The Impact of Implementing Imam al-Ghazali's Perception on Self-monitoring (*Muraqabah*) on the Development of Healthy Emotions among Marine Students during the Pre-Sea Training

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Abstract
Self-monitoring is considered as a crucial step in mastering self-regulation skill, which brings a person closer to achievement set up earlier. This study aims to investigate the implementation of self-monitoring in the light of Imam al-Ghazali's perception, known as *muraqabah* and to explore the impact of implementing *muraqabah* on the development of healthy emotions. The number of 376 students were randomly selected from five public and private higher institutions that offering Marine-related courses. The students were all Muslims and have completed the pre-sea training. A set of questionnaire was developed from items selected through experts' consensus of opinion (three-round modified Delphi method). The data collected were analysed descriptively (median and inter-quartile range) and inferentially (Spearman *rho* correlation analysis) using SPSS version 24. The study found that the level of *muraqabah* during the pre-sea training and the level of healthy emotions after completing the pre-sea training were both high (Med≥4.00, JI=≤1.00). All items of *muraqabah* during the planning phase and the development of healthy emotions after the pre-sea training were positively and moderately correlated (rs(376)=.459, p<.001). The result shows that the implementation of *muraqabah* before the students implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training increases the development of healthy emotions after the students returned from the pre-sea training. It also shows that self-monitoring which enhances through religious values helps students to become emotionally healthy, thus, it develops healthy image about the world of seafaring.

Introduction

Human's life has increasingly become more challenging from day-to-day. In the era of globalisation and technology-wise, human's life has become more complex. Jeopardising cultural and religious values is now easier with the help of borderless and limitless information over the internet. In order to become a proactive and competent person, strategies including planning and setting aims is on-demand (Peklaj, 2011), especially in internalizing religious values which further enhance the implementation of strategic skills and quality performance.

The pre-sea training is a moment of enhancing knowledge, developing skill and embracing challenges for the Marine students in the actual world of seafaring. These students implement theories they have learned throughout the study years. Students need to immediately adapt to the working environment, and it will become the first attempt of working on-board. According to Blairs, Calkins, and Kopp (2010), a well-mastered self-regulation skill can be identified through positive emotions and cognitive level where a person can positively adapt in a particular situation. This is because, the ability to regulate emotions depend largely on the cognitive capacities which develop at the early adulthood (Kasek, Zelazo, and Lewis, 2008). Even though the age of the students varies from one institution to another, the use of academic self-regulation won't be differed based on ages. The study conducted by Wang, Kim, Bong and Ahn (2013) on a group of Korean college students (N=220) found that regardless of level of studies, the use of self-regulated strategies did not differ significantly.

Mastering self-regulated should be done gradually with the help of the parents of teachers. There are many ways people help students to develop self-regulation. For example, in the study of Leidinger and Parels (2012), learning materials were used to help students improve self-regulation skills, which led to higher achievement in mathematics grade. Parents also can help children to develop better self-regulation skill. One of them is to strengthen religious knowledge and practice since childhood. McCullough and Willoughby (2009), believes that religious factor helps to increase the implementation of self-regulated behaviour. A study conducted by Cole-Lewis et al. (2016) among students between the ages of 12 and 15 found that religious rituals reduced signs of depression and the temptation to commit suicide. In addition, Rounding, Lee, Jacobson and Li-Jun (2012) also found the good side of religious factor to improve self-regulation. They found that when the participants of the research believed that 'God is important', they maintained longer to accomplish unpleasant tasks.

It is found that Imam al-Ghazali (n.d.) has introduced the concept of *muraqabah*, which means monitor. It is an act of monitoring behaviour a person needs to do, as human's behaviour is monitored by Allah SWT. He believes that human must plan their actions and develop strategy to accomplish the plan. The Muslims have a number of collective aims. Among them is to get Allah's blessing, and safe from the hellfire. Walid et al. (2015) also agree that self-monitoring helps respondents to draw closer towards Allah SWT, particularly during the hard time.

Problem Statement

As the maritime industry continues to develop in Malaysia, the need for highly trained and skilled human capital is increasing (Nazery, 2016). Competitive seafarers will be produced through Marine Training. Therefore, human capital development training for the marine industry needs to be enhanced (Saharuddin et al., 2011). The assessment of students' competency in Marine Training is not only focused on physical, mental and intellectual development, it is also important to note the spiritual and emotional aspects of the students.

Some studies have identified that stress among sailors is caused by loneliness, fatigue, distance from family, multiracial partners, limited recruitment activities, and lack of sleep (Jepsen et al., 2015; Carotenuto, Molino, Fasanaro, and Amento, 2012). Fatigue and sleep deprivation experienced by seafarers caused by shift working hour and across time zones resulted in the risk of chronic illness, as well as safety problems to other crew members (Dohrmann and Leppin, 2017). With unstable emotion, negligence is easy, so the accident is inevitable. Seafarers who face emotional problems also tend to commit suicide and seafarers' statistics that take the road of suicide due to stress with work are much higher than other jobs around the world (Jensen et al., 2017).

Self-regulation is one of the strategic approaches which helps a person reaches aims and objectives of life, even people develop the ability to identify personal potential, thus helping them to fulfil their responsibility as a person (Forgas, Tice, 2009). Self-regulation is so close to students as it helps students to perform better in grades, class participation, and learning experience. Students who acquire self-regulation skill will be more successful than their peers who don't (Greene, 2018). Therefore, this study believes that if Marine students are able to master self-regulation skill, they will be able to face hardships and challenges throughout the pre-sea training.

Furthermore, according to McCullough and Willoughby (2009), religion supports the development of self-regulation skill. However, studies related to the implementation of religious practices in self-regulation skill are less, especially studies involving the Marine students during the pre-sea training, a crucial period of training where students have to embrace real challenges of seafaring for the first time. The lack of studying the religious factor as a mechanism to master self-regulation skill should not be abandoned. Especially to the Muslim believers, religious practices are regarded as routine. Separating this religious element will abandon important aspect which might influence the change of result in acquiring the self-regulation skill among the Muslim students.

Methodology

Imam al-Ghazali's idea on self-monitoring, which is, *muraqabah*, was first analysed. Literatures on *muraqabah* was examined and the details were extracted. This study was focusing on the implementation of *muraqabah* during the planning of selecting strategies to succeed the pre-sea training. Selected items were identified and listed as items for three-round Delphi

instrument. Ten experts have participated in those Delphi rounds. The experts have reached consensus to remain with 15 items. Then, the items were transformed in the form of questionnaire which was sent to students for pilot test. The Cronbach's alpha for the instrument was high (α=0.907).

Meanwhile, 6 items for 'healthy emotions' were extracted from the literature and validated by the experts. The items were also sent to students for pilot test, together with the *muraqabah* items, and the Cronbach's alpha also was also high (α=0.856). The items for this part were related to the development of healthy emotions when students' have accomplished the minimum of 6 months pre-sea training. The final instrument was uploaded in Qualtrics.com because students who participated in this study were located all over Malaysia. Therefore, online survey was selected as it consumed less time, cost and energy.

Seven public and private higher institution in Malaysia, which offering Marine-related courses were contacted, either through e-mail or by phone. However, only five institutions have agreed to participate in this study. The link to the survey was sent over. Two public institutions have participated in this study which were Terengganu Malaysia University, Terengganu and Premier Polytechnic of Ungku Omar, Perak. Another three institutions were private higher education institutions, which consisted of Malaysian Maritime Academy, Melaka; Sarawak Maritime Academy, Sarawak; and Kuala Lumpur University-Malaysian Institute of Marine Engineering Technology, Perak.

After six months of data collection, all items were analysed through SPSS version 24. Descriptive analysis was conducted to answer the first and second research question, meanwhile, inferential analysis was conducted to answer the third research question as hypothesis was developed for the third question. The research questions are as follow:

RQ1 What is the level of *muraqabah* (self-monitoring) among the Marine students during the pre-sea training?

RQ2 What is the level of healthy emotions among Marine students after they have completed the pre-sea training?

RQ3 Is there any significant correlation between the level of *muraqabah* during the pre-sea training and the level of healthy emotions after the students have completed the pre-sea training?

Median and interquartile (IQR) analysis were selected to run the descriptive analysis as the items were rated using five-point Likert scaling (ordinal data). Even the inferential analysis also used the non-parametric analysis which was Spearman *rho* correlation analysis. The nul hypothesis was accepted when the *p*-value was higher than 0.05 (p>0.05). The following Table 1.0 and Table 2.0 show the interpretation of the median and IQR score (Peck dan Devore, 2012) and Table 3.0 for the interpretation of correlation result (Chua, 2006).

Table 1.0 Interpretation of Median Score

Median Score	Interpretation
4 − 5	High agreement
2.01 − 3.99	Moderate agreement
0 to 2	Not agreed

Table 2.0 Interpretation of IQR Score

IQR Score	Interpretation
0 − 1.00	High Consensus
1.01 − 1.99	Moderate Consensus
Above 2.00	Low Consensus

Table 3.0 Interpretation of Correlation Analysis

Correlation Value (r_s)	Interpretation
1.00	Perfect
0.70 − 0.99	Very High
0.50 − 0.69	High
0.30 − 0.49	Moderate
0.10 − 0.29	Low
0.01 − 0.09	None (Not correlated)

Findings

The findings are discussed based on the research questions (RQ).

RQ1 **What is the level of *muraqabah* (self-monitoring) among the Marine students during the pre-sea training?**

The following Table 4.0 shows the level of *muraqabah* implemented by the Marine students during the planning phase of implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.

Table 4.0 Level of Muraqabah during the Pre-Sea training

No	Items	Median	IQR
i	**The strategy selected parallels with the values of Islam**	**5.00**	**1.00**
A1.1	The process of choosing the right strategy to succeed the pre-sea training was my effort to keep on Allah's SWT path.	5.00	1.00
A1.2	I'd been praying to Allah SWT so that He helped to choose the right strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	5.00	1.00
A1.3	The strategy I chose did not hinder me from performing *'ibaādah.*	4.00	1.00
ii	**The motivation to contribute towards the benefit of the society**	4.00	1.00

A2.4	I chose strategy that created space for me to spread benefits among the crews on-board.	4.00	1.00
A2.5	I chose strategy which sometimes deny the right of other people around me during the pre-sea training (negative item)	4.00	1.00
A2.6	I portrayed the image of a good Muslim when I had successfully planned effective strategy.	4.00	1.00
A2.7	When I planned a strategy, I looked pious in the eyes of other crews.	4.00	1.00
A2.8	I became a good example when I planned to succeed the pre-sea training.	4.00	1.00
A2.9	My friends also asked for my assistance in helping them to plan for future actions.	3.00	2.00
iii	**For the sake of Allah SWT**	**4.00**	**1.00**
A3.10	When I planned a strategy to succeed the pre-sea training, I did it for the sake of Allah SWT alone.	4.00	1.00
A3.11	When I was choosing the strategy, I solely depended on Allah SWT and forbid myself to associate Him with other beings (*shirk*).	4.00	1.00
A3.12	I make Allah SWT as the priority when I was selecting a strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	4.00	1.00
A3.13	I chose the right strategy sincerely because I believed Allah SWT was the best in giving reward.	4.00	1.00
A3.14	Planning a strategy to succeed the pre-sea training pictured my love towards Allah SWT.	4.00	1.00
A3.15	I submit my efforts in the hand of Allah SWT after I finished planning the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	4.00	1.00

The level of items in Table 4.0 is high (Med≥4.00, JI=≤1.00), except for item *A2.9- My friends also asked for my assistance in helping them to plan for future actions*, which is moderate (Med=3.00, JI=2.00). The level of these items, which are divided into three sub-constructs, is high; **i) The strategy selected parallels with the values of Islam** (Med=5.00, JI=1.00), **ii) The motivation to contribute towards the benefit of the society** (Med=4.00, JI=1.00), and **iii) For the sake of Allah SWT** (Med=4.00, JI=1.00).

RQ2   What is the level of healthy emotions among Marine students after they have completed the pre-sea training?

Table 5.0 illustrated the finding of the level of healthy emotions when the students returned from the pre-sea training.

Table 5.0 Level of Students' Healthy Emotions

No	Items	Median	IQR
k2.1	I have greatly developed the strength to face hardship.	4.00	1.00
k2.2	I become braver to embrace difficult life in the future.	4.00	1.00
k2.3	I have stabile emotions to work with multicultural people.	4.00	1.00
k2.4	I know how to self-regulate my emotions better than before I was on-board.	2.00	1.00
k2.5	My dependence on Allah SWT has increased especially when I have to embrace difficult situations.	4.00	1.00
k2.6	I become more skilful to understand other people's emotions.	4.00	1.00

All items in Table 5.0 have reached high level of scores (Med=4.00, JI=1.00), except for item *k2.4- I know how to self-regulate my emotions better than before I was on-board* (Med=2.00, IQR=1.00).

RQ3 **Is there any significant correlation between the level of *muraqabah* during the pre-sea training and the level of healthy emotions after the students have completed the pre-sea training?**

Table 6.0 shows correlation between the implementation of *muraqabah* during the planning phase of the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training and the development of healthy emotions after the students returned from the pre-sea training.

Table 6.0 Correlation between the Implementation of Muraqabah and the Development of Healthy Emotions among the Pre-sea Students

Items	The Implementation of *Muraqabah*		Interpretation	
	r	*p*	Direction	Strength
Healthy emotions	0.459**	0.000	Positive	Moderate

**correlation is significant at p< .01

Table 6.0 illustrates the result for the correlational analysis between the variables. It is found the correlation is positive and the strength is moderate (rs(376)=.459, p<.001), which means that the increase in the implementation of *muraqabah* during the planning phase of the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training moderately leads to the increase of the development of healthy emotions after the students returned from the pre-sea training.

Discussion of the Result
The first finding of this study shows that the students have planned strategies to succeed the pre-sea training which were parallel with the values stated in Islam, including to hold steadfast on the path of Allah SWT, choosing strategies which were not conflicting with performance of *ibādah* and praying (make *du'a*) for Allah's SWT guidance to choose the right strategy.

The study also found that the students were motivated to contribute towards the benefit of the *ummah* through spreading kindness and avoiding transgression on people's right, portraying good image as successful and pious Muslims, becoming an example in the eyes of other crews, and helping friends to plan for success too.

Finally, the study found that during the planning phase, the students set intentions for the sake of Allah SWT and avoided the act of committing *shirk,* focusing the mind towards Allah SWT and being sincere in planning the strategy for the sake of Allah alone.

From the finding of the first research question, it can be summarised that the Marine students had developed a high hope on the supreme ability of The Creator to choose the right strategy which finally helped them to succeed the pre-sea training. It is an indicator that supreme entities plays a vital role in helping people to establish confidence and tranquillity during hard situations. McCullough and Willoughby (2009) justify that religious practice develop healthy emotions. Therefore, the study also measure students' level of healthy emotions after they have returned from the pre-sea training, which led to the second research question.

According to self-regulation theory developed by Zimmerman (2003), the cybernetic circle of self-regulation begins with the forethought phase. It is the phase of planning the aims and choosing strategies which help to reach the aims (Soric and Palekcic, 2009). According to Cleary and Patten (2013), several self-regulation training programs have been designed with the aims to enhance students' task-specific learning strategies as well as the skills to implement these strategies during learning. The study conducted by the Kesichi and Erdogen (2009) when the students were practicing writing the essay found that during the forethought phase, students drafted information related to the writing and when the essay to be written become certain, they were ready to start using any strategy they have chosen and started to write independently. Therefore, the implementation of *muraqabah* when the Marine students were planning to select the strategy to reach mutual aim of succeeding the pre-sea training helped the students to get

ready and implement all the strategies independently. Students who set their minds to fulfil tasks increases the ability to gain more success in the future.

From the second research question, it is found that the level of students' healthy emotions was high. Students have developed positive emotions when they returned from the pre-sea training. The strength to face hardship had been greatly developed and even became braver to embrace difficult life in the future. The experience of working with crews who came from different background also had developed stabile emotions to work with multicultural people. The result found of the second research question supported the first one as the students have developed dependency on supreme entity when facing difficult situations. The pre-sea training experience also helped to developed skill to understand other people's emotions. According to Kasek, Zelazo, and Lewis (2008), adolescents are finding difficulties to develop emotions regulation as they enter dramatic emotional states. Therefore, experience developed during the pre-sea training help these students to develop appropriate self-regulation as a whole, which finally increase the capacity for them to regulate emotions. All these results on developing healthy emotions after experiencing the full-of-challenges pre-sea training, developed good perception about the world of sea-faring. If not, students will be discourage and quit from being a seafarer in the future. They will be afraid to endure the hardship and emotional discontentment all along the journey on the ship and finally the shipping industry will lose potential crews who are supposed to continue and further expand the maritime industry in Malaysia.

Finally, the result also shows that there is moderate correlation between the implementation of *muraqabah* during the planning phase of the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training and the development of healthy emotions after the students returned from the pre-sea training. With the implementation of *muraqabah* throughout the pre-sea training benefits the students in the future in the form of emotions. The readiness to embrace hardship as the students believed that they have Allah SWT who supported them when they were alone, feeling sad and frustrated, almost gave up, helped them to become strong and brave to face challenges. The dependency, love and sincerity towards Allah SWT as a supreme being led students to closer to the success of completing the pre-sea training.

Conclusion

The implementation of *muraqabah* (self-monitoring) before a student applied any strategy to succeed the pre-sea training had led to the development of healthy emotions after they returned from the pre-sea training. For the students who aim to succeed the pre-sea training in the future, they should set their mind to acknowledge that the dependency on Supreme Being and the internalisation of religious values during the planning phase of selecting the strategy so that they develop strength and readiness to embrace the hardships and difficulties throughout the pre-sea training. Here is the list of *muraqabah* that the students should apply for guidance:

i. Believe that process of choosing the right strategy to succeed the pre-sea training is an effort to keep on Allah's SWT path.

ii.   Pray to Allah SWT so that He helped to choose the right strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.

iii.   The strategy chosen will not abstain from performing *'ibaādah.*

iv.   Choose the strategy that created space to spread benefits among the crews on-board.

v.   Don't choose any strategy that obstruct the right of other people.

vi.   Representing the image of a good Muslim through effective planning.

vii.   Portraying piety through the effort in planning.

viii.   Become a good example to other through planning.

ix.   Help others to plan for their success. For the sake of Allah SWT

x.   Set intention to plan for the sake of Allah SWT alone.

xi.   Depend on Allah SWT when choosing the right strategy and do not associate Him with other beings (shirk).

xii.   Make Allah SWT as the priority when selecting a strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.

xiii.   Choose the right strategy sincerely and believe that Allah SWT is the best in giving reward.

xiv.   Planning a strategy to succeed the pre-sea training will give a picture of the way to love Allah SWT.

xv.   Submit efforts in the hand of Allah SWT (*tawakkul*) after planning the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.

The finding of this study will help the Marine students, especially to those who are about to begin their journey on experiencing the pre-sea training. The checklist can become a guidance to practice religious values during on-board which will help the students to develop self-monitoring skill not only to succeed the pre-sea training, yet as a preparation for the students to embrace the real world of seafaring in the future. Furthermore, by embedding these religious elements in practicing self-monitoring, students will develop healthy emotions when they return from the pre-sea training. It can become a good motivation for not giving up the course and become happy seafarers.

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