

Relationship Between Islamic Studies Students' Knowledge of *Fiqh Al-Seerah* and Healthy Living Practices

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ABSTRACT

While the saying 'Health is wealth' has long been acknowledged, its gravity has been particularly underscored following the global outbreak of the Coronavirus-19 disease (Covid-19), making health our utmost priority. Hence, understanding the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, known in Islamic scholarship as Fiqh Al-Seerah, is necessary to learn about his healthful lifestyle practices. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the degree of knowledge regarding Fiqh Al-Seerah and the correlation between such knowledge and healthy living practices. Since the study was meant to represent the lifestyle patterns of the students, it was carried out using a sample of respondents from Sultan Ismail Petra International Islamic University College. Using a purposive sample of 49 respondents, the study used a quantitative methodology. The association between the two variables was examined using SPSS 20.0 and existing measures. For the variable "students' knowledge of Fiqh Al-Seerah," the mean is 5.240 with a standard deviation of 0.4258, while for the variable "healthy lifestyle," the mean is 3.5814 with a standard deviation of 0.42027. The Pearson correlation between students' knowledge of Fiqh Al-Seerah and healthy lifestyle is 0.444, and the p-value for this correlation is 0.003, indicating statistical significance. This highlights the importance of Islamic education, more specifically, the importance of Islamic history. This finding emphasizes the potential contribution of Islamic education to the promotion of holistic well-being since religious knowledge can inspire people to lead healthier lives.

Keywords: *Healthy Living, Fiqh Al-Seerah, Students' Lifestyle*

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1. Introduction

Life is the most important element Allah The Almighty (God) has given us. The proverb "health is wealth" captures the many advantages of excellent health, including increased psychological well-being, lower healthcare expenditures, and stronger economic growth. Ensuring and maintaining health is a personal advantage and an ensemble asset that contributes to overall prosperity and quality of life.

Nowadays, health has become our priority after the world was shocked by the outbreak of CoronaVirus-19 Disease (Covid-19). It was initially reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019. A month after that, on January 30, 2020, the WHO Director-General statement to the International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee on Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) said in his speech, "I am declaring a public health emergency of international concern over the global outbreak of novel coronavirus." He declared that the disease outbreak was a global health emergency.

As a Muslim, this is something to ponder. Ibn Abbas R.A (radhiyallahu'anhu - May Allah be pleased with him) narrated that Prophet Muhammad PBUH said:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُورٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

Translation: Two forms of enjoyment which often neglected most of mankind are namely health and spaciousness (time).

[*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, hadith no: 5933]

2. Research Objectives

This study was conducted based on the identified objectives, namely:

- To examine the level of knowledge in Fiqh *Al-Seerah* and;
- Identify the relationship between the levels of knowledge of Fiqh *Al-Seerah* and healthy living practices.

3. Fiqh Al-Seerah

In Al-Takrifat, Al-Jurjani defined fiqh as the knowledge of the practical legal rulings derived from their detailed evidence (Al-Jurjani, 1983). When referring to the term *syara*, 'fiqh' refers to the practical understanding of the principles of *syara* derived from their in-depth justifications (Zaidan,

1976). Hence, *al-Seerah* refers to the comprehensive narrative of the life, teachings, and actions of Prophet Muhammad. It encompasses his birth, upbringing, prophethood, interactions with his companions and opponents, major events such as battles and treaties, as well as his moral and spiritual teachings (Ibn Hisham, 1955).

3.1 Fiqh Al-Seerah in Islamic Discipline

A holistic understanding of the broad spectrum of individual circumstances, social interactions, and societal changes that have molded Islamic culture over millennia may be gained by investigating both history and *al-Seerah*. Numerous books of *seerah* detailed the everyday activities of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. It provides in-depth and detailed accounts of his life, his companions, and his followers. These include works by prominent Islamic scholars such as Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham and Imam al-Bukhari. Sa'id Ramadhan Al-Buthi (2001) said in his book- which is one of the famous reference history books nowadays- *Fiqh Al Seerah* that "The aim of such a study is to enable the Muslim, who may have a merely cognitive understanding of the truth of Islam in term of its principles, rules, and legislation, to gain an understanding of his truth in its entirety, as it is embodied in the life of the prophet PBUH. In other words, the study of prophetic history is a practical task the goal of which is to embody the Islamic reality as a complete whole as seen in its exemplar, Muhammad PBUH (pg.57)."

3.2 The Important of al-Seerah

"History is the storehouse of knowledge, the mirror of the past, the counsel of the present, and the guide to the future." (Al-Ghazali)

This quote reflects the profound understanding and appreciation of history throughout the centuries. He highlights the role of history as a guide for understanding the past, navigating the present, and shaping the future. Al-Ghazali highlights history as a repository of knowledge accumulated over time. It preserves the experiences, struggles, achievements, and failures of past generations, offering valuable lessons and insights for present and future generations. History encompasses various fields, including politics, economics, culture, religion, and social dynamics, providing a comprehensive understanding of human civilization. Hence, history serves as a mirror that reflects the events, actions, and circumstances of bygone eras. By studying history, individuals gain a vivid portrayal of past societies, their customs,

beliefs, conflicts, and achievements. Through this reflection, people can develop a deeper understanding of the human condition, recognizing both the virtues and vices inherent in human nature.

It highlights how important it is to study history because of its fundamental worth as well as its role in determining people's individual and societal outcomes. People can acquire the knowledge, awareness, and understanding necessary to effectively face the challenges of the contemporary world by accepting the lessons of history.

4. Healthy Living Practices

Healthy living practices refer to habits or behaviors that contribute to physical, mental and social well-being. These practices include eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, living physically active, maintaining strong desires, and harmonious relationships with people.

4.1 Prophet Muhammad PBUH as a Role Model

Healthy living practices in this study refer to the life of our Prophet PBUH as his lifestyle serves as an exemplary model for all humanity to follow. A healthy lifestyle of our Prophet PBUH such as sleeping, waking up, eating, drinking, speaking, sitting, walking, etc., are balanced and scientifically of high value. The Western biology scientists, Camille W. Anthony and William A. Anthony (2001) appreciated the prophet's style of mid-day slumber known as *khailulah* in the following term: "A mid-afternoon quiescent phase, or sleep for a moment at noon, is sufficient to give energy and to maintain health if not more than an hour. It greatly impacts a specific biological circle called circadian rhythm".

4.2 Students as Change Agents

Harry R. Lewis (2007) in his book; *Excellence without a Soul* says, "What universities have forgotten; is to develop students into good character, professor and hired scholar; not as mentors of value and ideals." He expressed disappointment with the educational system, where Harvard produces graduates who excel but are a barren soul of humanity. The result is that excellence is for personal gain and detrimental to society; it reflects the global symptoms of an education crisis that has lost its essence, meaning and mission.

Nevertheless, according to Baharom et al. (2008), the formation of student identity can occur formally through planned activities in schools and educational institutions or informally through interactions at home, with

friends, or with the community (translated by the researcher). Students can be changed agents with a unique and fresh perspective that can help identify societal problems and offer innovative solutions. There is a study by Lorelei Brush et al. (2015); students have been playing significant roles in creating positive social change across various sectors. This study found that students are often effective change agents because they can mobilize resources and collaborate with stakeholders. Also, young people are key drivers in advocating for and implementing changes related to social justice, environmental sustainability and human rights. Indeed, students have the potential to act as change agents in societies due to their unique skills, energy and passion for creating a better world.

5. Methodology

The study took a quantitative approach by using the purposive sampling method (Creswell, 2014). It involves selecting participants because this method assures that the participants will contribute to the research. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling size, 49 participants from Sultan Ismail Petra International Islamic University College (KIAS) were selected.

To investigate the relationship between two variables, the researcher adopts a quantitative approach by using the existing scales and SPSS 20.0. The population of this research is focused on students in the fifth semester, Islamic Studies Department of College. According to the Students Affairs Office of the college, there are 49 students in the fifth semester of the Islamic Studies Department for study session 2020/2021.

Table 1: The Population of Study

	Respondents	Total
1.	Male	18
2.	Female	31
	Total	49

(Source: Fatin Awanis, 2023)

The instrument used to collect data in this study is the questionnaire, which is used to distribute to the sample identified previously. Questionnaires were given to all students in the fifth semester of the Islamic studies department. After getting consent from the administration, the instrument was distributed to 49 students. However, just 43 students responded, and these students completed the questionnaires.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section A: Demographic

Section B: Knowledge

Section C: Healthy Living Practices

Table 3.4 below is section B, about the level of knowledge in *Fiqh Al-Seerah*. The instruments were derived from a previous study i.e. *Tahap Pengetahuan Islam dan Penghayatan Akhlak Pelajar Semester 1, Satu Kajian di Politeknik Banting Selangor* (2018).

Table 2: Question of Students' Level Knowledge in *Fiqh Al-Seerah*

NO.	ELEMENT
1.	Al-Qur'an does not explain the ways of human relationships.
2.	Mosques play an important role in building the excellence of Muslims.
3.	The Caliph is the person who holds the position of head of the Islamic state.
4.	Khulafa'al-Rasyidin is the best follower after Rasulullah s.a.w.
5.	The Muhajireen are the followers of Rasulullah s.a.w. who migrated from Mecca to Medina while the Ansar were composed of the original inhabitants of Medina who embraced Islam.
6.	Brotherhood is an important element in forming unity in Islam.
7.	Prioritizing religious interests over other interests is fundamental to the Islamic way of life.
8.	A dignified Muslim is one who is able to resist destructive foreign influences.
9.	The dress code in Islam is part of the Islamic method of preserving human dignity.
10.	Leaking an employer's secret is an action that can be taken.
11.	Great civilization is the result of selfish human efforts.
12.	Doing well to neighbors is the duty of Muslims.
13.	Respecting older people is an Islamic requirement.
14.	Maintaining good relations with non-Muslims is a responsibility of a Muslim.

Source: Nor Hayati Fatmi Talib, 2018)

The questionnaire for section C was developed by the researcher as the study had never been done before.

Table 3: Questions of Students' Healthy Living Practice

NO.	ELEMENT
1.	Early riser
2.	Early shower
3.	Morning stretching
4.	Fasting (sunnah)
5.	Stop eating before full
6.	Good in controlling stress
7.	Hold anger well
8.	Not a smoker
9.	Not a vaper
10.	Reading books related to studying
11.	Reading books not related to study (other resources)
12.	Easy to put smiling face
13.	The health supplement is taken
14.	Avoid snacks that contain MSG
15.	Doing brief exercises every day
16.	Going to bed early

(Source: Fatin Awanis, 2023)

In this study, a five-point scale questionnaire was selected to determine the respondents' level of agreement specified in this instrument. The questions probe students' level of agreement about the statement given. The five-point scale is used to measure each item.

1= Strongly disagree,

2= Disagree,

3= Neither agree nor disagree,

4= Agree, and

5= Strongly Disagree

6. Finding

6.1 Students' Knowledge in Fiqh Al-Seerah

The result in Table 4 below indicates the respondents' level of knowledge in Fiqh Al-Seerah.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistic for Students' Level of Knowledge in Fiqh Al-Seerah

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mosques play an important role in building the excellence of Muslims.	43	4	6	5.56	.700
The Caliph is the person who holds the position of head of the Islamic state.	43	2	6	5.28	1.008
Khulafa'al-Rasyidin is the best follower after Rasulullah s.a.w.	43	4	6	5.58	.587
The Muhajireen are the followers of Rasulullah s.a.w. ...	43	1	6	5.07	1.223
Brotherhood is an important element in forming unity in Islam.	43	4	6	5.72	.504
Prioritizing religious interests over other interests is fundamental to the Islamic way of life.	43	3	6	5.37	.952
A dignified Muslim is one who is able to resist destructive foreign influences.	43	4	6	5.47	.735
The dress code in Islam is part of the Islamic method of preserving human dignity.	43	4	6	5.70	.599
Great civilization is the result of selfish human efforts.	43	1	6	2.37	1.415

Doing well to neighbours is the duty of Muslims.	43	4	6	5.67	.566
Respecting older people is an Islamic requirement.	43	4	6	5.67	.606
Maintaining good relations with non-Muslims is a responsibility as a Muslim.	43	3	6	5.42	.794
Valid N (listwise)	43				

(Source: Fatin Awanis, 2023)

6.2 Healthy Living Practices

This section of the questionnaire consists 16 questions on healthy living practices and the results are presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Descriptive Statistic for Students' Healthy Living Practices

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Early riser	43	1	5	3.42	1.006
Early shower	43	2	5	3.72	1.076
Morning stretching	43	1	5	2.74	1.026
Fasting (voluntary)	43	1	5	2.98	.771
Stop eating before full	43	2	5	3.65	.948
Good in control stress	43	2	5	3.79	.888
Hold anger well	43	2	5	3.81	.958
Not a smoker	43	2	5	4.86	.639
Not a vaper	43	2	5	4.81	.664
Reading book related to study	43	2	5	3.51	.798
Reading books not related to study (other resources)	43	2	5	3.56	.854
Easy to put smiling face	43	1	5	4.19	1.006

Health supplement taken	43	1	5	2.77	1.394
Avoid snack that contain MSG	43	1	5	2.63	1.001
Doing brief exercise everyday	43	2	5	3.70	.989
Going bed early	43	1	5	3.16	.814
Valid N (listwise)	43				

(Source: Fatin Awanis, 2023)

6.3 Descriptive Statistics for All Valid and Reliable Items

Based on the data provided, we can identify their top practices based on their mean ratings. The higher the mean rating, the more favorable the students perceive the practice. Habits of 'hold anger well' have the highest mean rating of 3.81. Students rated themselves relatively high in their ability to handle anger effectively. The second highest is the habit of 'not a vaper.' The practice of not vaping has a mean of 4.81. Followed by the third-highest mean rating of 4.81 is the practice of 'not a smoker.' These three practices stood out with the highest mean ratings, indicating that participants perceived themselves positively in managing anger, not vaping or smoking.

However, based on the same data, there are also practices with the lowest mean rating. The practice 'avoid snacks that contain MSG' received a mean rating of 2.63, indicating that students reported having difficulty avoiding snacks that contain MSG. The second lowest is 'taking health supplements.' This practice had a mean rating of 2.77. While practice, 'voluntary fasting' had the third lowest mean rating of 2.98, showing that respondents had a lower engagement or adherence to voluntary fasting.

6.4 Answering the Question of The Study

Table 6: Means and Standards Deviations for Each Variable

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Students' Knowledge in Fiqh Al-Seerah	43	5.240	.4258	.0649

Healthy Living Practices	43	3.5814	.42027	.06409
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(Source: Fatin Awanis, 2023)

The table shows the descriptive statistics for two variables: "Students' Knowledge in Fiqh *Al-Seerah*" and "Healthy Living Practices." For the variable "Students' Knowledge in Fiqh *Al-Seerah*," the mean is 5.240 with a standard deviation of 0.4258 while the variable 'Healthy Living Practices,' the mean is 3.5814 with a standard deviation of 0.42027. These statistics indicate that, on average, the student's knowledge in Fiqh *Al-Seerah* is approximately 5.240, while the standard deviation suggests some variability in the knowledge levels among the students. It also reveals that, on average, the respondents' engagement in healthy living practices is around 3.5814.

6.5 The Relationship Between Two Variables

The second research question "What is the relationship between the level of knowledge in Fiqh *Al-Seerah* and healthy living practices?"

This present study adopted Pearson's correlation method to analyze the level of correlation between two variables of level of students' knowledge and healthy living practices. The Pearson correlation coefficient measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the two variables.

Table 4.4 Pearson's Correlation between Students' Knowledge of Fiqh *Al-Seerah* and Healthy Living Practices

	Students' Knowledge in Fiqh <i>Al-Seerah</i>	Healthy Living Practices
Pearson Correlation	1	.444**
Students' Knowledge in Fiqh <i>Al-Seerah</i> Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
N	43	43
Pearson Correlation	.444**	1
Healthy Living Practices Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
N	43	43

(Source: Fatin Awanis, 2023)

Based on Table 4.4, Pearson's Correlation between students' knowledge of Fiqh Al-Seerah and Healthy Living Practices is 0.444. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.003, indicating statistical significance.

On the major finding, there is a significant and positive correlation between students' knowledge of Fiqh Al-Seerah and their engagement in healthy living practices. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1989) once said: "The aim of history is not to know what happened in the past but to understand the present by examining the past. History reflects the course of human conduct, transforms the good and bad actions of people into everlasting lessons for the living and gives us the chance to better understand the world we live in." Therefore, the positive correlation showed that students who possess a higher level of knowledge in Fiqh Al-Seerah, which pertains to understanding Islamic history teaching, are more likely to adopt healthy living practices. This showed the importance of Islamic education or more precisely, the importance of Islamic history. This finding highlights the potential role of Islamic education in promoting holistic well-being, where religious knowledge can motivate someone to implement healthier lifestyles.

7. Conclusion

To enhance the connection between knowledge in Fiqh Al-Seerah and healthy living practices, future research can benefit from several improvements. Firstly, a qualitative approach, alongside quantitative data, like individual or focus group interviews, should be considered to delve deeper into the underlying mechanisms and motivations driving the observed relationship, potentially revealing cultural, social, or personal factors at play. Secondly, the inclusion of diverse respondent characteristics, spanning different backgrounds, age groups, educational levels, or study fields, can offer a broader range of perspectives and experiences, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding. Lastly, conducting intervention studies to assess the effectiveness of educational programs aimed at improving Fiqh Al-Seerah knowledge and promoting healthy living practices can provide evidence-based insights into the impact of targeted interventions on behaviour change. This research study has successfully addressed the research questions and achieved its objectives. We have learned important things about the connection between students' knowledge of Fiqh Al-Seerah and their healthy living practices via a detailed analysis of the data and a careful assessment of the relevant literature. The findings of this study contribute to the existing

body of knowledge in the field and have important implications for both societies and higher education institutions.

Therefore, to shape students' behavior or daily lifestyles of The Prophet Muhammad PBUH way is not easy. However, it is important to note that achieving and maintaining healthy living practices requires motivation, time management and a supportive environment. Incorporating these practices into daily life can not only prevent the onset of chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, and virus infection but also improve mental health and cognitive function.

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