

# “Believing in God’s Presence” as a Religious Factor to Succeed in Pre-Sea Training: A Three-Round Delphi Approach to Develop Questionnaire Items

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i6/17565>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i6/17565

**Published Date:** 15 June 2023

## Abstract

Despite all the hurdles during pre-sea training, faith in the presence of Allah, the Exalted, should help the marine students to become stronger and gain more experience when they return from training at sea. Therefore, this study was conducted with the aim of identifying elements of "Believing in God's Presence" as a religious factor that helps marine students during pre-sea training. A three-round Delphi procedure was used, starting with conceptualisation and operationalisation to form the items in the first round. Ten experts had agreed to participate in the two subsequent rounds. All items were analysed using SPSS version 23. It was found that the consensus among the experts on the items in the first and second rounds was high ( $IQ \leq 1.00$ ) and there were no significant changes in the scores from Round 2 to Round 3. Items such as *tawakkal*, believing in the All-Seeing Power, learning from the creation of other living beings and seeking help through prayer are discussed. Perhaps they can help the marine students to feel the presence of Allah during their pre-sea training and make them strong. This study also illustrates the implementation of the three-round Delphi process using conceptualisation and operationalisation for future research.

**Keywords:** Marine Students, Pre-sea Training, Religious Factor, Allah SWT, Seafaring Challenging Life, Islam.

## Introduction

The preparation during pre-sea training is referred as preparing students to work on ship through practical training (The Alam Training Programmes Education Essay, 2017).

Marine students should be exposed to the marine world as they will be working as seafarers after they completed studying. Academic institutions which offering marine courses include pre-sea training as a package to graduate the course.

The pre-sea training is so essential to marine students. It is the moment to expose students with the real world of seafaring as it will be totally different from working on land. Students will be able to apply theories they have learned and be trained to embrace challenges during the pre-sea training (The Alam Training Programmes Education Essay, 2017). Adequate training produces skilful cadets. Therefore, the pre-sea training can be a group training, teaching mutual responsibility that makes students to be highly aware of the danger that might harm every crew on the ship. The study of Abdul et al (2012) found that training, experience, attitude and fatigue have impact on the violation of the Oil Pollution Act. The participants of the study were comprised of cadets who have attended maritime trainings as obliged by the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STWC) as well lesson plans suggested by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The finding of this study highlighted that adequate pre-sea training and modular courses will increase the awareness towards violation of the Oil Pollution Act. The impact on training also will increase with more experience. Oil pollution is not the only an alarm for seafarers. There are thousands of danger and precautions they need to be aware of.

The pre-sea training helps students to develop soft skills such as social skill that is crucial for seafarers when they have to communicate with crews who come from all over the world. Karthik (2014) believes that most of the misunderstandings occurred during seafaring was due to conflicting interest on religion and customs. Therefore, the pre-sea training can be an introductory reflection of the social conflict students will have to encounter in the future. Students also develop physical, mental and emotional strength, as well as spiritual knowledge and practice such the practice of *'ibadah* onboard. Cabas and Tancinco (2016) believe that the pre-sea training helps students to develop soft skills and these soft skills can be enhanced through in-house training, seminars, lectures and workshops. They also put emphasized on the development of these soft skills (especially the emotional intelligence) through curriculum and learning for the marine students as it can help cadets during mental, physical and emotional struggle as seafarers in the future.

Muslim cadets/ marine students should become aware of this emotional turmoil. When Islam carries the definition of peaceful and tranquillity, it shows that Islamic principles are able to develop peaceful personnel too. Allah SWT also mentioned: "For each [religious following] is a direction toward which it faces. So race to [all that is] good. Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you forth [for judgement] all together. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent" (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 114). The Prophet (pbuh) even said, "Allah SWT is beautiful and loves beauty" (Sahih Muslim, Book 1, No. 164). Therefore, despite of all challenges that students will encounter during the pre-sea training, they will acquire stable emotional condition and become ready to embrace hardships as they are aware of Allah's presence in their heart.

### **Literature Review**

Accidents often occur on board as a result of cadet stress work due to the shift working hours and sleep deprivation which affects cadets' task performance as well as health condition (Jepsen et al., 2015). According to Saharuddin et al (2012), seafarers do not only suffer from fatigue problems, they also need to develop immediate perception about cultural differences, sustaining long periods of work, with the absence of spouses/ partners/ family

members, extended vessel duration, pressure from the superiors, etc. Due to the ship's environment and the atmosphere of the ports they have been traveling along the way, their health condition is always at risk (Jensen et al., 2017).

Some studies 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 et al., 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. 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). This is very worrying about the shipping world because of emotional problems that seafarers can't handle will result in loss of life and loss of human capital who can serve professionally when they are not motivated to serve for a long time. The shipping field will be desperate for shipping experts as expertise is built through experience.

Seafaring is an activity that can draw close to Allah SWT. Seafarers should be willing to open their hearts and minds to learn the greatness of Allah SWT through the creation of nature. Allah SWT says: "Allah it is He Who has subjected to you the sea, that ships may sail through it by His Command, and that you may seek of His Bounty, and that you may be thankful. And has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth; it is all as a favour and kindness from Him. Verily, in it are signs for a people who think deeply." (Surah al-Jathiyah, 45: 12-13).

Allah SWT has witnessed His Exalted Power through the creation of the sea. Therefore, those who sail through the sea and ocean should regard this magnificent creation as one of Allah's undeniable Power and Greatness. Allah SWT mentions: "Among His signs are the ships which look like mountains upon the ocean. If He wants, He can cause the wind to become still and leave them motionless on their backs - surely in this example there are signs for every such person who patiently endures and is grateful. - Or He may cause them to drown in consequence of even a few of their misdeeds, though He forgives many of their misdeeds." (Surah Al-Shuraa, 42: 32-34).

The acknowledgement of there is Allah SWT, as the magnificent creator, creates the sense of awareness among us. We become more accountable towards our deeds and feelings, of how we behave with others and when we should continue to strive. Of course, it is difficult. Seafaring takes more than what seafaring could give; hearts, family, time and many more. Yet Allah SWT sees everything. Allah SWT is counting every hardship we embraced and every effort we spend, as He mentioned: "And wish not for the things in which Allah has made some of you to excel others. For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned, and ask Allah of His Bounty. Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knower of everything" (Surah Al-Nisa', 4: 32).

Allah SWT praises the act of Muslim who strives to reach the blessing from Allah SWT, as He mentioned in the Quran: "and there is the type of man who gives His life to earn the pleasure of Allah and Allah is full of kindness to (His) devotees." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 207). Meanwhile, Abdul-Khalek (2014) believes that subjective well-being, a condition synonymous with happiness, joy, satisfaction, pleasure, and other life indicators showing that one's life is complete, finds that it is closely related to the practice of Islamic teaching, especially performing prayers, reading Quran, dzikr, du'a, seeking forgiveness from Allah SWT, and

fasting in the month of Ramadan. In fact, he also justified by mentioning *Alhamdulillah* alone can educate the heart to be grateful on the blessings earned.

Sri (2014) in her study of the role of religion on resilience among Fisheries College cadets found that religion has strong correlation with mental health. Resilience *“is the ability to be happy, successful, etc. again after something difficult or bad happen”* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018). The study found that religious experience which included *“I feel the presence of God/Allah”* have significant effect on resilience among cadets. This is parallel to what Bonab et al (2013) have justified that verses in the Quran describe Allah SWT as close and nurturing, making Allah SWT as attachment figure, so they emphasised on the power of remembrance which helps Muslims to feel endowed with love, care and protection.

To conclude, religious factor can help Muslim students to become a successful cadet, especially when they believe in the presence of Allah SWT. Because when they start to believe that Allah SWT is there, near to heart and come in need, this believe will lead to the performance of *‘ibadah*, as an act of believe, love and loyalty. Therefore, this study was carried out with the aim to identify items that will represent the element of *“Believing in God’s Presence”* as religious factor that help students to succeed the pre-sea training. Perhaps it will benefit the whole seafaring life to achieve successful worldly life and hereafter.

### Methodology

To identify the items that will represent the element of *“Believing in God’s Presence”* as religious factor that help students to succeed the pre-sea training, Delphi technique was used. The Delphi method can be considered as a consensus-building method that involve the opinions from panel of experts in a series of meeting which run in cycles and stop when panel of experts reach consensus of opinion. Skulmoski et al (2007) defines Delphi as

*“The Delphi method is an iterative process used to collect and distil the judgments of experts using a series of questionnaires interspersed with feedback. The questionnaires are designed to focus on problems, opportunities, solutions, or forecasts. Each subsequent questionnaire is developed based on the results of the previous questionnaire. The process stops when the research question is answered: for example, when consensus is reached, theoretical saturation is achieved, or when sufficient information has been exchanged.”*

Delphi helps researchers to reach the intended knowledge through professional people who are the reservoirs of the knowledge. Therefore, experts in the field of education can utilize their expertise to identify important topics in learning through Delphi method. There are a number of benefits that make Delphi technique a popular method of research. One of the remarkable characteristics is the experts are anonymised to one another and this allows freedom of expression and encourages more contribution from the experts in terms of ideas, opinions and knowledge (Ashmore et al., 2016; Keeney et al., 2011). Furthermore, because of this characteristics, the experts also are free to amend or correct their opinion without feeling ashamed or humiliated.

The participants for these three-round Delphi are panel of experts. According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, an expert is referred to a person who have special skill and knowledge in a particular subject. Therefore, selecting experts for this research is crucial because the professional skills and knowledge they possess will help the researcher produces

a good and usable instruction. Skulmoski, et al (2007) rule out three factors that should be considered by researchers in selecting experts, and they are

- a) A small sample size ranges between 10 and 15 will be sufficient in a homogenous group, however, the number increases when the group of sample is heterogeneous. Nevertheless, a heterogeneous group is difficult to administer and reach consensus.
- b) Decision quality will increase and errors can be reduced when the sample size increases. However, above a certain threshold, it is difficult to manage.
- c) The results can be convincingly verified when the group is large. Nonetheless, verification in a small sample can be verified by follow-up research, such as interview or survey.

A researcher can identify experts under broad criteria to form a heterogeneous sample, however, most of Delphi researches, a homogeneous sample is used (Keeney et al., 2011). Hence, for this research, a homogeneous type of sample is characterized. The sample size reaches up to 10 experts, those who are content and curriculum experts. The selection of experts in this study was based on the following criteria:

- a) Experts should have more than 3 years of experience in teaching Marine students
- b) Experts should be educated to postgraduate level in Islamic Studies or Islamic Education
- c) Experts should have wide-range experience and knowledge about implementing Islamic practices on-board
- d) Experts are well-exposed to the nature of Marine courses and on-board practical course
- e) Experts are willing to participate in this study

Three iterative modified Delphi rounds were run for this study. Instead of starting the first round with interview, this study starts with construct operationalisation which helps researcher identify the items needed. Eon-Song and Dong-Wook (2015) started their first round Delphi with construct operationalisation to analyse the relationship among cooperation networking, collaboration among networking, knowledge acquisition and the value of maritime logistic. Different from Eong-Song and Dong-Wook, this study used the holy scripture of the Quran to form the items. Thorough identification of the verses related to "Believing in God's Presence" were done with the help of quranic glossary, *tafseer*, and Imam al-Ghazali's writing in *Ihya' 'Ulumuddin*. Ten possible items were identified as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Extracting Verses in the Quran Representing the Belief in the Presence of Allah SWT*

Items on “Believing in God’s Presence”		Verse
1	Strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing.	6:59
2	Rely on Allah SWT (the concept of <i>tawakkal</i> ) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	60:4
3	Seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	7:55-56
4	To believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong.	61:14
5	Try to calm the despairing heart by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT.	94:5-6
6	To believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT.	2:214
7	Pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil.	23:97-98
8	To believe the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish.	35:27-28
9	To start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with <i>basmalah</i> so that actions will be easily performed.	6:118
10	To embrace the hardships with open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT.	2:207

After the identification process, items were transformed into sentences suitable for the questionnaire. Transformation of the items are shown in the following Table 2. A set of questionnaire was completely formed using these items.

Table 2

*Extracting Verses in the Quran Representing the Belief in the Presence of Allah SWT*

Original Statement	After transformed
1 Strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing.	I strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing.
2 Rely on Allah SWT (the concept of <i>tawakkal</i> ) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	I rely on Allah SWT (the concept of <i>tawakkal</i> ) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.
3 Seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	I seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.
4 To believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong.	I believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong.
5 Try to calm the despairing heart by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT.	I try to calm my despair by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT.
6 To believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT.	I believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT.
7 Pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil.	I pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil.
8 To believe in the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish.	I believe in the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish.
9 To start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with <i>basmalah</i> so that actions will be easily performed.	I start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with <i>basmalah</i> so that actions will be easily performed.
10 To embrace the hardships with open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT.	I embrace the hardships with open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT.

Then, in Round 2, experts were given the questionnaires through e-mail. Other than rating the level of agreement towards each item, the experts were allowed to give opinion, suggestion or additional items to the listed items. The data will then imported to SPSS version 23 for further analysis including the median and interquartile range. After that, the procedure moved to Round 3 and the experts were asked to re-analyse the results from Round 2, however, adding new items was not allowed. Round 2 was carried out to reduce the difference of opinion among the panel of experts.

Data in Round 2 and 3 were analysed using SPSS version 23. The interpretation of the data was based on the inter-quartile range (to view the differences in each round) and Wilcoxon Signed-rank test (to determine if there are significant differences between the rounds). When the experts had finished with the first round, all items were analysed through median and inter-quartile range (IQR). The median was used to measure level of agreement among panel of experts, whereas IQR described the consensus among experts for each item. The following Table 3 and 4 illustrate the interpretation of median and the IQR respectively (Peck and Devore, 2012).

Table 3

*Interpretation of Median*

<b>Median</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Med 4 – 5	High agreement
Med 2.01 – 3.99	Moderate agreement
Med 0 to 2	No agreement

Table 4

*Interpretation of Inter-quartile Range*

<b>Inter-quartile Range</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
IQR 0 – 1.00	High consensus
IQR 1.01 – 1.99	Intermediate consensus
IQR 2.00 and above	Low consensus

At the end of the analysis, Wilcoxon Signed-rank test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences between the rounds. Responses to each item in both rounds were used for agreement analysis using a Wilcoxon matched pairs signed-rank test within same experts in different rounds. Pairwise differences between the constructs were measured with Wilcoxon signed-rank tests. According to Hinton et al (2014), the items must reach significant level at  $p < 0.05$ . However, the p-value will always be greater than 0.05 when the sample size is small. Researcher will be able to identify differences of experts' agreement between the first and the second Delphi Rounds through Z and that Z value needs to be in between 0 to -1.99 to indicate that the experts' agreement are consistent (Norlidah, 2010).

**Findings**

The following Table 5 illustrates the experts' agreement and consensus of the items in the second round.



Table 5

*Experts' Agreement and Consensus on the Second-Round Items*

Items on "Believing in God's Presence"	Percentage (%)	Median	Mod	IQR	Experts' Consensus of Opinion
2MP36 Strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP37 Rely on Allah SWT (the concept of <i>tawakkal</i> ) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP38 Seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP39 To believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP40 Try to calm the despairing heart by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP41 To believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP42 Pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP43 To believe the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP44 To start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with <i>basmalah</i> so that actions will be easily performed.	100	5.00	5.00	0.25	HIGH
2MP45 To embrace the hardships with open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT.	100	5.00	5.00	1.00	HIGH

Table 5 shows all the Inter-quartile of the items 2MP36 to 2MP44 are 0.25 ( $IQ \leq 1.00$ ) and item 2MP45 is 1.00 ( $IQ \leq 1.00$ ) indicating that the consensus is high. Meanwhile, the median of all items is 5.00 indicating high level of agreement among the experts and the level of the importance of the statement is high. It shows that most experts are strongly agree with the items to be chosen to represent "Believing in God's Presence" as an element of religious factor to succeed the pre-sea training. It can be summarized that all items representing "Believing in God's Presence" reach consensus in Delphi Round 2 and it is reliable to conclude that all ten experts have mutual agreement upon the items. The following Table 6 illustrates the experts' agreement and consensus of the items in the third round.

Table 5

*Experts' Agreement and Consensus on the Third-Round Items*

Items on "Believing in God's Presence"	Percentage (%)	Median	Mod	IQR	Experts' Consensus of Opinion
2MP36_2 Strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP37_2 Rely on Allah SWT (the concept of <i>tawakkal</i> ) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP38_2 Seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP39_2 To believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP40_2 Try to calm the despairing heart by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP41_2 To believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP42_2 Pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP43_2 To believe the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP44_2 To start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with <i>basmalah</i> so that actions will be easily performed. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH
2MP45_2 To embrace the hardships with an open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT. _2	100	5.00	5.00	0.00	HIGH

Table 6 shows all the Inter-quartile of the items 2MP36\_2 to 2MP44\_2 are 0.00 ( $IQ \leq 1.00$ ), indicating that the consensus is high. Meanwhile, the median of all items is 5.00 indicating high level of agreement among the experts and the level of the importance of the statement is high. It shows that for the second time, most experts are strongly agree with the items to be chosen to represent "Believing in God's Presence" as an element of religious factor to succeed the pre-sea training. It can be summarized that all items representing "Believing in God's Presence" reach consensus in Delphi Round 3 and it is reliable to conclude that all ten experts have mutual agreement upon the items.

Finally, Table 7 illustrates the level of consistency between experts' opinion in the first round and the second round of Delphi.

Table 7

*Difference of Level of Consistency between Delphi Round 1 and Round 2*

Items on "Believing in God's Presence"	N	Z	There is no significant difference between the experts' opinion in Delphi Round 1 and 2
2MP36 Strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing.	10	-.577	YES
2MP37 Rely on Allah SWT (the concept of tawakkal) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	10	-.577	YES
2MP38 Seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.	10	-.577	YES
2MP39 To believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong.	10	-.577	YES
2MP40 Try to calm the despairing heart by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT.	10	-.577	YES
2MP41 To believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT.	10	-.577	YES
2MP42 Pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil.	10	-.577	YES
2MP43 To believe the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish.	10	-.577	YES
2MP44 To start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with <i>basmalah</i> so that actions will be easily performed.	10	-.577	YES
2MP45 To embrace the hardships with an open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT.	10	-1.000	YES

The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to compare experts' level of agreement between Delphi Round 2 and 3 in order to determine whether the experts changed their ratings. Based on Table 6, the result of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test lies between 0.00 to -1.99 ( $Z = -0.577$  and  $-1.000$ ). So, there are no significant changes in score for all items from Round 2 to Round 3. The result shows that the experts' level of agreement are consistent in both rounds and all items are included as items to represent the "Believing in God's Presence" as an element of religious factor that help students to succeed the pre-sea training. Indeed, median all items score rating was 5.00 both in Round 2 and Round 3.

### Analysis and Discussion

This study established experts' consensus regarding the items that represent the "Believing in God's Presence" as an element in religious factor that help Marine students to succeed the pre-sea training. All listed items were agreed to be included under the list of "Believing in God's Presence" element.

All items were identified to be related to the execution of planned strategies and the act of monitoring the implementation of the strategies. Planning and monitoring are two important parts in self-regulation and most of the time these two help the person to reach intended objective in life. Humans need to be proactive and competent to pursue a challenging life. Self-regulatory and strategic approaches to various aspects of life are becoming increasingly needed so that humans can adapt to complex and challenging worlds

(Fritz and Peklaj, 2011). The relationship of the concept of self-regulating with successful social life has been emphasized in various fields such as Hobbes philosopher, Hume's utilitarian theorist, the philosopher of the Period of Enlightenment of Kant, as well as the modern philosopher of Sartre who argues that the mastery of self-regulating skills can create awareness on the potential and full human responsibility (Forgas et al., 2009). Self-regulation is also seen as a situation in which a person maintains a stage of emotionally and cognitive stimulation that results in positive self-adjustment, which ultimately builds on positive efficacy and self-esteem (Blairs et al., 2010).

McCulloch and Willoughby (2009) justify that religion can enhance the mastery of self-regulating skills. Koole, McCullough, Kuhl, and Peter (2009) emphasizes on religious affiliation with self-regulation. According to Koole et al., religious practices and believes activate psychological mechanisms including motivational and emotional levels that increase willingness to self-regulate. Most religious practices regulate bodily functions that help humans become calmer and understand the religion more deeply.

Therefore, by believing in the presence of Allah SWT throughout the pre-sea training, will help students to maintain positive emotional level. It helps students to stay calm and focus on succeeding the pre-sea training. Therefore, with the help from experts, who also have experience in seafaring or well-exposed with seafaring lives, ten items that can be served as guidance for students to create the feeling of awareness of the presence of Allah SWT. Here are all the items that represent the "Believing in God's Presence" as an element in religious factor that will help Marine students to succeed the pre-sea training:

- i- Strive for the best to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training as being aware that Allah SWT is All-Seeing.
- ii- Rely on Allah SWT (the concept of *tawakkal*) when carrying out the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.
- iii- Seek the help from Allah SWT when facing problem to implement the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training.
- iv- To believe that Allah SWT makes pious people strong.
- v- Try to calm the despairing heart by believing the presence of help from Allah SWT.
- vi- To believe that Allah SWT will become close to those who draw close to Allah SWT.
- vii- Pray to Allah SWT to be protected from the evil.
- viii- To believe in the presence of Allah SWT through the creation of the nature like the sea and fish.
- ix- To start implementing the strategy to succeed the pre-sea training with *basmalah* so that actions will be easily performed.
- x- To embrace the hardships with an open heart during the pre-sea training for the pleasure of Allah SWT.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that religious factor has the ability to help Marine students to succeed the pre-sea training, despite of all the hardships they will go through as a newcomer on-board. Therefore, it is important for the students to feel the presence of Allah SWT during the pre-sea training, as they will be separated from family, being alone in the middle of crews from places all over the world, as well the moment of embracing new experience. To ensure that the development of eligible seafarers continues to the next level in the process of producing skilful human capital in the marine world, students must be properly trained and succeed the pre-sea training as the first baby step to the world of seafaring. Therefore, it is a hope that all

items that reach the consensus of experts' opinion under the element "believing in God's Presence" will become guidance for those who are about to enter the life full with challenge and excitement.

### **Contribution**

There are very few studies on shipping, especially studies that focus on Muslim students pursuing maritime education. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of a theory of self-regulation based on religious aspects. The religious elements highlighted by Imam al-Ghazali are adopted in McCullough and Willoughby's self-regulation theory, which builds on the framework of Carver and Scheier's self-regulation theory. The concept of "belief in the existence of God" is a complementary element to the self-regulatory framework based on religious values.

From a contextual perspective, the elements of self-regulation based on the existence of God are a guide for students to apply later in their pre-Sea Training. Based on the findings of this study the religious practises on board maritime students support students to organise themselves well and successfully complete the pre-sea training to the end.

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