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FOUNDED IN THE TEACHING OF THE AL-QURAN**Zahimi Zainol Abidin¹, Noor Azmi Haji Mohd Zainol², Daud Mohamed Salleh³¹ Faculty of Defence Studies and Management, National Defence University of Malaysia, Sungai Besi Camp, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

This descriptive study will be discussing on the disciplinary problems among the army personnel, the contributing factors to the problem as well as coming up with Islamic approach solutions to the problem. This study is significant as discipline plays primary roles in building a man's character. Discipline is also synonymous with one's manners, virtue and courtesy. Several scholars have defined discipline as a mental and moral practices in ensuring one's adherence to rules and regulation for the betterment of the society. Via Al-Quran, Islam has promoted discipline as the interjecting factor which leads to success in this world and hereafter. However, disciplinary problem in any organization is still the core problem that needs to be resolved. Discipline and the military are synonymous and the ability to adhere to the rules that have been determined is the decisive factor which can lead to one's career excellence in the military. However, there are some military personnel who are involved in disciplinary cases which could compromise the reputation of the military. Zina (unlawful sexual relations), gambling, alcoholism is some of the criminal cases that have been committed by these personnel. It is believed that the occurrences of these cases are due to their lack of religious knowledge and practices (not performing prayers and being ignorant towards the Al-Quran), lack of parental guidance and family problems. Several steps have been taken to counter these problems as well as to curb it from further spreading such as enforcing religious classes. With that note, this paper will investigate how the principles of Al-Quran can assist in the instillation of discipline as outlined in Islamic teachings among the military personnel. This study will use a qualitative method by reviewing

related documents, conducting interviews and carrying out observations in order to identify the elements which contribute to this problem. Further in-depth discussion will be carried out on the current disciplinary problems, its contributive factors and resolving steps based on the principles of Al-Quran in order to instill high discipline level in the military.

Keywords:

Discipline, Military, Al-Quran, Religious Practices.

Introduction

During the era of globalization, a high level of discipline is required to determine an organization's excellence. To develop individuals with a high level of integrity and professionalism, one must adhere to the principles of discipline. Simply put, discipline refers to the rules of life. To lead a disciplined life, one needs to follow rules related to adherence, restrictions, mannerisms, and courtesy. Islam teaches its followers to be disciplined in all aspects of life to cultivate honorable behavior. Rasulullah SAW, who was sent by Allah SWT as the messenger, aimed to improve the manners and character of people. Rasulallah SAW has decreed;

"That I was sent to perfect good character."

(HR Bukhairi, Ahmad and Al-Hakim)

The image of the military is not confined to immaculate uniforms and a complete set of armory. It also requires a high level of discipline and honorable mannerisms. According to Faizal (2022), Muslims not only need to be free from the grip of western thinking, but also need to provide a strong force full of discipline and always ready to face any possibility. military personnel are expected to observe, adhere to, respect, and protect the reputation of their force, as well as implement religious principles into their daily lives. This ensures they remain on the righteous path. However, if these disciplinary principles are not ingrained within them, the likelihood of disobedience increases. according to kokun (2020), when there is a war, military personnel will feel very stressed and afraid. but the power of discipline will overcome the situation.

Letrature Review

"Discipline in the military is very important. According to Fauzan (2022), the importance of discipline in the military is undeniable. Without military discipline, one will not be respected by either opponents or allies." Ahmad Shalaby (1970) claims that Prophet Muhammad SAW was involved in 27 ghazwah (battles). Prophet Muhammad survived all these battles due to his belief and faith in Allah SWT. The Prophet and other Islamic warriors used the Qur'an as guidance in their struggle and as a reference for resolving conflicts. Allah bestowed His guidance and assistance, which led to the victory in the Battle of Badr on 17 Ramadan in the second year of Hijrah. Witnessing Prophet Muhammad SAW's piety and devotion, His

disciples and warriors fought relentlessly and selflessly to spread the message of Islam (Ahmad Shalaby, 1970).

The level of discipline among the disciples and the Muslim army was flawless. The correlation between discipline and success was evident in Sultan Salahuddin Al-Ayubi and Sultan Mehmed II (Muhammad Al-Fateh). Salahuddin, a devout Muslim who abstained from material wealth, was admired by his troops (Abul Al-Hasan Nadwi, 1996). Due to his utmost level of discipline, he successfully seized Palestine from the Crusaders. A similar achievement was accomplished by Muhammad Al-Fateh, who aspired to fulfill Prophet Muhammad's prophecy during the conquest of Constantinople. Al-Fateh placed his utmost faith solely in Allah SWT and His Prophet.

"The city of Constantinople shall befall to the Muslims. The leader who conquered the city is the noblest leader and his troops are the noblest troops"

[H.R. Ahmad bin Hanbal Al-Musnad 4/335]

The success of conquering the city would have been impossible without a high level of discipline among the leaders and their troops. Al-Fateh's troops were chosen based on their level of faith in Allah. Military personnel who were obedient to Allah, His messenger, and their leaders were the pillars of Al-Fateh's success. This is evident in the following verse:

"O you who believe, obey Allah, obey His messenger and the leaders among you".

(Al-Quran 4:59)

According to Muhammad (2022), Russia's failure in Afghanistan was attributed to a lack of discipline. Russia took this failure as a lesson for its operations in Ukraine, but Ukrainian resistance was bolstered by significant external support, making it difficult for Russia to overthrow the country. The violation of discipline codes and failure to follow orders can have devastating impacts on a larger scale." John (1993) stated that the primary reason for Russia's failure to invade and conquer Afghanistan in 1989 was their poor discipline. The Afghan warriors' unflinching fighting spirit, unity, faith, and their willingness to die as martyrs to safeguard their country were also contributing factors to the Russian failure. However, in 2003, Afghanistan failed to defend its previous triumph. Contributing factors such as a lack of unity between the people and the government, compounded by treacherous and undisciplined troops, allowed the Americans to invade Afghanistan with relative ease.

According to the Positivist Legal Theory, the law regulates the behaviour of the people by enforcing sanctions and punishments. Military Law is primarily a mean to enforce discipline and obedience in the military. Discipline generally denotes a negative type of motivation. It usually involves the threat of some physical or psychological deprivation if a particular action is not undertaken (Kusai 2024). Discipline remains a vital element in maintaining motivation. Among the primary disciplinary issues affecting the fighting spirit and motivational levels of the Malaysian army personnel are absenteeism, drug abuse, criminal offenses, and suicide (Daud 2014). Identity disorder is commonly associated with the defense forces due to misconduct that compromises the organization's reputation. Expertise in weaponry and the projection of bravery, which are instilled in all military personnel, are sometimes misused and misdirected. Such problems are not unique to Malaysia but also occur among military staff in

other countries, with issues such as amok and behavioral misconduct. Only a high level of discipline can serve as the foundation for improved character building, especially among army personnel. Without discipline, it is difficult for an army to feel responsible for defending and protecting their religion, race, and nation. According to Amina (2022), children's discipline needs to be formed from an early age. The Qur'an instructs mankind to discipline children so that they become good servants.

Al-Quran Dictates Discipline

A study conducted by Norhabibah et. al (2022) revealed that the generation of the Al-Quran is uniquely Muslim, characterized by immaculate physical, mental, spiritual, and behavioral attributes fostered by one's belief and faith in Allah S.W.T. This noble character is developed based on the concepts of *uluhiyah* (acknowledgment that Allah is the only One) and *rubbiyyah* (acknowledgment of Allah's immense power). During the time of Rasulullah S.A.W., the Prophet produced eminent leaders such as Ali bin Abi Talib, 'Aisha, Ibn Abbas, Umar al-Khattab, Zaid bin Thabit, and many others. Rasulullah trained his Muslim warriors based on the guidance provided in the Al-Quran, which led to the successful expansion of the Islamic empire both before and after his death. Prophet Muhammad was created by Allah and led his life with the utmost discipline and adherence to regulations. He is perceived by his followers as an exemplary leader. Allah said:

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad SAW) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much"

(Al-Quran, 33:21)

The Al-Quran is an absolute and complete revelation that encompasses the lives of previous Prophets before the arrival of Muhammad, as well as dictating every aspect of life: *aqidah* (creed), *syariah* (Islamic law), and *akhlak* (morals). *Akhlak* originates from the Arabic term *khuluq*, which is defined as habit or temperament. It is also closely related to terms such as ethics, good character, and courtesy. It is a significant human trait that enables one to differentiate between virtue and immorality, prompting the practice of virtuous acts while abandoning immoral ones. Conceptually, the terms ethics and morals share similar definitions, describing behavior and conduct from a moral perspective (Ainain, 1985). Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. said:

"Indeed, I was only sent to perfect noble morals".

[H.R. Ahmad bin Hanbal, Al-Musnad 4/335)

Contributing Factors That Lead To The Formation Of Discipline

Fikiri et al, (2024) mention that There are many causes and factors that can increase a person's discipline, whether at the child or adult level. Motivation at work, the quality of work, and attitude can improve the overall quality of a person's discipline. Zahimi (2011) in his study claimed the following as the factors which lead to the increment of disciplinary cases and reduction of discipline level among the military personnel's;

The Educating Role Of Parents And Family

Rahimah (2022), in her research mention that demographic factors contribute significantly to one's level of discipline. It has been found that military personnel with disciplinary problems often suffer from a lack of good values instilled by their family members. Alamiah (2004) states that the demographics of military personnel influence their behavior and level of discipline. Additionally, discipline must be instilled by parents; a lack of attention in this matter can lead to misdemeanors as individuals may struggle to discern between right and wrong. Abdulsyukur (2022) explains that, according to Al-Quran, in QS At-Tahrim (66):6, parents have the responsibility to care for and educate their children with discipline and good manners.

Due to the rapid changes in lifestyle, the roles of parents today are often assumed by others, resulting in children not receiving proper attention. Parents need to realize that they are the determining factor in shaping their children's behavior (Bakhtiar, 1994). Motivation, discipline, a close relationship between children and parents, and a strong family foundation all influence one's personality, motivation level, and academic achievement. It can be postulated that the family unit is a significant socialization agent. If the family unit is disbanded, it can have a negative cognitive impact on children or adolescents. Unconducive households and irresponsible parents are perceived as primary factors contributing to social problems among adolescents today. Studies on disciplinary problems among teenagers reveal that many come from broken families. It is argued that the misbehavior of these adolescents is due to impeded mental development, which impairs their ability to reason and make rational decisions (Melson, 1992; Sheldon et al., 1985; Shoba, 2007; Wong, 1996). The source of discipline among military personnel can often be traced back to their families, who instilled the value of discipline from a young age. With a solid level of discipline, including military training, it is unlikely that military personnel will violate disciplinary codes.

Razali (1994) affirms that parents must play their roles responsibly by providing positive nurturing within a harmonious household. As adolescents reach puberty, they seek freedom and self-identity, which can cause inner conflict as they desire liberation from their parents while remaining financially dependent on them. Maslow (1954) argues that a lack of care and affection is a primary cause of personality disorders, which can manifest as aggressiveness and anti-social behavior.

Utomo (2022), explain that negative parental behavior can hinder the development and shaping of adolescents' minds. According to Ambert (2001) and Anderson & Sabatelli (1995), good moral values nurtured by parents lead to positive outcomes in adulthood. Zahimi (2001) observed that the behavior of military personnel upon entering service reflects the values and character instilled by their parents, schooling, and friends. If they are ignorant of Islamic principles and practices, such as the inability to recite Quranic verses, neglecting prayers, not observing the Ramadan month, and lacking religious knowledge throughout the first eighteen years of their life, they are likely to retain negative behaviors throughout their military service. Any misconduct by these personnel not only compromises the reputation of the military organization but also reflects poorly on the military's ability to instill good values in their personnel. Some families may enlist their children in military service hoping that the armed forces will correct their disciplinary problems. Parents should fulfill their roles responsibly by nurturing their children with good values as stated by Allah.

“O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire, whose fuel is people and stones. Over it are angels, fierce and powerful. They never disobey God in anything He commands them, and they carry out whatever they are commanded”

(Al-Quran 66:6).

Religious Education Factor

Hasrat, (2024) explain, religious education is essential in one's life, as it is considered a savior for humanity. Islam is based on the concepts of *tauhid* (Oneness of God), absolute justice, and pre-determined regulations that connect humans with their Creator (Haron, 1998; Mohd, 2004; Akmal, 2014). A believer in God adheres to these regulations and refrains from committing vices such as slander, envy, treachery, consuming alcohol, *zina* (unlawful sexual relations), and hypocrisy out of fear of God's punishment. Islam, as the true religion, provides and dictates guidance for various aspects of life, including *muamalat* (commercial and civil dealings under Islamic law), *jinayat* (criminal Islamic law), *munakahat* (social interactions), and many other principles (Haron, 1998; Mohd, 2004; Akmal, 2014). Therefore, it is a primary obligation for any Muslim, including those in the military, to equip themselves with knowledge of Islam.

According to Imam al-Ghazzali, parents play a crucial role in their children's education and have a significant impact on their upbringing. In *ushul fiqh*, "hifd an-Nafs" refers to the development of a child's psyche into one that is socially conscious and healthy; "hifd al-'Aql" pertains to educating children to engage in positive, critical, intelligent, and productive thought; and "hifd an-Nash" involves protecting family honor and reputation. Military personnel will exhibit greater discipline if the foundation of discipline, informed by religious knowledge as recommended by the Al-Quran, has been established by their parents before they enter the armed forces.

Basic Religious Knowledge

According to Rifa, (2021), one must learn and equip oneself with religious education from a young age to minimize the tendency to commit wrongdoings that could incur God's wrath in adulthood. Embracing the teachings and principles of Islam provides a secure moral foundation and earns respect in society. In fact, one's faith is not complete without the practice of moral values in daily life. It is essential for any Muslim to understand and discern between what is obligatory, prohibited, non-obligatory, disfavored (*makruh*), and indifferent (*mubah*). Muslims should lead their lives based on the principles set by Allah (Fardhu Ain). The Five Pillars of Islam represent fundamental knowledge and the foundation for any Muslim; one is not truly considered a Muslim unless one acknowledges and practices them. It has been found that new recruits in the Malaysian Army often lack basic knowledge of Islam, and if this trend continues, it could jeopardize the reputation of the Malaysian Army in the near future (Asmawati, 2003; Haron, 1988; Yusran, 2008; Zahimi, 2011).

Al- Quran Literacy

Ali (2022) explains in his research that the Al-Quran contains words of guidance from Allah, which believers should embrace as a guide to life. Humans are incapable of recreating the Al-Quran, let alone disputing its wisdom. Despite government efforts to incorporate the Al-Quran into the syllabi of primary and secondary schools, these efforts have reportedly failed to achieve their intended aims and objectives (Abdul Halim, 1991; Ramli, 2000). Some military personnel

are unable to read the Quran based on the sources provided by the Military Religious Corps. Mohd Yusuf (2000) noted that many military personnel can be labeled as *Al-Quran* illiterate. Moreover, those who can recite the verses of the Al-Quran are few in number. Therefore, it is not surprising that they are unable to use the Al-Quran as a reference in their lives, which may lead them to commit disciplinary offenses due to ignorance of its teachings. They fail to recognize that the strength of the Muslim military during the time of Rasulullah S.A.W. was due to their strong faith in the Al-Quran.

The Organisation Of Religious Activities

In some military organizations, particularly in Muslim countries, the Military Religious Corps is responsible for coordinating and organizing religious activities and Islamic education within the organization. The main functions of the corps are to provide education and religious services, such as those related to death and matrimony, to all three branches ie Army, Navy, and Air Force—in order to nurture the spiritual development of the forces. Zahimi (2011) argues that the role of the religious corps in armed forces, especially in the Malaysian Armed Forces, needs to be re-examined, as their impact on military personnel has been minimal. This view is supported by an interview conducted with an officer in charge in 2014, who felt that the corps had failed to instill a high level of discipline among the military personnel. In response to this awareness, the corps organized a program called *Pendidikan Islam Fardhu Ain* (Fardhu Ain Islamic Education). Feedback from this program indicates that the level of comprehension and Islamic knowledge among the personnel has increased significantly. According to the Al-Quran, discipline is essential and is determined by the function of every leader and organization. To save their members from the hellfire, leaders and organizations must evaluate their leadership practices to ensure compliance with Islamic law.

The Attitude Of The Military Personnel Towards Religious Practices And Programs

A person's attitude towards religion is a significant factor in shaping their disciplinary behavior. Lack of faith and endurance among Army personnel can make them vulnerable to negative influences. According to Anne, (2024), positive attitude generally develops when one is exposed to positive stimuli, whereas negative behavior often results from exposure to negative elements in one's life. Adolescence, which spans from ages 12 to 18, encompasses many military personnel who are either still in their adolescent years or have just entered adulthood when they are recruited by the Malaysian Army. These young recruits may experience emotional disturbances as they struggle to adjust to the new environment and demands of military life (Hurlock, 1973). Adolescents are often perceived as having less emotional resilience and endurance. Allah Says in Surah An-Nisa verse 59:

"O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger (his), and ulil amri among you. Then if you have different opinions about something, then return it to Allah (the Al-Quran and the Messenger (sunnah), if you really believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is more important (for you) and the consequences are better. (Q.S) An-Nisa: 59).

Discipline encompasses not only obeying rules but also adhering to leadership. In educational institutions, the principal is the leader who has full authority over supervision, coaching, evaluation, assessment, and the management of teaching and learning activities. A Muslim should consistently maintain a positive outlook and behave in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, which provide guidance in the right direction.

During the teaching and learning process, one's attitude not only influences the acquisition of knowledge but also affects one's determination to complete tasks and ultimately determines the level of success. Attitude impacts not only the acceptance of religion among personnel but also the behavior of leaders within the troops (Cohen, 1955; Harlen, 1996; Kozlow & Nay, 1976; Sezali, 1997). According to Zahimi (2011), some Commanding Officers emphasize the involvement of their staff in religious activities. However, certain teams remain indifferent to these activities. Despite strict regulations that leave no room for disobedience, some personnel disregard these activities. Attendance and participation in these programs depend largely on the personnel's awareness, which can hinder the achievement of the programs' aims and objectives. The formation of one's discipline is influenced by one's attitude, which in turn is shaped by one's reactions to and acceptance of the events in their life.

Methodology

This study is conducted qualitatively, using facts and data from existing readings and studies by previous researchers. This study also included information obtained from interviews with relevant parties concerning military personnel in the army. Additionally, the study incorporates information from the Malaysia Armed Forces, particularly from the religious corps. However, due to the confidentiality of military organizations, the specific information obtained cannot be displayed. Instead, this study presents a compact summary derived from the original data. This study has set two objectives: first, to identify the factors contributing to the collapse of discipline, especially among military personnel; and second, to explain some of the orders found in the Qur'an regarding the importance of discipline, both for the general public and for the military.

Discussion And Implications Of Findings

Based on studies, interviews, and internal reviews, several key factors contributing to disciplinary problems among Army personnel have been identified. These factors include family background, religious education, Al-Quran literacy, the organization of religious activities, and personnel attitudes towards religion. Addressing these issues requires thoughtful intervention by superior leaders. The Al-Quran provides detailed guidance on each of these matters. To achieve peak discipline, all parties especially those aspiring to join the military must contribute significantly. According to the Al-Quran, discipline is crucial for success in war, complementing the importance of having the right weaponry. As a Muslim armed force, the responsibility extends beyond protecting national sovereignty to include a missionary role in spreading Islamic dakwah (preaching). Muslim soldiers can serve as exemplary role models for non-Muslim personnel, potentially sparking their interest in learning about Islam.

The Military Religious Unit/Corps must re-evaluate its roles and responsibilities to ensure that staff are well-equipped to impart both theoretical and practical Islamic knowledge to Army personnel. Traditional teaching methods conducted in mosques are no longer sufficient; modern teaching tools and innovative methods are needed to effectively engage and motivate personnel. Additionally, the recruitment of religious teachers or officers should be reassessed. Dealing with problematic personnel is challenging, and selection should not rely solely on academic qualifications but also consider the candidates' practical capabilities. Furthermore, the recruitment process for military personnel should also be re-evaluated. Physical and academic criteria alone are insufficient to ensure a Quranic-reading generation among the Armed Forces. Religious knowledge should be assessed and considered before recruitment.

This study aims to identify the contributing factors to the prevalent disciplinary problems in the Army. Therefore, further quantitative research is needed to gain comprehensive insights and measure the problem statistically. Increased research will provide more data to develop effective solutions to these issues. This study has also achieved two outlined objectives. The findings reveal that six important factors contribute to fluctuations in the quality of discipline, including among military personnel. Additionally, the study explains several Quranic verses that highlight the importance of discipline.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it is clear that the behavior of Army personnel can be positively influenced by adhering to the principles of the Al-Quran, which can help them navigate the challenges of the post-modern era. Effective preparation, planning, and ongoing, sincere efforts to provide support, knowledge, and impactful religious activities are essential strategies for instilling high levels of disciplinary values among Army personnel. If misconduct, carelessness, and mistakes are not addressed promptly, they could become irreparable issues.

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