Towards Quality of Life:
Analysis of patterns on religious practice at workplace

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Abstract
Life quality depends on the balance of work and life. Among the determinants in life quality is religious freedom in the workplace, which contributes to physical and mental health, leading to employee stability. This paper aims to explore religious freedom at workplace patterns supported by two research objectives; to determine religious freedom issue and to identify patterns involved. The paper that adopted PRISMA approach and thematic content analysis concluded many unattended religious issues based on 49 articles. Contributions such as human resources management, while limitation on timeframe to allow for the lengthy timeframe in future.

Keywords: religious at workplace, quality of life, work-life balance

1.0 Introduction
The employee's well-being is related to the extent of happiness in life. In order to improve well-being, the critical issue that is highlighted is the commitment to religious practice (Azizan & Mahmud, 2018). Nonetheless, the employee work-life balance depends on the strategy used in improving life quality (Kasmuri, Ismail, Nordin, & Hashim, 2020). The role of life quality is significantly related to well-being. However, since employees spend more time at the workplace than in their own dwellings, the need to improve the workplace environment to suit with life quality is important for them.

Based on the theory of need introduced by Abraham Maslow in 1943, human need is based on the five levels; Maslow has introduced the importance to meet the psychological need which is the basis of human life. As such, religion is among the psychological needs that are required to be fulfilled which also part of human rights aspect (Shah & Sani, 2010). It has been suggested to supports religious matters with equality of resources policy (Alon, Li, & Wu, 2017). In the part of the paper focus, supports could be given by the organisation through employee religious beliefs in order to improve quality of life. In the hectic employee work schedule, the need to accommodate religious practice should be given high priority. Previous research has pointed out that the role of religion benefits the organisation through religious-based stress management (Héliot, Gleibs, Coyle, Rousseau, & Rojon, 2020) and life quality improvement (Hashim,

Mohd Aminuddin, Ghazali, & Abd Razak, 2019; Miller, Ngunjiri, & LoRusso, 2017). Despite the benefits to the workplace, the contribution from religion can be seen in entrepreneur activity which promotes better time management, innovation and proactive behaviour (Omri, Becuwe, & Randerson, 2017). These findings show that the role of religion in life quality has been proven to be important in both work and personal life.

Religious issues in Malaysia involve the Muslim employee who is unable to perform his or her prayer during working hours (Department of Labour Peninsular Malaysia, 2018) and the issue of work attire within the industry that requires clothing etiquette (The Edge Markets, 2019). There is lack of understanding about religious need at workplace. Since Malaysia is a multi-religion country, multi-religion working environment is a culture that should not be avoided (Shah & Sani, 2010). Due to these circumstance, religious issues affect the employee work outcome that will lead to poor life quality. According to the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC), in order to promote industrial harmonisation, changes in employment policy by the organisation management should be able to cater to the employee's need (Association of Maybank Class One Officers, n.d.). Thus, by considering religious aspects in the organisation policy, an improvement on workplace harmonisation can be seen, which at the same time is seen in the employee's quality of life.

Based on these circumstances, this paper aims to explore religious freedom patterns at workplace. In order to meet the aim, the paper is supported by two research objectives; to determine religious freedom issue and to identify patterns involved. The following sections elaborate sections that involved in the study as follows; research method, review findings, discussion and conclusion & recommendation.

2.0 Research Method

In order to explore religious studies pattern, this paper adopted the Systematic Literature Reviews (SLR) by considering Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA). PRISMA allows rigorous articles searching that is relevant in the research scope through its four stages protocol, namely identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion (Moher et al., 2016) or simplified as ISEIn. The PRISMA protocol utilised in the article searching process is illustrated in Fig. 1, while the PRISMA procedure elaborates in the following sections accordingly.

Remarks:
I=Included S=Screening E=Eligibility In=Included
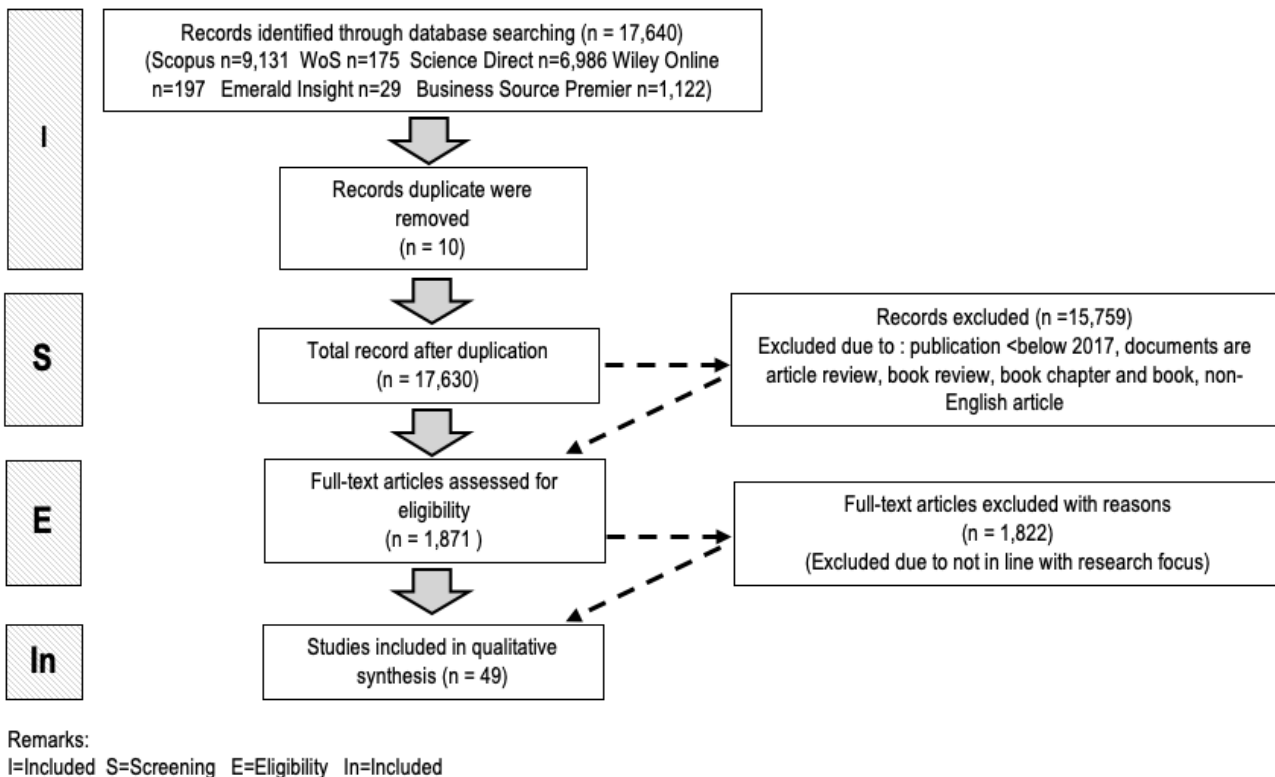
Fig. 1: PRISMA Protocol of Articles Searching

2.1 Identification

Six databases are involved in the article searching process, which is also known as identification in the PRISMA workflow. The databases that were used were Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct, Wiley Online, Emerald Insights and Business Source Premier. About 17,640 articles were found with the usage of the different search string (see Table 1). Each database has different articles searching protocol such as the wildcard (i.e. * as in Scopus) and query string (TITLE-ABS-KEY as in Scopus and TS= as in Web of Science). It is important to use Boolean operators such as AND and OR between the keywords, to improve articles relevancy.

Table 1. Search String Used in Article Searching Process

Resources	Search string/Query string
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ((religio* OR religiosity) AND (practice OR administration OR tradition OR culture OR use) AND (workplace OR organisation OR office OR building OR enterprise OR institute))
Web of Science	TS=(religious AND practice AND workplace)
Science Direct	religious workplace practices
Wiley Online	religious AND workplace
Emerald Insights	religious practice workplace
Business Source Premier	religious AND workplace practices AND workplace

2.2 Screening

The researcher is required to develop inclusion and exclusion criteria to respect the PRISMA screening protocol. This protocol is to ensure that all the articles get equal treatment, to be selected through the application of the pre-determined criteria. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were created and discussed among the researchers (see Table 2). A total of 1,871 articles that met the inclusion criteria were then proceeded to the eligibility stage. Meanwhile, 15,759 articles were excluded as they did not fulfil the inclusion criteria.

Table 2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2017-2020	Below 2017
Language	English	Non-English
Article type	Research paper and conference paper with data/empirical data	Review article papers, books, thesis

2.3 Eligibility

Articles that met the inclusion criteria require the second stage of the filtering process where researchers read the article thoroughly. In this stage, other researcher articles were read by another researcher, to avoid the possibility of bias in the article inclusion process (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009). About 1,822 articles were excluded due to not being in line with the research focus, while 49 articles proceeded to qualitative synthesising.

2.4 Included

The review process began with a focus on the abstract of 49 articles. In this stage, authors were required to read the articles thoroughly with the research question's assistance. Following the research question, types of data or patterns that were discussed and agreed upon earlier became the main reference in the review process. Content analysis was executed with the assistance of Atlas.ti (Version 9). Review findings were discussed and confirmed by all the authors, which included the religious practices pattern in the workplace.

3.0 Review Findings

The review findings of articles involve two parts: the first part consists of information on the sample of articles, while the second part involves the findings. The latter includes three themes according to religious issues suitability: workplace environment, discrimination and work implementation.

3.1 Sample of Review Articles

The four religions that are involved in the review findings include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam, while one category is categorized as general represents all religion (see Fig. 2. (a). In terms of research design, there is a high focus on the qualitative and quantitative, with 24 and 19 articles, respectively (see Fig. 2. (b), while 6 articles adopted the mixed method. Meanwhile, five sample categories involved the sample of articles. However, focuses were prioritised on the employee, while others were seen as low in numbers (see Fig. 2. (c). On top of that, the sample of articles has involved 6 countries' geography classification with Europe and Asia as the priority (see Fig. 2 (d). Lastly, on the industry involved in studies, various industries and healthcare have been given high priority (see Fig. 2. (e).

3.2 Religious Issue at Workplace

Table 3 presents the result that is obtained from the review protocol. Three themes were identified from the content analysis with five sub-themes, i.e., workplace with three sub-themes and work implementation with two. Correspondingly, one theme stood alone without any sub-theme. The following elaborates the review of the religious issue at the workplace.
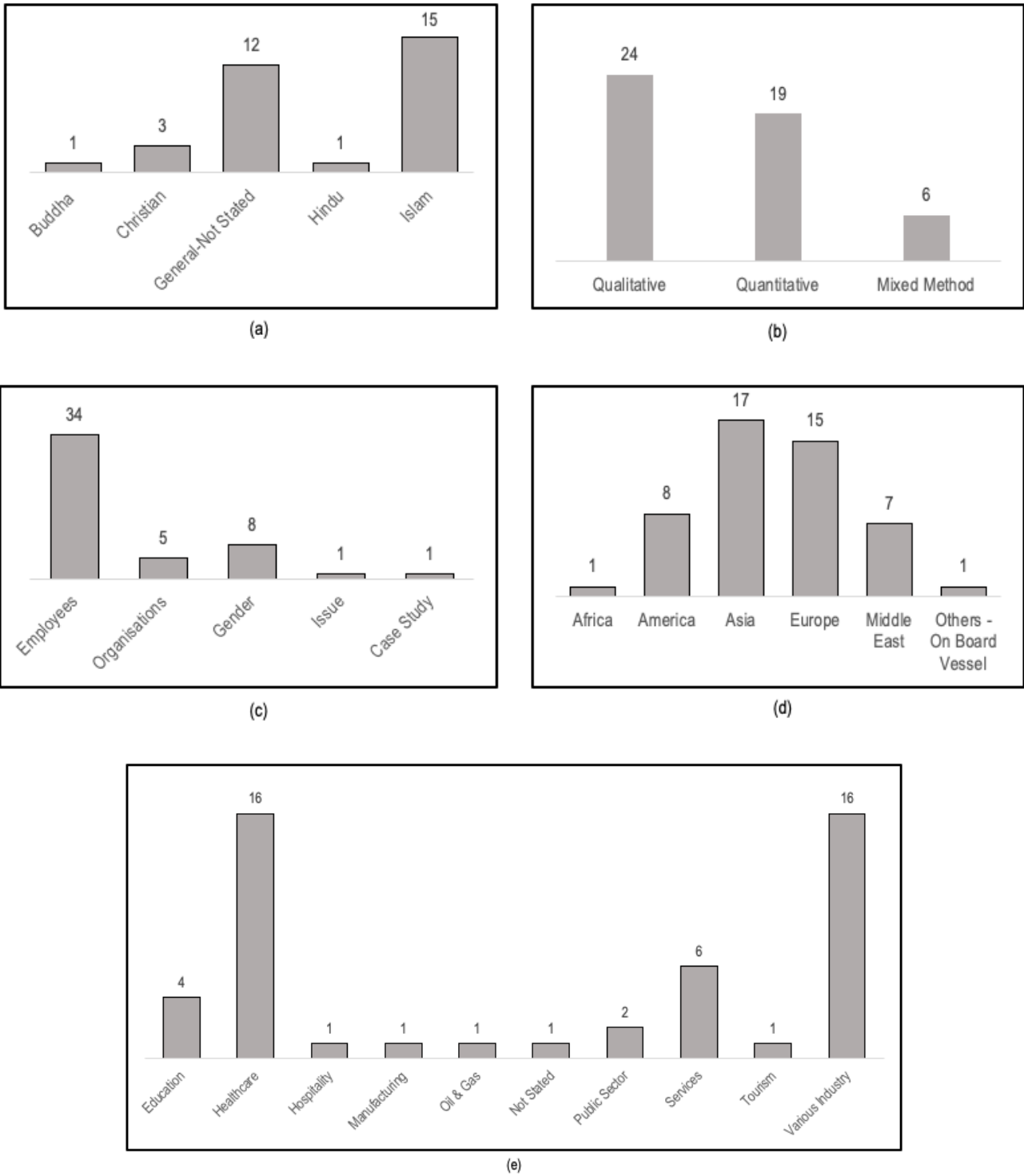
Fig. 2. (a) Types of Religion, (b) Research Design, (c) Sample of Review Studies, (d) Country of Studies Executed, (e) Industry Involved in Review Studies

- **Workplace**

This theme involves religious issue at the workplace. Three sub-themes are involved in this part, including the demand for freedom on religion at the workplace, colleagues' acceptance and the effect of religious issue.

Demand of Freedom of Religious at Workplace

In managing an organisation with various religions, reasonable decision making on religious aspects should be considered. Organisation is advised to support an employee's religious belief through freedom of religious practice at work (González-González, 2018). Two

religious-based approaches can be executed- the individual and the organisation (Fanggidae, 2018). In extent to the approach's idea, one highlights creativity improve due to the role of religion that is utilised within the organisation settings (Loo, 2017). These approaches may cater to all perspectives of religion in every angle. Besides, the management focuses its decision by not having a negative perception concerning religious accommodation requests from the employee (Butt, Dahling, & Hansel, 2017) as it could amount to forming discrimination (González-González, 2018). Furthermore, religious accommodation could be the basis for the management to explore the various religious beliefs in the workplace (Adam & Rea, 2018) as part of the organisation value. Without dedicated religious accommodation, the employee's possibility to build informal religious space such as religious animist at the workplace is high (Parsons & Brickell, 2020).

Another religious request is seen through the religious request on religious accommodation at the workplace. A lack of accommodation is the main contributor to the requests (Sekerka & Yacobian, 2018). Due to that situation, the management may attract the employee by providing conventional space aims for religious practice at the workplace (Lindheim, 2020). Even though the management accepts the request, it is difficult to implement religious accommodation at the workplace (Loo, 2017). To conclude, the demand for religious practice at the workplace should be a critical aspect of management. Thus, entertaining the requests on religious-based issue promote workplace harmonisation.

Colleague Acceptance
This sub-theme relates to the acceptance among peers concerning the employee's religious belief. Accordingly, the review found various forms of acceptance on religious belief, such as a negative form of anti-muslim attitude (Sekerka & Yacobian, 2018). Besides, the employee has to hide his or her religious belief in order to avoid negative perception among his or her colleague (Sampson, Turgo, Cadge, Gilliat-Ray, & Smith, 2020). In the study by Cruz, Alquwez, Albaqawi, Alharbi, & Moreno-Lacalle (2018), colleagues have shown their respect for their colleague's religious belief. This issue could be managed wisely through management policy. The management is advised to include the variety of religions in the workplace into their policy (Hennekam & Bennett, 2017) and a trained manager in managing a religious issue (Elkhwesky, Salem, & Barakat, 2019; Sampson et al., 2020).

Effect on Freedom of Religion at Workplace
Various forms of religious effect are found. It has been highlighted that religion is linked to mental health through mental health framework by considering three elements- social capital, migratory stress and effect (Hou, Leung, Cheung, & Xu, 2019). As such, religion is seen in positive work outcome through the assistance in work-life balance (Hassan, Tnay, Sukardi Yososudarmo, & Sabil, 2020), task flexibility (Ang, Uthaman, Ayre, Lim, & Lopez, 2019), work pressure (Batalla et al., 2019), job performance (Li, Xu, Gill, Haider, & Wang, 2019; De Clercq, Haq, & Azeem, 2017), and job satisfaction (Ntantana et al., 2017). Work pressure affects the employee's occupational health which can be countered with the role of religion. However, the freedom of religion at the workplace causes challenges for some religions, for instance, to the Muslims (Tariq & Syed, 2018). Besides, human resources management that focuses on religion should consider the effect on gender. As some religions limit women's participation in certain activities, the women's promotions were affected by a failure in the participation rate, leading to the performance evaluation score (Rożnowski & Zarzycka, 2020). This situation leads to pressure among the employees besides the negative attitude and behaviour.

- **Discrimination**

The discrimination theme focuses on discrimination that lies from religion. The review highlights the unfairness in organisation policy due to religious belief (Scheitle & Ecklund, 2018). This circumstance is seen in a promotion (Arifeen, 2020) and the least working hours and lowest salaries (Naseem & Adnan, 2019) among those who show their religious belief. Besides, showing religious belief affects the discrimination on gender as well (Bozzano, 2017). As such, a female auditor is not suitable to work as an auditor due to religion and culture that prevent females from entering the labour market (Yudiatmaja, Edison, & Samnuzulsari, 2018). One thing to highlight is the religion policy direction that is based on the country's official religion. Thus, gender discrimination is not executed without basis but through the policy developed. In extend of gender discrimination matters, religion affects the business reputation due to discrimination that is contributed through the religious policy direction (Sian, Agrizzi, Wright, & Alsalloom, 2020). To conclude, discrimination due to religion leads to few effects within workplace practice.

- **Work-related Factor**

This theme involves factor contributing to religion practice effect on employee's task implementation. This theme involves two sub-themes, namely work implementation and religious clothing issue.

Table 3. Review Findings

No.	Authors	Theme & Sub-theme						
		Workplace			Discrimination	Work-related Factor		
		Demand of Religious Freedom at Workplace	Colleague Acceptance	Effect on Freedom of Religion at Workplace		Work Implementation		Religion Clothing Issue
						Work Strategy	Client Focus	
1	Adam & Rea, 2018	√						
2	Ang et. al., 2019			√				
3	Arifeen, 2020				√	√		
4	Batalla et al., 2019			√				
5	Boğan et. al., 2020					√		
6	Bozzano, 2017				√			
7	Butt, Dahling, & Hansel, 2017	√						
8	Cai, Kim, Li, & Pan, 2019					√		
9	Cruz et. al., 2018		√			√		
10	De Clercq, Haq, & Azeem, 2017			√				
11	Elkhwesky, Salem, & Barakat, 2019		√					
12	Fanggidae, 2018	√						
13	Frey et al., 2018					√		
14	Gallo & Scrinzi, 2019					√		
15	González-González, 2018	√				√		√
16	Grant, Sallaz, & Cain, 2016						√	
17	Hassan et. al., 2020			√				
18	Hennekam & Bennett, 2017		√					
19	Hodges, 2017					√		
20	Hou, Leung, Cheung, & Xu, 2019			√				
21	Koura, 2018							√
22	Li, Xu, Gill, Haider, & Wang, 2019			√				
23	Liem, 2020						√	
24	Lindheim, 2020	√						
25	Loo, 2017	√						
26	Malik et al., 2019							√
27	Masood, 2019							√
28	Mutair, 2019						√	
29	Naseem & Adnan, 2019				√			
30	Nsiah, Siakwa, & Ninnoni, 2020						√	
31	Ntantana et al., 2017			√				
32	Omer, Sharp, & Wang, 2018					√		
33	Panicker, Agrawal, & Khandelwal, 2018					√		
34	Parsons & Brickell, 2020	√						
35	Rao, 2012					√		
36	Richardson & Rammal, 2018					√		
37	Rożnowski & Zarzycka, 2020			√				
38	Sampson, et. al., 2020		√			√		
39	Sarin & Lunsford, 2017					√	√	
40	Scheibl et al., 2019					√		
41	Scheitle & Ecklund, 2018				√			
42	Sekerka & Yacobian, 2018	√	√					
43	Sholikhah, Wang, & Li, 2019					√		
44	Sian et. al., 2020				√			
45	Tariq & Syed, 2018			√				
46	Taylor et al., 2018						√	
47	Van der Noll, Rohmann, & Saroglou, 2018							√
48	Vatandost et. al., 2020						√	
49	Yudiatmaja, Edison, & Samnuzulsari, 2018				√			

Religious-based Work Implementation Strategy. Non-religious benchmarking is a better approach in the work implementation. However, the perception of the current organisation religious climate depends on the experience in the previous organisation that the employee has worked for (Cruz et al., 2018). Therefore, avoiding religion as the benchmark could be the best strategy. Concurrently, religion is used to benchmark an employee's performance, affecting the employee's promotion (Arifeen, 2020; González-González, 2018). The organisation that allows for freedom of religion at the workplace provides support to the employee to overcome the everyday work routine (Sampson et al., 2020). This situation includes a religious-based coping strategy to promote mental health among employees during working hours (Scheibl et al., 2019) and the meaning of well-being (Frey et al., 2018). As such, this circumstance may contribute to better management practice by considering religion as a part of the work policy (Rao, 2012). However, the management of the organisation could be less visible in the market as its business direction will not be based on profit (Cai, Kim, Li, & Pan, 2019). Thus, religious matters should be reliable as part of the work implementation strategy, avoiding the effect on the employee's employment matters.

The religious role can be seen in work implementation. Work implementation is difficult through the routine of work that needs to be entertained (Sarin & Lunsford, 2017). Furthermore, some workplaces have criteria for their workmen in order to maintain image and reputation (Gallo & Scrinzi, 2019). Additionally, some religious-centered business ideas are linked to different perceptions among the stakeholders, as has been mentioned by Boğan, Dedeoğlu, Batman and Yıldırgan (2020). Besides negative acceptance on religious matters, religion influences professionalism in the work implementation, which is highlighted by Omer, Sharp and Wang (2018) and affects the work procedure on the religious basis (Richardson & Rammal, 2018). To conclude, the religious role in work implementation should be seen as a positive effect.

The leader is important in work implementation, especially in guiding the subordinates. However, the leader also faces a challenge due to religious requirements (Hodges, 2017). his situation leads to the difficulty of the leader in the work implementation. Moreover, the leader highlighted the support from the organisation on religious leadership that allowed for the possibility in the poor organisational behaviour (Panicker, Agrawal, & Khandelwal, 2018). Additionally, the leader was also affected in terms of an emotional problem that is significant to the organisational support within the leader's relationship and the workplace religion (Sholikhah, Wang, & Li, 2019). As a leader, religious-based leadership requires high consideration due to its relationship to the leader's reputation and organisation aim.

Religious-based Client Focus. Various challenges are faced by the organisation and the employee in delivering the service. Among the challenges that could be seen are the client's cultural belief and religion, and the different association that existed between the client and the service provider (Sarin & Lunsford, 2017; Nsiah, Siakwa, & Ninnoni, 2020; Vatandost, Oshvandi, Ahmadi, & Cheraghi, 2020). Despite the differences, other factors involved were the cooperation between the healthcare team, the patient and the organisation, poor communication, relationship and family (Nsiah et al., 2020). Correspondingly, the implementation of service delivery depends on several factors outside the employee's control.

In order to ensure good service delivery, the organisation may utilise a few religious-based approaches. Religion is proven as one of the alternatives that have been used as medicine in the healthcare industry (Grant, Sallaz, & Cain, 2016) and as an approach, it has been utilised in psychological problem (Liem, 2020). Additionally, using the religious conversation is regarded as appropriate; however, it should exclude some events that are found to be inappropriate (Taylor et al., 2018). For instance, in the death of children or an infant, the healthcare employee utilises religious belief to calm the family (Al Mutair, Al Ammary, Brooks, & Bloomer, 2019). To conclude, religion is seen as the alternative in some event; however, careful consideration should be focused.

Religion Clothing Issue
This sub-theme focuses on religious clothing requirement. For some occupational groups, an employee must perform clothing etiquette which prevents them from complying with a religious requirement such as in the healthcare industry (González-González, 2018; Malik et al., 2019; Masood, 2019). These findings are due to the industry's nature, where the issue of service delivery is concentrated. However, from the perspective of an industry which has no issue on clothing etiquette, there are challenges to the employees who attire as is required by their religion (Koura, 2018; Van Der Noll, Rohmann, & Saroglou, 2018); his situation can be seen in colleagues' acceptance and the effect to their employment. On a side note, religious-based clothing could be flexible depending on the industry requirement, but there are some highlights concerning the issue on workplace acceptance.

4.0 Discussion
The paper examined the pattern of religious freedom in workplace based on six databases. Based on the review findings of 49 articles, the articles' sample has various unattended areas. In meeting the research objective, to determine religious freedom issue, this paper has explored issues by identifying relevant articles. As illustrated in Fig. 3, three main themes emerged involving workplace, discrimination and work-related factor.

Religion issues at workplace are seen in demand of religious freedom, the colleague acceptance on religion beliefs and effect on freedom of religious at workplace. It can be summarised that the role of organisation in entertaining employee religious belief could be managed wisely through the review of management policy (Héliot et al., 2020; Hashim et al., 2019; Miller et al., 2017; Omri et al., 2017). Additionally, the possibility of employment discrimination in workplace could be reduced through organisation management policy reviewing exercise. Meanwhile the discrimination part could also due to poor management policy that require reviewing exercise. Finally, on the work-related factor theme that involve work implementation and clothing issue. Religion issue in work-related factor affects work outcome if it received less attention from the management, including poor performance and commitment. By considering the religious

issue in a more holistic method, stability of employees' well-being could be met (Azizan & Mahmud, 2018) by strategic arrangement in the organisation (Kasmuri et al., 2020) and also contribution to workplace harmonisation (Association of Maybank Class One Officers, n.d.). Through the approach discussed, human psychological need could be fulfilled and lead to the employee's quality of life. As such, this study could be conceptualized as Fig. 3 with religious practice as one of the determinants in quality of life.
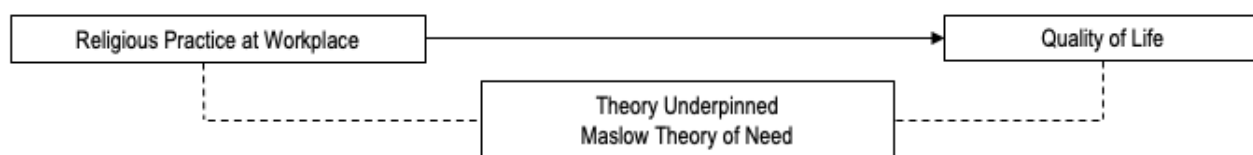

Fig. 3. Conceptual Framework of Religious Practice at Workplace

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The review highlights the importance of freedom of religious practice in the workplace as a part of life's quality improvement strategy. This paper suggests recommendation for future research, with several considerations for religious scholars to undertake, such as applying a mixed-method approach for better research findings. Moreover, a sample requires organisation, whereby a detailed study on the effect of religion on gender, and the religious issue can be concluded one at a time. Besides, future studies could also explore the religious issue in the industry, which lacks focus in this research. Notably, the limitation in this research is in the timeframe for articles searching as such future research could benefit with a lengthier timeframe in this aspect.

Paper Contribution to the Related Field of Study

Religious practice at workplace contributes to employee's quality of life. Failure of the organisation to prioritise employees to perform their religious responsibilities will impair basic psychological need. This situation in turn, will have an impact on employees, especially those related to work outcome. Thus, this study provides an overview of the organisation to be sensitive to matters involving religious issues, which is the priority of employees according to their religious beliefs.

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