

Are Muslim patients praying consistently while on hospital admission?

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Abstracts

Background: Five daily prayers are prescribed by Allah to all Muslims no matter the situations including the period of ill-health. However, certain adjustments are allowed to ease the performance of prayers by a sick person. It is part of the general conduct of Muslims to remind one another when it is time for prayer. During ill-health, especially when a patient is on admission, it is observed that a significant number of them do not perform the five daily prayers consistently. The aim of this study was to interview Muslim patients on hospital admission regarding their ability to observe the prescribed five daily prayers.

Methodology: An open- and close-ended questionnaire using SurveyMonkey of the online google form was employed to collect data. Analysis was done using Microsoft excel spreadsheet.

Results: Findings revealed that over 30% of the patients interviewed were not performing their five daily prayers consistently. The major reasons for not praying while on admission include severity of the illness, lack of knowledge on how to pray while sick, and lack of support from the hospital staff and caregivers.

Conclusion: The author concluded that less than 4 out of every 10 patients on admission perform their daily prayers regularly. It is recommended that continuous health awareness campaigns on the value of the patient performing regular prayers, their care givers, as well as the hospital staff, including the leadership.

Keywords: Ibadah-friendly hospital, patient prayer, spiritual care.

Introduction

The five daily prayers are an important act of worship that Allah prescribed to all Muslim males and females. Performing five daily prayers at its stipulated time is the dearest deed in the sight of Allah according to one of the sayings of Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon him (PBUH).¹ Various positions are prescribed to a Muslim when sick to observe

five daily prayers no matter the severity of his/her illness provided he/she is conscious and in good mental status.² Muslims are usually conscious about the timing of prayer in order to observe such religious duty, and usually remind others to prayer as well. This is the basis for making a call for prayer when it is time. However, it is observed that the majority of Muslim patients do not observe their five daily prayers while on hospital

admission due to various reasons that included general ignorance from the patients as well as their caregivers regarding prayers of a sick patient, lack of appropriate support by the hospital community, and lack of support from the staff on duty.³

The objective of the study

The study aimed to interview Muslim patients on admission in some health facilities regarding their consistency in observing their five daily prayers and to assess if there is any difficulty regarding that.

Methodology

This was a cross-sectional descriptive study that surveyed Muslim patients on hospital admission regarding their consistency and constraint in performing their five daily prayers. An online structured open- and close-ended questionnaire using SurveyMonkey of the google Forms was developed and used for data collection. The first part contains the request for consent, after which the participants will now be able to move to subsequent part of the measuring scale like: a patient's ziyarah (i.e., visitation) team was formed, which visited patients for spiritual guidance and counseling. In addition, the patients or their caregivers were interviewed. Responses were analysed using Microsoft excel spreadsheet

2019; results were presented in form of tables, figures, and charts.

Results

A total of fifty-two (52) patients on admission in various hospitals were interviewed, 56.9% were males while 43.1% were females (see Fig. 1). Forty-two-point- nine percent (42.9%) of the patients interviewed were on admission for less than one week, 26.5% one to two weeks, 16.3% for three to four weeks, and 14.3% were on admission for more than four weeks. As shown in Fig. 2, close to one third of the participants (31%) interviewed were not observing their five daily prayers (salawaat). Among the patients who were not able to observe their salawaat, 95.5% were not happy with the situation. Figure 2 displayed participants' reasons for not being able to carry out salawaat and the three major ones are: severity of illness, lack of support from the hospital staff, and lack of knowledge of how to pray while sick among the major reasons that prevent them from praying consistently (31.3%, 25%, and 12.5%, respectively). Table 1 reported that of the 68.7% who were praying, 50% of them do not find it easy to pray, and various reasons for such difficulty include having intravenous fluid fixed, no conducive environment for ablution and the prayer, severity of illness, unaware of the actual prayer time, and lack of availability of water.

Figure 1: Showing the genda of the patients interviewed

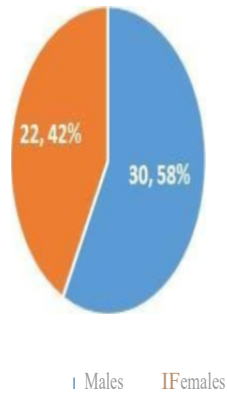


Figure 2: Showing those patients that are praying and others who are not

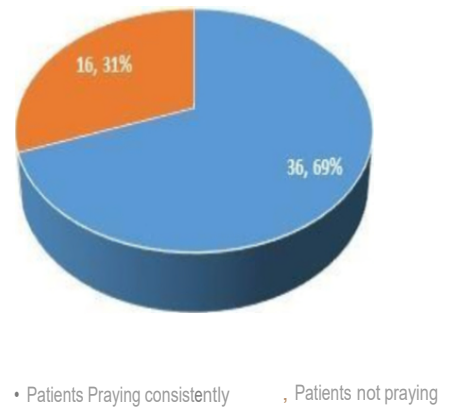


Figure 3: Various reasons that stop patient from praying

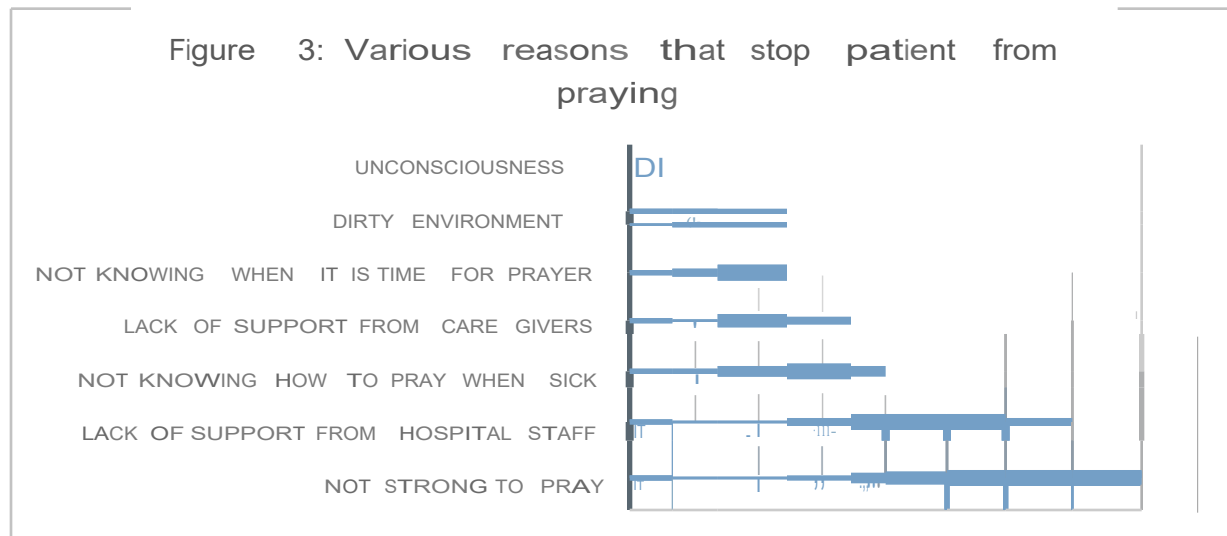


Table 1. Types of constrains that make observing prayer difficult

Type of constrain	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Having intravenous fluid fixed	8	22.2
lack of conducive environment for ablution and the prayer	5	13.9
Severity of illness	10	27.8
Unaware of the actual prayer time	7	19.4
Lack of availability of water	6	16.7
Total	36	100%

Discussion

The five daily prayers are important and compulsory upon every Muslim that is in a good state of mental health and conscious of his/her environment. Ill-health is recognised in Islam, and provisions have been made on how to observe five daily prayers while sick. Finding from this research revealed that a significant number of Muslim patients (31%) on hospital admission do not perform five daily prayers consistently. This finding is similar to that from Malaysia⁴ but lower than that reported by Taib and colleagues.⁵ Various reasons that hinder patients from praying consistently included lack of body strength, poor knowledge regarding prayers for a sick person, and lack of support by the hospital staff. These findings are similar to prior studies.^{4,5} And extrapolated from Taib *et al.*, this study might finding might also influenced by types of illness, patient mobility as well as toileting ability, among others.⁵ Findings from this research revealed that even among those patients who are praying consistently, significant number of them (50%) are facing some difficulties. These include lack of clean environment, having intravenous fluid fixed, unawareness about the actual timing for prayer, and lack of adequate water supply.

Conclusion

This study concluded that a relatively high number of Muslim patients on hospital admission do not observe five daily prayers consistently, and those that pray, find it difficult to do so. Some noted variables influencing this are: general lack of knowledge from the patients or their caregivers; lack of supportive environment as well as lack of assistance by the hospital staff. The researchers recommended continuous awareness campaigns to Muslim healthcare providers, patients, and their caregivers about the importance of prayer for a sick patient in order to bridge this gap. Lastly, the Hospital Managers should facilitate and entrench ibadah friendliness of their hospitals.

References

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Conflict of interest: Nil