

PHYSICAL LEARNING ECOSYSTEM AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF TAHFIZ INSTITUTIONS IN MALAYSIA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

*Arita Hanim Awang¹, Nurlelawati Ab Jalil¹, Nurul Hamiruddin Salleh², Habibah Ab Jalil³, Siti Suria Salim³

¹*Department of Applied Arts and Design, Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design, (IIUM),*

²*Architecture Department of Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design, IIUM.*

³*Faculty of Educational Studies in UPM, Malaysia.*

*Correspondence Author: aritahanim@iium.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Tahfiz education is common in Malaysia referring to the Islamic education system of producing 'Hufaz' or graduates who can memorize and recite the Quran. This study covers all types of quran memorizing institutions in Malaysia namely, Pondok, Madrasah, Maahad, Centre and Institute. The aim of this systematic review is to identify the type of physical learning ecosystem (PLE) and the aspect of built environment (BE) of the Tahfiz Institution (TI) in Malaysia. The research starts by defining the PLE and BE to establish the related variables to extracts from the literatures. The keywords are also identified and established. The study covers systematic literature search available from Google Scholars, Scopus, Web of Science, Crossref and Grey Literature. The scope of the literature chosen is specifically related to the Malaysian context. The quantitative synthesis of related research studies was used. Literatures on PLE and BE of TI in Malaysia are still lacking as the areas are rarely examined directly, therefore content analysis of the related articles are used to establish the research findings. This research provides a summary of available studies on the PLE of Malaysian TI and BE features. The findings confirm that the lack of literature and studies on the BE aspects of TI in Malaysia highlighted the importance of the studies to upgrade the current infrastructure of TI. In addition to that, the research emphasizes the needs to acquire primary data of the existing conditions of and of the TI in Malaysia.

Keywords: Tahfiz institutions, Tahfiz Centre, *Pondok* Tahfiz, Madrasah, Maahad Tahfiz, Physical Learning Ecosystem, Built Environment.

INTRODUCTION

One of the paths in Islamic education is teaching students into memorizing Al-Quran and reciting Al-Quran which usually being known with the terms of Tahfiz and the school offering such programs are known as Tahfiz institutions (TI) or Tahfiz centers. Bani, Katan, Mohd Noor & Abdul Fatah (2014) stated that the recorded number of centers offering the stream is mushrooming since the years 2000 with majority are privately owned centers. The Tahfiz school stream is also supported by The Ministry of Education through its commitment in implementing the Ulul Albab Tahfiz Model (TMUA) pioneer project in national religious schools (SMKA) and fully residential schools (Ministry of Education, 2016). Apparently, there are 577 tahfiz centers in Malaysia; twenty (20) are state government schools, ten (10) tahfiz colleges and 547 are privately owned (JAKIM, 2016). This data provides evidences on parents' inclination in sending their children to tahfiz schools operated by either Ministry of Education (MOE), states or private entities.

Privately owned TI may be set up by an individual, public or private entity. As such they have different management practices according to the founders' preferences and experiences (Hamidah et al, 2017). Besides differences in the organizational structure, the TI may also have different curriculum and accommodating different types of buildings. Private TI are categorized as Islamic religious schools in Malaysia. As such these schools are subject to state regulatory enactment of Islamic religion according to the state where they are registered. The state is responsible in creating a regulatory framework as a mechanism to ensure that the objective of tahfiz schools is aligned with the goal of the sector and the regulation set able to influence the behavior of the players in

the sector. Besides state enactment of legislation for the administration of Islamic religion, tahfiz schools are also enacted to State Enactment Controlling Islamic Religious Schools (Hamidah et al, 2017).

TI learning environment research is still at infancy level. While mainstream research on Tahfiz education revolves around teaching and learning method (Ashraf, Ab Halim Tamuri, Kamarulzaman & Nurul Huda, 2013; Azmil, Ab Tamuri (2012), memorization technique (Abdul Hafiz & Hasimah, 2004;) and rules and students (Norlizah, Fathiyah, Ahmad Fauzi, Lukman & Wan Marzuki , 2015) high expectation has been placed by the Muslim community on Tahfiz performance. Hence, the physical aspect of the facilities offered by the TI are rarely mentioned or discussed.

Previous studies conducted found that the physical aspects of the learning environment can affect psychological and social behavior (Barker, 1968; Moos, 1979) and have a significant impact on learning (Chism, 2006; Monahan, 2002; Strange & Banning, 2001). In this regard, we need to conduct more study on existing physical environment and its impact on learning (Chism, 2006).

METHODOLOGY OF SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher systematically searched peer-reviewed and ‘grey’ literature, in English, restricted to human subjects from 2009 onwards unlimited of geographical location as the Tahfiz scope of studies are quite limited. The following academic databases were systematically searched: Web of Science, Scopus, ProQuest, Science Direct and Google Scholars. The scope of the review was defined to reflect recent context on specific evidence of discussion or characterising regarding the physical learning environment or the conditions of the TI built environment. Four criteria of process were considered which are identification, screening, eligibility and included. The flow of the process can be referred at Fig. 1 below.

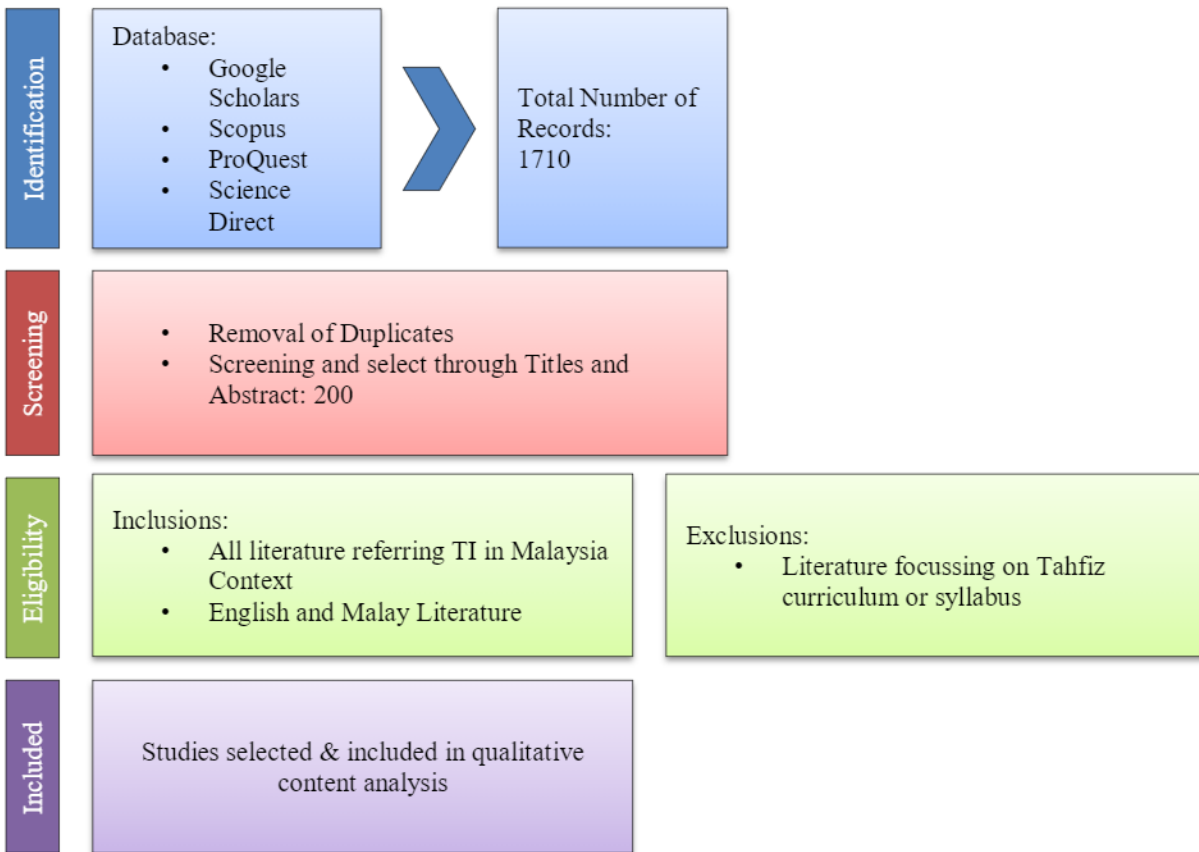


Fig. 1: Search strategy, data sources and inclusion criteria

Of the 1710 articles retrieved only 20 were included in this review. The studies ranged from single-site comparative studies through to randomized designs at multiple sites. The review revealed that no literature available on a specific scope of Tahfiz built environment in Malaysia. Only one articles related to PLE and one article on TI infrastructure internationally.

Table 1: Keyword search result

Database Search	Keyword Search						
	Tahfiz Built Environment	Tahfiz Physical Learning Environment	Tahfiz Learning Environment	Tahfiz	Pondok	Madrasah	Maahad
Google Scholars	-	2	4	-	7	5	1
Scopus	-	-	3	3	4	1	-
Proquest	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Science Direct	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

The review had compared the variables related to TBE and PLE with the thematic contents of the available literatures in the selected 20 literatures.

Table 2: Most related literature sources which had mentioned physical attributes of TBE

Categories	Researchers	Context
Facilities	<p>Fireza, D., & Nurdiani, N. (2013). APPLICATION OF SHARIA PRINCIPLES IN PLANNING AND DESIGNING PONDOK PESANTREN Case Study: Pondok Pesantren Al Fath Ma' had in, 2013(9), 1–18.</p> <p>Hashim, R., Rufai, S. A., & Nor, M. R. M. (2011). Traditional Islamic education in Asia and Africa: A comparative study of Malaysia's Pondok, Indonesia's Pesantren and Nigeria's traditional Madrasah. <i>World Journal of Islamic ...</i>, 1(2), 94–107. http://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.1971.0078</p> <p>Osman, M. M., Bachok, S., & Thani, S. N. 'Alia A. (2015). An Assessment of Physical Development in Religious Educational in Malaysia: Case Study of SAR and SABK in Perak. <i>Procedia Environmental Sciences</i>, 28(Sustain 2014), 427–432. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.proenv.2015.07.052</p> <p>Nur, R., Raja, S., Yazit, M., & Husini, E. M. (2018). Immersive Educational Technology 2018 A Review: Influence Of Natural Daylighting On Quranic Memorisation (Hafazan) Learning Task, (August), 11–19.</p>	<p>Pesantren ,</p> <p>Pondok, Tahfiz Centre, Madrasah, Maahad Tahfiz,</p> <p>Sekolah Agama & Maahad Tahfiz Facilities</p> <p>Madrasah, Maahad Tahfiz,</p>
BE typology	<p>Hamidah Bani, Yassir Jaafar, Maheran Katan, & Abd Halim M.Noor. (2017). An Overview of Governance and Accountability of Tahfiz Institutions in Malaysian: Religious Councils</p>	<p>Pondok, Madrasah, Maahad Tahfiz, Ulul Albab MRSM</p>
Learning Environment	<p>Ridza, B. H., Jalil, R. A., Sipan, I., & Nukman, Y. (2017). Critical success factor (CSF) service delivery for tahfiz institution teaching & learning environment. <i>AIP Conference Proceedings</i>, 1903. http://doi.org/10.1063/1.5011522</p>	<p>Pondok, Tahfiz Centre, Madrasah, Maahad Tahfiz, Ulul Albab MRSM</p>

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

There is only one related article discussing specifically on TI physical learning environment or built environment aspect. The article is discussing on the Pondok Pesantren typology which vastly being established in Indonesia. Fireza, D., & Nurdiani, N. (2013) in their case study of the planning and designing of Pondok Pesantren Al Fath Ma'had in Palembang, South Sumatera had reported that Masjid or a prayer hall in one of the important and main facilities that usually being constructed at the Pondok Pesantren as Masjid is the center of Islamic education. Fireza, D., & Nurdiani, N. (2013) also reported that the next stage after the planning and construction of masjid is a dormitory facility as a residence for the students studying in the compound. Dormitory occupies an important role because it not only serves as a residence of santri, but also serves as a place of mental education of values of simplicity, independence, sincerity and self-control. Other facilities such as classrooms, office spaces, a library and support facilities like at general boarding school, can be planned to follow the needs of the school.

There is also discussion on TI facilities such as furniture and furniture arrangement. Nur,

R., Raja, S., Yazit, M., & Husini, E. M. (2018) reported that traditionally, hafazan learning in 'pondok' requires only a small open space or a platform for the students and teachers to sit. Students in Madrasah Nizhamiyah during the Seljuq dynasty uses small tables, presumably short or also known as Rehal in Malaysia (Nur, R., Raja, S., Yazit, M., & Husini, E. M. 2018). The teacher or scholar recite the Quran in front of the students while they listened and continued with a discussion session (Fuady, 2015). This traditional semi-circular arrangement or a circle (halaqah) around the teacher during hafazan changed in the 20th century due to the new adaptation of 'pondok' teaching system into class or madrasah system (Sulong, 2015).

The review also identified that the common aspect of BE and PLE that can be considered for Malaysia TI are the facilities such as classroom, management office, toilet and washroom, mosques or musolla, recreational or sports field, hostel and dining area (Hashim & Denan, 2015; Osman, Bachok, Thani, & Ibrahim, 2015). The identified BE typology of TI in Malaysia from the available literature are the Pondok (Individual hut as hostel), and teacher's houses, mosques or musolla and the institutions building typology (Hamidah Bani et al., 2017; Ridza, Jalil, Sipan, & Nukman, 2017).

CONCLUSIONS

This research provides a summary of available studies on the Malaysian TI physical learning ecosystem and built environments features. The findings confirm that the lack of literature and studies on the built environment aspects of TI in Malaysia highlighted the importance of the studies in order to upgrade the current infrastructure of TI. In addition to that, the research emphasizes the needs to acquire primary data of the existing conditions of physical learning ecosystem and built environment of the TI in Malaysia.

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