



**AN ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL PLANNING OF  
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL: CASE STUDY OF SELECTED  
SMAR AND SABK IN PERAK**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

Provision of Islamic religious school in Malaysia is very important as the majority of the populations are Muslims. However, an assessment of school physical facilities carried out on *Sekolah Menengah Agama Rakyat* (People Religious Secondary School) and *Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan* (Government Aided Religious School) in Perak has revealed that these schools are in poor condition and lacking in facilities due to insufficient financial assistance. This study is an attempt to examine the provision and condition of the schools' physical facilities and to identify the relationship between condition of the school physical facilities and students' academic performance based on parents' and teachers' point of view. Two SMAR and eleven SABK were involved in the study. Data were collected from a questionnaire survey which was administered on 204 parents and 105 teachers and unstructured interviews conducted with the school principals. The school facility inventory and site observation also provided data for the study. The findings showed that only one school was provided with all physical facilities listed in the *Jabatan Perancang Bandar dan Desa* (Town and Country Planning Department) guideline. There was also a significant relationship between the educational spaces and students' academic performance based on the parents' and teachers' point of view. The result also showed that the main reason parents sent their children to the selected schools was because of the Islamic syllabus offered. Both parents and teachers agreed that the main factor influencing the students' academic performance was the teaching and learning methodology. It is suggested that the school could be improved through proper maintenance of the physical facilities and better financial assistance. This is to enable students of those schools to improve their academic performance through better quality education.

## خلاصة البحث

يعد توفير المدارس الدينية الإسلامية في ماليزيا في غاية الأهمية، حيث أغلبية سكانها مسلمين. فقد تم إجراء تقييم على مرافق المدرسة تركيزا على مدارس الشعب الدينية الثانوية المعروفة باسم Sekolah Menengah Agama Rakyat (SMAR)، والمدارس الدينية المدعمة من قبل الحكومة، وهي معروفة بـ Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan (SABK) في ولاية بيراك. ونظرا لنقص المساعدات المالية افتقرت وضعفت مرافق هذه المدارس. ويركز هذا البحث على تحديد توافر وحالات المرافق المادية لدى مدارس SMAR و SABK، ويهدف إلى تحديد العلاقة بين مرافق المدرسة وأداء الطلبة، وأيضا تطوير مدارس SMAR و SABK الحالية في ولاية بيراك. وتشمل الإجراءات في تحديد مشكلات البحث وصياغة أهداف الدراسة. فمن أجل تحقيق هذه الأهداف قامت الباحثة بالاطلاع على البحوث السابقة وقامت بجمع البيانات باستخدام الاستبيان ومخزون المرافق المدرسية والمقابلات الغير رسمية مع مديري المدارس. وقد أظهرت نتائج البحث أن بعض مدارس SMAR و SABK تنقصها مختبرات الحاسوب وقاعة متعددة الأغراض ومكتبة العلوم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن معظم المباني المدرسية كانت قديمة وغير محتفظة. وبالتالي فقد اقترحت صيانة المرافق المناسبة ومساعدات مالية أفضل، من أجل ضمان تحسين جودة التعليم وتحسين أداء الطلبة في تحسين الوضع الحالي لمدارس SMAR و SABK في ولاية بيراك.

## APPROVAL PAGE

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## DECLARATION

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ABIM    | <i>Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia</i>  |
| BGA     | Block Grant Authority   |
| BPI     | <i>Bahagian Pelajaran Islam</i>   |
| CLEAPSS | Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services |
| DEO     | District Education Office   |
| DTP     | District Transformation Programme   |
| ECCE    | Early Childhood Care and Education  |
| EPU     | Economic Planning Unit  |
| ESEA    | Elementary & Secondary Education Act  |
| GUI     | Graphical User Interface  |
| HPS     | High Performance Schools  |
| IED     | Islamic Education Division  |
| IMED    | Islamic and Moral Education Division  |
| I.T.    | Information Technology  |
| JAKIM   | <i>Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia</i>  |
| JAWI    | Arabic Script   |
| JPBD    | <i>Jabatan Perancang Bandar dan Desa</i>  |
| JPN     | <i>Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri</i>  |
| JPS     | <i>Jemaah Pengurusan Sekolah</i>  |
| KAAs    | <i>Kelas Aliran Agama</i>   |
| KBSM    | <i>Kurikulum Berasaskan Sekolah Menengah</i>                                    |
| KBSR    | <i>Kurikulum Berasaskan Sekolah Rendah</i>                                      |
| KISAS   | Kolej Islam Alam Shah   |
| LINUS   | Literacy, Numeracy and Screening  |
| LPS     | <i>Lembaga Pengurusan Sekolah</i>   |
| MAIK    | <i>Majlis Agama Islam Kelantan</i>  |
| MOE     | Ministry of Education   |
| MOHE    | Ministry of Higher Education  |
| MoU     | Memorandum of Understanding   |
| NAO     | National Audit Office   |
| NOUN    | National Open University Nigeria  |
| OECD    | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development                          |
| PPD     | <i>Pejabat Pendidikan Daerah</i>  |
| PTA     | Parents and Teacher Association   |
| PT3     | <i>Penilaian Tingkatan Tiga</i>   |
| RED     | Religious Education Division  |
| SABK    | <i>Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan</i>   |
| SAR     | <i>Sekolah Agama Rakyat</i>   |
| SED     | State Education Department  |
| SJK(C)  | <i>Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina</i>  |
| SJK(T)  | <i>Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Tamil</i>   |
| SK      | <i>Sekolah Kebangsaan</i>   |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| SMA    | <i>Sekolah Menengah Agama</i>  |
| SMAN   | <i>Sekolah Menengah Agama Negeri</i>                                     |
| SMK    | <i>Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan</i>                                       |
| SMK(A) | <i>Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama</i>                                 |
| SMAP   | <i>Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan</i>                                |
| SMAR   | <i>Sekolah Menengah Agama Rakyat</i>                                     |
| SPM    | <i>Sijil Peperiksaan Malaysia</i>  |
| SRP    | <i>Sijil Rendah Peperiksaan</i>  |
| STAM   | <i>Sijil Tinggi Agama Menengah</i>                                       |
| STP    | <i>School Transformation Programme</i>                                   |
| STPM   | <i>Sijil Tinggi Peperiksaan Malaysia</i>                                 |
| TACIR  | <i>The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations</i>  |
| UNESCO | <i>United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</i> |
| UPSR   | <i>Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah</i>                                    |
| YIK    | <i>Yayasan Islam Kelantan</i>  |

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

There is considerable interest amongst policymakers and school system authorities in the quality of school performance and the physical condition of religious school namely the public/ federal funded religious school, private religious school and the state funded religious (De Grauwe and Naidoo, 2004). Much of this interest stems from the view that some schools are producing quality students with better exam results but with differences in the qualities of physical facilities (Schneider, 2002). It suggests that a student's chances of good academic progress, strong certificate results and successful post-school transition will vary depending on the school that he or she attends (Schneider, 2002). For a school system, this have raises several important issues.

If a school wants to improve the overall students' academic performance and achieve consistency in the overall quality of its education, then the school or the policymakers need to identify the physical condition of the schools and the students' academic performances and to analyses whether there is relationship between these two factors. School performance indicators are an important part of this process (Edwards, 2006). Performance or effectiveness measures often focus on growth in student achievement over time (such as growth in student achievement test scores in *Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR)*, *Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR)* or *Peperiksaan Tingkatan 3 (PT3)* and *Sijil Peperiksaan Malaysia (SPM)* results (Nor Hasnida, 2015).

This research can be use as target improvements and help support the underperforming religious school. Most of these schools are located in rural area and attended by pupils with low income family. As the Muslim population is increasing the demand for religious school is growing. Therefore, the existing school spaces and facilities should be improved for the growing enrolment in order to provide a quality learning environment.

Malaysian education system are based on the five aspirations which are 1) Access, 2) Quality, 3) Equity,4) Unity and 5) Efficiency. These aspirations in general promise students the opportunity to the education in term of quality, physical facilities and social environment regardless of their background (Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025).

Implementation of compulsory primary education in Malaysian education system was stated in the Education Act 1996 took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003. The act stated that all the children age six regardless of their background has the right to the compulsory primary education. Parents that failed to fulfil this basic education opportunity to the children are liable to certain legal actions (Malaysian Education Act 1996).

Surry School Department (2001) defined school facilities as “buildings and grounds, parking lots, playing fields, and fixed equipment”. Maphoso and Mahlo (2014) stated that physical infrastructures and buildings are not the only basic facilities for school as it also requires water, electricity and sanitation to run smoothly. According to Kuuskorpi and Gonzales (2011) physical learning environment is referred to the physical aspect of education institutional in term of space, equipment and tools. Nurul Syakima, Maimunah, Ibrahim & Mohd Hafizal (2012) claimed that

physical learning environment is the facilities services which consist of classrooms, library, laboratories, sport facilities and other space required for educational activities.

Educational space is defined as a physical space that supports the teaching and learning process, adopt latest technology, equip with cost-effective building, integrated with the environment, support social activities, and provide safe and healthy setting (OECD, 2006). In other word, physical learning space is a combination of a space that allows formal and informal education process (Manninen, Burman, Koivunen, Kuitinen, Luukannel, Passi & Sarkka, 2007). However, there is a possibility where school is no longer relevant as technology evolves and student can take online home schooling. Educators should start considering and planning on how to provide education to the upcoming generation (Stevenson, 2010).

The purpose of the study of **An Assessment of Physical Planning of Religious School: Case Study of Selected *Sekolah Menengah Agama Rakyat (SMAR)* and *Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan (SABK)* in Perak** is to assess the physical facilities condition of SMAR and SABK in order to improve the student and teacher performance in school. This study is conducted in the Perak state which has a total number of 14 SMAR and 27 SABK.

## 1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

### i. Lack of studies on the physical facilities of the Islamic Religious Secondary School in Malaysia

Mohd Suzli (2007) stresses on the absence of research regarding to the physical facilities provision and condition of the Islamic religious school in Malaysia. According to Azizi and Supyan (2010) SAR (*Sekolah Agama Rakyat*) in Selangor utilize residential house, shop lot and mosque for school buildings. He stated that, SAR that was established in the private land was built by the local people with the help of financial sources from private organisation and individual thus only focused on certain facilities which are classrooms and administration office. Ayaji and Ayodele (2001) emphasized the availability of physical school facilities is important to the teaching and learning process in the school. Sinar Harian newspaper dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2016 highlighted that due to the fact that the buildings of SABK Maahad Aziz built in the piecemeal style it resulted in buildings location being scattered and unorganised. .

Based on Malaysian Educational Statistic Quick Facts 2014, the number of SABK was increased in the year to 2014 compared to the year 2012, as there are 142 SABK in the year 2012 and increased to 164 in the years 2014. Malaysian Educational Statistic Quick Facts 2013 stated that there are 98 SMAR in 2013. However, the number of SMAR was decreased to 89 in the year 2014 according to the Malaysian Educational Statistic Quick Facts 2014. According to Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 government will explore the opportunities to increase the number of religious school as the demand is increase. Additional