

Schools' Surau and Their Relation to the Teaching of Islamic Education

Siti Adawiyah Mohd Adzmy*¹, Mohd Aderi Che Noh²

¹(Faculty of Leadership and Management, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, sitiadawiyah09@gmail.com)

²(Faculty of Leadership and Management, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, aderi@usim.edu.my)

*corresponding author

Received: [08-May-2026]

Rev. Req: [11-May-2026]

Accepted: [12-May-2026]

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

ABSTRACT: *This study analyzes the role and infrastructure of surau (school prayer halls) in National Schools in Malaysia and the factors that contribute to the teaching of Islamic Education at the surau. The study focuses on teachers' perceptions of the surau's roles, the infrastructure they possess, and the teaching of Islamic Education in the surau at National Schools. This quantitative study involved 500 Islamic Education teachers from five zones in Malaysia (North, East, Centre, South, and East Malaysia). The pilot study recorded a relatively high Cronbach's Alpha reliability value (0.989). Data were descriptively analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and percentages, and further tested using the t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression at a significance value of 0.05. Overall, the findings showed a mean of 4.39 for the surau's role, the highest among the variables, while teaching of Islamic Education in the surau recorded a moderate mean (3.69) and surau infrastructure also recorded a moderate mean (3.95). The t-test and one-way ANOVA showed a significant difference between teaching Islamic Education at the surau and its infrastructure ($p < .05$). Physical and ergonomic aspects were also found to contribute significantly to the teaching of Islamic Education at surau in National Schools. Overall, the surau and its infrastructure are shown to be capable of improving and upholding Islamic Education in National Schools. As a contribution, the study proposes that the 'Model Surau Sekolah Bersepadu' be implemented in the teaching of Islamic Education in National Schools in Malaysia.*

Keywords: *Islamic Education, Surau, Infrastructure, Location, Gender, Ergonomic*

ABSTRAK: *Penelitian ini menganalisis peran dan infrastruktur surau (ruang salat sekolah) di Sekolah Kebangsaan di Malaysia serta faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap pengajaran Pendidikan Islam di surau tersebut. Penelitian ini berfokus pada persepsi guru mengenai peran surau, infrastruktur yang dimilikinya, dan pengajaran Pendidikan Islam di surau Sekolah Kebangsaan. Penelitian kuantitatif ini melibatkan 500 guru Pendidikan Islam dari lima zona di Malaysia (Utara, Timur, Tengah, Selatan, dan Malaysia Timur). Studi percontohan mencatatkan nilai reliabilitas Cronbach's Alpha yang cukup tinggi (0,989). Data dianalisis secara deskriptif menggunakan rerata, standar deviasi, dan persentase, serta diuji lebih lanjut menggunakan uji-t, ANOVA satu arah, korelasi Pearson, dan regresi linear berganda pada nilai signifikansi 0,05. Secara keseluruhan, temuan menunjukkan rerata 4,39 untuk peran surau, nilai tertinggi di antara variabel, sementara pengajaran Pendidikan Islam di surau mencatatkan rerata sedang (3,69) dan infrastruktur surau juga mencatatkan rerata sedang (3,95). Uji-t dan ANOVA satu arah menunjukkan perbedaan yang signifikan antara pengajaran Pendidikan Islam*

di surau dan infrastrukturnya ($p < 0,05$). Aspek fisik dan ergonomik juga ditemukan berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap pengajaran Pendidikan Islam di surau Sekolah Kebangsaan. Secara keseluruhan, surau beserta infrastrukturnya terbukti mampu meningkatkan dan menjaga mutu Pendidikan Islam di Sekolah Kebangsaan. Sebagai kontribusi, penelitian ini menyarankan agar 'Model Surau Sekolah Bersepadu' diterapkan dalam pengajaran Pendidikan Islam di Sekolah Kebangsaan di Malaysia.

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Islam, Surau, Infrastruktur, Lokasi, Gender, Ergonomis*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Studies system in Malaysia is based on the Education Act gazetted in 1961 (Rusiah, 2006). This Act has catalyzed changes in the policies of the Islamic Education system in Malaysia. For teaching and learning Islamic Education, surau at schools have played a considerable role, being used not only as a means to perform prayers but also to conduct da'wah activities, host Islamic holy festivals, and support the teaching of Islamic Education at schools in Malaysia. It is therefore sufficient to state that the schools' surau are not merely a place to perform individual or group prayers (solat), but also a centre that fuels the growth of Islam through their role as a hub for Islamic activities at schools. Teaching Islamic Studies in schools' surau is stated in the Malaysian Education Development Blueprint (PPPM) 2013-2025. According to Habidin et al. (2019), surau at schools are the focal point for developing Islamic appreciation and the centre of teaching and learning Islamic Education. These surau are highly beneficial for the interests of Muslims in Malaysia.

Surau at schools give teachers the prerogative to teach Islamic Education outside of the classroom. That said, the practical implementation of this is still questionable and not consistently carried out (Fakhruddin, 2012). The school's surau is well equipped with facilities to conduct both the theoretical and practical parts of teaching Islamic Education. However, the question remains whether Islamic Education teachers conduct teaching in the surau at school, or whether it is done only in the classroom. Are the schools' surau being used as a medium to strengthen students' knowledge and further develop their appreciation of the teachings of Islam, or are they used merely to perform prayers?

Based on a preliminary study conducted by the researcher using questionnaires involving 30 National School Islamic Education teachers on the frequency of using the school surau for Islamic Education, the frequency of teachers teaching Islamic Education at schools' surau was found to be at a high level, at 42.42%, compared to teachers who rarely use the surau, at only 7.58%. Meanwhile, in terms of use of the surau according to sub-field of Islamic Education, 57.40% of teachers reported using the National Schools' surau very often, while 0% reported not using it at all. This shows that the use of surau by Islamic Education teachers in teaching Islamic Education is indeed very high.

That said, not all Islamic Education teachers use and utilize the surau and its infrastructure, for various reasons. One reason is that teachers are overtly examination-oriented and thus more concerned with students passing their examinations than with lifelong Islamic education. This is consistent with Royo (2011), who found that teachers are more concerned with students' achievement in examinations. In addition, the lack of use of the surau by Excellent Islamic Education Teachers (Guru Cemerlang Pendidikan Islam) is also attributed to over-reliance on the fixed number of lessons within an examination-oriented system, rather than consideration of the broader learning environment (Kamarul Azmi, 2010).

Therefore, the main focus of this study is to examine the role of the surau in National Schools in Malaysia in teaching Islamic Education, encompassing the aspects of solat, adhering to and

appreciating Islamic values, and functioning as an education centre in schools. This research also aims to identify the level of infrastructure in National Schools from the aspects of physical, ergonomic, and teaching-aid provisions, and to examine the relationship between the level of surau infrastructure and the teaching of Islamic Education in National Schools in Malaysia, in line with the objectives suggested by BPG, KPM (2010). Specifically, this study aims to: (1) identify the role of the surau in National Schools as a centre of worship, a centre of Islamic appreciation, and a centre of education, from the teachers' perceptions; (2) identify the teaching of Islamic Education in schools' surau (sub-field of Islamic Education and teaching methods) according to teachers' perceptions; (3) identify the infrastructure of surau in National Schools from the aspects of physical, ergonomic, and teaching aids, from teachers' perceptions; and (4) identify differences in the role of surau and the level of surau infrastructure based on the gender and location of the schools.

II. METHOD

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study reviews the relationships and key features that form the basis for the teaching of Islamic Education in National Schools' surau. The implementation of KSSR Islamic Education in National Schools includes intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical elements, in line with the Philosophy of National Education (FPN) and the Philosophy of Islamic Education (FPI). This framework is derived from the teaching of Islamic Education in National Schools' surau by teachers, comprising two components: the role of National Schools' surau and the infrastructure of the surau, which together form the basis for teaching Islamic Education in National Schools in Malaysia.

A combination of four theories underlies this study: Ibn Khaldun's (2000) theory of Malakah, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), Hammermann et al.'s educational continuum theory (2001), and Skinner's behaviorism theory (1974). The study is also based on the teaching and learning model of the al-Nabawi mosque (1999), the 'Surau Sekolah' model of Ab. Halim et al. (2003), and Shahrin's (1998) reality-based teaching model (waqi'iyah). These were combined to form the theoretical framework used in this study.

Research Design

This is a quantitative study using a descriptive research design to identify and examine the study variables empirically and systematically. The survey method used in this study is suitable for measuring opinions, attitudes, and behaviors (Ary et al., 2002). In addition, Kerlinger (1986) notes that when the goal of a study is to observe the effect of an independent variable that is not manipulated on a dependent variable, a survey is the most appropriate method.

Population and Sample

The population is a group of individuals, organizations, communities, events, or anything else that the researcher wishes to study (Sabitha, 2005). This study involved 14 states divided into five main zones, namely the northern, southern, central, and eastern zones, and East Malaysia (comprising Sabah and Sarawak). A total of 378 Excellent Teachers of Islamic Education (GCPI) were selected using random sampling to serve as respondents. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan table, the sample size used in this study is considered sufficient.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

1. Roles of Schools' Surau in Education

The descriptive analysis for the surau's role as a worship centre showed an overall mean (SD = .617) exceeding 4.00 on the agreement scale, indicating a good perception among respondents

of the surau's role as a worship centre. The highest mean value was recorded for the role of the schools' surau in making it easier to perform solat (mean = 4.60).

For the Islamic appreciation centre variable, the overall mean also exceeded 4.00 (SD = .734), with all positive-worded items recording means above 4.00, indicating a positive perception of the surau's role as a centre for Islamic appreciation. The highest mean score (4.47) related to the surau's role in making respondents aware of the importance of using and utilizing it, while the lowest mean score (2.28), on a negatively worded item, indicated that respondents disagreed that the surau does not play a role in encouraging Islamic Education teachers to teach the subject seriously.

For the education centre variable, the overall mean and item means also exceeded 4.00 (SD = .665), indicating a good perception among respondents of the schools' surau as an education centre across various aspects, including Islamic education, co-curricular activities, religious activities, and out-of-class activities. The highest mean score was recorded for the item "Schools' surau make it easier for teachers to teach students to perform solat correctly" (mean = 4.54), followed by "Schools' surau make it easier for teachers to teach manners practically" (mean = 4.52).

2. Teaching Islamic Education at Surau in School

For the sub-field of Islamic Education, the overall mean was 3.85 (SD = .899), within the range of 3.50-4.00, with item means ranging from 3.31 to 4.23. These findings indicate a moderate level of perception regarding the use of schools' surau by Islamic Education teachers in teaching various sub-fields. The highest mean scores were recorded for Kem Bestari Solat (mean = 4.23), followed by Tilawah al-Quran (mean = 4.22), the practical component of PAFA (mean = 4.12), and Ibadat (mean = 4.07). The lowest mean scores were recorded for Sirah (mean = 3.31), Aqidah (mean = 3.41), and Adab and Islamic Manners (mean = 3.54).

For teaching methods, the overall mean was 3.83 (SD = .886), with item means ranging from 3.28 to 4.27, indicating a moderate perception of the use of schools' surau for various teaching methods. The methods with the highest mean values were Tadarus al-Quran (mean = 4.27), practical practice (mean = 4.17), group readings (mean = 4.15), listening to Quranic recitation (mean = 4.14), teachers correcting recitation (mean = 4.13), and group memorization (mean = 4.07). The lowest mean scores were recorded for games (mean = 3.28), forums (mean = 3.40), projects (mean = 3.40), suggestions (mean = 3.53), and storytelling (mean = 3.57), indicating that surau are used more often for formal than informal teaching methods.

For teaching aids, the overall mean was 3.42 (SD = .957), with item means ranging from 3.05 to 3.93, indicating a moderate level of perception regarding the use of teaching aids. The highest mean value was for the whiteboard (mean = 3.93), followed by Tafsir al-Quran/al-Quran books (mean = 3.91) and textbooks (mean = 3.86). The lowest mean scores were recorded for Islamic Education software (mean = 3.05), webpages (mean = 3.07), portable microphone/audio systems (mean = 3.07), and the internet (mean = 3.15), indicating that the use of technology-based teaching aids and the internet is less frequent in the surau.

3. Infrastructure in Schools' Surau

For physical aspects, the overall mean was 3.99 (SD = .738), indicating a moderately good level of perception of physical infrastructure in schools' surau, though item means ranged more widely, from 2.72 to 4.47. The aspects with the highest mean values included the al-Quran arranged neatly on bookshelves (mean = 4.47), a comfortable place to pray (mean = 4.42), a neatly arranged prayer mat (mean = 4.40), a working fan and lamp (mean = 4.40 and 4.36), and sliding windows (mean = 4.36). The lowest mean scores were recorded for the pulpit/mimbar (mean = 2.72), air conditioning (mean = 2.96), and the mihrab (mean = 3.19).

For ergonomic aspects, the overall mean was 3.92 (SD = .787), with item means ranging from 3.62 to 4.14, indicating a moderately good perception of ergonomic infrastructure. The highest mean value was recorded for the absence of unclean najis (mean = 4.14), followed by sunlight illuminating the surau (mean = 4.12), cleanliness from garbage (mean = 4.11), sufficient garbage baskets (mean = 4.09), and a good air system (mean = 4.09). The lowest mean scores were recorded for the absence of noise signage (mean = 3.62), sufficient deodorizers (mean = 3.62), clear speakers (mean = 3.70), and clear safety signage (mean = 3.71).

4. Kruskal-Wallis Analysis for Differences by Gender and Location

For the role of schools' surau, the Kruskal-Wallis test showed significant differences ($p < .05$) by gender: worship centre role, $\chi^2(1) = 4.860$, $p = .027$ (mean rank 275.10 for men, 242.90 for women); Islamic appreciation centre role, $\chi^2(1) = 12.014$, $p = .001$ (mean rank 290.67 for men, 238.09 for women); education centre role, $\chi^2(1) = 4.383$, $p = .036$ (mean rank 274.53 for men, 243.08 for women); and the overall role of schools' surau, $\chi^2(1) = 8.744$, $p = .003$ (mean rank 283.86 for men, 239.89 for women). By location, no significant differences ($p > .05$) were found for the role of schools' surau, either overall or by individual aspect.

For teaching Islamic Education, the Kruskal-Wallis test showed significant differences ($p < .05$) by gender: sub-field, $\chi^2(1) = 12.012$, $p = .001$ (mean rank 290.70 for men, 238.08 for women); methods, $\chi^2(1) = 9.418$, $p = .002$ (mean rank 286.14 for men, 239.49 for women); teaching aids, $\chi^2(1) = 5.327$, $p = .021$ (mean rank 277.31 for men, 242.22 for women); and overall Islamic Education teaching, $\chi^2(1) = 9.746$, $p = .002$ (mean rank 286.79 for men, 239.29 for women). By location, no significant difference ($p > .05$) was found for any aspect of teaching Islamic Education in schools' surau.

For surau infrastructure, no significant difference ($p > .05$) was found by gender for either physical or ergonomic aspects, or overall infrastructure. By location, a significant difference was found for the ergonomic aspect, $\chi^2(1) = 4.500$, $p = .034$ (mean rank 275.12 for cities, 242.89 for outside cities), but not for physical aspects or overall infrastructure ($p > .05$).

Discussion

This study, as a whole, provides an overview of the role of schools' surau, the teaching of Islamic Education in schools' surau, and the infrastructure of schools' surau, as well as the differences and relationships among these variables for teachers in National Schools in Malaysia. Nevertheless, the study's design, method of data collection, location, and population have limited the findings in the context of the practice of teaching Islamic Education in schools' surau.

Therefore, a few suggestions for further research are offered to provide a wider and deeper picture of the teaching of Islamic Education in National Schools' surau. Related follow-up studies may also be conducted to enrich understanding of the implementation of the teaching and learning process of Islamic Education in schools' surau, as well as its contribution to the achievement of the National Education Philosophy, which is a crucial part of the education system in Malaysia. The suggestions are as follows: (a) this study involved 500 National School teachers (questionnaire) and 5 Islamic Education teachers (interview) in National Schools in Malaysia (Kedah, Selangor, Johor, Kelantan, and Sarawak); it is suggested that future research involve different study samples by expanding the scope to other states so that comparisons between states can be made; and (b) this study is limited to Islamic Education teachers; the same study could be conducted with students in National Schools, or extended to other school types, including Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan and Sekolah Rendah Islam (private), to allow comparisons across variables related to Islamic Education teachers and students.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, from the aspect of perception, respondents showed a good perception of the role of schools' surau in teaching Islamic Education in terms of worship centres, Islamic appreciation centres, and education centres. On the other hand, respondents showed a moderate perception of both the physical and ergonomic aspects of infrastructure, and an even more moderate perception of the use of teaching materials and methods, namely sub-fields, teaching methods, and teaching aids.

For the analysis of differences, the Kruskal-Wallis test showed that gender (male/female) had a significant effect on teachers' perceptions of the role of schools' surau and Islamic Education teaching, but not on perceptions of surau infrastructure. Meanwhile, location (cities/outside cities) did not have a significant effect on teachers' perceptions of the role of schools' surau, Islamic Education teaching, or overall physical infrastructure, but did have a significant effect on the ergonomic aspects of surau infrastructure.

Finally, the role of surau as a centre of Islamic appreciation and education, and the ergonomic aspects of schools' surau infrastructure, are shown to contribute significantly to the teaching of Islamic Education in schools' surau.

V. REFERENCES

- [1] Saad, R. (2006). Surau sekolah sebagai wadah pendidikan. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- [2] Khaldun, I., & Al-Hadrami, A. A. B. M. K. (2000). Mukaddimah Ibn Khaldun (Terj. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia). Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.
- [3] Fakhruddin, F. M. (2012). Peranan & cabaran guru dalam pengajaran pendidikan Islam. Penerbit Universiti Putra Malaysia.
- [4] Habidin, N. F., Fuzi, N. M., Muhamad, U. A., Chik, T. W. T., & Ong, S. Y. Y. (2019). Amalan terbaik dalam penambahbaikan sistem pendidikan: Pengajaran dan penyelidikan. Kaizentrenovation Sdn Bhd.
- [5] Jasmi, K. A., & Ilias, M. F. (2011, April). Penggunaan masjid dan persekitaran sekolah dalam amalan pengajaran dan pembelajaran guru cemerlang Pendidikan Islam sekolah menengah di Malaysia. In Prosiding Seminar Pengurusan Masjid Inovatif Peringkat Antarabangsa (pp. 23-24). IAIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh.
- [6] Tamuri, A. H. (2007). Islamic Education teachers' perceptions of the teaching of akhlāq in Malaysian secondary schools. *Journal of Moral Education*, 36(3), 371–386. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240701553347>
- [7] Rekan, A. A., Mokhtar, M. I., Tengku Kasim, T. S. A., & Yusoff, Y. M. (2024). Instructional approach of Islamic Education teachers to gearing up future Muslim generations with environmental education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education*, 39(2), 249–272. <https://doi.org/10.21315/apjee2024.39.2.13>
- [8] Irfanda, H., Ulinnas, S., & Saputra, A. (2026). Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam sebagai agen moderasi beragama di lembaga pendidikan formal. *SURAU: Journal of Islamic Education*, 4(1), 70–85. <https://doi.org/10.30983/surau.v4i1.11012>
- [9] Rasid, R., Munip, A., & Djafar, H. (2019). Transformasi sistem lembaga pendidikan Islam di Patani-Thailand Selatan. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 2(3), 407–420. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v2i3.1100>
- [10] Tolib, A. (2015). Pendidikan di pondok pesantren modern. *Risalah: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Studi Islam*, 2(1), 60–66. https://doi.org/10.31943/jurnal_risalah.v2i1.12

- [11] Alwi, B. M. (2013). Pondok pesantren: Ciri khas, perkembangan, dan sistem pendidikannya. *Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*, 16(2), 205–219. <https://doi.org/10.24252/lp.2013v16n2a8>
- [12] Shiddiq, A. (2015). Tradisi akademik pesantren. *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(2), 218–229. <https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi.v10i2.826>
- [13] Arif, M., Abd Aziz, M. K. N., & Ma'Arif, M. A. (2025). A recent study on Islamic religious education teachers' competencies in the digital age: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 19(2), 587–596. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v19i2.21311>
- [14] Huda, S., Tsani, I., Syazali, M., Umam, R., & Jermisittiparsert, K. (2020). The management of educational system using three law Auguste Comte: A case of Islamic schools. *Management Science Letters*, 10(3), 617–624. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2019.9.018>
- [15] Ramazanov, R., Malamagomedov, J. M., Nagieva, M. K., Umakhanov, R. M., & Shamkhalov, S. S. (2021). A school at mosque in the structure of Muslim religious education: Status and evaluation. *Revista on line de Política e Gestão Educacional*, 25(esp. 2), 910–927. <https://doi.org/10.22633/rpge.v25iesp.2.15276>