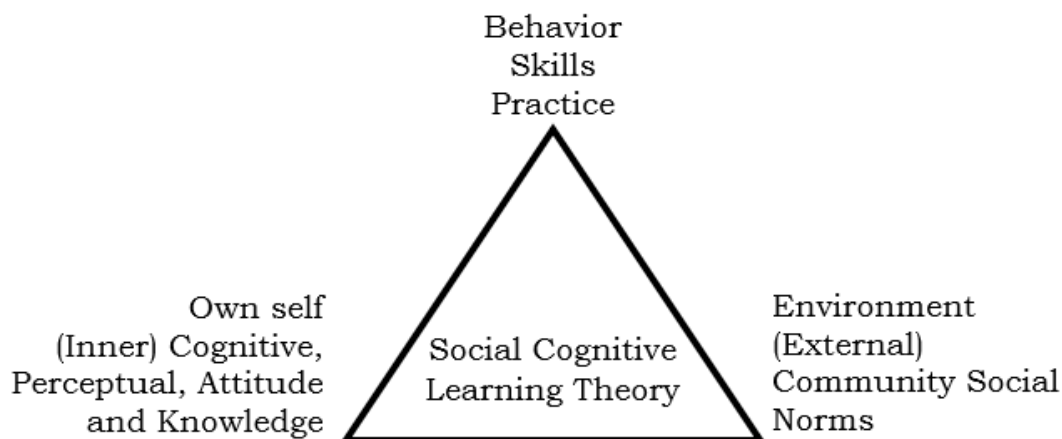


Figure 2: Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT) by Albert Bandura (1999)

This study aims to identify the level of prayer knowledge and encouragement factors towards prayer practice among Perak State Community College students. Based on the purpose of the study stated above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To identify the relationship between prayer knowledge and practice among Perak State Community College students.
- ii. To identify the relationship between prayer encouragement factors and prayer practice among Perak State Community College students.
- iii. To identify the relationship between prayer knowledge and prayer encouragement factors towards prayer practice among Perak State Community College students.

2.3 Prayers Knowledge (PK)

According to the fourth edition of *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka*, knowledge perception is a term that refers to informing and knowing about the actual situation. Meanwhile, Noriani Jamal and Faizah Abd Ghani (2009) state that knowledge perception is information or details known or realised by a person. Several studies have been carried out by past researchers who looked at the level of knowledge perception and understanding about the obligation of prayer. This study was done by Hasna Bidin (2016), Khairiah (2014), Nur Faridah (2016), Nor Hayati (2017), Ramli & Rosmaziah (2007) and Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020). All researchers found that the perception level of knowledge and understanding related to the importance and obligation of prayer was high. This indirectly shows that prayer-related learning, whether formal or informal, succeeds in applying the importance of prayer to students. Through past research, the research hypothesis has been formed as follows:

H1. There is no relationship between the level of prayer knowledge and prayer practice among students.

2.4 Prayers Encouragement Factors (PEF)

According to Mohtar (2019), encouragement is the driving force or energy that creates the desire to do something. In this study, there are three encouragement factors to perform the prayer: self, family and environment. According to Al-Ghazali (1993), faith is what is said with the tongue, consent with the heart and good deeds with the body parts. Meanwhile, Nor Hayati (2017) state that the prayer performed shows the level of continuous strengthening of faith in a person. A study by Yusoff (2012) found that Islamic spiritual tendencies greatly influence students' moral judgment. This shows that faith in oneself will make him always fear and obey Allah S.W.T. A person's personality starts at home because the first person who will educate him is his parents. Moreover, Stapa et al. (2012) mentioned that parents play an important role in shaping children's education and forming the foundations of a child's personal development.

Khaldun (2002) also explained that a good environment is necessary to produce good morals. Those good morals must be born from oneself based on his observation of environmental factors that can influence human life habits. Ali (2007) mentioned that the peer factor strongly affects the formation of students' minds, attitudes and personalities. Stapa et al. (2012) mentioned that whoever finds himself in an environment and education that helps him towards goodness is more likely to be a good person and vice versa. Through past research, the research hypothesis has been formed as follows:

H2. There is no relationship between the encouragement factors for performing prayers in the context of personal, family and environmental factors with the prayers practice among students.

2.5 Prayers Practice (PP)

Dearana (2010) defines practice as practising something that has been studied diligently. Meanwhile, Asmawati & Lukman (2009) refer to prayer practice as the implementation of prayer that is done sincerely and *tawaddu'*. Azhar Ahmad (2006), Syarifah Nur (2009), Hilmi Ismail (2010), Aida Samihan (2010), Dearana Murshidi (2010) and Nur Faridah (2016) found the level of prayer practice unsatisfactory and at a weak level. However, Hasna Bidin (2016) and Nor Hayati (2017) found that the prayer practice level is moderate and still needs improvement. From comparing prayer practice between male and female students, Mohd Azrai (2016) found that male prayer practice was higher than female students.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research model

In the primary research method, the researcher adopted the Theory of Knowledge and Practice by al-Ghazali (1993) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) by Bandura (1999) to identify the level of prayers knowledge and prayers encouragement factors towards the prayers practice of Perak State Community College students as shown in Figure 3. Overall, the Cronbach Alpha value of the questionnaire is 0.953. Meanwhile, the Cronbach Alpha value of each construct, such as prayer knowledge, is 0.920, encouragement

factors are 0.938 and prayer practice is 0.871. All questionnaire items were used from previous studies after being reviewed and verified by experts in the field before the pilot study was carried out. Ghazali Darussalam & Sufean Hussin (2018) believe that a high Cronbach Alpha score of $\alpha = 0.65 - 0.95$ has a high-reliability value. Konting (2000) also agreed that a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.60 is often used as a reliability index in a study. This means that this study's Cronbach's Alpha value is strong and suitable for use in real studies.

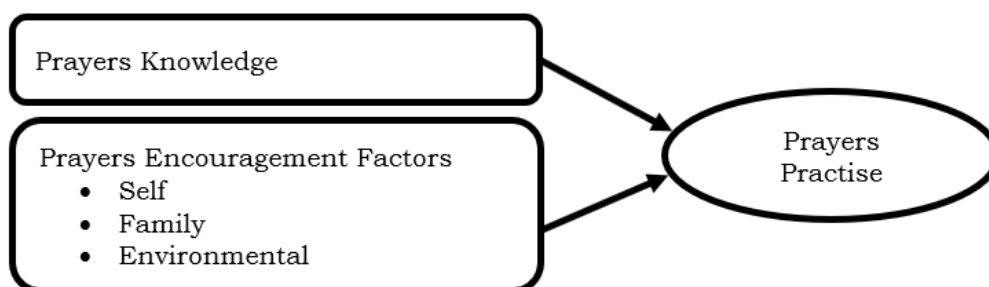


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework Study adaptation from al-Ghazali (1993) and Bandura (1999)

3.2 Sample and data collection

Darusalam & Hussin (2018) stated that the questionnaire function in a study is for data analysis via descriptive and inferential statistics for data measurement. Noraini (2013) mentioned that the measurement tool could reduce expenses, time and energy during data collection. This study involves 13 community colleges in the State of Perak. The total population of Muslim students from semesters 1 to 4 is 1308. According to Krejcie & Morgan (1970), if the population size is close to 1400, the number of respondents that should be involved is 302 students. This set of questionnaires has been distributed through a google form link via Islamic Studies course lecturers at Perak State Community College to be distributed to students. The questionnaire used was modified from Nor Hayati (2017) and Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020) for the construct of prayer knowledge and prayer practice, while Aida Samihan (2010) for the construct of factors that encourage prayer (Table 1). In addition, the basis for constructing this instrument is based on the research objectives and questions.

Table 1: Summary of research instrument

Section	Constructs	No of Items	Sources
Section A	Demography	5	
Section B	Prayers Knowledge	14	Nor Hayati (2017) and Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020)
Section C	Prayers Encouragement Factors	22	Aida Samihan (2010)
Section D	Prayers Practice	13	Nor Hayati (2017) and Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020)

In this study, the researcher measured the level of prayers knowledge and prayers encouragement factors, in which a Likert scale related to the level of agreement was used as in Table 2 (Abdul-Ghafar, 2003):

Table 2: Likert scale for prayers knowledge and prayers encouragement factor

Level of Acceptance	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Scale	1	2	3	4	5

Meanwhile, a Likert scale related to frequency is used for students' prayer practice. This is because the questions asked in this construct are to determine the frequency of students' prayers practice (Vagias, 2006). The Likert scale used is shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Likert scale for prayers practice

Level of Acceptance	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Always	Constantly
Scale	1	2	3	4	5

3.3 Data analysis

Creswell (2008) states that statistical data analysis using SPSS software will produce accurate calculations. Therefore, the researcher used SPSS 26.0 to analyse the data in this study. Data analysis is done based on each research question that has been set. Both statistics, which are descriptive and inferential, are used to analyse the research data. In this study, descriptive statistics were used to measure the level of students' prayers knowledge, prayers encouragement factors and the level of prayers practice. The mean interpretation used in the research question involves a Likert scale, as shown in Table 4:

Table 4: The mean interpretation

Group Code	Range	Level	Sources
1	1.00 until 2.33	Low	Adapted from Rudzi Munap (2003)
2	2.34 until 3.67	Medium	
3	3.68 until 5.00	High	

This study also used inferential analysis, such as the Pearson correlation test. Inferential analysis using the Pearson correlation test is to find the value of the correlation coefficient (r). Here, the significance level set is 0.05. Correlation measures the strength of the linear relationship between two variables. The value of Pearson's correlation (r) range is between -1.00 to +1.00, indicating a relationship between the two variables. Note that correlation $r=0$ shows no direct relationship between the two variables. The interpretation value of the correlation level of the relationship between the variables in this study was estimated using the strength scale proposed by Rosenthal (2012), as shown in Table 5:

Table 5: The interpretation value of the correlation level

Correlation Coefficient (r)	The Strength of Relationships
r = .10 - .29	Weak
r = .30 - .49	Moderate
r = .50 - .69	Strong
r = .70 - 1.0	Very Strong

4.0 Results and Findings

The study consisted of Muslim students from semester 1 to semester 4 at Perak State Community College. The demographic profile of the study is displayed in Table 6. The study results were only 152 respondents who answered the question out of 302 respondents. Regarding gender, 71 (46.7%) male students and 81 (53.3%) female students participated. Regarding semester study, most respondents are from Semester 3, totalling 92 people (60.5%). As for the interest in Islamic Studies, a total of 335 (96%) students expressed interest, while 14 (4.0%) students expressed the opposite.

Table 6: Demographic respondent

	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	71	46.7
	Female	81	53.3
Study of Semester	1	31	20.4
	2	14	9.2
	3	92	60.5
	4	15	9.9
Interested in Islamic Studies	Yes	149	99
	No	3	2

The research results from the descriptive analysis conducted found that the level of prayer knowledge, prayer encouragement factors, and prayer practice among Perak State Community College students are at a good level, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Descriptive analysis

Constructs	Mean	Std Dev.	Interpretation	
Prayers Knowledge	4.67	7.47	High	
Prayers Encouragement Factors	Self	4.74	3.21	High
	Family	4.34	7.78	High
	Environment	4.09	4.82	High
Prayers Practice	3.53	9.21	Medium	

4.1 Hypothesis testing

H1. There is no relationship between prayer knowledge and prayer practice among students.

H2. There is no relationship between prayer encouragement factors in the context of self, family, and environmental factors with the prayer practice among students.

Table 8: Person Correlations Matrix, Means Scores and Standard Deviations for Study Variables

Variables	Prayers Practise	Prayers Knowledge	PEF: Self	PEF: Family	PEF: Environmental
Prayers Practise	1				
Prayers Knowledge	.494**	1			
PEF: Self	.488**	.892**	1		
PEF: Family	.442**	.593**	.557**	1	
PEF: Environmental	.354**	.484**	.499**	.629**	1
Mean	45.92	65.39	28.48	43.41	24.57
Std. Deviations	9.21	7.47	3.21	7.78	4.82
No of Items	152	152	152	152	152

**Correlation is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level

Overall, the results of the correlation analysis show that students' prayers practice is positively and significantly correlated between prayers knowledge (.494**, $p < .01$) and prayers encouragement factors comprised self (0.488**, $p < .01$), family (.442**, $p < .01$) and environmental (.354**, $p < .01$). This proves that the level of prayers knowledge is significantly correlated to prayers practice for encouraging students to perform their prayers, as shown in Table 8. Furthermore, good knowledge and understanding will give awareness to the students to fulfil the responsibility of prayer obligatory on them. Therefore, H1 and H2 are rejected.

5.0 Discussions

The results of the study show that there is a significant relationship between the perception of students' prayer knowledge and prayer practice. However, the relationship between the variables is moderately positive. This finding shows that good knowledge among students contributes to increasing students' prayer practice. Therefore, prayer-strengthening programs for students carrying out prayer-related evaluations and assessments must be implemented more effectively. This is to ensure that students who have not yet mastered the theory and practice of prayer can be identified to implement the rehabilitation program. This is because mastering prayer knowledge, whether in theory or practice, will lead to the perfection of one's prayer practice. These views and findings are further strengthened by previous

studies, such as the study of Mohd Azrai (2016), Nor Hayati (2017) and Tuan Mohd Amin (2020), who studied to see the relationship between knowledge perception and students' prayer practice. The findings show a significant relationship at a moderate positive level with students' prayer practice. Likewise, the study by Ahmad (2019) stated that respondents agreed that the religious education received by a student would affect prayer performance. In addition, a study by Jalil et al. (2017) examined the level of knowledge perception and *fardhu ain* practice of the children of converts in secondary schools in Sri Aman, Sarawak. The study's findings show a significant relationship between the perception of *fardhu ain* knowledge and *fardhu ain* practices among the children of converts.

From knowing and understanding the obligation that every Muslim must fulfil, students' prayers knowledge is seen to encourage the increase of good prayer practice. Through good knowledge and understanding, it will give awareness to the students to fulfil the responsibility of prayer that is obligatory on them. This is supported by Mohd Azrai (2016), proving that a high level of knowledge and understanding related to the responsibility of performing prayers will significantly change students' prayers practice. This is because, according to Jamar (2020), understanding an act of worship will determine the extent of a person's practice. In addition, a study by Ahmad & Kasim (2018) found that the level of students' prayer knowledge will affect prayer practice. This proves that the higher the students' prayer knowledge, the better the prayer practice. Therefore, the process of instilling knowledge and efforts to cultivate awareness to perform prayers must go hand in hand to ensure that students know the responsibilities that must be fulfilled as servants of Allah S.W.T. This study's findings align with the theory of knowledge and practice pioneered by Al-Ghazali. He stated that the knowledge possessed would result in good practice and deeds.

This study also identified the relationship between encouragement factors of aspects of the self, family and environment towards students' prayers practice. This study's findings show a significant relationship between the prayer encouragement factors and students' prayer practice. Furthermore, the relationship between the variables is moderately positive, implying that encouragement factors from the aspects of self, family and environment contribute to improving students' prayer practice. This study's findings align with Hasna Bidin (2016) and Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020) studies. They have looked at the relationship between the factors that encourage students to perform their prayer. Both researchers found that self, family and environmental factors significantly affect students' prayer practice. The detailed analysis found that the encouraging factors from the self aspect showed a moderate positive relationship compared to the family and environmental factors, which were at a low level. This shows that the self factor strongly motivates a student to pray. This study's findings align with the study done by Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020). Here, the authors found that self-factors, including self-awareness, faith and purity, encourage the implementation of prayer.

Similarly, the findings of Tuan Mohd Aiman (2020) also showed that respondents agreed that the self factor is a strong motivator for a student to pray. This shows that a better attitude and awareness of praying will improve

the students' prayer practice. Therefore, the research findings show that own self is the best motivator for a student to perform prayers. This includes self-attitude, faith and the positive effects obtained by performing prayers, making a student responsible for fulfilling prayer demands.

6.0 Conclusions and recommendations for future studies

In conclusion, prayers, knowledge and prayers encouragement factors from the aspect of self, family, and environment are very important in shaping a student's personality. As a lecturer, educating students to be noble people is not dependent on education in an institution alone, but the family is the most important aspect. Therefore, it is appropriate for parents to improve their parenting knowledge based on the happiness outlined by Islam by knowing Allah S.W.T. and being a guardian to give birth to noble morals for their children to emulate (Shahri, 2020)

If parents do not educate and supervise their children, students' behaviour will be easily triggered due to parents' lack of love and control (Mohamed, 2021). Since this study was conducted on only Perak State Community College students, the researcher suggests that further research can be carried out on students in community colleges throughout Malaysia. This aims to determine the level and understanding of students' prayer at a more comprehensive level. The researcher studied the prayer knowledge and encouragement factors of students' prayer practice using quantitative methods in this study.

Therefore, it is hoped that future research can use different methods to be further detailed, either by adding more constructs or changing items to identify other factors. This further strengthens the validity and reliability of the research findings. In addition, the researcher suggested that the research findings obtained using the survey method via a questionnaire as an instrument can be further strengthened by conducting an observational study on students who consistently perform prayer and students who always neglect prayer. Analysis using these two methods is expected to produce better research findings.

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